

India-Comoros Unclassified Bilateral Brief

Comoros is an archipelagic country strategically located in the Mozambique Channel in the Indian Ocean between Madagascar and Mozambique. 98% of population of Comoros follow Shafi'i school of Sunni Islam. The commonly used languages are Shikomoro (Swahili dialect), French and Arabic.

2. India established diplomatic relations with Comoros in June 1976 and the Embassy of India in Antananarivo is concurrently accredited to Comoros. India and Comoros enjoy close and friendly relations. Both countries share similar views on several regional and multilateral issues of importance. Comoros has been a member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) since 2012 and of the International Solar Alliance since 2017.

3. President of Comoros H.E. Mr. Azali Assoumani took part in the G-20 Summit held in New Delhi on 9-10 September 2023, in his capacity as the then President of the African Union. He sent a video message for the 2nd edition of Voice of the Global South Summit chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in the virtual format on 17 November 2023. He also took part in the virtual G-20 Summit under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Modi on 22 November 2023. Minister of Interior and Acting Foreign Minister of Comoros H.E. Mr. Fakridine Mahamoud took part in the Foreign Ministers' session of the 3rd Voice of the Global South Summit chaired by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar in the virtual format on 17 August 2024.

4. The then Foreign Minister of Comoros H.E. Mr. Dhoihir Dhoulkamal visited New Delhi from 1-3 March 2023 to take part in the G-20 Foreign Ministers Meeting and had a bilateral meeting with External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar. He also took part in the 7th Indian Ocean Conference held in Perth (Australia) on 9-10 February 2024. The then Minister of Economy and Industry of Comoros H.E. Mr. Ahmed Ali Bazi attended the G-20 Development Ministers Meeting from 11-13 June 2023 in Varanasi.

5. External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar called on President Azali Assoumani on the sidelines of 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 20 September 2022. President Azali

Assoumani appreciated India's medical assistance to Comoros in its fight against Covid-19 and dengue. They also discussed issues of cooperation in maritime security and development partnership.

6. 12 diplomats from Comoros took part in the 1st Special Course for diplomats of the Indian Ocean Region at Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, New Delhi (SSIFS) from 20 September - 01 October 2021. One diplomat from Comoros attended the 69th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) from 03-28 October 2022 at SSIFS.

7. Hon'ble EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar had a telephonic conversation with the Comorian Foreign Minister in April 2020 following which a 14 member Indian medical assistance team was sent to Comoros to help in the fight against Covid-19 and Dengue.

8. The then Vice-President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu paid an official visit to Comoros from 10-12 October 2019, during which 6 MoUs were signed:

- i. MoU on Exemption of Visa Diplomatic and Official / Service Passport Holders
- ii. MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Arts & Culture
- iii. MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Defence
- iv. MoU for Cooperation in the Field of Health & Medicine
- v. Protocol for Consultations between India and Comoros
- vi. MoU for Participation in the e-VBAB Network Project

Following announcements for grants were also made during the visit of the Hon'ble Vice-President of India to Comoros:

- i. Medicines and medical equipment worth US\$ 1 mn.
- ii. Transport vehicles worth US\$ 1 mn
- iii. Interceptor Boats worth US\$ 2 mn
- iv. Supply of 1000 MT of rice. (*Delivered in March 2021 during the visit of INS Jalashwa to Comoros. Foreign Minister Dhoihir Dhoulkamal received the consignment on behalf of Govt. of Comoros.*)

9. President of the Union of Comoros, H.E. Mr. Azali Assoumani led a Comorian delegation to participate in the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance in New Delhi in March 2018.

10. The then Minister of State for Science & Technology, Mr. Y.S. Chowdhary visited Comoros as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India in August 2015.

Trade-Economic Cooperation

11. Comoros as one of the Least Developed Countries, benefits from GoI's Duty Free Tariff Preference scheme since April 2008. The total export and import figures of India with respect to Comoros for the last five years are given below:

in US \$ million

FY	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
India's Export	18.88	18.26	23.05	39.83	27.95
India's Import	19.65	12.48	14.87	16.11	18.65
Total Trade	38.52	30.74	37.91	55.93	46.60

Source: DGFT

12. Top commodities of import from Comoros to India are cloves, iron and steel, copper, aluminum etc. and the top commodities of export from India to Comoros are rice, meat, cotton, sugar, textiles etc.

Developmental Partnership

13. Mr. Hassane Ahamada Mohamed Hassane, Deputy Director General and Mrs. Ali Mohamed Naifata, Financial Governance Monitoring Officer of the Ministry of Finance of Comoros attended the ITEC Executive programme "Global Trends in Building Infrastructure for Development" held at IIM Indore from 28 April – 11 May 2024.

14. Technical Adviser to the Director General of Civil Security (DGCS) Mr. Samil Chakira and Deputy Director of Resources, DGCS Mr. Ali Abdoukader took part in a Workshop titled "Strengthening Capacity of Power Sector Practitioners in the Indo-Pacific Region" organized at CDRI, New Delhi from 4 -7 June 2024, under Quad Infrastructure Coordination Group.

