

Bilateral Brief on India-Madagascar Relations

(As on 31 August 2017)

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India's maritime trade links with Madagascar date to 18th century when the first Indian settlements from Gujarat began to arrive. Since then there has been a gradual increase in the number of persons from India to Madagascar.

India opened a Consulate General in Antananarivo in 1954. Upon Madagascar gaining independence in 1960, the Consulate General was up-graded to an Embassy. India and Madagascar enjoy cordial bilateral relations.

High level and Ministerial level visits **from Madagascar to India** are taking place at periodic intervals: i) President Didier Ratsiraka visited India in 1980 (bilateral) and 1983 (to participate in NAM). President Hery Rajaonarimampianina led a large delegation to India to participate in the India Africa Forum Summit in October 2015; ii) Foreign Ministers Lila Hanitra Ratsifandrihamanana and Mr. Marcel Ranjeva and Mr. Pierrot J. Rajaonarivelo, in 2001, 2005 and November 2012 visited India respectively to hold bilateral discussions; iii) Agriculture Minister Mr. Marius Ratolojanahary visited India in February 2006 and March and November 2008 respectively. During his 2008 visit he signed US\$25 million LOC Agreement with the Exim Bank of India for Agriculture Development; iv) Minister of Health Prof (Mr.) Mamy Lalatiana Andriamanarivo visited India in August 2015 to participate in the Global Health Ministers Conference; v) Ministers of Economy, Commerce and Industry Mr. Ivohasina Razafimahefa, in 2008 and Transport and Meteorology Mr. Benjamina Ramarcel Ramanantsoa in March 2017 visited India to participate in the 4th and 12th CII-Exim Bank of India Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership; vi) Minister of Trade and Consumer Affairs Mr. Tazafy Armand visited India to participate in the 3rd Global Exhibition on Services, Greater Noida in April 2017; vii) Ministers of Finance and Budget Mr. Rakotoarimanana Francois Marie Maurice Gervais and Agriculture and Livestock Mr. Rivo Rakotovoao visited India in May 2017 to participate in the 52nd Annual African Development Bank meeting, Gandhi Nagar Gujarat.

From India Ministers of State for Commerce Shri P.A. Sangma and External Affairs Shri Hari Kishore Singh made bilateral visits to Madagascar in 1985 and 1990 respectively. Minister of State for Finance Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar visited Madagascar in October 2016 as part of PM's Outreach Programme.

Bilateral Developmental Cooperation: Government of India had extended a concessional Line of Credit of US\$ 25 million to Madagascar in 2008 for raising productivity of rice and setting up of fertilizer plants. The project is under implementation. Two Static Soil Testing Laboratories have been established in Mahajunga and Toamasina in July and November 2016 respectively. On the Malagasy government's request, an additional LOC of US\$2.5 million has been sanctioned by Government of India to help complete the above project. An agreement with the Exim Bank of India has been signed by the Malagasy Finance Minister in June 2017.

Centre for Geo-informatics Applications in Rural Development (CGARD): A MoU on setting up of a CGARD Centre in Antananarivo was signed on 29 February 2016. The setting up of the CGARD Centre is nearing completion and the Technology Centre is expected to be inaugurated shortly.

A **MoU between India and Madagascar in the field of Agriculture and Allied Sector** was signed on 29.2.2016. The mutual dates for convening of the First meeting of the Joint Agriculture Working Group in Antananarivo, Madagascar are being worked out.

Aid/Assistance: The Government of India provided cash assistance of US\$100,000/- for the Cyclone 'Haruna' victims in early 2013 and a cash assistance of US\$ 200,000/- was provided to the 'Chedza' victims in April 2015. India also provided indelible ink costing Rs.31,38,000/- Madagascar municipal and local elections held in July, 2015. Capacity building equipment for the Malagasy Senate sanctioned under Gol Cash Grant of US\$37,530/- in November 2016 was handed over in April 2017.

