

## **India-Rwanda Relations**

India-Rwanda relations are marked by cordiality, convergence of views and cooperation on major international issues, an increasing trend in bilateral trade and investments, greater people to people contact and a deep sense of mutual respect.

India is among the few countries in the world which voiced their concerns to alert the world about the possibility of genocide, as early as 1992. During the genocide of 1994, Indian soldiers, as a part of UNAMIR, sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.

In 1999, Rwanda established a High Commission in New Delhi. The first Rwandan High Commissioner to India was appointed in 2001. The High Commission of India in Kampala, Uganda is concurrently accredited to Rwanda. Rwanda has also appointed two Honorary Consuls in India viz. in Mumbai and Bangalore.

### **High Level Visits:**

President Paul Kagame visited India thrice in private capacity. In December 2002 he visited India to receive an honorary doctorate from the Vellore Institute of Technology. During his visit to India, President Kagame met the then Prime Minister Shri. A.B. Vajpayee. President Kagame again visited New Delhi in January 2009 to participate in the India-Africa Business Forum organized by FICCI, as the Chief Guest. During the visit he met Hon. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh. Most recently, President Kagame traveled to New Delhi in November 2014 to participate in the India Economic Forum. He met Hon'ble President Shri. Pranab Mukherjee during the visit.

Rwandan Prime Minister Bernard Makuza participated in the Vibrant Gujarat Summit in January 2011. During the visit he called on the Hon. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Rwandan PM also met Hon. Shri. Narendra Modi, the then Chief Minister of Gujarat.

Mr. Charles Murigande, Foreign Minister of Rwanda visited India in March 2003. During the visit a General Agreement on Bilateral Cooperation was signed between India and Rwanda.

The year 2006 saw the first ministerial visit from India to Rwanda. Hon. Minister for Small Scale Industries, Agro and Rural Industries, Shri Mahabir Prasad visited Rwanda in August 2006. An MoU on Cooperation in Small Scale Industries was signed during the visit.

MoS (Agriculture) Shri Kanti Lal Bhuria visited Rwanda in May 2007 and signed an MOU in the field of Agriculture and Animal Resources.

Shri Arun Yadav, Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Processing Industries visited Rwanda in May 2011 to advance and strengthen sectoral cooperation.

Former Rwandan Prime Minister and Senator Bernard Makuza led a 25-member business delegation to India in October 2011 to explore new investment opportunities. A road show was organized by Rwanda Development Board in collaboration with the Federation of Indian Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, New Delhi focusing on

trade, investments, joint ventures, technology supplies and sourcing of expertise across a wide spectrum. The two sides explored business opportunities in agro-processing and packaging, construction, pharmaceuticals, textiles, banking and financial services. Cooperation in mining and energy, including renewable energy, was also discussed.

A high-level delegation led by Hon. Minister of State for External Affairs, Smt. Preneet Kaur visited Rwanda from 15-16 February, 2012. This was the first ever ministerial level visit from Ministry of External Affairs to Rwanda. A CII business delegation consisting of 22 business executives from different sectors also accompanied the official delegation. An agreement for establishment of a bilateral Joint Commission and two MoUs on Renewable Energy Cooperation and Solar Electrification of 35 schools in Rural Rwanda were signed during the visit. The Solar Electrification of the 35 schools was completed under a grant from Government of India.

In April 2012, Gen. James Kaberebe, Minister of Defence led a three-member delegation to India to attend 'DefExpo India 2012'. During the visit, he met Hon. Defence Minister of India and discussed possible future cooperation between the two countries in the field of defence.

Hon. Speaker of Parliament of Rwanda Ms. Rose Mukantabana attended the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament held in New Delhi in October 2012. Dr. Agnes Matilda Kalibata, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources visited India in January, 2013 at the invitation of Hon'ble Union Minister of Water Resources, Shri Harish Rawat. During the visit, a MoU was signed between the two sides to promote cooperation in water resource management with a focus on irrigation and capacity building.

In November 2013, Hon. Minister of State (IC) for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Shri. K.H. Muniyappa led a business delegation to Kigali to participate in Technical and Vocational Education and Training Expo and Symposium.

In February 2014, Rwandan Minister of Infrastructure, Prof. Silas Lwakabamaba visited India to attend a conference of UN Economic Commission on Africa (UNECA). He also met the then Minister of State for Power Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia.

In June 2014, Dr. Sutanu Behuria, Secretary, Department of Heavy Industries visited Kigali to oversee the progress of the Nyaborongo Hydropower project. During the visit the Secretary met the Rwandan Minister of Infrastructure Prof. Silas Lwakabamaba.

In January 2015, Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Shri. Kalraj Mishra visited Kigali for inaugurating the Vocational Training Institute set-up under GoI assistance. During his visit he called on President Kagame. He also had meetings with Rwandan Ministers of Education, Trade and TVET.

### **Bilateral Development Partnership:**

India's engagement with Rwanda is at three levels viz. at the African Union (AU) level, at level of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and at the bilateral level.