15. India offers a number of ITEC slots and ICCR scholarships to Comoros under its developmental partnership. As on date, total slots availed by Comoros are:

- i. ICCR: 53*
- ii. ITEC: 98*
- iii. IAFS-III: 29*
- iv. Ilearn portal: 2*

16. In December 2012, Government of India provided US\$ 100,000 as assistance to Comoros for losses suffered on account of torrential rains in April 2012.

17. In response to the requests received from the Government of Comoros for supply of medicines to deal with situation of Dengue and Covid-19, a 14-member Indian Medical Assistance Team visited Comoros on board INS Kesari from 1-18 June 2020. A consignment of medicines as relief assistance was also donated to Comoros. India donated Anti TB Drugs to Comoros in July 2022 under NTEP (National Tuberculosis Elimination Program).

18. INS Jalashwa visited the port of Anjouan in Comoros from 14-18 March 2021 to deliver 1000 MT of rice in fulfilment of the announcement of donation of rice made during the visit of the Hon'ble Vice-President of India to Comoros in Oct 2019. The consignment of rice was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Comoros, H.E. Mr. Dhoihir Dhoulkamal.

19. EXIM Bank of India had offered a concessional credit of US\$41.6 million for setting up a heavy fuel oil power plant in Moroni and the foundation stone for the project was laid in July 2015. A consortium of BHEL and "Overseas Infrastructure Alliance" are the contractors of the project.

Culture

20. An Indian Contemporary Dance Group sponsored by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) performed at the Comorian National Assembly Hall in Moroni on 28 August 2018. The event was attended by the President Comoros, First Lady, Foreign Minister, Speaker of the National Assembly and other dignitaries. One Comorian national participated in Kumbh Mela celebrations in India in March 2019. 12 artists from Comoros took part in the Surajkund International Crafts Mela in Haryana from 2-18 February 2024. 10th International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Moroni on 14 June 2024.

Indian Diaspora

21. The Indian Diaspora comprises of around 250 persons and most of them are engaged in trading, business and other professions. Their role in the economic development of Comoros is well appreciated.

ANNEXURE-1

Bilateral Visits from Comoros to India

Sl. No.	Name of the Visitor	Date of visit	Purpose
1.	Mr. Souef Mohamed El-Amine, Minister of External Relations & Cooperation	August 2004	Bilateral visit
2.	Mr. Ahmed Ben Said Djaffer, Minister of External Relations & Cooperation	July 2006	Bilateral visit
3.	Mr. Ahmed Abdullah Mohamed Sambi, President of Comoros	November 2007	4th International Conference on Federalism.
4.	Mr. Fahmi Said Ibrahim, Minister of External Relations & Cooperation	February 2011	India- LDCs Ministerial Conference, New Delhi
5.	Mr. Mohamed Issimail, Minister for National Education	March 2012	India-Africa Science & Technology Ministerial Meeting, New Delhi
6.	Mr. Mohamed Bakri Ben Abdoulafatah Charif, Minister of External Relations & Cooperation	November 2012	Meeting of Council of Ministers of Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), Gurugram
7.	Mr. Mohamed Ali Soilihi, Vice President in-charge of Finance Ministry	February 2013	Bilateral

8.	Mr. Mohamed Ali Soilihi, Vice President in-charge of Finance Ministry	October 2015	4th India-Africa Trade Ministers Meeting, New Delhi
9.	Dr. Ikililou Dhoinine, President of Comoros	October 2015	3 rd India-Africa Forum Summit. New Delhi
10.	H.E. Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of Comoros	March 2018	Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance, New Delhi.
11.	Mr. Abdou Moustadroine, Minister of Energy, Agriculture, Fisheries & Environment	October 2018	1st General Assembly of the International Solar Alliance, New Delhi
12.	Mr. Dhoiher Dhoulkamal, Minister of Foreign Affairs	February 2021	Aero India 2021 and IOR Defence Ministers Conclave, Bengaluru
13.	Mr. Moudjib Rahmane Adaine, Chief of Comorian Coast Guard	November 2021	Goa Maritime Conclave 2021
14.	Mr. Moudjib Rahmane Adaine, Chief of Comorian Coast Guard	February 2022	MILAN 2022, Visakhapatnam
15.	Mr. Moudjib Rahmane Adaine, Chief of Comorian Coast Guard	October 2022	Def Expo-2022 Gandhinagar (Gujarat).
16.	Col. Said Hamza, Technical Advisor to the Chief of Staff of the Comorian Army	February 2023	Aero India-2023, Bengaluru

17.	Mr. Dhohir Dhoulkamal, Foreign Minister	March 2023	G-20 Foreign Ministers Meeting, New Delhi.
18.	Lt-Col Kamali Ali, Chief of Land Force of Comoros	March 2023	Africa- India Exercise (AFINDEX), Pune.
19.	Mr. Ahmed Ali Bazi, Minister of Economy and Industry of Comoros	June 2023	G-20 Development Ministers Meeting, Varanasi.
20.	H.E. Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of the Union of the Comoros	September 2023	G-20 Summit, New Delhi
21.	H.E. Mr. Youssoufa Mohamad Ali, Delegate of Defence at the Presidency of Comoros (Defence Minister)	October 2023	4 th edition of Goa Maritime Conclave
22.	Lieutenant Siradji Chamsidine, Commander of the Moroni Naval Base	February 2024	MILAN 2024 Naval Exercise, Visakhapatnam

February 2025