

India – South Sudan Bilateral Relations

South Sudan was a part of Anglo-Egyptian administered Sudan from 1899 to 1955 under joint British-Egyptian rule. After two civil wars (1955-72 and 1983-2005), it became an autonomous region ("Southern Sudan" State) within Sudan.

2 India's position remained neutral in the long-running civil wars for autonomy of Southern Sudan. In 2005, a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed [ceremony *attended by the then Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahmed*] between the Government of Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Nairobi which led to the autonomy for the Southern part with a provision for South Sudanese referendum on independence in six years' time.

3. South Sudan gained independence from Sudan on 09 July 2011, following a referendum held in January, 2011. India was one of the first countries to recognize independent South Sudan and the then Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari attended the Independence Day celebrations in Juba on 9 July 2011. Indian Consulate in Juba (which was opened in October 2007) was upgraded to Embassy in March 2012. South Sudan also opened its Embassy at New Delhi in August 2012. South Sudan and India have always enjoyed cordial and friendly relations.

4. Following a civil war that started in December 2013, the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) was signed among the warring rivals in Addis Ababa on 12 September 2018. A transitional government of national unity (i.e. coalition of signatory political partners based on the power sharing formula envisaged in the Agreement) is in place at present since February 2020. The main mandate of the transitional government is to implement the R-ARCSS to hold election in December 2026 for a democratic transfer of power by February 2027.

Visits / Political Interactions

5. The then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met South Sudanese President H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit in New York in September 2011 on the side

lines of UNGA. Gen. (Rtd) V. K. Singh, Minister of State visited Juba in July 2015, as the then Special Envoy of Prime Minister to deliver invitations to South Sudanese President H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit and Foreign Minister Dr. Barnaba Marial Benjamin for participation in 3rd India Africa Forum Summit. He again visited Juba in July 2016 to coordinate and oversee evacuation of Indian nationals through 'Operation Sankat Mochan' when civil war was at its peak in South Sudan. Shri V. Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs visited Juba from 20-22 October 2021. The visit gave a fillip to India's bilateral cooperation with South Sudan.

6. From South Sudanese side, President H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit led a high-level delegation to attend the 3rd India Africa Summit (IAFS-III) in New Delhi in October 2015. A bilateral interaction of the President H.E. Kiir with PM Shri Narendra Modi was also held on 30 October 2015. In March 2016 and July 2022, H.E. Dr. James Wani Igga, Vice President for Economic Cluster of Ministries participated in the CII-EXIM Bank "India-Africa Growth Partnership" Conclaves, with large delegations. The Speaker of Transitional National Legislative Assembly Jemma Nunu Kumba led an 18-member delegation including Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mary Nawai Martin to New Delhi in April, 2023. There have been several other Ministerial-level visits from South Sudan to India, mainly to represent South Sudan in various conferences, EXPOs etc.

Bilateral Institutional Mechanisms/Agreements

7. An MoU on Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) was signed between the two countries on 22 February 2019 in New Delhi. Consultations are to be held on annual basis, alternatively in Juba and New Delhi at the level of Director General or equivalent.

Bilateral Trade

8. Main items of Indian imports from South Sudan are oil and timber, whereas India's exports to South Sudan mainly comprise consumer and household goods, food items, pharmaceuticals, motor cycles and three-wheelers. As the trade is mainly through third countries (Uganda, Kenya, UAE), precise data of the same are not available. Bilateral trade figures with South Sudan over the last seven years (as taken from website of the Department of Commerce), are as follows:

(In million US\$)

Year	India's Imports	Indian Exports	Total Trade
2016-17	0.18	3.24	3.42
2017-18	70.56	3.54	74.10
2018-19	89.97	10.53	100.50
2019-20	7.33	20.05	27.38
2020-21	1.59	24.98	26.57
2021-22	1.23	26.91	28.14
2022-23	1.13	32.31	33.44
2023-24	0.16	41.68	41.84

9. Though precise data is not available, some local companies do import pharmacy products directly from India. These are mostly concentrated in the capital city of Juba. South Sudan's global goods imports in 2022 were US\$938 million and exports accounted for approx US\$544 million. China, Uganda, UAE and Kenya are its major trading partners.

Economic and Commercial Relations

10. ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) has made an investment of about US\$ 2.0 billion (spread over Sudan and South Sudan) in the hydrocarbon sector since 2003.

