

## **India – Cote d'Ivoire Relations**

India and Cote d'Ivoire have traditionally enjoyed cordial relations. While India established the Embassy in Abidjan in 1979, Cote d'Ivoire [popularly known as Ivory Coast in English] opened its Resident Mission in New Delhi in September 2004. After a decade of political instability and post election armed conflict, His Excellency Mr. Alassane Ouattara was inaugurated as the President of Cote d'Ivoire in May 2011. President Ouattara has declared India as a focus country with emphasis on cooperation in the fields of ICT, Agriculture, Mining and Infrastructure.

### **Important Visits from India to Cote d'Ivoire**

The Minister of State for External Affairs Mrs Preeti Kaur visited Abidjan from 22-24 January 2014. During the visit, she called on the President and the Prime Minister of Cote d'Ivoire. She held bilateral talks with Foreign Minister Charles Koffi Diby. Two agreements were signed during the visit; the establishment of Joint Commission between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cote d'Ivoire and a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institutes of the two countries. She, along with the Prime Minister Duncan, launched the Mahatma Gandhi Technology Park at Grand Bassam on 24 January. India has committed a Line of Credit of US\$ 20 million for this project.

Earlier, the then Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Anand Sharma paid a visit to Cote d'Ivoire from 14-15 January 2009 marking the first high level visit from India bridging a long gap of 17 years.

Mrs. Stuti Narain Kacker, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment visited Cote d'Ivoire to participate in the Seventh African Federation of Orthopedic Technicians (FATO) Congress held on the theme "Addressing Barriers to Development of Rehabilitation: Good Practice for the National Plans" held from 28 September – 7 October 2013 at Yamoussoukro.

The then EXIM Bank Chairman, Shri T.C.A. Ranganathan, and Joint Secretary from Ministry of Finance, along with a team of senior officials, attended the Annual Meeting of the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Development Fund, held in Abidjan in May 2010. India is a member of the AfDB Board of Governors.

### **Important Visits from Cote d'Ivoire to India**

Prime Minister His Excellency Mr. Daniel Kablan Duncan accompanied by Ministers of Trade and Industry & Mines visited India from 3-7 November 2014 to participate in India Economic Summit in New Delhi. He met EAM Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, besides having business interaction with CII and FICCI. Prime Minister Duncan had also visited India from 17-19 March 2013 and addressed the 9th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave. He was accompanied by five Ministers of Industry, Agriculture, Health, Infrastructure and Information & Communication Technology. He also met with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

The then Foreign Minister Mr. Youssouf Bakayoko visited India in August 2006, leading a delegation to attend the 2nd Indo-Ivorian Joint Trade Committee (JTC) Meeting in Delhi. The delegation, inter alia, included two Ministers –

representing Ministries of Mines and Energy; and Environment, Water Resources and Forests.

There have been visits to India of Ivorian Ministers from time to time to attend international conferences in India. Some of these are the then Minister of Industry and Promotion of Private Sector, Ms. Amah Marie Tehoua in 2007, and again in 2008 to participate in the CII-EXIM Bank Partnership Conclave; the then Minister of New Technologies and Information Communication, Mr. Gohrey Jackues Houga Bi, accompanied by the President of the Cote d'Ivoire Telecommunications Agency (ATCI) and several other high-ranking telecom officers, to participate in the ITTU World Telecom Development Conference held in Hyderabad in May / June 2010.

### **Foreign Office Consultations**

A Memorandum of Understanding on Foreign Office Consultations was signed on 4 August 2006 at New Delhi during the visit to India of the then Foreign Minister Bakayoko.

### **Cooperation in Electoral Matters**

A Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in electoral matters was signed on 10 September 2004 at New Delhi during the visit of then president of Ivorian Independent Electoral Commission, Camille Hogueie.

### **IAFS Process**

Under the India-Africa Forum Summit, three sites were set up within the ambit of the PAN African e-Network Project. There are over 100 Ivorian students pursuing higher studies through distant learning faculties at the University of Cocody which has one of the sites. The second site comprises a tele-medical consultation facility with prominent hospitals in India established at Youpogong Hospital in Abidjan; it was inaugurated by the Minister of ICT and Minister of Health in June 2014. The third site, the VVIP facility at the Presidential Palace, was destroyed during the crisis in 2011 and its rehabilitation is being considered by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire.

