

Embassy of India  
Antananarivo

**India-Madagascar Unclassified brief**

India has had maritime links with Madagascar for several centuries. Settlements of Indian merchants in Madagascar date back to the late eighteenth century. The late nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century witnessed a steady increase in the number of persons from India in Madagascar and persons of Indian origin began to play a significant role in business here.

**Indian Diaspora**

There are about 17,500 persons of India origin in Madagascar, including approximately 2500 Indian passport holders. The first Indians settlers, mostly from Gujarat, arrived in Madagascar in 1789. Most of them are in trading but some of them are also in the manufacturing, real estate and other assorted businesses. 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. In recent years a number of Indian professionals have migrated and are working in different companies, including multi-national companies in Madagascar. The Indian Diaspora has been playing a significant role in preserving and promoting Indian culture and traditional values.

**Diplomatic Relations**

India opened a Consulate General in Antananarivo in 1954. Upon Madagascar gaining independence in 1960, the Consulate General was up-graded to an Embassy. Madagascar experienced political crisis in 2009. The transitional government was not recognized by the international community. The general elections were subsequently held in December 2013 and Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina was elected as President and assumed office on 25 January 2014. The international community formally recognized the government in May 2014. President Hery Rajaonarimampianina resigned in September 2018 to be able to contest again in the Presidential elections. The elections were held in two phases – first one in November and the second one in December 2018 in which President Andry Rajoelina became victorious and was sworn in as the President of Madagascar on 19 January, 2019. A 23-member Council of Ministers led by Prime Minister Christian Ntsay was sworn in on January 24, 2019. In the legislative elections held on May 27, 2019 on 151 seats, RID (the ruling coalition of parties led by President Andry's TGV Party) secured absolute majority with 84 seats. Prime Minister Christian Ntsay gave his technical resignation, as stipulated under the constitutional provisions after the election of a new legislative assembly, and was re-appointed as Prime Minister with a 22-member Council of Ministers.

India and Madagascar enjoy cordial bilateral relations. Madagascar has been supportive of India's demand for Permanent Membership of UNSC and G-4 initiative for Expansion of the UNSC. Madagascar has also supported India's candidatures in various UN and other international bodies.

Honourable Rashtrapatiji, Shri Ram Nath Kovind visited Madagascar from 14-15 March, 2018. Bilateral agreements in the field of Defence Cooperation and an amendatory Air Service Agreement were signed. Several other bilateral cooperation MoUs/Agreements between India and Madagascar are expected to be finalised in the near future.

Hon'ble EAM had a telephonic conversation with the Foreign Minister of Madagascar, His Excellency, Dr. Tehindrazanarivelo Djacoba A.S. Oliva on 1 March, 2021. As a result, 1000 tonnes of rice and 100,000 tablets of hydroxychloroquine were sent on board by INS Jalashwa for the people of drought affected southern Madagascar as humanitarian assistance.

A list of high-level bilateral visits that have taken place so far is as follows:

#### **Visits from Madagascar and India**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Visitor</b>	<b>Date of visit</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
1.	Mr. Didier Ratsiraka, President	1980	Bilateral
2.	Mr. Didier Ratsiraka, President	1983	To participate in NAM Summit
3.	Malagasy Parliamentary delegation	2000	Bilateral
4.	Mr. Lila Hanitra Ratsifandrihamanana, Foreign Minister	2001	Bilateral
5.	Mr. Marcel Ranjeva, Foreign Minister	2005	Bilateral discussions
6.	Chief of Staff to the President	Feb 2006	Bilateral
7.	Mr. Marius Ratolojanahary, Minister for Agriculture	Jul 2007	Bilateral discussions on Agricultural matters
8.	Mr. Ivohasina Razafimahefa, Minister for Economy, Commerce and Industry; and Mr. Marius Ratolojanahary, Minister for Agriculture	Mar 2008	To participate in CII organized India Africa Project Partnership Conclave
9.	Mr. Marius Ratolojanahary, Minister for Agriculture	Nov 2008	To sign LOC Agreement with EXIM Bank
10.	Mr. Pierrot J. Rajaonarivelo, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Nov 2012	To participate in the IOR-ARC Ministerial Meeting. Also met MoC Mrs. D. Purandeshwari
11.	Prof (Mr.) Mamy Lalatiana Andriamanarivo, Health Minister	Aug 2015	To attend Global Health Ministers Conference in New