Capacity Building Programmes: The training programmes offered by India under ITEC, IAFS and other fellowship programmes have been widely appreciated by the local population. Madagascar utilised ITEC slots 66 against 85 allotted in 2016-17 and 27 against 50 in 2017-18; 14 IAFS in 2016-17 and one slots each under CV Raman, FSI PCFD Course have been utilised. 17 Malagasy students were granted ICCR General Scholarship in 2016-17 and 3 in 2017-18. Madagascar is a beneficiary of the Pan African e-network project.

A team from Indian Institute Foreign Trade (IIFT) visited Madagascar to conduct a 5-day workshop (24-28 February 2014) on Executive Management Programme for a targeted group in collaboration with the Malagasy Ministry of Trade and the Chamber of Commerce, EDBM (Economic Development Board of Madagascar) and ITBM (International Trade Board of Madagascar). Following positive feedback a second such initiative is under consideration.

Market Survey: A market survey on the Pharmaceutical, Agribusiness and Investment sectors to assess opportunities in both trade and investments for Indian companies was conducted by the Embassy and a report was published in March 2014. A Catalogue Show was also arranged in the same month where Indian companies who have already invested in Madagascar participated.

Four Market Surveys in Madagascar on: i) Textile and Clothing ii) Automotive Sectors iii) Agribusiness Sector and iv) Pharmaceuticals were conducted by the Embassy in 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively to assess opportunities in both trade and investments for Indian companies in Madagascar. The survey reports and have been shared with the respective Export Promotion Councils, ITP Division and Ministry of Commerce.

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the International Trade Board of Madagascar (ITBM) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 18th March 2014 in New Delhi to enhance economic relations. A 6-member CII business delegation including Shri Arvind Sagar, Executive Vice President, Afcons Infrastructure Limited visited Madagascar from 12 to 14 December 2016. The delegation was received by the Malagasy leadership at the highest level and other key Ministers who appreciated the importance that India has for Madagascar. A Business Conference followed by a B2B meeting was held on 13 December attended by over 75 companies and representatives of various Malagasy Business Chambers. A Memorandum of Understanding(MoU) between the CII and the Malagasy Federation of Chamber of Industry and Commerce (FCCIM) was signed.

Apollo Hospitals group have signed a MoU with the Malagasy Ministry of Health in the month of May 2014. The MoU would allow the treatment of government sponsored and private patients in India at viable economic costs, train the accompanying Malagasy doctors in India and give follow up treatment to the patients in Madagascar once in three months.

A MoU between a Gujarat based Zydex Company limited and Ministry of Public Services was signed for the strengthening of road network in Madagascar to make them moisture resistant

with the innovative technology. The trial runs have already been conducted by the Company to prove the effectiveness of their products.

The Mission organized a series of events to mark the diamond jubilee of diplomatic ties between India and Madagascar starting with a 'Showcase India' and an Indian Business Promotion event exhibition on 26 March 2014. The event was organized in partnership with the Malagasy Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Economic Development Board of Madagascar and the International Trade Board of Madagascar. This was the first time that an activity of such a magnitude was organized by the Mission. It received by both the invitees, participant businessmen and the visitors.

Two Trade Promotion Activities under 'Make in India Initiative' the first one on 3-4 October, 2015 and the second one on 24 October 2016 in Antananarivo. Both the events received overwhelming response from the public and business community in Antananarivo.

At Embassy's initiative, an EdCIL delegation visited Madagascar from 5 to 11 June 2013 and organized workshops/seminars in collaboration with the Universities of Antananarivo and Mahajunga, which were well attended and it is expected that due to awareness created by this visit, many students would look forward to India as a destination for higher education.

A 7-member pharma delegation comprising health officials, hospital authorities, members of pharmaceutical companies and journalist from Madagascar participated in the International Expo for Pharmaceuticals and Health products from 21-23 May 2014, in Mumbai, India.

