

## **Brief on India-The Gambia Relations**

### **Political Relations**

India established diplomatic relations with The Gambia in 1965, soon after its independence from the United Kingdom. India and The Gambia share warm and friendly relations. Former Deputy Minister for External Affairs, Shri Dinesh Singh, visited Banjul to participate in the Independence celebrations of The Gambia on 6 February 1965. The Gambia's resident High Commission in New Delhi was inaugurated in February 2009. The Indian Embassy in Dakar (Senegal) is concurrently accredited to The Gambia. In the initial decades of The Gambia's independence, the bilateral engagement was limited to capacity building and training programmes from Indian side. However, in the recent years, bilateral relations have witnessed a greater engagement and momentum.

### **Visits from The Gambia**

Vice President of The Gambia Mr. Muhammad B.S. Jallow led a high-powered delegation comprising of 3 Ministers (Trade & Industry, Tourism & Culture, Transport works & Infrastructure) to participate in the 19<sup>th</sup> CII India-Africa Business Conclave, held in New Delhi from 20-22 August 2024.

Vice President of The Gambia Mr. Muhammad B.S. Jallow led a high-powered delegation comprising of 5 Ministers (Trade & Industry, Petroleum & Energy, Communications & Digital Economy, Tourism & Culture, Transport works & Infrastructure) to participate in the 18<sup>th</sup> CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Growth Partnership, held in New Delhi from 14-16 June 2023.

Vice President of The Gambia Mr. Badara A. Joof led a high-powered 28-member delegation comprising of 4 Ministers (Finance, Health, Petroleum, and Public Service) to India from 18-23 July 2022 to participate in the 17<sup>th</sup> CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Growth Partnership, held in New Delhi from 19-20 July 2022. During the visit, Vice President Badara had a brief joint meeting with Vice President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu. In addition, Minister of State for External Affairs Shri V. Muraleedharan and Secretary, Department of

Administrative Reforms and Personnel Grievances (DARPG) Shri V. Srinivas called on Vice President Badara and discussed issues of mutual interest.

A delegation led by the Vice President of The Gambia Ms. Isatou Njie-Saidy participated in the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III), held in New Delhi from 26-29 October 2015.

### **Other Ministerial Visits/ Meetings**

Minister of Defence of The Gambia Mr. Sering Modou Njie and Ms. Rohie Bittaye-Darboe, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence participated in the AERO INDIA 2025 at Bengaluru from 10-14 February 2025.

Dr. Mamadou Tangara, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad of The Gambia participated in the Foreign Minister's Session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Voice of Global South Summit held virtually on 17 November 2023.

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Rajkumar Ranjan Singh met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of The Gambia Dr. Mamadou Tangara on the sidelines of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries at Doha, Qatar on 6 March 2023.

Prof Pierre Gomez, Minister of Higher Education of The Gambia participated in the Education Session of the Voice of Global South Summit held virtually on 13 January 2023.

Minister of Defence of The Gambia Mr. Sering Modou Njie and Chief of Defence Staff Lt. Gen. Yakuba Drammeh participated in the 12<sup>th</sup> DefEXpo and 2<sup>nd</sup> India-Africa Defence Dialogue at Gandhinagar from 18-22 October 2022.

Dr. Mamadou Tangara, The Gambian Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad met EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar and also addressed the UNGA side event titled "India@75: Showcasing the India-UN Partnership in Action" on 24 September 2022.

The Gambian Minister of Defence Mr. Sheik Omar Faye visited India to participate in DEFEXPO 2020 held in Lucknow, from 5-8 February 2020 and the India-Africa Defence Ministers Meet on the margins of the DefExpo.

Dr. Mamadou Tangara, The Gambian Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad visited India from 7-12 March 2019. Minister Dr. Tangara held a meeting with External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, in New Delhi on 7 March 2019. An MoU with FSI (on Foreign Service training) was signed.

The Gambian Minister of Petroleum & Energy, Mr. Fafa SANYANG participated in ISA Founding Conference in New Delhi in March 2018, the First ISA Assembly and 2nd Re-Invest in New Delhi in October 2018 and 2nd General Assembly Meeting in New Delhi in Oct 2019.

### **Visits/Meetings from India**

Hon'ble President Ram Nath Kovind paid the first ever State Visit to The Gambia from 30 July – 1 August 2019. During the visit, Hon'ble President reiterated India's commitment to support Gambia's development.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi met President Barrow on sidelines of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in London in April 2018.

