

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

India-Cameroon 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 Profile Report depicting the Embassy of Cameroon.
2. India and Cameroon have friendly and cordial relations dating back independence of the latter in 1960. The present (second) High Commissioner Anindya Banerjee, joined this Mission on 21.02.2022.
3. India's bilateral engagement with Cameroon gathered momentum through high level visits between the two countries including the third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III). Cameroon leadership acknowledges India's contributions to Africa, its secular democracy and economic progress and the leadership it provided to the Non- Aligned Movement.

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

4. India and Cameroon signed a Trade Agreement in February 1968, thus laying the foundations for bilateral trade arrangements. In 2019-20, India emerged as the 7th trading partner of Cameroon with two-way trade touching US \$ 904.81 million. In the year 2021-2022, India was the fourth largest trading partner of Cameroon. In the year 2021-2022, bilateral trade was US\$ 1209.48 million. In the year 2022-23, the bilateral trade decreased to US \$ 1103.56 million due to decrease in imports by India. An account of Bilateral commodities trade in goods from 2019-20 to 2023-24 are as under:

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

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

(US Dollar Million)

S. No		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.	Export	228.45	279.07	403.06	553.17	454.04
2.	Import	676.36	202.47	806.42	550.39	788.11
3.	Total Trade	904.81	484.54	1209.48	1103.56	1242.15

(Source: Doc, Ministry of Commerce & Industry)

5. There are about 60 Indian companies having their presence in Cameroon, mostly engaged in trading of general merchandise. Some of the prominent companies include Mahima group (general trading and retailing), Deelite group (manufacturing of biscuits, plastics, supermarkets, imports from India) Olam group (Singapore-based group, engaged in import of rice and other products), Reddy Global (manufacturing of alcohol) and Africure (manufacture of pharmaceuticals). Indians have invested to the tune of US\$15-20 million in plastics, carton, biscuits, smelting of scrap, bottling and distribution of alcohol. Jindal group has got concession in the area of Iron Ore mining from an Australian company. This Project involves a sizeable amount of investment. Indian company Africure Pharmaceuticals invested USD 29.8 million in Douala, to produce essential drugs for local consumption.

6. Key potential areas for cooperation and investment are — Energy, Oil & Gas, agriculture, forestry, mining, Healthcare, Education, telecom, IT etc. Tourism, especially medical tourism is becoming very popular in this country and many Cameroonians are going to India for medical treatment. Similarly, many students from Cameroon are going to India for higher studies.

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8. Cameroon is the largest economy in the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC). GDP of Cameroon was 44 Billion USD in 2022.

C. Other Major Areas of Cooperation:

➤ Several Agreements/ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) have been signed between India and Cameroon for cooperation in the fields of defence, economic and commercial links, agricultural cooperation and culture.

➤ During the visit of Cameroon Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, Mr. Louis Paul Motaze, to New Delhi from 29 January to 4 February 2017, Cameroon signed a commercial loan agreement with Exim Bank of India worth USD 93.50 million for construction of 225 kv Nkongsamba - Bafoussam and Yaounde AbongMbang Transmission Line. The project was handed over to an Indian company “Kalpataru” in November 2019 was completed and handed over to Cameroon in November 2022. This project was a big success.

➤ Minister of Economy Mr. Louis Paul Motaze led a Cameroonian delegation to India from 29 January to 4 February 2017 to sign a commercial loan agreement with Exim Bank of India worth USD 93.50 million for construction of 225 kv Nkongsamba - Bafoussam and Yaounde — Abong Mbang Transmission Line.

- A three-member team from Cameroon Defence forces led by a Senior Army officer attended the Aero show in Bengaluru in February 2023.

- Mr. Felix Mbayu, Minister Delegate to the Minister of External Relations visited India in June 2023 to attend the CII-EXIM Bank Conclave and also called on MOS(VM) during the visit.

- India has been providing 'various training slots for the Cameroonian Armed Forces in Indian Armed Forces Training establishments under the ITEC program. Focus of our Defence Cooperation is to provide training in counter terrorism, anti-piracy operations and in UN peace keeping operations. A three-member team from Cameroon Defence forces led by a Senior Army officer attended the Aero show in Bengaluru in February 2023. Defence cooperation forms an important facet of our bilateral engagement.

- Cameroon is officially a French-English bilingual country, even though most official work is in French language. Indian films are popular in Cameroon. A Rajasthani folk dance troupe sponsored by ICCR performed in Douala, Cameroon in November 2010. To commemorate 100 years of Indian cinema in Cameroon, an Indian Film Festival was organized in 2013 by Indian Community in collaboration with the Institut Francais du Cameroun, with French sub-titles

- After the establishment of the High Commission in September 2019, International Day of Yoga is being celebrated every year. Similarly, other festivals like Holi, Ambedkar Jayanti, Gandhi Jayanti, Hindi Day etc. are being celebrated by the Mission. The Mission also celebrated 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and also brought out postal stamps on Mahatma Gandhi.

- There are about 1000 Indian expatriates in Cameroon, engaged mostly in trading and small business apart from some professionals. Indians are generally well-regarded. Majority of Indian nationals are living in Douala, financial city and a port city of Cameroon. Shri J. Ravihumar, Honorary Consul of India in Douala has been conferred with prestigious Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award in 2021.

- Indians travelling to Cameroon require visa. Cameroon Resident Mission in Delhi will be opened shortly. Recently, Cameroon has announced e-Visa facility effective from 1 May 2023 for foreign nationals including Indian nationals through visa portal www.evisacam.com. Cameroonians travelling to India need to obtain visa. The visa can be obtained through the High Commission in Yaounde. India also extends e-Visa facility for Cameroon nationals as per extant guidelines.

Source: www.mea.gov.in