Indian assistance to Rwanda has been guided mainly by the announcements made by India at the India-Africa Forum Summits in 2008 and 2011.

Following the first India Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-I), Rwanda was nominated by the AU to host the India-Africa Vocational Training Centre (VTC). The machinery and equipment have been commissioned and the institute was handed over to the Rwandan authorities in December 2014. Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Shri.Kalraj Mishra inaugurated the institute in January 2015.

A pan-EAC Agricultural Seed Production-cum-Demonstration Center was proposed to be established in Rwanda during IAFS-II. The Rwandan government has identified the land for setting-up the institute. An Indian team of experts visited Kigali in November 2014 to take the project forward.

A Food Testing Laboratory (FTL) (at approx. USD 2 million) was proposed to be set-up in Kigali during IAFS-II. The necessary agreements have been signed. The requisite equipment procurement is being done by Gol.

Under the IAFS-II, India offered to establish a pan-African Institute, the India-Africa Entrepreneurship Development Centre (IAEDC). The necessary MoUs are being finalized.

A 28 MW hydroelectric power project on the Nyabarongo River has been completed and commissioned under a Gol Line of Credit of US \$ 80 million. The project has augmented Rwanda's total electricity generation capacity by 25%.

India has extended LoCs totaling US\$ 120 million for the development of export targeted irrigated agricultural project [and its expansion]. The project involves expansion of irrigation facilities to more than 6500 hectares of cultivable land and comprises watershed works, farm mechanization and establishment of processing units for post-harvest processing of agriculture produce.

Solar electrification of 35 schools in rural Rwanda was completed in 2014 under a grant-assistance from India.

Under the Pan-Africa e-Network project, tele-medicine and tele-education centers were established in Rwanda in 2009 at King Faisal Hospital and College of Education respectively with an aim to enable Rwandan doctors to consult their Indian counterparts, and ensure high quality medical consultation and treatment for patients; and to ensure quality education at subsidized cost for Rwandan students.

Under the India-US Dialogue on Open Government, an Indo-US-Rwanda Trilateral Open Government Platform Initiative [OPG] has been developed which enables the participating nation to download free software and create a site which provides its citizens access to the government data for innovation, economic development and transparency.

India is a preferred destination for affordable and quality health care for Rwandans. There is an increasing trend of medi-care seekers from Rwanda to India. In 2014, the High Commission issued 756 medical-related visas to Rwandan nationals.

India is also seen as a destination for quality and affordable education by Rwandan students. Over the last three years, more than 1582 student visas have been issued by this Mission to Rwandan nationals.

Every year, the Government of India offers scholarships and fellowships to Rwandans from the public and private sector to enable them to pursue fully-paid undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate and research courses in India under ITEC, ICCR, CV Raman Fellowship and Special Agricultural Scholarship. In the current academic year i.e. since April 2014, 43 scholarships were offered to Rwanda. In addition to these, several short-term fully-funded training courses are offered to Rwandese nationals under the aegis of the IAFS. In the current academic year, 45 Rwandan have travelled to India for various fully-sponsored short-term and long-term courses.

Kigali Institute of Science & Technology (KIST) and the Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) signed an MOU in 2001 to facilitate training of KIST faculty members in VIT and deputation of teachers from VIT to KIST. VIT also provides education to Rwandan students at its institute in undergraduate, postgraduate and IT courses as per an MOU with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Scientific Research, Government of Rwanda since 2002.

## **Economic and Commercial Relations**

The bilateral trade between India and Rwanda has been gradually increasing over the last few years, even though in terms of value the total trade remains very modest at US\$ 78.10 million for 2012-13.

[In US \$ million; source: National Bank of Rwanda; 1US\$- 690.455 Rwandan Franc]

Year	2012	2013
Exports from India	159.93	220.52
Imports from Rwanda	0.99	0.24
Total bilateral Trade	160.92	220.76

Although the Balance of Trade is heavily in favour of India, India encourages higher Rwandan exports to India. Rwanda is also poised to benefit from the Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) scheme extended by India to Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The major items of India's exports to Rwanda include, among others, pharmaceuticals, vehicles including motorcycles, plastics and machinery.

## **Indian Community**

Approximately 2800 Indian nationals and PIOs are estimated to be in Rwanda. The Indian community in Rwanda is united under an Indian Association of Rwanda. The Government of Rwanda has a positive attitude towards the Indian community. During the genocide of 1994, the evacuation of Indian nationals by the Indian Government from Rwanda to Bujumbura and Nairobi was also not interfered with by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), or the Government forces.

The positive role that the Indian community plays in the Rwandan economy is well appreciated by the Rwandan Government and the people. Rwanda's only sugar refinery, Kabuye Sugar Factory, is owned by the Madhwanis. Utexrwa, the only modern textile mill of Rwanda is located in Gisozi in Kigali and is owned by Mr. Kishore Jobanputra, an Indian National. Sulfo Rwanda, a soap and cosmetics factory, is owned by a PIO Mr. TazdinJaffer.

**Useful Resources:**

High Commission of India, Kampala website:

<http://hci.gov.in/kampala/>

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