			Delhi
12.	President Hery Rajaonarimampianina	Oct 2015	Led a 17-member delegation to New Delhi to participate in the 3rd IAFS. The delegation, among others included, Spouse of the President, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Industry and Private Sector Development. President and Foreign Minister had bilateral meetings with both PM and EAM where subjects of mutual interests were discussed.
13.	Minister of Transport and Meteorology Mr. Benjamina Ramarcel Ramanantsoa	Mar 2017	12th CII-Exim Bank on India-Africa Project Partnership, New Delhi
14.	Minister of Trade and Consumer Affairs Mr. Tazafy Armand	April 2017	3rd Global Exhibition on Services, Greater Noida
15.	Minister of Finance and Budget Mr. Rakotoarimanana Francois Marie Maurice Gervais  Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Mr. Rivo Rakotovoao	May 2017	52nd Annual African Development Bank meeting, Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat
16.	International Solar Alliance Summit meeting in India - Madagascar represented by Energy Minister Mr. Lantoniana Rasoloelison	March 2018	First International Summit of the Solar Alliance in New Delhi.
17.	Minister of Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Mr. Roland Ravatomanga	Sept-Oct 2018	Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention (MGISC)
18.	Ministry of National Defence - Lt.Col Antilahy Louis Herve, Deputy Commandant of Support Regiment and Lt.Col Ralaikoa Martin Raymond, Deputy Head of Department of Domain of the General Staff of the Malagasy Army	18-27 March, 2019	<b>Multinational India-Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)</b> conducted by the Indian Army in <b>Pune, Maharashtra.</b>
19.	6-member delegation i) Mrs. Saolimananalintsoa Nelly Florence Marie de la Salette ii) Mr. Raharison Tahina Solofoniaina iii) Mrs. Ralalarinanana Herivololona iv) Mrs. Ratovo Olitina v) Mr. Randrianantenaina Fenehery Rarivaorivelo vi) Rakotoson Raymamy Sitraka	28 Aug to 14 Sept, 2019	CoP-14 Summit meeting in New Delhi

20.	Vaohavy Andriambelonarivo Andasy, Navy Chief of Madagascar visited India	11-14 June, 2019	To take part in the Maritime Symposium at Regional Maritime Fusion Centre, Gurgaon, and had discussions with Indian Navy Chief.
21.	H.E.Major General Léon Jean Richard RAKOTONIRINA Minister of National Defence Republic of Madagascar and delegation	4-6 February, 2020	To participate in the DefExpo- 2020 and India-Africa Defence Ministers' Conclave
22.	A 4-member delegation led by H.E.Major General Léon Jean Richard RAKOTONIRINA, Minister of National Defence, Republic of Madagascar	3-5 Feb, 2021	To participate in the Aero India 2021 and IOR Defence Ministers Conclave at Yelahanka, Bengaluru
<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Name of the Visitor</b>	<b>Date of visit</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
1.	Shri P.A. Sangma, Minister of State for Commerce	1985	Bilateral
2.	Shri Hari Kishore Singh, External Affairs Minister	1990	Bilateral
3.	Shri Santhosh Kumar Gangwar, MoS(Finance)	Oct 2016	PM's Africa Outreach Programme. Called on Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Industry, Trade etc
4.	Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Hon'ble President of India	14-15 March, 2018	State visit.

### **Indian Naval Ship visits from India**

**Ship Visits:** Indian naval ships have been making goodwill visits to Madagascar ports for many years. In recent times the visits were as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>No of Ships visited</b>	<b>Ship Visit</b>
2006	One	INS "Mumbai" - A Four Day Goodwill Visit To Toamasina port
2007	One	ICGS "Samar" – visit to Diego Suarez Port port
2008	One	INS "Talwar" – a four day visit to Diego Suarez port
2014	Four	INS "Mumbai", INS "Talwar", INS "Teg" and INS "Deepak" – visit to Antsiranana port

