

Democratic Republic of Congo

India – Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Relations:

India and the Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC] have traditionally shared cordial and friendly relations. India was among the first countries to establish a diplomatic mission in Kinshasa in 1962. As far back as 1960, India contributed to the UN Peacekeeping Mission in DRC with its Gurkha troops under ONUC, for countering the rebellion in Katanga province. Presently, some 2,000 Indian troops, military observers and police personnel are deployed with MONUSCO, under the largest ever UN Peacekeeping operation in the country.

Ministerial visits from DRC to India have been regular. The more recent ones are : the visit of then Foreign & International Cooperation Minister, Raymond Tshibanda N'tungamulongo, for the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit, held in New Delhi in October, 2015. A ten member delegation led by Mr. Boyamba Okombo Antoine, Deputy Foreign Minister attended the “Colours 2016 International Youth Fest” organized by M/s Aditya Group of Educational Institutions, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh from in February 2016. Ms. Nefertiti Ngudianza Bayokisa Kisula, Minister of Trade visited India in March, 2016 for the CII-EXIM Bank Conclave, held in New Delhi. Mr. Jeannot Matadi Nenga, Minister of Energy & Water Resources, visited India in April 2016. Mr. Boyamba Okombo Antoine, Deputy Foreign Minister visited India again in June 2016, to meet the Congolese diaspora (including students). Mr. Raymond Tshibanda N'tungamulongo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation visited New Delhi in August, 2016 to discuss some Hydroelectric Projects. Mr. Modeste BAHATI LUKWEBO, Minister of Economy, participated in the 12th CII EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership, held in March 2017. Mr. Kwet Mwan Kwet John, Minister for International Cooperation visited New Delhi in June 2017. Mr. Ileka Atoki, Secretary General of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Congo led the DRC delegation to the 14th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave in March 2019, on the sidelines of which he also signed LoC Agreements for implementing three Solar Power Projects in the DRC. H.E. Mr. Sylvestre Ilunga Ilunkamba, Prime Minister of DR Congo, participated in the 15th CII-Exim Bank Digital Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership during 22-24 September, 2020. H.E. Mr. Jean-Lucien Bussa Tongba, Minister of External Trade, also participated in the Conclave and addressed the Ministerial Session on “Enhancing India’s Trade & Investment with Africa through Bilateral, Regional & Continental level Partnership” on 23 September, 2020.

Bilateral Agreements/MOUs: The following bilateral Agreements/MOUs exist between India and DRC: (i) Foreign Office Consultations, signed in March, 2010; (ii) Joint Commission for Political, Economic, Scientific, Technical and Socio-cultural, signed in March, 2008; (iii) Cultural Cooperation Agreement signed in October, 2009; and (iv) Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments signed on April 2010.

India's Economic Assistance to DRC: Lines of Credit [LOC]: The following GOI LOCs have been extended to the DRC : (i) US\$ 33.5 million for setting up a cement plant and acquisition of buses for the urban transport sector (2005-06). The supply of buses and spares have been completed; (ii) US\$ 25 million Rural Water Supply Project was completed in 2011; (iii) US\$ 42 million Kakobola 9.3 MW Hydropower Project, Bandundu Province (2010). The Project has been completed and handed over to the Government of DR Congo. (iv) LOC of US\$ 34.50 million for the Development of Transmission and Distribution Line Project for evacuation of power from Kakobola Hydropower Project was signed on 28th May, 2015. The project is expected to begin in early February 2019. (v) LoC of US\$ 168 million for the Katende Hydropower Project (64 MW), in the Kasai Occidental Province, was signed on July 11, 2011 and the contract awarded to a consortium, however, selection of a new contractor is under process. (vi) Agreement for a LOC of US\$ 109.942 million for Transmission and Distribution Line Project for the evacuation of power from the Katende Hydropower Project was signed on 28th May, 2015. (vii) In December 2018, GoI approved an LoC of US\$ 33.29 million for installation of 15 MW Solar Photovoltaic Power Project at Karawa, Province North Ubangi. Process to implement the LoC is underway; (viii) In December 2018, GoI approved an LoC of US\$ 25.27 million for installation of 10 MW Solar Photovoltaic Power Project at Lusambo, Province Sankuru. Process to implement the LoC is underway; (ix) In December 2018, GoI approved an LoC of US\$ 24.55 million for installation of 10 MW Solar Photovoltaic Power Project at Mbandaka, Province Equator. Process to implement the LoC is underway. {LoC Agreements on vii to ix above have been signed on 17 March 2019}; (x) In July 2019, Government of India approved an LoC of USD 56.824 million for 15 MW Photovoltaic Power Plant and Electrical Network Solar Project at Tshilenge (to be installed at Mbuji-Mayi), (xi) In July 2019, Government of India approved an LoC of USD 56.824 million for 15 MW Photovoltaic Power Plant and Electrical Network Solar Project at Gemena and (xii) In July 2019, Government of India approved an LoC of USD 26.68 million for 10 MW Photovoltaic Power Plant and Electrical Network Solar Project at Manono.

Donations/grants: (i) 60 "Sonalika" tractors with accessories & spares worth US\$ 0.66 million [2006- 07]; (ii) US\$ 1 million for supply of medicines [2008-09]; (iii) A MoU for setting up an IT Centre of Excellence in Kinshasa is under consideration; (iv) Tele-education and Tele-medicine projects have been implemented under the Pan African e-network project. (v) MoU on the e-Vidya Bharti and e-Arogya Bharti (e-VBAB) was signed with the DRC Government in August 2019.

