

India – South Sudan Relations

South Sudan was a part of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, under joint British-Egyptian rule, from 1899-1955. After two civil wars (1962-72 and 1983-2005), a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed between the Government of Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) on 09 January 2005 in Nairobi, Kenya which led to autonomy for the South, and a South Sudanese referendum on independence in six years' time. Consequently, South Sudan gained independence from Sudan on 09 July 2011, following a peaceful referendum in which 98.5 percent South Sudanese voted for independence. South Sudan is the 193rd member of the United Nations and 54th member of the African Union. India did not take sides in the two civil wars; therefore, unlike some other countries, it carries no baggage from the past. There were sporadic informal contacts between SPLM and Indian Missions in Kampala, Nairobi, and Kinshasa in the 1980s and 1990s. When the war broke out in 1983, only a few intrepid members of the Indian community stayed on in Juba and other major towns while most left for the North.

India has long standing relations with the people of South Sudan. In December 1975, the then President of India, Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed visited Sudan and addressed the Regional Peoples' Assembly in Juba. Almost the entire population of Juba had turned out to welcome him. An assessment by the Embassy in Khartoum stated: "On the whole, the visit to Juba made it evident that the Southern Sudanese have deeper respect for India." India increased its engagement with South Sudan after the second civil war ended in 2005. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E.A. Ahamed, attended the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on 09 January 2005 in Nairobi, between the Government of Sudan and SPLM that brought peace to South Sudan. Indian Consulate in Juba was opened in October 2007, which was later upgraded to the level of Embassy in March 2012. India was one of the first countries to recognize Independent South Sudan and Hon'ble Vice President of India Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari attended the Independence Day celebrations in Juba in July 2011.

Important Bilateral Visits

From the Indian side, former President Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed visited Juba (then part of Sudan) in December 1975. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed, attended the signing of Comprehensive Peace Agreement between South Sudan and Sudan in Nairobi in January 2005. Subsequently, he led a multi-disciplinary delegation to South Sudan in June 2011. Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari represented India at the independence ceremony in Juba on 09 July 2011. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Salva Kiir Mayardit in New York on 24 September 2011 on the sidelines of UN General Assembly (UNGA). The Special Envoy of India to Sudan and South Sudan visited the two countries regularly during the last two years to discuss issues of bilateral interest. An audit team from C&AG of India, led by a Joint Secretary visited South Sudan from 11th August to 5 September 2014 to conduct the audit of UN Peace Keeping Operation Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). MOS(VKS)

Gen (Retd) V.K Singh, visited Juba, South Sudan from July 12-13, 2015 as Special Envoy of Prime Minister of India to deliver invitations to South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and Foreign Minister Dr Barnaba Marial Benjamin for participation in Third India Africa Summit in New Delhi in October 2015

From the South Sudanese side, a high level delegation from President Salva Kiir's office led by Dr. Priscilla Joseph Kuch visited India in April 2011. Special Envoy of the President of South Sudan, Joseph Lual Achuil visited in November 2011. Former Vice President Dr. Riek Machar Teny, visited India to participate in the conference organized by the Friends of Moral Re-armament at Panchgani in January 2012. Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Cooperatives, Betty Achan Ogwaro, visited in January 2012. Deputy Minister of Commerce of South Sudan, Kengen Jakor Beyo led an eight member delegation to attend the ELECRAMA Exhibition in Mumbai in January 2012 on the invitation of the Indo-African Chamber of Commerce. Chairperson of the Constituency Fund Committee of the National Assembly, Beatrice Aber Samson, led an eight-member delegation on a Study Tour of India, hosted by the Indian Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training in July 2012. South Sudanese President Gen Salva Kiir Mayardit was scheduled to visit India in August 2013, but the visit was postponed at the last minute due to disturbed political situation in the country. President Salva Kiir accompanied by a high level official delegation attended the Third India Africa Summit held in New Delhi in October 2015 and discussed bilateral relations with PM Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the Summit. Dr Bernaba Marial Benjamin, Foreign Affairs Minister also participated in the Ministerial level meetings and interacted with External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj during the Summit. The South Sudanese delegation also included Minister for Health, Minister for Finance and Minister for Petroleum and many various Government officials. South Sudan Petroleum Minister Stephen Dhieu Dau and senior officials also attended 4th India Africa Hydrocarbon Conference in New Delhi on 21-22 January 2016

Economic - Commercial Relations

ONGC of India - Videsh Ltd. (OVL) has made an investment of around US\$ 2.5 billion (spread over South Sudan and Sudan) in the hydrocarbon sector since 2003. It has 25% Participating Interest (PI) in Greater Nile Oil Project (GNOP) [Block 1, 2 and 4] in consortium with CNPC of China, Petronas of Malaysia and Sudapet of Sudan. It has 24.125% PI in Block 5A in consortium with Petronas and Sudapet.

