

## **Brief on India - Cameroon Bilateral Relations**

### **Political Relations**

India and Cameroon have friendly and cordial relations dating back to the independence of the latter in 1960. India has opened a diplomatic Mission in Yaounde, Cameroon in September 2019, as part of the 18 new Embassies to be opened in Africa over the period 2018-21. Shri Rakesh Malhotra has been appointed as the first resident High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Cameroon, and has arrived in Yaounde, Cameroon in September 2019.

India's bilateral engagement with Cameroon gathered momentum through high level visits between the two countries including the third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III). Cameroon leadership acknowledges India's contributions to Africa, its secular democracy and economic progress and the leadership it provided to the Non- Aligned Movement.

### **Bilateral Visits**

#### **(I) From Cameroon to India**

- Cameroonian President Mr. Paul Biya visited India in March 1983 to attend NAM Summit.
- Cameroon Prime Minister Mr. Philomen Yang accompanied by seven Ministers and a large business delegation visited India in March 2013 to attend CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on Africa.
- Mr Emmanuel Nganou Dogmas, Minister for Economy & Planning Mrs. Bankang Mbock Catherine, Minister of Social Welfare, September 12-16, 2012 – visited India for signing of \$42m Credit Line for the Cassava Plantation Project.
- Defence Minister Mr Edger Alain Mebe Ngo'o had visited India in March 2012 to attend DefExpo India 2012 held in New Delhi.
- Mr.Mbella Mbella Lejeune, Minister for External Relations led the Cameroonian delegation that participated in the India-Africa Summit-III from October 26-30, 2015.
- A 8- member delegation comprising of Ministry of Public Health Officials, Doctors and Pharmacists visited India from October 3-5, 2016 to attend the conference -Advantage Health Care India 2016- organised by FICCI in Noida, UP.
- Minister of Economy Mr. Louis Paul MotaZe led a Cameroonian delegation to India from 29 January to 4 February 2017 to sign a commercial loan agreement with Exim Bank of India worth USD 93.50 million for construction of 225 kV Nkongsamba - Bafoussam and Yaounde – Abong Mbang Transmission Line.
- Cameroonian Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development Mr. Louis Pal Motaze again visited India to attend AfDB meeting held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat from 22-26 May, 2017.
- Marie Rose Nguini Effa, President of African Parliamentary Forum on Population Development attended a conference on 'enhancing role of parliamentarians in the inter-linkage between population issues and the 2030 agenda of sustainable development', held in New Delhi on 13 September 2017.

- Cameroon Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Mrs. Emilia Mojowa Lifaka, who is also the Vice-Chairperson of Executive Committee of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), visited India, as part of a delegation comprising representatives of African Group of Commonwealth Speakers Forum on 11 October, 2017.

## **(II) From India to Cameroon**

- From Indian side, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Cameroon in April 1990.
- External Affairs Minister of India met with Cameroonian Foreign Minister in New York in September 2002.
- In June 2008, Mr. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, met Cameroonian Foreign Minister at AU Summit in Sham Al Sheikh, Egypt.
- A 60-member Indian Parliamentary delegation comprising of MPs, MLAs including Speakers of a few States Assemblies visited Cameroon to attend the 60th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in Yaoundé, Cameroon from October 2-10, 2014.
- Special Envoy to PM, Prof. Ram Shankar Katheria, MOS (HRD) visited Cameroon on July 15-17, 2015 to personally handover invitation letters from Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi to Cameroonian President Mr. Paul Biya to attend India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III).
- Mr. Rahul Navin, Commissioner of Income Tax, Foreign Tax and Tax Research Division, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Department of Revenue participated in the 10th Plenary Meeting of the General Forum of Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax purposes in November 2017 in Yaoundé.

### **Recent Visits**

- **Visit of Shri V. Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs of India to Cameroon [MOS (VM)](03-05 September 2019):** During his visit to Cameroon, MOS (VM) held wide ranging discussions with Foreign Minister MBELLA MBELLA, who was accompanied by both his MoSs Mr. ADOUM GARGOUM, in charge of OIC, and Mr. FELIX MBAYU, in charge of Commonwealth. MOS (VM) also called on Prime Minister JOSEPH DION NGUTE and Senior Vice President of the National Assembly ETONG HILARION.