<b>Year</b>	<b>No of Ships visited</b>	<b>Ship Visit</b>
2016	One	ICGS "Samarth" - visit to Antsiranana port
2018	Four	INS "Trikanth" and INS "Mumbai" - visited the port of Antsiranana  And  INS "Tarkash" and INS "Kolkata" - visited port of Toamasina
2019	Five	INS "Tir", INS "Shardul", INS "Sujata" and ICGS "Sarathi" - visited the port of Antsiranana  And  ICGS "Vikram" - visited the port of Toamasina
2020	Three	INS "Airavat" – visited the port of Antsiranana as part of Operation 'Vanilla' to distribute the humanitarian and relief assistance from Government of India to the flood-affected regions of the northern region of Madagascar. The relief assistance included clothes, essential food items and consumables, medicines, clothes etc. On the occasion, Prime Minister Natsy Christian himself arrived at Antsiranana to receive the relief material from Government of India on 1 February, 2020. In a handwritten message he expressed his gratitude to the Government and people of India after receiving the relief material from the Ambassador.
		INS Shardul visited the port of Antsiranana from 10-14 March, 2020. During the visit, 600 tonnes of rice was offloaded from the ship as human disaster and relief assistance (HADR) to Madagascar from India for help in dealing with the situation arisen due to the heavy floods in the Northern region of Madagascar. On the occasion, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Madagascar, Dr. Tehindrazanarivelo Djacoba received the consignment at a ceremony organised in Diego on 12 March, 2020. President Rajoelina also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the help and support of India to the flood victims in Madagascar.
		INS Kesari visited the port of Antsiranana from 26-28 May, 2020 to deliver the consignment of medicines meant for treatment of Covid-19 as per the request received from the Malagasy side.

Year	No of Ships visited	Ship Visit
2021	Two	INS Jalashwa visited the port of Antsiranana from 12-13 Mar, 2021 to disembark the 5-member Indian Navy Mobile Training Team to train the Malagasy Special Forces. The team imparted 14-days training to 50 trainees from the Malagasy side, before returning onboard INS Jalashwa on 30 Mar, 2021. From 22-25 Mar, 2021 INS Jalashwa visited the port of Ehoala to deliver the donation of 1000 MT of rice and 100,000 tablets of Hydroxychloroquine from Government of India to the people of southern Madagascar who are struggling with severe drought and famine situation. The formal handing over ceremony of the donations was held on 23 Mar, 2021 and the Malagasy Prime Minister, H.E. Mr. Christian Ntsay received the donation on behalf of the Malagasy government, from Ambassador Abhay Kumar.
		INS Shardul visited the port of Antsiraana from 21-24 Mar, 2021 and during their stay for the first time in the history of defence relations between India and Madagascar, a joint-patrolling of the Malagasy Exclusive Economic Zone and the PASSEX was done by INS Shardul and the Malagasy Naval Ship Trozona on Mar 24, 2021 immediately before return of INS Shardul to India.

**Goa Maritime Symposium:** Two senior Malagasy Naval officers participated in the online video conference of Goa Maritime Symposium from 11-13 May 2021.

**Bilateral Developmental Cooperation:** Government of India had extended a concessional Line of Credit of US\$ 25 million to Madagascar for raising productivity of rice and setting up of fertilizer plants. The then Malagasy Minister of Agriculture signed an agreement in this regard in New Delhi in 2008 with EXIM Bank of India. The implementation of project was delayed due to political and economic situation in the country. An additional LOC of US\$ 2.5 million to complete implementing the US\$ 25 million LOC project, was approved by Government of India in February 2017 however was not utilized. An additional line of credit of \$ 80.72 million has been approved by the Government of India for the development of irrigation, food processing projects and farm mechanization in four regions of Madagascar. A revised enhanced request for the Line of Credit is under consideration with the Government of India.

### **High Level Engagement**

A meeting was held between the Ambassador and a team from the Embassy with Prime Minister Christian Ntsay along with his 15 Cabinet Ministers, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of National Defence, Minister of Justice, Minister of Public

Health, Minister of Water, Sanitation & Hygiene, Minister of Mines, Minister of Transport and Tourism, Minister of Labour and Employment, Minister of Higher Education, Minister of Trade & Industry, Minister of Environment, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Vice-Minister of Town-planning and Housing, Secretary General of the Ministry of Communications and Culture and other high-level officials, on 29 October, 2020 to review the bilateral relations between India and Madagascar.