### **Other Ministerial Visits/ Meetings**

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri V. Muraleedharan paid an official visit to The Gambia from 1-2 November 2021. During the visit, a Framework Agreement on cooperation (*for institutionalization of Joint Commission Meetings*) and a visa waiver agreement for diplomatic/official passport holders were signed. The re-purposing, of the grant assistance of US\$ 500,000 extended during the visit of Hon'ble President of India, for purchase of dialysis machines was also announced.

### **Bilateral Institutional Mechanisms**

**Joint Commission Meeting (JCM):** The Agreement to form a bilateral JCM was signed in November 2021.

**Foreign Office Consultation (FOC):** Both countries have signed a Protocol for Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) in August 2010.

## **Economic and Commercial Relations**

The bilateral trade between the two countries has been growing steadily, and registered at US\$ 168 million in 2020-21, US\$ 197 million in 2021-22, US\$ 173.75 million in 2022-23 and US\$ 217.36 in 2023-24.

### **Bilateral Trade**

*Value in Million US\$*

<b>Year</b>	<b>India's Export</b>	<b>India's Import</b>	<b>Total Trade</b>	<b>Balance of Trade</b>
2019-20	132.33	39.65	171.98	92.68
2020-21	121.59	38.41	160.00	83.18
2021-22	153.27	43.49	196.76	109.78
2022-23	122.60	51.15	173.75	71.45
2023-24	175.95	41.41	217.36	134.54
2024-25 (Apr- Dec)	94.61	41.96	136.57	52.65

*Source: Export Import Database, Department of Commerce, Government of India*

## **Development Partnership**

### **Lines of Credit (LOCs)**

The Gambia, being an LDC country, has been a recipient of India's development assistance. India has extended 8 concessional Lines of Credit worth **US\$ 114.45 mn** [including 2 LOCs extended through ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)] to the Government of The Gambia for developmental projects in the fields of agriculture, construction, water and power, all of which have been completed. This includes the iconic National Assembly Building Complex in Banjul.

## **Grants**

Under IAFS-I Scheme, a Vocational Training Center (VTC) cum Incubation Center (IC) was set up in Banjul with a full grant from GoI and handed over to The Gambian authorities in September 2017.

A grant of USD 500,000 was announced during the Hon. President's visit to The Gambia in July 2019 for a Skill development and cottage industry project. In September 2021, Gambia requested for change in purpose to utilize the grant amount of USD 500,000 for buying dialysis machines for use at various hospitals in The Gambia. Forty dialysis machines (costing apprx. Rs. 3.3 cr) were procured by the Ministry and were handed over to the Ministry of Health, Govt of Gambia on 16 March 2024 at Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital in Banjul. The machines have been installed and are functioning since 11 December 2024.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, India donated a large quantity of medicines to the Republic of the Gambia. Gambian Foreign Minister Dr. Tangara took over the donation and thanked profusely for the generous support. In March 2021, India also provided 36,000 doses of Made-in-India Covid-19 Vaccine to The Gambia under the COVAX facility.

National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) of the Gambia, in partnership with UNESCO Regional Office for West Africa, Sahel, secured funding of US\$ 0.9 million from the India-UN Development Partnership Fund to implement a project on the "Using of Drones and Early Warning system for Pre and Post-Floods Disaster Management in The Gambia. The project was implemented in November 2021

## **ITEC and other training programmes**

Under the ITEC Civilian programme, The Gambia has been allotted 60 slots and 15 slots have been allocated under the ITEC Defence programme for 2023-24. Under ICCR scholarships for long-term UG/PG/Ph.D courses, The Gambia has been allocated 33 slots.

The Gambia had signed an MoU for participation in the e-VBAB Network Project in March 2020. Since then, 246 scholarships have been awarded to Gambian students for pursuing online UG/PG/Diploma courses under e-VBAB.

Three batches of Gambian diplomats have undergone training at the SSIFS, New Delhi (latest being in June 2024).

Five batches of senior civil servants have participated in public policy courses at the National Centre of Good Governance (latest being in Feb/March 2025).

### **Culture/People-to-People**

President Adama Barrow of The Gambia, on India's request, had written an anthology on “What Gandhi Means to me” as part of the celebrations of 150th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

ICCR Bollywood troupe Dance Smith gave two performances in Banjul in January-February 2020.

Five young political leaders from different political parties participated in the 10th batch of the Gen-Next Democracy Program organised by ICCR from 15-24 May 2023.

A 19-member cultural troupe from The Gambia participated in the 37<sup>th</sup> Surajkund International Crafts Mela from 3-18 Feb 2024.

The approximate number of Indian nationals in Gambia is 1600. They are mostly engaged in trading and private businesses including in construction sector.

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