## **Trade and Commercial Relations**

India and Cameroon signed a Trade Agreement in February 1968, thus laying the foundations for bilateral trade arrangements

In the FY 2018-19, the two-way trade increased by about 28% reaching US\$ 521 million compared to the US\$ 407 million two-way trade in 2017-18. India's exports registered a decrease by 8% reaching US \$ 178 million as against US\$ 194 million during 2017-18. India's imports registered an increase by 61% reaching US\$ 343 million as against US\$ 213 million during 2017-18. Our imports are mainly petroleum products which constitutes US\$319 million out of the total USD 343 million imports in the FY 2018-19.

Major Indian exports to Cameroon are pharmaceuticals, plastics, foot wear and textiles. Major Cameroonian exports to India are Crude Oil, wood and wood objects, coffee and Cocoa. A major portion of India's imports from Cameroon comprises Crude Oil.

**India – Cameroon Bilateral Trade Statistics (Value in US \$ million)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>India's Exports to Cameroon</b>	<b>India's Imports from Cameroon</b>	<b>Total Trade</b>
2014-15	249	745	994
2015-16	191	558	749
2016-17	149	359	508
2017-18	194	213	407
2018-19	178.25	343.20	521.46

Key potential areas for cooperation and investment are - oil & mining, telecom, fertilizers, oil & gas, agriculture & food processing, forestry, IT, railways and Indian exports of consumer and light engineering goods.

**Defence Cooperation**

India has been providing various training slots for the Cameroonian Armed Forces in Indian Armed Forces Training establishments under the ITEC program. Focus of our Defence Cooperation is to provide training in counter terrorism, anti-piracy operations and in UN peace keeping operations. A senior representative from the Cameroon Ministry of Defence attended the DefExpo held in Bengaluru in April 2018.

**Projects and related activities**

The Pan-African e-Network Project was inaugurated in June 2010 in Cameroon. The tele-education and telemedicine projects have been set up at Cameroon State Regional University Yaoundé and its hospital and are performing satisfactorily.

**Development Cooperation**

**(I) Lines of Credit & Commercial Loan Agreements**

- In May 2009, a US\$ 37.65 million Indian Line of Credit (LoC) for Cameroon funding a project each of Rice and Maize Farm Plantation was operationalized.
- In September 2012, India and Cameroon signed on a new LOC of US\$ 42 million for Cassava plantation project in Cameroon.
- During the visit of Cameroon Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, Mr. Louis Paul MotaZe, to New Delhi from 29 January to 4 February

2017, Cameroon signed a commercial loan agreement with Exim Bank of India worth USD 93.50 million for construction of 225 kV Nkongsamba - Bafoussam and Yaounde – AbongMbang Transmission Line.

## **(II) Capacity Building**

- India has been supporting Cameroon's efforts in Capacity building under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme since 1964. India offers 32 training slots under ITEC to Cameroon annually.
- Consequent to the third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) held in New Delhi in October 2015, India has been offering additional training programmes to Cameroon in diverse subjects ranging from Agriculture to Hydropower. In 2018-19, 7 Cameroonians have been trained under India-Africa Forum Summit-III (IAFS-III) Programmes in the prominent training Institutes in India.

## **Culture and Education**

Cameroon is officially a French-English bilingual country. Indian films are popular and a local channel Capital TV regularly telecasts Indian films. A Rajasthani folk dance troupe sponsored by ICCR performed in Douala, Cameroon in November 2010. An Indian Film Festival was organised by Honorary Consul of India in 2013. To commemorate 100 years of Indian cinema in Cameroon, an Indian Film Festival was organised in 2013 by the Honorary Consul of India to Cameroon and the Indian Community in collaboration with the Institut Francais du Cameroun, with French sub-titles. An ICCR sponsored Haryana Folk Dance Troupe performed in Cameroon during November 2018.

## **Indian Community**

There are about 800 Indian expatriates in Cameroon, engaged mostly in trading and small business apart from some professionals. Indians are generally well-regarded. Majority of Indian nationals are living Douala, financial city and a port city of Cameroon.

## **Visa Procedures**

Indians travelling to Cameroon require visa. As there is still no resident Cameroonian High Commission in India, visa needs to be obtained from elsewhere. If approached sufficiently ahead of the visit, India's Honorary Consul to Cameroon based in Douala can assist in obtaining visa on arrival.

India has liberalized its E-Visa regime for select countries in February 2019, including for Cameroon. In particular, multi-entry e-tourist, e-business and e-medical visas for Cameroonians can be processed online.

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