11. Over 90% of South Sudan's budget funding comes from its oil revenues. Production of crude oil was, however, disrupted from December 2013 due to outbreak of civil war in the country, further deteriorating the economy. Since September, 2018, oil production has been revived at a minimal level. It was expected to reach pre-2013 level of 3,20,000 bpd, but the production on ground has remained between 1,30,000 pbd to 170,000 pbd until 2023. However, after damage to one of the two oil pipelines in Sudan in February 2024, 65% of its oil production stopped.

12. A few companies, where majority share is owned by Indians, have presence in South Sudan in different fields such as hotel industry, construction, borehole drilling, printing, retail trading, supply to UN agencies/NGOs and oil industry-related services. Some Indians also run supermarkets and restaurants in Juba.

Capacity building

13. **ITEC slots:** India is currently offering 180 slot annually to South Sudan under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) training programme for capacity building. In the aftermath of COVID pandemic, many training courses were also conducted online within the Mission premises. As part of the programme, a lady diplomat Ms. Adiang from the local Foreign office did a yoga training course for three months at Bengaluru, thus becoming the first India trained yoga teacher in the country. Around 1500 South Sudanese have attended ITEC training courses in India since 2013.

14. **ICCR Scholarships:** During 2013-2024, a total of 175 South Sudanese students were granted ICCR scholarships. Given the high demand and popularity of courses offered under ICCR, scholarship quota for South Sudan has been enhanced from 20 to 30 seats from the year 2023-24.

15. **Police Training Courses:** 50 officers of South Sudan Police Force attended specialized courses in India in 2018 and 2019.

16. **Training at SSIFS:** In 2016, under country specific programme, 15 diplomats of South Sudan Foreign Ministry attended a specialized course at Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, New Delhi. In 2017 and 2019 one diplomat was accommodated by SSIFS each year in the Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats. In May 2022, Thirty-one South Sudanese diplomats were trained at SSIFS, New Delhi (twenty-nine diplomats travelled to India and two joined from the South Sudanese Embassy in New Delhi). In December 2024, 15 more diplomats attended a specialized course. Thus, a total of 80 South Sudanese diplomats have been trained at SSIFS, New Delhi so far.

17. **Courses under IAFS-III scholarship:** A total of 43 slots have been availed by South Sudan officials who attended different capacity building and Post-graduation courses since 2017.

18. **Pan Africa E-network/e-VBAB:** An MoU has been signed on 7 July 2022 between TCIL and Government of South Sudan for online training in education e-Vidya Bharti or e-VB and health e-Arogya Bharti or e-AB (eVBAB) as part of Pan Africa e-Network (IAFS-III, 2015). The e-VBAB has already commenced and 188 students has enrolled for different courses in 2022-23.

Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief :

19. In 2008, India donated US\$ 100,000 worth of tents and medicines for flood victims to be shared between Sudan and South Sudan. In February 2020, a consignment of life saving drugs worth Rs.68.8 lakh (approx. US\$100,000) was donated to the flood affected people of South Sudan. In December 2020, Government of India donated 70 Metric Tons of food aid consisting of wheat flour, rice and sugar to the flood affected people of South Sudan (equivalent to US\$55,540 aprox.). In April, 2021, Government of India gifted 6 Metric Tons of life-saving essential medicines to South Sudan (equivalent to US\$118,000 approx).

Other Bilateral Assistance projects:

20. The following Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) have been undertaken by the Government of India in South Sudan :

(i) India Provided four hand pumps at Mangalla Internally Displaced Persons Camp in June 2022 (at the cost of US\$ 44,900 approx).

(ii) A 6-week Artificial Limbs (Jaipur Foot) Fitment Camp was organized by the MEA at Juba Military Hospital (at cost of US\$180,000 approx) in June-July 2022.

(iii) Construction of an observatory for a seismic station (under Ministry of Mining/Geological Society of South Sudan) at Kolye West Village, Rajaf Payam, Juba (at cost of US\$49,474 approx) has commenced in November 2024.

(iv) Renovation of South Sudan Learning Center (SSLC) under the Ministry of ICT & Postal Services (at cost of US\$13,954 approx) has also commenced in December 2024.

