

Brief Embassy Report on Bilateral Relations – ITJ Division, DGCI&S, Kolkata.

India-Cote D' Ivoire Bilateral Relations

A. Introduction:

1. Indian Trade Journal (ITJ) division of the Director General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS) brings out weekly publication on Embassy Profile Report providing information on recent policy changes and happenings in other countries that may be of interest to the Indian trading community. This is the Embassy Profile Report depicting the Embassy of Cote D' Ivoire.

2. India and Côte d'Ivoire have traditionally enjoyed cordial and friendly relations. India established its Embassy in Abidjan in 1979 and Cote d'Ivoire opened its Resident Mission in New Delhi in September 2004. India and Cote d'Ivoire share convergence of values and aspirations. Cote d'Ivoire, since 2011, has declared India as the focus country for cooperation in the fields of ICT, Agriculture, Mining and Infrastructure and has emphasized on the importance of strengthening relations with India. India, too has given renewed thrust to bilateral relations with Cote d'Ivoire in the recent years.

3. The Ivorian Government is cognizant of our role in the UNSC during 2011- 12 in support of restoration of democracy and is appreciative of role played by our military advisers in UN Peacekeeping Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Cote d'Ivoire has been supportive of India in the UN and other international bodies particularly in the elections. Cote d'Ivoire during its non-permanent membership at the UNSC from 2018- 19 took a clear stand and supported India, including that of abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian constitution and J&K. Cote d'Ivoire is a member of International Solar Alliance and has also ratified the amended framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance in 2020.

B. Commercial Relations (Trade and Foreign Investment) – Recent facts & figures

4. There has been growth in economic and commercial relations between India and Cote D' Ivoire in recent years, especially in areas such as Textiles and apparel, Machinery and appliances, Vehicle and Transport materials etc. An account of Bilateral commodities trade in goods from 2019-20 to 2023-24 are as under:

Export-Import statistics as per India's Ministry of Commerce data bank from 2019-20 to 2023-24 are as follows :

Export-Import statistics from 2019-20 to 2023-24

Year	Exports	Imports	Total (in US\$ Million)
2019-20	414.67	454.88	869.55
2020-21	585.96	317.51	903.47
2021-22	728.62	468.78	1197.40
2022-23	887.79	665.18	1552.97
2023-24	685.53	384.94	1070.47

(Source: Doc, Ministry of Commerce & Industry)

5. India imports cashew, manganese ore, cotton, wood, scrap metals, rubber, etc. CI is the largest producer & exporter of Cocoa and raw cashew in the world and India imports big chunk of Ivorian cashew. The main items of India's export are rice, pharmaceutical products (albeit not directly),

Automobiles, machinery, chemicals, plastics and rubber.

6. A large number of Indian enterprises have established its presence in CI in recent years. As per the estimates of the CEPICI (Cote d'Ivoire Investment Promotion Agency), total investment from India to Cote d'Ivoire from 2013-2019 is CFA 16.829 billion (US \$ 28 Million app.). Besides the private companies' investments G2G exposure of GOI for development projects in Cote d'Ivoire stood at US\$385.15m which is US \$ 247.7 m as LOC projects and US\$ 137.45 as Buyer's credit, Under National Export Insurance Scheme.

7. Embassy of India in Abidjan successfully brought together prominent Indian business personnel and established an Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Cote d'Ivoire (ICCI-CI) which was officially launched in February 2020 by the Minister of Commerce and Industry Mr. Souleymane Diarrasouba.

8. As part of the continued efforts to promote India's exports, the Embassy has been organizing a series of trade promotions events in collaboration with Cote d'Ivoire Chamber of Commerce and Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Cote d'Ivoire. These include two day "India Day Events" in Abidjan on 2-3 March 2020. The two days events included the 3rd India-Cote d'Ivoire Business Forum, inaugurated and addressed by Minister of Commerce and Industry HE Souleymane Diarrasouba, First India-Cote d'Ivoire HealthCare Seminar inaugurated and addressed by the Minister of Health and Public Hygiene HE Dr Eugène Aka-Aouélé, two days India Solo exhibitions by 30 Indian companies showcasing their products and services to the Cote d'Ivoire business and public in general.

9. Completed LOC projects include (a) Renewal of urban transport system in Abidjan and for agricultural projects in the field of vegetable oil extraction, fruits and vegetable chips production, production of cocoa, coffee-LOC US \$ 26.80million (b) Mahatma Gandhi IT and Biotechnology Park (LOC US\$ 20 million). (c) Transmission line between Cote d'Ivoire and Mali [LOC US \$ 54 (US \$ 30 million + US\$ 24 million)]. On-going LoC projects include: (i) Fisheries Processing Plant(LOC US\$ 4 million); (ii) Coconut fiber processing plant (LOC US\$ 1.5 million) (iii) 30 Rice Production programme (LOC US \$ 30 million) (iv) Upgradation/construction of four military hospitals (LOC US \$ 71.4 million).

C. Other Major Areas of Co-operation:

- India has been providing 100 training slots to Cote d'Ivoire under ITEC Programme annually. ICCR also extended 10 paid scholarships to Ivorian to pursue undergraduate and post graduate studies in India. GOI has offered the service of the upgraded programme of Pan African e-Network Project known as e- Vidhya Bharati & e-Aarogya Bharati (e-VBAB) and have signed an MOU for cooperation in this regard.
- Indian tele-serials and movies, dubbed in French, have been immensely popular in CI since many years. Senior Ivorian citizens recall watching movies such as 'Albela' and 'Mangala' in Abidjan movie theatres in the early days. Yoga is also popular among Ivorians. Under Festival of India in Cote d'Ivoire, the Embassy of India organized several cultural performances in Abidjan and other cities in 2017-18. Embassy of India organized the Indian Film Festival in December 2019 as well as 2020 where popular Bollywood movies with French subtitles were screened.

- Mission has been also regularly organizing the International Yoga Day since its inception. The Yoga is becoming more and more popular in Abidjan. In IDY- 2022 on 19 June the Ivorian Sports Minister attended as the Chief Guest. The event was led by five local Yoga Gurus and more than 500 yoga lovers participated enthusiastically. The event was also live streamed on social media handles of the Mission highlighting the benefits of practicing Yoga in boosting self-immunity in the current situation of pandemic.

- There are estimated over 1500 Indian nationals residing in Cote d'Ivoire. Most of them are engaged in trading and general merchandise business while few of them are engaged in mining and manufacturing. ISKCON, Geeta Ashram and Art of Living have their setup in Abidjan. Indian community also patronizes a temple in Abidjan. There are also many Indians working with African Development Bank. There are few Indian restaurants in Abidjan. Community members regularly organize get togethers to celebrate major Indian festivals.

Source: www.mea.gov.in