

Embassy of India
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
India- Ethiopia Bilateral Relations

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Historical linkages

- Historical linkages between India and Ethiopia go back about 2,000 years of recorded history. Trade between the two countries flourished during the ancient Axumite Empire (1 Century AD), which is seen to be origin of modern Ethiopia. Indian traders trade silk and spices for gold and ivory through the ancient port of Adulis in the 6 Century AD. In the 16 century AD, the Portuguese assisted the Christian King in Ethiopia to repel Muslim invaders, and with them came Indians from Goa. In 1868, General Robert Napier led a punitive expedition to obtain the release of European diplomats and missionaries who had been imprisoned by Emperor Tewodros II in his bunker fort at Makdala. The 30,000 strong force had 13,000 soldiers from India, mostly Sikhs. The British Army that ended the Italian occupation of Ethiopia (1936-41) also had a sizeable contingent of Indian soldiers. General William Platt, who led one of the three simultaneous attacks, commanded a force consisting of the 4 and 5 Indian Divisions.
- Soon after achieving independence, a goodwill mission led by Sardar Sant Singh was sent to Ethiopia. Diplomatic relations at legation level were established in 1948. Full diplomatic relations were established in 1950 with Sardar Sant Singh as the first Ambassador.
- India Ethiopia relations have been traditionally close and friendly. Ethiopia has been appreciative of the fact that India has never been hostile to Ethiopian interests. Ethiopia has been consistent in their support for India in the international fora on various issues.

Visit of Indian External Affairs Minister to Ethiopia

- External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Addis Ababa (22 June 2022) and met Ethiopian President H.E. Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde They discussed bilateral cooperation including education, health and investment as also development partnership. Also, they exchanged perspectives on the regional and international situation. EAM, who also exchanged pleasantries with Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mr. Demeke Mekonnen, appreciated their warm sentiment towards India and their good words for our bilateral partnership.
- EAM inaugurated the Indian Embassy's Chancery Building & Residential Complex. He was joined by Ethiopian Minister for Women and Social Affairs H.E. Dr. Ergogie Tesfaye (PhD) and State Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Amb Tesfaye Yilma. Later, EAM and Minister Dr. Ergogie Tesfaye addressed the Indian community.

Visit of Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister to India

- Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen visited New Delhi (17-19 Feb 2021). During the visit, he met External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar and discussed wide ranging issues including bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. Earlier (18 Feb), the two Ministers inaugurated the newly constructed chancery building and residence of the Ethiopian Embassy. DPM & FM Mekonnen and MOS for External Affairs attended the Indian-Ethiopia Business Forum meeting (17 Feb).

- The two sides signed an Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for holders of Diplomatic Passports and a MoU between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Central Research Institute, India and Wollo University, Ethiopia.

Meetings

- External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar met Ethiopian DPM & FM Demeke Mekonnen in New York (26 Sept 2021). Earlier (27 Aug 2021), EAM and Ethiopian DPM & FM had telephonic conversation and inter alia discussed bilateral relations and UNSC matters including the developments in Ethiopia.
- Ethiopian Minister of Trade participated in the CII-Exim Bank conclave (14 July 2021). CEO of Tourism Ethiopia participated in the segment on tourism and hospitality (15 July 2021). Ethiopian Agriculture Minister participated as Guest of Honour in the CII India Africa Agriculture & Food Processing Summit (15 Sept 2021). Ethiopian Minister of Trade & Regional Integration participated in the CII Partnership Summit (13 Dec).

Bilateral visits

- President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a State Visit to Ethiopia (Oct 2017) and held talks with Ethiopian President and Prime Minister. Other high level visits included President S. Radhakrishnan (1965), Vice President Zakir Hussain (1967), President V.V. Giri (1972), PM Manmohan Singh (2011) and Vice President Hamid Ali Ansari (May 2013).
- High level visits from Ethiopia included those of Emperor Haile Selassie (1956 & 1968), Col. Hailemariam Mengistu (1983 and 1985), PM Meles Zenawi (1997, 2007, 2008 & 2011) and PM Hailemariam Desalegn (2015).
- Recent ministerial visits from India included those by External Affairs Minister (2007, 2011), Commerce Minister (2011), MOS for External Affairs (2011, 2012), MOS for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution (2011), MoS for Finance (2015) and MOS for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (2018). From Ethiopia, visits were made by Special Envoy of PM & former President Dr. Mulatu Teshome (Nov 2019), Minister of Water, Irrigation & Electricity for the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance (March 2018).