(v) An amount of INRs 14,40,000/- (US\$16,900 approx) have been released to Indian peacekeepers in UN Mission in South Sudan in December 2024 for distribution of veterinary medicines at 16 veterinary aid camps in different parts

of South Sudan (eight camps to be organized each by Indbatt1 (in Malakal) and Indbatt2 (in Bore).

Medical Tourism

21. Given the effective treatment with robust but affordable medical infrastructure in India, South Sudanese prefer to travel to India for diagnosis and treatment. The number of medical visas issued to South Sudanese nationals each year is steadily increasing. Some India-based medical tourism promoting agencies are also active South Sudan and facilitating their South Sudanese clients to get diagnosis and treatment in various hospitals based in Delhi, Gurugram, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad etc.

Cultural Interaction

22. Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) sponsored cultural troupe visited South Sudan in 2016 & 2017 and performed in Juba. In 2019, 2020 and 2023, traditional dance groups from South Sudan participated at the International Arts and Crafts Mela in Surajkund.

Under the Academic Visitors Programme (AVP), sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Prof John Akec, Vice Chancellor and Dr. Biong Kuol Deng, Dean-School of Law, from University of Juba, visited India in August 2018 and in October 2023 respectively,

Under the Distinguished Visitors Programme (AVP), sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Member of Parliament Hon'ble Atem Garang Deng Dekuek also visited India in January 2023

Indian peacekeepers in South Sudan

A. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

23. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was established based on a UNSC resolution in 2011. India has provided a contingent of over

2,300 defense personnel for the peacekeeping operations in South Sudan out of UNMISS total strength of around 17000. Lt Gen Mohan Subramanian from Indian Army is the Force Commander of UNMISS since August, 2022. His predecessor Lt. Gen. S.S. Tinaikar was also an Indian Army officer. Indian peace keepers are deployed in Juba, Bor (Jonglei State) and Malakal (Upper Nile State) Regions. In addition, a police component (UNPOL) of around 26 Indian Police Officers is also attached with UNMISS. Apart from the peacekeeping operations, the Indian contingents have also been involved in community welfare activities viz. conducting veterinary camps to help the local community in taking care of their large cattle population in Bor and Malakal. The India peace keepers are also engaged in training of youth in various fields including repair of computers, diesel gen-sets, etc. To empower women of South Sudan, the peacekeepers have taught them methods of growing vegetables and pulses, and also how to milk cattle in clean, hygienic ways.

24. The battalion in Bor (Jonglei State) installed community solar lights in villages to enhance their security and also for benefit of students to enable them study at night. Indian army engineers under UNMISS in Malakal re-laid the airstrip, repaired flood affected roads and helped renovation of the earlier defunct Government Hospital in Malakal.

25. In 2013, seven soldiers of the Indian peacekeeping battalion made the supreme sacrifice in the cause of peace in two different attacks in Jonglei State. The bravery and social welfare activities of the Indian peacekeepers are highly commended both by the local population and Government of South Sudan.

B. The United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA):

26. UNISFA is a United Nations peacekeeping force in Abyei, an oil rich border area which is contested between Sudan and South Sudan. The area is being administered jointly by the two countries at present. UNISFA was established through a UNSC Resolution in 2011. The Resolution made provision for deployment of 4,200 Ethiopian troops to provide security and protect civilians under imminent threat of violence in the disputed border region. From January 2022, it has become a multinational force of 3,250 military personnel, 640 police

personnel and an appropriate civilian support with an Indian contingent of around 570 soldiers is deployed in UNISFA.

Indian Community

27. Presently, around 1000 Indian nationals are based in South Sudan. Some of them have set up their businesses in Juba and others are working in various local companies. A number of Indians are also working with UN organizations, missionaries and NGOs. Indians were among the first to open hotels, borehole drilling companies, printing press and departmental stores in Juba in early 2006 after South Sudan was declared an autonomous region.

28. There is an Indian Association of South Sudan (IASS) in Juba, which, in addition to provide support to various outreach activities of the Embassy, organizes cultural functions and charitable activities such as free medical and blood donation camps on various occasions. Shri Sanjaykumar Shivabhai Patel, Managing Director of JIT Supermarket chain in Juba, was conferred Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award on 10 January 2023 at the PBD Convention at Indore for business and community services.

January 2025