

BILATERAL BRIEF – INDIA AND SUDAN

India-Sudan Relations

Relations between India and Sudan date back to ancient times. The first Sudanese Parliamentary elections in 1953 were conducted by Shri Sukumar Sen, the then India's Chief Election Commissioner (the Sudanese Election Commission, formed in 1957, drew heavily on Indian elections norms and laws).

2. India opened diplomatic representation in Khartoum in March 1955. In April 1955, interim Prime Minister of Sudan Ismail Al Azhari and several Ministers transited through New Delhi on their way to Bandung for the first Afro-Asian Relations Conference.

Recent Visits/Political Interactions:

3. The following are the recent visits/exchanges :-

i) Ms. Amal Salih Mohamed, Minister of Trade & Supply visited India in July,2022 to attend 17th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Growth Partnership.

ii) Lt. Gen. Anan Hamed Mohamed Omer, Interior Minister and Director General of Police visited India in November,2022 to attend 3rd Ministerial Conference on Counter-Terrorism Financing (NMFT).

iii) Dr. Abubaker Albushra, Agriculture Minister visited New Delhi in March, 2023 to attend Global Conference of International Year of Millets.

iv) Dr Jibril Ibrahim Mohammed, Minister for Finance and Economic planning attended virtual meeting in the Voice of Global South Summit (January 12-13, 2023).

v) A 4 member Sudanese delegation participated in Africa Conclave organised by Confederation of Indian Industries from August 20-22, 2024.

vi) A delegation from Sudan attended WTSA Assembly held in Delhi from October 14-24, 2024.

Bilateral Trade

4. India is a significant trade partner of Sudan. India primarily exports food stuffs, petroleum products, manufactured goods, machinery and equipment, chemicals including pharmaceuticals and textiles to Sudan. One third of the medical solutions approved in Sudan have been patented by Indian Pharma Companies. Sudan mainly exports sesame seed, gum Arabic, cotton, watermelon seeds, hides and skins and ground nuts to India. Bilateral trade between both countries was on a steep rise. But with the armed conflicts that broke out on April 15, 2023, the trade declined drastically. A snapshot of our bilateral trade in US \$ million is given in the following table:

Bilateral Trade (Calendar Year Basis, Values in USD Million) - (Source: DGCIS, India)

Year	India's Exports	India's Imports	Total	% change vis-à-vis previous year
2018	795.45	707.12	1,502.57	+17.3%
2019	1,062.00	467.30	1,529.30	+1.8%
2020	1,047.56	253.80	1,301.36	-14.9%
2021	1017.91	260.80	1,278.71	-1.8%
2022	1,671.51	176.81	1,848.32	+44.55%
2023	1,077.28	264.51	1341.79	-27.40%
2024	337.57	538.44	876.01	-34.62%

Cooperation in the area of Agriculture:

5. Sudan is the third largest country in Africa, and it is estimated that around 10% of the world's arable land is in Sudan. Cooperation in agriculture between India and Sudan has been strong. The areas of cooperation include skill development and training, sale of agricultural machineries, including tractors, agricultural equipment, hybrid seeds, agro-chemicals and agro-fertilizers. India dominates the agricultural tractor market in Sudan with export of around 2500 tractors in a year. Indian hybrid seeds are popular and companies like JK Seeds and Nath Seeds have good distribution network in Sudan. In the agro-chemical industries, UPL is a dominant player. India also imports a lot of agro commodities from Sudan, including sesame seeds, watermelon seeds, groundnuts, pigeon peas and chickpeas.

Projects and Lines of Credit

6. A number of Lines of Credit have been extended to the Government of Sudan beginning with Rs. 20 million Line of Credit in 1980. During President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's visit in 2003, US\$ 50 million LoC was extended to Sudan (the first ever on G-to-G basis) for Indian goods and services in power, solar energy, railways, and laboratory equipment. Various Lines of Credit extended to the Government of Sudan, through EXIM Bank of India are as below:-

Year	Amount (Mn US\$)	Purpose / Project/ Details
2004	50.00	Supply of electrification, equipment, photo-voltaic cells, diesel coaches, copper rods, textile machinery and rehabilitation of locomotive products.
2006	350.00	4 X 125 MW Kosti combined cycle power plant executed by BHEL. All 4 units synchronized, commissioned in Jan 2016.

		BHEL has outstanding dues of USD 30.98 million from the project.
2006	41.90	Sinja-Gedarif Transmission and Sub-Station project
2007	48.00	For supply of agriculture inputs, technical and laboratory equipment, scientific equipment, solar electrification, and Sudan Railways supplies.
2007	52.00	37.44 million for Gadarif- Galabat transmission line, micro-industrial projects and development of livestock production and services. The original amount of LoC was reduced to US\$ 37.44 million.
2009 & 2013	25.00	Mashkour Sugar Plant in White Nile State. 1 st tranche of US\$ 25 million has been disbursed. 2 nd tranche of USD 125 million could not be disbursed due to various irregularities, inability of Government of Sudan to mobilize local contributions of US\$ 80 million, inability of Government of Sudan to pay LoC dues and non-optimal utilization of current capacity of existing sugar mills.

Educational Cooperation and cultural relations

7. About 1800 students travel to India annually for higher studies mainly to Hyderabad, Vizag, Pune, Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore. More than 100,000 Sudanese, graduates of Indian Universities, have carved a niche for themselves in their chosen fields and some of them are holding high positions in government and business. The following cultural exchanges were also carried out in the recent past. This year the Mission under Africa-India Maitri scholarship (ICCR) scheme, 72 fully paid scholarships were also granted to Sudanese nationals.

i) A 15-member Sudanese artisan and artists group has participated in the Surajkund International Crafts Mela in February 2023.

ii) Three ICCR sponsored cultural troupes (a) A to Z Bollywood Music & Dance Group (12-15 Nov 2023) (b) 8 member Gujarati Folk Group,

"Kalapath Sanstha" from 2 -4 February 2023 and (c) 11 member Maharashtrian cultural troupe " Bhavani Productions" from 30.11.2022 to 02.12.2022. visited Sudan had enthralling performances at Friendship Hall, Al Neelain University, Ahfad University, Ribat University, Omdurman National Theatre, Omdurman Indian Club and India-Sudan Friendship Club.

Indian Community

8. The first Indian Luvchand Amarchand Shah, a Gujarati trader who imported goods from India, is believed to have come to Sudan from Aden in 1856. Prior to the evacuation drive carried out under Operation Kaveri, the Indian community in Sudan was around 4000. Out of which around 1000 were settled Indian community. However, post Operation Kaveri and return of Indians from Sudan at present the community is around 200 which comprises Sudanese Indians (60), laborers (50), Indian women married to locals and their family members (30) and other expatriates (60). The Sudanese community in India now is around 22000 which mainly comprises of patients/attendants, students, Sudanese married to Indians and their family members.

Conclusion

9. The armed conflict broke out on April 15th between Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) had a devastating impact over the country. Over 45000 civilians lost their life (though media estimates higher figure) while close to 12.5 million people were displaced. More than 5.4 lakhs buildings in the country, including civilians' residences, were destroyed or made inhospitable. Above 50% of the population now requires food support and facing stiff challenges in wake of spread of diseases and collapse of health set up as 70% of the health care facilities have been fully or partially damaged. Our Mission in Port Sudan notwithstanding the prevailing situation continue to extend Consular, Visa and Passport services. Over 1200 visas have been granted to Sudanese nationals ever since restoration of visa services.

3rd February 2025
