

India-Somalia Bilateral Relations

A year after the independence of Somalia in 1960, the Commissioner of India to Mauritius was accredited as Ambassador of India to Somalia and presented Credentials in 1961. Later, a resident Mission was opened in Mogadishu. After the outbreak of civil war in 1991, the Indian Embassy in Mogadishu was closed.

Visits from Somalia

- Prime Minister of Somalia Dr. Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke accompanied by Minister of Information visited India in 1963. Dr. Sharmarke visited India again in 1968 as President of Somalia.
- Somalia's Foreign Minister Dr. Abdurrahman Jama Barre visited India in 1979. This was followed by the visits of Somalia's Minister of Commerce & Industry in 1986 and a Special Envoy of the President of Somalia in 1989.
- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Planning and International Cooperation Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali visited India in March 2011 to attend the 7th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership. During the visit, he met EAM S.M. Krishna and CIM Anand Sharma.
- The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) Minister for Education, Culture and Higher Studies Prof. Ahmed Aidid Ibrahim visited India to participate in the India-Africa Science & Technology Ministerial Conference and Tech Expo held in New Delhi in March 2012. During the visit, he met Minister for Human Resource Development Kapil Sibal.
- President of State of Puntland Abdirahman Mohamed Farole visited India in May 2012. He met MoS for External Affairs E. Ahamed and MoS for Petroleum & Natural Gas R.P.N. Singh.
- Minister of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Environment Abdirahman Ibrahim visited India to attend the High Level Segment of the 11th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity held in Hyderabad in October 2012.
- Minister of Trade of the Federal Republic of Somalia Mohamud Ahmed Hassan visited India during January 2013 to attend the Vibrant Gujarat business summit.
- President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud led the Somali delegation for the 3rd India Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi from 26-29 October 2015. He held a bilateral meeting with PM Narendra Modi. He also visited Bhopal, at the invitation of GOI. During the visit, he was conferred an Honorary Doctorate degree by the Barkatullah University, Bhopal of which he is an alumnus.
- Somali State Minister of Finance Mr. Mohamoud Hayir Ibrahim visited Gandhinagar for the 52nd Annual Meeting of African Development Bank Group held there from 22-26 May 2017. During this visit, Somalia signed the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement.
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Somalia, Mr. Yusuf-Garaad Omar paid his first official visit to India from 31 July - 4 August 2017. He held meetings with EAM Smt. Sushma Swaraj and MoS for External Affairs Shri M. J. Akbar. An Agreement for Transfer of Sentenced Persons between India and Somalia was signed during the visit. On 23 September 2017, Mr. Yusuf-Garaad Omar met MoS Shri M. J. Akbar in New York on sidelines of UNGA.
- In January 2018, the Attorney General of Somalia visited Mumbai to bring back the first group of 41 Somali prisoners and their Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs went in March to bring back 76 Somali prisoners.
- Deputy Prime Minister Mahdi Mohammed Gulaid accompanied by Minister of Energy and Water Resources Salim Alio Ibro and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abdulkadir Ahmed-Kheyr Abdi visited India from 10-13 March 2018 to attend Founding Conference of International Solar Alliance (ISA) in New Delhi. He called on Rashtrapatiiji and Prime Minister during the visit.
- Mr. Mohamed Said Abdilahi, Deputy Minister of Health & Human Services visited New Delhi to attend the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention held from 29 September to 2 October 2018. Somali delegation participated in the First Assembly of International Solar Alliance and 2nd IORA Renewable Energy Ministerial meeting held at New Delhi from 2-4 October 2018.

- Somalia participated in COP14, CRIC18 and CST14 to UNCCD held in New Delhi on 02-13 September,2019.

Visits from India

- Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Eduardo Faleiro visited Somalia in 1992. India provided relief supplies (medicines, food) worth Rs. 20 lakh to Somalia in 1992 during the visit.
- The Indian delegation to the London Somalia Conference (February 2012) was led by MoS for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed. The Minister met TFG President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed; President of Puntland Abdirahman Mohamed Farole and President of Galmudug Mohamed Ahmed Alin. President Farole said that he would be happy to see Indian companies getting involved with oil exploration and production in Puntland.
- High Commissioner led the Indian delegation at the Istanbul II Conference on Somalia held in May 2012.
- MoS for External Affairs Smt. Praneet Kaur addressed the debate on Somalia held at the UN Security Council in October 2012. She congratulated the new Somali leadership noting that President Mohamud had studied in India during 1980s.
- High Commissioner led the Indian delegation at the Somalia Conference held in London on 7 May 2013.
- MoS for External Affairs, Gen. (Retd.) V.K. Singh visited Somalia in July 2015 as Prime Minister's Special Envoy and handed over the invitation from the Prime Minister to the President of Somalia, for attending the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) in New Delhi in October 2015.
- High Commissioner represented GOI at the inauguration of President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed 'Farmaajo' at Mogadishu on 22nd February 2017. High Commissioner called on President Farmaajo in December 2017 in Mogadishu and extended a joint invitation to attend the Founding Conference of ISA in March 2018.
- India participated in Somalia Partnership Forum in Brussels on 16-17 July 2018.
- An Indian delegation participated in the 21st Plenary Session of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia in Nairobi from 9-13 July 2018.
- High Commissioner visited Mogadishu to present his credentials on 14 February, 2019.
- High Commissioner led a team of officials to celebrate 5th International Day of Yoga in Mogadishu and Garowe on June 30- July 02, 2019.
- High Commissioner went on an official visit to Mogadishu on 07-08 September,2019 to call on the Foreign Minister.