**Centre for Geo-informatics Applications in Rural Development (CGARD):** As a follow up to the IAFS II (2012) decision to set up capacity building institutions in Africa, an MoU was signed on 29 February 2016 between India and Madagascar for setting up of a Centre for Geo-informatics Applications in Rural Development (CGARD) in Antananarivo. The Centre was jointly inaugurated by Hon'ble Rashtrapati and the Malagasy President on 14 March, 2018 and the Centre is presently functional. Following the request from the Malagasy side, the MoU was extended till March 2021. The two Indian Scientists deployed at the Centre have completed their work. The Centre will continue to function under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture of Madagascar.

**International Solar Alliance:** Madagascar has signed the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement in Marrakech, Morocco in November 2016 and has ratified the instrument on 12 February 2018. Madagascar was represented at the Ministerial level at the Founding Conference of the ISA on 11 March 2018. A Malagasy delegation participated in the First General Assembly meeting of the ISA held in New Delhi from 2-5 October, 2018. At the First General Assembly meeting of ISA in New Delhi on 3 October, 2018, an amendment to the 'Framework Agreement' was introduced which was meant to grant 'Partner Country' status to the countries which fall outside the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, but are members of the UN and are willing and able to contribute to the objectives and activities provided in the Framework Agreement. The ratification of the proposed amendment to the Framework Agreement was taken up with the Malagasy side and they have expressed their agreement with the spirit of the Amendment of the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

**Cooperation in defence sector:** India and Madagascar signed an MoU for Defence Cooperation in March 2018 during the visit of the Hon'ble Rashtrapati to Madagascar and several bilateral cooperation projects in the area of defence are under discussions between the two countries. A 5-member Indian Navy Mobile Training Team successfully concluded its 15-days training session in March 2021 at Antsiranana with 50 trainees from the Malagasy special forces. Indian Naval ship Shardul and Malagasy Naval Ship Trozona together undertook the first ever Joint Patrolling in Madagascar's EEZ on 24 March, 2021.

**Aid Assistance:** The Government of India provided cash assistance of US\$100,000/- to Madagascar as disaster relief for damages caused due to the tropical cyclone 'Haruna' in early 2013. The Government of India provided cash relief assistance of US\$200,000/- in April 2015 for the victims of cyclone Chedza of January 2015. A cash grant of US\$ 2 million was handed over to the BNGRC (Natural Disaster Management Agency of Madagascar) as per the announcement made by Hon'ble Rashtrapati on 14 March 2018. A donation of 1000 Metric Tonnes of Rice and consignment of approximately 100 tonnes of medicines for

the drought victims of Southern Madagascar, ENAWO cyclone and Plague epidemic were given by Govt of India. Computers, office equipment and furniture were also given to the Malagasy Senate in April 2018 as GoI assistance. During 'Operation Vanilla' donation of relief material from Government of India on 1 February, 2020 for the flood-affected regions of the northern region of Madagascar. Donation of 600 tonnes of rice in March, 2020 as human disaster and relief assistance (HADR) to Madagascar for help in dealing with the situation arisen due to the heavy floods in the Northern region of Madagascar. Donation of a consignment of medicines in May 2020 meant for treatment of Covid-19 as per the request received from the Malagasy side.

**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 offered under ITEC and India Africa Forum Summit Scholarships, which has been widely appreciated by the local population. On the request of the Malagasy Armed Forces the Ministry enhanced the slots from two to twenty.

The utilization of the above scholarships are as per the detailed chart below:

N o	Scholarship	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-2020		2020-21	
		Allotted	Utilized	Allotted	Utilized	Allotted	Utilized	Allotted	Utilized	Allotted	Utilized
1.	ITEC	50	66	70	80	80	97	107	60	107	0
2.	IAFS	-	17	-	29		19	--	-	-	-
3.	CV Raman	1	1	1	1		0	--	-	-	-
4.	FSI Course	-	01	01	01	01	01	01	-	-	-
5.	ICCR	12	17	12	3	12	10	12	7	23	23

In addition to the above, 2 Malagasy journalists participated in the training programme for Young Journalists from Africa during 13-27 September 2014 in New Delhi; organized by the XP Division, Ministry of External Affairs. Also, 2 Malagasy journalists participated in a familiarization programme under the hospitality of the XP Division of the Ministry of External Affairs in August 2018. A journalist from Midi-Madagascar newspaper visited India under the Familiarisation Visit of the Journalists from Africa to India on 17-24 March, 2019 which coincided with 14<sup>th</sup> CII-Exim Bank Conclave.