Capacity Building Programme: (i) 666 ITEC slots were utilized during 2007 to March 2018. 78 slots were utilized in 2019-19 and 80 slots were utilized in 2019-20 (ii) 9 DRC officials benefited from various training courses offered under IAFS-I during 2010-11. 8, 5

and 2 officials attended training under IAFS-II during 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 respectively. 14 officials attended training under IAFS-III in 2019-20 (iii) 7 Congolese women ('Solar Mamas') were trained in solar electrification and rooftop water harvesting course at Barefoot College, Rajasthan under ITEC Programme during 2010-11, 2013-14 and 2014-15. (iv) 13 ICCR scholarships were utilized during 2012-13, 14 during 2013-14, 7 during 2016-17 and 6 during 2017-18, 15 during 2018-19. (v) Two DRC scholars availed of the prestigious CV Raman International Fellowship for African Researchers in 2014 and 2017. (vi) e-VBAB Project related to tele-education and tele-medicine has become operational in 2020 and many applicants are taking benefit. Till July 2021 Mission has approved 47 applications of candidates for various courses.

Offers under IAFS Projects: Establishment of a Human Settlement Centre in DRC (during IAFS-1); Setting up of an IT Centre of Excellence in Kinshasa (during IAFS-II); Setting up of a Vocational Training Centre (VTC) (IAFS-II); and Establishment of a Soil Water and Tissue Testing Laboratory (SWTTL) (IAFS-II).

Trade and Commercial Relations:

Trade and Commercial linkages between India and DRC are growing. DRC is rich in natural resources such as cobalt, copper, diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, germanium, uranium, radium, bauxite, iron ore, coal, hydro-power and timber. There are considerable opportunities for enhancing bilateral cooperation. Indian companies are engaged in the mining of copper, cobalt and diamond in DRC. A large portion of DRC's pharmaceutical imports is sourced from India, some for re-export to neighbouring countries like Republic of Congo, Gabon and the Central African Republic. Indian businessmen have also been investing in DRC in sectors like logistics, education, restaurants, supermarkets/ departmental stores etc. Hospitals and construction are new areas of investments in recent years, by Indians. An Indian investor (West African Cement) has invested in setting up a cement plant in DRC. A 12 member delegation from Federation of Rajasthan Trade and Industry and 5 other prominent businessmen participated in the Private Sector Investment Conference (PSIC) for the Great Lakes Region of Africa held in Kinshasa from 24-25 February 2016. Companies like L&T, Apollo International etc. are considering investments in the country. Companies like KalpaTaru Power Transmission Limited and KEC International are executing/ have executed power transmission projects in the country. TATA Motors and Mahindra have distribution centers in the DRC. In 2010, Bharti Airtel acquired Zain Communications Network and today, it is one of the largest telecommunication company in DRC.

Bilateral trade figures are given below (USD million):

Year	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Exports	317.63	200.49	225.07	302.94	352.77	434.34

Imports	97.76	85.92	225.42	19.01	32.13	10.16
Total Trade	415.39	286.41	450.50	321.95	384.90	444.50

(Source: Department of Commerce, GoI)

Major items of export from India during the year were Pharmaceutical products, vehicles, parts and accessories thereof, machinery and mechanical appliances and parts thereof, electrical machinery & equipment, plastic and plastic articles and cotton. Major items of import were Ores, slag and ash, natural or cultured pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, mineral fuels, mineral oils and cocoa and cocoa preparations.

Cultural Cooperation: India and DRC signed an Agreement on Cultural Cooperation on 29 October, 2009. A dance and music group from the National Festival of Gungu [FESNAG] visited India from February 1-15, 2012, February 1-15, 2013 and February 1-15, 2016 to participate in the Surajkund Crafts Mela. A 12-member 'Rajasthani Music and Dance group' visited DRC from July 17-27, 2012 and performed in Kinshasa and FESNAG, Gungu, Bandundu Province. A 15-member Manipuri Dance troupe from ICCR, along with local dancers, performed to packed audiences in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in June 2016.

India's participation in Peace Keeping Mission under UN: There are around 2000 Indian troops comprising Contingent Troops, Police Units, Experts on Mission deployed with MONUSCO in DRC.

Indian Community: DRC has the largest concentration of Indians in this sub-region. There are about 13,000 Indians and PIOs [holding British, Canadian, Kenyan and Tanzanian nationalities], living in the country. They are engaged mainly in the services sector, retail business, trading and manufacturing, mining and more recently, in construction and hospitals. Majority of the Indian community is from Gujarat. Others are mainly from Kerala, other South Indian States and a small number from North India. Ismaili community, with an estimated number of 2,000 members, is the single largest Indian community in the DRC. A Hindu temple has been built by the Congo Hindu Mandal comprising Indians in Kinshasa.

July, 2021

Useful Resources

- 1) <https://eoi.gov.in/kinshasa/>

2) <https://www.facebook.com/India-in-Democratic-Republic-of-Congo-Embassy-of-India-Kinshasa-388682068002432/>

3) <https://twitter.com/indiaindrc?lang=en>