Bilateral Agreements

- Air Services Agreement (1967); 4 MoUs signed subsequently in 1972, 1993, 2004 and 2008.
- Agreement on Technical, Economic and Scientific Cooperation (1969)
- Cultural Agreement (1983)
- Trade Agreement (1997)
- Agreement on Cooperation in Micro Dams and Small Scale Irrigation Schemes (2002)
- Agreement on Establishment of Joint Ministerial Commission (2007)
- Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (2007)
- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Science and Technology (2007)
- Educational Exchange Programme (2007)
- Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (2007)
- Double Taxation avoidance treaty (2011)
- MOU between NSIC, India and FEMSEDA (2011)
- MOU between ICAR and Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (2011)
- Trade Agreement (2017)
- Agreement for Cooperation in the field of Information, Communication and Media (2017)

- Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for holders of Diplomatic Passports (2021)
- MoU between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Central Research Institute, India and Wollo University, Ethiopia (2021)

Cultural Cooperation

- During the month of May/June 2022, Embassy took the lead in celebrating International Day of Yoga in Ethiopia, and 210 events were held in various places in Ethiopia including factories (100), universities (35) and schools (24). The main IDY celebration was held in Addis Ababa on 19 June 2022. About 250 yoga enthusiasts participated in the yoga session held at the Embassy premises.
- During 2022, National Day Receptions were held in Addis Ababa and Hawassa (Jan). Dr. Ergogie Tesfaye, Minister of Women and Social Affairs who was conferred the Distinguished ICCR Alumni Award 2021 was felicitated during the Reception in Addis Ababa. ITEC Day was celebrated at Adama Science and Technology University (22 Jan) and Ambo (8 March). Embassy celebrated National Youth Day / Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda (12 Jan), and organized Kite flying festival in Addis Ababa (15 Jan) & Bishoftu (16 Jan), India Cup – Cricket (March), India Cup – Golf (March), Holi festival (20 March), Nowruz celebrations in Addis Ababa (27 March), India Cup – Badminton (15 May) and Bachcha’s Got Talent (22 May).
- As part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav / India@75 celebrations in Ethiopia, Indian films were screened at Mettu University (Aug 2021), Indian film evening at Addis Ababa Science & Technology University (Aug 2021), Wollega University (March 2022), Gambella University (March 2022) St. Mary Convent School, Babich (March 2022), Kidane Mehret School, Nekemte (March 2022), Don Bosco School in Adami Tullu (April 2022), Mary Help School, Zway (April 2022), Wolaita Sodo University (May 2022) and Don Bosco School in Gambella (May 2022). Also, tree plantation drives were held in Kombolcha Institute of Technology (July 2021), Bule Horra University (Aug 2021), Hawassa University (Aug 2021), Dambi Dollo University (Oct 2021), Arbaminch University (Feb 2022), Gambella University (March 2022), Don Bosco School, Adami Tullu (April 2022) and Don Bosco School in Gambella (May 2022).
- During the month of June 2021, Embassy took the lead in celebrating International Day of Yoga in Ethiopia, and 100 events were held in various places in Ethiopia including universities (26), schools (2), factories (43) and community events. The main IDY celebration was held in Addis Ababa on 27 June 2021. Other events included yoga seminar, quiz competitions and a yoga session at the prestigious Unity Park in Addis Ababa.
- Gandhi Jayanthi was celebrated at Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Addis Ababa (2 Oct 2021). On the occasion of Hindi Diwas, Kavi Sammelan was held for the first time in Ethiopia at the Embassy premises (18 Sept 2021). Embassy organized the participation of Shri Arun Gemini and Smt. Mumtaz Naseem from India at the Kavi Sammelan. Other cultural events included India food festival (21 Aug), Independence Day Special Week (15-20 Aug), Sports evening (11 April) and holi celebrations in Bishoftu (30 March). Also, Mission conducts free yoga sessions every Saturday and Sunday and Indian Dance classes every Saturday.
- Embassy and Indian Women’s Association organized a cultural evening (6 March 2021) to commemorate the International Women’s Day. It was attended by Minister of Labour & Social Affairs, Members of Parliament and about 250 guests. During the National Day Reception (26 Jan 2021), Embassy felicitated Shri M Sardarwallah, the only PBD Awardee (2021) from Ethiopia and Indian school teachers who have served in Ethiopia for the past 40 years.
- During 2022, Mission has reached out to universities in Ethiopia and held discussions on possible areas of collaboration with India – Adama Science and Technology University (Jan), Gambella University (Feb & May), Ambo University (March), Wachemo University (March &