India has agreed to establish a Rural Technology Park in Cote d'Ivoire as per decision of IAFS –II. The Government of Cote d'Ivoire have identified the Ministry of Mines and Industry who would be dealing with this project. A team from National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) is expected to visit Abidjan for detailed discussions on this project.

### **Capacity Building and Human Resource Development**

India had provided 60 training slots to Cote d'Ivoire under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme during 2012-13. This number was increased to 85 during 2013-14. In the current year 2014-15, India has offered 60 slots to Cote d'Ivoire.

The Government of India through Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) offered 9 fully paid scholarships to Ivorian youth to pursue undergraduate and post graduate studies in India. Apart from this, Ivorian students have also undergone training courses under the IAFS decisions. There are an estimated over 400 Ivorian students going to India for studies on their own finance every year since 2011-12.

## Indian Community

There are approximately over 1500 Indian nationals residing in Cote d'Ivoire. Most of them are engaged in trading and general merchandise business. Nine (9) Indian Army officers are working with the UN Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI).

ISKCON and Geeta Ashram have small setups in Abidjan.

## Bilateral Trade Relations

Total trade turnover during last five years are as follows:

Year	Exports	Imports	Total	%age Growth
2009-10	122.33	298.17	<b>420.50</b>	
2010-11	94.15	250.84	<b>344.99</b>	-17.96
2011-12	282.53	466.33	<b>748.86</b>	117.07
2012-13	395.97	384.23	<b>780.20</b>	4.19
2013-14	298.83	298.40	<b>597.23</b>	-23.45

The bilateral trade, having witnessed a substantial increase for two years, remained steady in the following year and slowed down in the year 2013-14. The reason for this spike may be attributed to political stability since mid 2011.

India imports cashew & other nuts, manganese ores, cotton, wood, scrap metals, rubber, etc. Cote d'Ivoire is the second largest exporter of cashew nut in the world and India imports around 80 percent of Ivorian cashew nuts.

The main items of India's export are cereals (rice), pharmaceutical products, machinery, articles of iron, chemicals, plastics, rubber products, vehicles, etc.

## Indian Investment in Cote d'Ivoire

A number of Indian enterprises have acquired presence in CI in recent years. Besides an Indian company mining and exporting manganese, there are other 4-5 large companies from India including Tata Steel and Shiloh Minerals (Chennai based) which are currently engaged in the exploration activities in iron and manganese mining respectively.

There are a large number of Indian companies primarily involved in trading of agri-products. Most of these are small and medium sized engaged in cashew nut, timber, scrap metal and commodities trade. However, many of these enterprises, controlled by NRIs / PIOs, are now based in Dubai, Singapore, etc.

ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) had entered into a joint venture with VANCO, a US energy company, for offshore hydrocarbon exploration in CI in 2005, but the consortium pulled out a year later due to lack of encouraging technical data. However, OVL continues to be interested in this sector in CI and is currently examining the technical data of various oil and gas blocks on offer in CI.

Many large and small Indian pharmaceutical companies, including Ranbaxy, Cadila, Ajanta, Stride, Bharat Serum, Micro Labs, IPCA, etc., have intensified their

operations in CI. Several of these companies have opened / expanded their offices in Abidjan in 2013 and 2014 with the objective of covering the entire West African Francophonie countries from Abidjan.

### **India's Economic Assistance**

Cote d'Ivoire, under the true spirit of South-South Cooperation, has received a mix of grant and soft credit from Government of India for development projects in the areas of agro-processing, transport, electricity transmission, fisheries, etc.

India has extended the Lines of Credit of US\$ 136.3 million to Cote d'Ivoire through EXIM Bank of India for the agriculture sector, IT & Biotechnology Park, Development of Rice Production Programme and for power transmission line project in Cote d'Ivoire.

### **Economic and Commercial Exchanges**

At the invitation of Prime Minister Duncan, an Indian business and investment delegation comprising 13 Indian companies visited Abidjan from 7-9 December 2014 and met with several line Ministries in addition to personal interaction with Prime Minister. A Business delegation from India had also visited Cote d'Ivoire from 6-9 April 2013 and held B2B meetings. The delegation was addressed by several Ministers of the Ivorian Cabinet. The delegation called on President Ouattara and Prime Minister Duncan.

A 9-member ICT delegation from Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC) visited Cote d'Ivoire from 29 November – 1 December 2012.

### **Useful Resources**

Embassy of India, Abidjan website:  
<http://www.eoiabidjan.org/>

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