### **ICCR & ITEC Scholarships**

For the academic year 2020-21, 23 Malagasy students have been admitted through ICCR Scholarships to pursue their studies in various premier Indian universities such as Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University, National Forensic Science University, Gujarat Technological University and Andhra University in bachelor and masters courses. This is more than double the number of ICCR scholarships offered than in 2019-2020 and an all time high in the number of scholarships offered to Madagascar annually since 2014. Many Malagasy students have pursued their studies in India till date. These include 81

Malagasy students who have benefited from ICCR scholarships since 2014 and about 100 Malagasy students are studying in India on self financing scheme. About 854 young Malagasy professionals between the ages of 25-45 have also benefited from ITEC scholarships so far since 2007.

Madagascar was a beneficiary of the Pan African e-network project. Tele-education facilities offered in collaboration with Imailaka University have benefitted 228 students since the start of the project. In all, 109 telemedicine consultations have been arranged since beginning of the project and twelve patients have undergone treatment in India using the tele-medicine facility of the project.

An Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) Team visited Madagascar to conduct a 5-day workshop from February 24-28 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). Similarly workshop on “International Business Diplomacy” for Malagasy public servants was again held from 16-20 April, 2018 by a 3-member team of IIFT senior professors, which was well appreciated by the Malagasy side.

### **Indian investments**

Most Indian Investors are in trading but some of them are also in the manufacturing, real estate and other assorted businesses. 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. Airtel bought Zain Madagascar mobile and internet service in June 2010. Tirupati Carbons & Chemicals (P) Ltd was granted licence to set up a Graphite processing facility in Brickaville in December 2015 and they have started operations in March 2019. M/s.Tata Sons Ltd has also made minor investment in mining sector.

### **Bilateral Trade**

Being a Least Developed Country, Madagascar is a beneficiary of India’s Duty Free Preferential Tariff Scheme. Bilateral trade almost doubled since 2014 - from US\$262.48 mn in 2014-15 to US\$489.49 mn in 2018-19. Economic events gained momentum since 2016 with the organizing of Make in India event. Economic activity was slow pre-2014 as there was also political turbulence. The bilateral trade figures for the last five years are as follows:

*In millions and in US\$*

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 (Apr-Feb)
India’s Export	167.19	197.05	213.70	228.11	196.38	301.73	303.03
India’s Import	95.29	141.74	119.82	167.67	293.11	119.24	70.51
Total Trade	262.48	338.78	333.51	395.78	489.49	420.97	373.54

*Source:DGFT*

**Main Items of Import and Export:** The main items of exports from Madagascar to India are coffee, tea, mate, spices, edible vegetables and certain roots, salt, sulphur, earth and stones, plastering materials, essential oil and resinoids, perfumery, cosmetics or toilet preparations etc. The major imports from India are cereals, pharmaceutical products, mineral fuels, mineral oils and their products of distillation, bituminous substances, mineral waxes, cotton, nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances, vehicles other than railway or tramway rolling stock, plastics and articles thereof, sugars and sugar confectionary etc.

## **Culture**

**Indian Community/Diaspora:** There are about 17,500 persons of Indian origin in Madagascar including approximately 2500 NRIs holding Indian passports. Most of them are in trading but some of them are also in the manufacturing and other businesses. Indian origin population constitutes less than 1% of the total population of approx. 25 million. In recent years a number of Indian professionals have been working in different companies, including multi-national companies in Madagascar. 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.

**International Day of Yoga (IDY) :** The Mission successfully celebrated six editions of International Day of Yoga – the inaugural edition on 21 June 2015; the second and the third editions on 18 June 2016 & 2017, the fourth edition on 21 June, 2018, fifth edition on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2019 and the sixth edition on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020. There was appreciable increase in the participation by the Malagasy community in addition to international community present in Antananarivo. This year the IDY was celebrated online due to COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Mission initiatives**

A commemorative stamp on Mahatma Gandhi was issued by Madagascar Post on 2nd October 2019, which was unveiled by Mr. Andry Rajoelina, President of Madagascar.