- May), Arbaminch University (March & April), Wollaita Sodo University (April), Mettu University (April), Werabe University (May), Wollega University (May), Samara University (May), Harambee University (May & June) and Bahir Dar University (June).
- During 2021, Mission reached out to universities in Ethiopia and held discussions on possible areas of collaboration with India – Gambella University (Dec), Arba Minch University (Dec), Bahir Dar University (Dec), Adama Science & Technology University (Nov), Assosa University (Oct), Jimma University (Oct), Jigjiga University (Oct), Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa University (Sept), St Mary's University (July), Oromia State University (June), Wachemo University (April), Dambi Dollo University (March), Dire Dawa University (March), Haramaya University (March), Oromia Police College (March), Adama Science & Technology University (Feb), Hawassa University (Jan) and Ambo University (Jan).
 - Due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, cultural activities could not be organized during 2020 with the exception of Gandhi@150 celebrations that was observed at the Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Addis Ababa (2 Oct 2020).
 - ICCR Foundation Day 2019 was celebrated in Addis Ababa (4 June) with the participation of Labour Minister and State Minister for Agriculture & Natural Resources. Both dignitaries had studied in India under ICCR scholarship. More than hundred alumni of ICCR participated in the programme. In association with Ethiopian Ministry of Culture & Tourism, Mission also organized a walk of heritage buildings built by Indian masons in the centre of Addis Ababa city (9 June).
 - An Ethiopian cultural group participated at the Suraj Kund Mela (March-April 2022). The group's visit was sponsored by Government of India and State Government of Haryana. Earlier, Meskerem Asseged, a renowned art critic in Ethiopia and Director, Zoma Contemporary Art Centre, Addis Ababa visited India under ICCR Academic Visitors Programme (Feb/March 2015). Ms. Zenebu Tadesse Woldetsadik, Ethiopian Minister of Women, Child & Youth Welfare was selected by ICCR in 2015 for the Distinguished Alumni Award for her outstanding contribution towards bilateral relations between India and Ethiopia in the field of promotion of welfare of women, children and youth in Ethiopia. Dr. Negeri Lencho, Minister of Communication Affairs visited India (March 2017) under ICCR Distinguished Visitors Programme. Ethiopian traditional dance troupe YeTemesgen Lijoch, was sent to India in October 2015 for performance during IAFS-III. An Ethiopian cultural troupe performed in India during the Africa Day Celebrations in Delhi (May 2017). Ethiopian National Theatre Traditional Band gave performances in New Delhi, Bhubaneswar and Goa (May 2018).

Indian Community

- The early settlers among the Indian community in Ethiopia came from Gujarat in the latter years of the 19th century. During imperial times, there were also tens of thousands of Indian teachers in schools all over Ethiopia, even in the most remote parts.
- Today, the Indian community has a sizeable presence in the educational sector of Ethiopia. There are about 1200 Indian Lecturers/Professors in about 40 Universities and higher educational institutions.
- The Indian Diaspora in Ethiopia is estimated to be about 5000. There are a number of Indian companies in this country. There are also several Ethiopian companies who engage Indian workers.

Source: Embassy of India, Ethiopia Web site June 2022.