A 21-member Pharm Excil delegation visited Madagascar from 16-20 March, 2014 and the Embassy organized an inaugural conference and B2B meetings which were very productive. The Pharmexcil delegation called on the Secretaries General of Health and Trade and also on the Prime Minister.

Shri Noel Tata, Chairman Trent Ltd made two visits to Antananarivo – in January 2016 and 2017. He called on President Hery and Minister of Mines on both the occasions.

The major Indian investments by Indian companies were in the mining, oil and gas sectors, telecom sector and health sectors. Airtel is the main player in mobile telephony and Dr. Aggarwal's Eye Hospital in the health sector. Tirupati Carbons & Chemicals (P) Ltd was granted licence to set up a Graphite processing facility in Brickaville in December 2015. M/s.Tata Sons Ltd have also made minor investment in mining sector. Other Indian companies which have invested in Madagascar but are yet to commence operations due to the crisis include, Varun Industries, GIMPEX, Osho Ventures, Sahara (India), Diamond Cement, Jindals, etc.

Bilateral Trade: Being a Least Developed Country, Madagascar is a beneficiary of India's Duty Free Preferential Tariff Scheme. Total bilateral trade between the two countries was US\$334.70 in 2016-17 as against US\$338 in 2015-16. The main items of exports from Madagascar to India are Coffee, Tea, Spices, Edible Vegetables, Salt, Sulphur & Earth, Essential Oils & Resinoids, Base Metals, Precious and Semi-precious Stones, etc.. The major imports from India are Cereals, Apparel Products, Iron & Steel, Cotton, Pharmaceutical Products, Products of the Milling Industry, Sugar and Sugar confectionery, etc. India's

Cultural and Educational Relations: Due to lack of cultural cooperation agreement, there had not been any significant exchange of cultural visits between the two countries in recent years. Malagasy population is familiar with Indian culture thanks to the vibrant PIO community. Indian

TV channels are included in the cable TV package by the local cable operators. Indian movies, tele-serials and tourism related documentaries provided by the Embassy are being telecast on National TV and certain private television channels. The cultural programmes, including film shows organized by the Embassy in association with local organizations have been well attended.

International Day of Yoga (IDY) : Mission has been successful in holding three editions of International Day of Yoga in 2015, 2016 and 2017 in Antananarivo, Madagascar. A steady increase of active participants and keen interest in various yoga streams have been noticed.

Festival of India in Madagascar: The first ever Festival of India in Madagascar was held during September – December 2015 sponsored by Ministry of Culture and Sangeeth Natak Academy. The Festival included fusion dance, Punjabi & Gujarati Folk dances, Mehendi Art and Food Festival. As part of India @ 70 celebrations the Mission organized a Photo Exhibition titled ‘Pluralistic Culture of India – Harmony in Diversity’ in collaboration with the Office of National Arts and Culture in Antananarivo from 17 to 22 August 2017. Three shows of Indian folk dance performance ‘Lavani/Gharba’ sponsored by ICCR was held in Antananarivo and Mahajunga in Madagascar from 19 to 22 August. All the events drew large public response and were widely reported in the print and audio visual media.

Connectivity and Travel: Foreign airlines provide connectivity to India via Mauritius, Dubai and Nairobi. Major airlines Air Seychelles flights via Seychelles have been introduced recently, which provide comparatively a cheaper option.

Indian Community/Diaspora: There are about 15,000 persons of India origin in Madagascar, including approximately 2500 Indian passport holders. Most of them are in trading but some of them are also in the manufacturing sector and other businesses as well. The role played by the Indian community and diaspora in economic development of Madagascar is appreciated at all levels. Some of the Indian Diaspora are quite influential and their contribution to the total GDP of Madagascar is substantial. The Indian Diaspora has been playing a significant role in preserving and promoting Indian culture and traditional values in Madagascar.

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Resources

www.embassyofindia.mg

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

<https://twitter.com/indembtana>

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRiM_YUXv9KnKxyVTR3XiGw