The Mission celebrated the 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Devji in 2019. The event was attended by members of Indian diaspora from different sects and religions.

To mark the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the Mission organised a display of pictures / photographs on the life events of Bapu at the La City Centre in Antananarivo from 2 to 12 October, 2018. An LED projection of a slide-show on life events of Mahatma Gandhi was also organised by the Mission on Group Sipromad Tower on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2018. An exhibition of photographs on Gandhi ji's life events was held at Fort Dauphin in collaboration with the Anosy Chamber of Commerce on 25

November, 2018. A 13-member delegation from Madagascar participated in the Surajkund Mela from 1-16 February, 2020 in India.

The grand finale of the celebrations of the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was celebrated with inauguration of a 8kW Solar Power Plant at the Embassy building by the Malagasy Prime Minister Christian Ntsay and Ambassador Abhay Kumar. Indian Embassy in Madagascar became the first Indian Embassy to go solar.

A Gandhi Katha “The Oceanic Gandhi” by Prof. Makarand Paranjape was also organised on this occasion. The Mission organised an online conversation with violin maestro Dr. L. Subramaniam and well known singer, Kavita Krishnamurti on 19 October, 2020.

The Mission celebrated the 72nd Republic Day of India on 26 January, 2021. During the morning celebration, Ambassador unfurled the National Flag and read out the excerpts from the Hon’ble Rashtrapatiji’s address to the nation. A reception was also hosted by the Ambassador in the evening of 26 Jan, 2021 in which the Minister of National Defence of Madagascar H.E. General Richard Rakotonirina, was the Chief Guest. Minister of Posts, Telecommunications and Digital Development, Minister of Environment & Sustainable Development, President of the Senate, members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of international organisations based in Madagascar, and prominent members of the Indian diaspora in Madagascar were among others also attended the reception. President Andry Rajoelina sent a congratulatory tweet on the occasion saying: “My warmest congratulations to the people of India on the 72nd Republic Day. On this occasion, I wish President @rashtrapatibhvn and Prime Minister @narendramodi continued peace, progress and prosperity.” Foreign Minister Liva Djacoba Tehindrazanarivelo also congratulated: “My warmest congratulations to the people and Government of India on the 72nd Republic Day. On this occasion, I wish India and her people continued peace, progress and prosperity.” The event was widely covered in the local print and visual media in Madagascar.

A street library was inaugurated at the Embassy of India Antananarivo on 21st January 2021 by the Minister of Communication and Culture of the Government of the Republic of Madagascar Mrs. Andriantogarivo Rakotondrazafy Lalatiana Lalatiana and Ambassador Abhay Kumar.

The Mission organised the 10th edition of its monthly literary programme La Lit Tana on 22 January, 2021, after an interval of several months due to COVID-19 pandemic. 11<sup>th</sup> Edition of La Lit Tana was organized on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

The Mission organised a special exhibition on Indian Diaspora in Madagascar on 27 March, 2021 at the Chancery. The exhibition was inaugurated by H. E. Christian Ntsay, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Madagascar in presence of Foreign Minister Tehindra Zanarivelo Oliva and Ambassador Abhay Kumar. People from the Indian state of Gujarat who sailed across the Indian Ocean in dhows to Madagascar and today number around 17 500 inhabiting in almost every part of Madagascar. They play a crucial role in its society and economy. Prime Minister of Madagascar, H.E. Mr. Christian Ntsay inaugurated the

exhibition and the gathering was addressed by him, the Foreign Minister of Madagascar and Ambassador Abhay Kumar.

**Festival of India in Madagascar:** The first ever Festival of India in Madagascar (sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, Sangeet Natak Academy and ITDC) was organized in Antananarivo in 2015. The inaugural show was held with a scintillating fusion dance performance by Nrityarupa dance troupe from SNA. This was followed by a Bhangra dance performances and Mehendi Art show (9-12 October at Antananarivo & Toamasina), Food Festival of India (9-15 November at Antananarivo) and Gujarati Folk Dance performances (25-30 November at Antananarivo and Mahajanga). The events received overwhelming response from the local NRI/PIO community as well as diplomatic corps, Government dignitaries, businessmen, professionals and artists. A 2<sup>nd</sup> Festival of India in Madagascar is soon scheduled to be organised and the dates and programme for it are being worked out.

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### **Resources:**

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