Grants in Aid & Developmental Assistance

- In 1985, Somalia was among the recipient countries of 100,000 tonnes of wheat offered by Government of India to countries in the region.
- In 1992, India provided relief supplies (medicines, food) worth Rs. 20 lakh to Somalia during the visit of Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Eduardo Faleiro.
- Somalia is among the partner countries of Pan African e-Network project. The project was inaugurated by EAM S. M. Krishna in August 2010 along with the Vice Minister of Education of the State of Puntland.
- In September 2011, India announced a contribution of US\$ 8 million towards humanitarian assistance for countries in the Horn of Africa region (Somalia, Kenya and Djibouti) to be distributed through WFP.
- No projects have been offered to Somalia under IAFS. Following PM Dr. Manmohan Singh's announcement at the 2nd India Africa Forum Summit held in Addis Ababa in May 2011, India provided US\$ 2 million to the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). India announced a further contribution of US\$ 1 million to AMISOM in March 2012. India contributed US\$ 1 million as assistance to the AMISOM in August 2017.

- At the request of Foreign Minister of Somalia, 20 diplomats from Somali Foreign Ministry were trained in FSI, New Delhi in September-October 2015. The second special course for young Somali diplomats was held from 9 May-8 June 2018 at FSI, New Delhi. An MoU between FSI and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Somalia was signed on 5 June 2018.
- India has always remained one of the preferred destinations for Somali students. From April to November 2018, Somalia availed 28 slots under Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR); Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and India Africa Forum Summit (IAFS III) scholarship schemes.
- High Commissioner handed over the consignment of essential medicines worth US\$ one million to Dr. Fawziya Abikar Nor, Minister of Health of Somalia on 19 July 2018 in Mogadishu. During the visit, High Commissioner called on Mr. Hassan Ali Khaire, Prime Minister of Somalia.

Indian Community

Indian traders have been trading with the Horn of Africa since ancient times. In the 1940s and 1950s, many Indians were recruited by Italians to work on their plantations, mainly around Qoryoley. Others established businesses in Somalia. It is estimated that there were around 200 Indian families in Somalia, mainly engaged in textile dyeing in Mogadishu and Merka. Indian families, who at one time were living in Kismayo, left for Mogadishu in early 1980s. At one time, the Indian embassy used to run a popular international school in Mogadishu. After 1991, most Indians left Somalia, and many relocated to Mombasa in Kenya. Presently, it is estimated that there are around 100 Indian nationals working in different parts of Somalia including the UN and around 500 persons of Indian origin in Somalia.

Mission in collaboration with UN Organizations in Somalia organized celebrations of International Day of Yoga in Mogadishu for last five years. In 2019, for the first time ever, Mission celebrated 5th International Day of Yoga in Garowe, Puntland State. Mission organized the first-ever consular camp in Mogadishu on 1 October 2017. The second consular camp was organized on 20 January 2018. Third Consular camp was organized in Garowe, Puntland state on 14 September 2019. Many Somalis travel to India for studies and medical treatment. Mission issued over 4651 visas to Somali nationals in the year 2018.

Bilateral Trade

During 2018-19, India-Somalia trade was approx. US\$ 555.5 million and in 2017-18 trade was approx. US\$ 459.07 million. Somalia, being an LDC country, qualifies for India's offer of unilateral Duty-Free Tariff Preferential (DFTP) market access for export of goods and services to India. Recently, Mission participated in Puntland Investment Forum on 15-16 September, 2019.

Indian Participation in UN Peacekeeping in Somalia

4,600 Indian peacekeepers, led by Brigadier M. P. Bhagat, participated in UNOSOM II during 1993-94. The contingent was headquartered in Baidoa. It included armour and helicopters. The troops also engaged in reconstruction and humanitarian work. 12 Indian soldiers laid down their lives during the deployment. The Indian Navy played a major part in the Indian contribution to the UN task force in Somalia. The Indian Navy has been involved in anti-piracy patrolling in the Gulf of Aden since 2008. India is a member of the UN Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia.

Useful Resources

Website of High Commission of India, Nairobi: <https://www.hcinairobi.gov.in/>

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

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

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/india_in_kenya/