India's trade with South Sudan is small. The main items of Indian imports from South Sudan are oil and timber and India's exports mainly comprise of consumer and household goods, food items, pharmaceuticals, two & three wheeler motorcycles. As Indian trade is mainly through third countries (Kenya, UAE), precise data is not available. South Sudan's estimated global imports in 2013 were US\$ 1.8 billion and exports approximately US\$ 3.0 billion, with Uganda and Kenya being the major trading partners. South Sudan earned US\$ 3.376 billion through oil exports in 2014. The Barefoot college(The Social Work and Research Centre) at Tilonia, Rajasthan and

Evangelical Prebysterian Church (on behalf of Government of South Sudan) signed an MOU on August 18, for establishing a Regional Barefoot Training and Vocational Centre (RBTVC) in Yei province of Equatoria State, South Sudan to promote solar electrification in the villages in Yei. MEA also signed an agreement with Barefoot College for providing funds up to US \$ 500,000.00 (Rs.2.48 Crores) for establishing RBTVC in South Sudan.

Some Indian companies are operating in the area of construction, borehole drilling, printing, trading, and services to the oil industry. Indians also operate small hotels and a supermarket in Juba. A large Indian business delegation under the auspices of India-Africa Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mumbai visited Juba in April 2013 on an exploratory mission and had fruitful interaction with the South Sudanese businessmen for joint ventures and collaborations.

Development Assistance Partnership

At the April 2005 Oslo Donors Conference, India announced a grant of US\$10 million for infrastructure, capacity building and social sector projects such as hospitals and educational institutions in Sudan. Half of the US\$10 million grant to Sudan was allocated for construction of a hospital in South Sudan. The proposal to construct a medium sized hospital in Juba is under active consideration and MoU to start the work on the project is likely to be finalized shortly between GoSS and GOI. In January 2008, India also donated US\$100,000 worth of tents and medicines for flood affected areas to be shared between Sudan and South Sudan.

Other development assistance initiatives include the following

- (i) **ICCR Scholarships:** Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has allocated seven (7) scholarships for South Sudanese nationals for higher studies in India for the academic year 2016-17 and all scholarships have been utilized.
- (ii) **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Training Slots:** During 2014-15, Ministry had allocated 80 slots for South Sudan under the ITEC Programme. Ministry of External Affairs of India has allocated 60 slots for South Sudan under the ITEC Programme for the year 2015-16.
- (iii) **Vocational Training Centre (VTC):** The VTC is India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) commitment. The Government of South Sudan has proposed setting up of VTC in Wau County in Western Bahr el Ghazal State and matter is under discussion with the Government of South Sudan.
- (iv) **Solar Electrification:** A solar electrification project, implemented by Central Electronics Limited of India near Juba has drawn widespread appreciation; and
- (vi) **Construction of Hospital:** Proposal to provide financial assistance to South Sudan for construction of hospital in Juba is under active consideration and MoU will be signed soon to start the construction of hospital in Juba.
- (v) **Pan African e-Network Project:** The Agreement for the implementation of the project in South Sudan was signed in February 2012. The project is at an advanced stage of implementation.

Indian Contingent in United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

India has two battalions of about 2,000 personnel in the UNMISS, deployed in two of the largest states in South Sudan - Jonglei and Upper Nile. Additionally, there is a police component of around 37 Indian Police officers who have been assisting the South Sudan National Police Service in building up the police structures, and a number of civilian officials are in various other departments of UNMISS. The Indian army contingents have been undertaking several social welfare initiatives viz. holding medical camps, donating books to educational institutions, building roads etc, which have been highly appreciated by the local population. On 09 April 2013, 36 Indian soldiers who were escorting a UN convoy from Pibor to Bor in Jonglei state came under heavy attack from the rebels. One senior Indian Army officer and four soldiers got killed and four Indian soldiers were injured. Two Indian soldiers were also killed in an attack on the UN Base at Akobo (Jonglei State) on 19 December 2013. Two Indian soldiers also suffered injuries during an attack on the UN Base at Bor, in Jonglei State in April 2014.

Indian community in South Sudan

Presently, there are about 700 Indian nationals in South Sudan. Some of them have set up businesses in Juba and others are working for various companies. A small number of Indian nationals also work in Christian missionary organizations in South Sudan. In addition, there are 2,000 Indian Army peacekeepers, 37 Police officers and some civilian officials attached to UNMISS. Indians have been among the first to open hotels, borehole companies, printing press and departmental store in Juba in early 2006. Indian nationals in Juba have formed an Indian Association, whose membership is presently around 300. The Embassy maintains regular contacts with the Indian community in South Sudan and facilitates their various social projects. A two day free medical camp was also organized in Juba by Indian doctors in June 2015 in collaboration with a local hospital for the local South Sudanese community. First International Day of Yoga was also organized by the Mission in collaboration with Association of Indians in Juba, South Sudan on June 21, 2015. An open house was organized recently to address the issues faced by the members of Indian community. The Mission organized PBD on January 9, 2016 for the first time in Juba and felicitated 9 prominent Diaspora members for promoting Diaspora interests in South Sudan.

Useful Resources:

Embassy of India, Juba website:

<http://indembjuba.org/>

January 2016