

**EMBASSY OF INDIA  
KHARTOUM**

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**INDIA-SUDAN BILATERAL RELATIONS**

**Historical Background**

1. India-Sudan relations go back in history to the time of the Nilotic and Indus Valley Civilizations (about 5000 years ago). The pastoral Beja, some 5% of Sudan's population, are a Hamitic people, claiming their origin from India. Their language, spoken from the chest (heart) rather than from the lips, could be related to ancient Prakrit.
2. There is evidence that by the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, trade via the Red Sea between India and the ancient Nubian kingdoms of Sudan had started growing. Visiting Sudan in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the famous spiritual leader Tajuddin Al Buhari stayed with the renowned al-Hindi family of Sufis originally from India (the al-Hindis have been a leading political family in Sudan).
3. By 1699, Sennar, the capital of the Black Funj Sultanate, traded extensively with India through Sawakin Port in Silk, silver ornaments, leather and gold.

**Bilateral Relations – 1900-1947**

4. The two famous steel suspension rail bridges in Khartoum and Atbara, still in use, were imported from India in the first decade of the last century. Indian experts, starting in 1900, developed Sudan's forestry sector.
5. In 1935, Mahatma Gandhi stopped over in Port Sudan (on his way to England through sea) and was welcomed by the Indian community there. In 1938, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru stopped over in Port Sudan on his way to Britain and was hosted through a function at the home of Chhotalal Samji Virani. The Graduates General Congress of Sudan formed in 1938 drew heavily on the experience of the Indian National Congress.
6. British Indian troops fought alongside Sudanese in Eritrea in 1941 winning the decisive battle of Keren (Bengal Sappers won a Victoria Cross for mine clearance in Metemma, now on the Sudan-Ethiopia border). The Sudan Block at India's National Defence Academy was partly funded with a gift of one hundred thousand pounds from the Sudanese Government in recognition of the sacrifices of Indian troops in the liberation of Sudan in the North African Campaign during World War II.

**Bilateral Relations – Post 1947**

7. The first Sudanese Parliamentary elections in 1953 were conducted by Shri Sukumar Sen, India's Chief Election Commissioner (the Sudanese Election Commission, formed in 1957, drew heavily on Indian election literature and laws).

8. A Sudanization Committee, established in February 1954 with budgetary support from India for compensation payments finished its work in April 1955. India opened a diplomatic representation in Khartoum in March 1955. In April 1955, the interim Prime Minister of the Sudan Ismail Al Azhari and several Ministers transited through New Delhi on their way to Bandung for the first Afro-Asian Relations Conference.

9. At the 1955 Bandung Conference, the delegation from a still not independent Sudan did not have a flag to mark its place. Taking out his handkerchief, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote "Sudan" on it, thus reserving a place for Sudan in the international community.

10. In 1958, India offered a six-acre plot (for a nominal price) in the Chanakyapuri area of New Delhi for the construction of Sudan Embassy.

11. In 1993 and 1994 India voted against UN resolutions critical of Sudan and opposed moves in 1994 to expel Sudan from the IMF. In 1995 it was formally suspended from IMF but subsequently under negotiations, a formula was devised as per which it was required to pay US\$ 4 million per month, which it could not honour due to its continued liquidity problem.

### **Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC)**

12. The India-Sudan Joint Committee (formed in January 1995) was upgraded to a Joint Commission at Ministerial level in June 1997 during the visit of then Foreign Minister Ali Osman Taha to India when the first Joint Committee at Ministerial level was held in New Delhi. The second meeting was held in Khartoum in April 2000 and co-chaired by Ministers of State (MOSs) from each side. The third round of India Sudan JMC was held in New Delhi on 20-21 February, 2017 and was co-chaired by Minister of State (MJA) from the Indian side and Prof. Ibrahim A. Ghandour, Foreign Minister from the Sudanese side.

### **Foreign Office Consultations**

13. Foreign Office Consultations between India and Sudan have been held regularly with the first taking place in September 2000 in Khartoum. The 6th round of India Sudan Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) were held in Delhi on December 11, 2014 and the 7th FOC's were held, on 21 December, 2016 in Khartoum. The 7th round of FOC's were led by JS (WANA) from the Indian side and Director General, Regional and Bilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the Sudanese side. The 8th round of FOC was held in New Delhi on 3 December 2018 at the level of JS (WANA) from the Indian side and Director General, Asia and Arab Affairs in the Sudanese Foreign Ministry.

### **Joint Working Group on Oil and Gas**

14. The first meeting of the India-Sudan Joint Working Group on cooperation on the Oil and Gas sector was held in Khartoum in November 2010.

## **Bilateral Trade:**

15. A snapshot of our bilateral trade is given in the following table:

Financial Year	Bilateral Trade (Million USD)			Total Bilateral Trade
	India's exports	Annual% of Indian Export +/-	India's imports	
2013-14	862.17	14.21	436.19	1298.36
2014-15	882.46	2.36	569.66	1452.12
2015-16	782.48	-11.33	149.20	931.68
2016-17	753.23	-3.98	166.21	919.44
2017-18	822.71	9.2	452.00	1274.17
2018-19 (till Sep 2018)	418.70	-	358.00	776.70

*Source: DGCI, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India*

16. As per Central Bank of Sudan's statistics up to June 2018, India is the second largest exporter to Sudan after China. It primarily exports food stuffs, petroleum products, manufactured goods, machinery and equipment, chemicals including pharmaceuticals and textiles to Sudan. Sudan mainly exports sesame seed, gum Arabic, cotton, hides and skins and ground nuts to India.

## **Economic Relations**

17. In January 2007, President Omer Al-Bashir inaugurated Sudan's first solar photo-voltaic module manufacturing plant built with Indian technology and equipment (supplied by CEL) at the Energy Research Institute in Khartoum.

18. India was one of the few countries that has unilaterally declared Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme for Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The DFTP Scheme grants duty free access on about 96% of India's total tariff lines and preferential access (Positive List) on about 2.2% of tariff lines. Only 1.8% tariff lines are under the Exclusion List. Duty Free and Positive List cover about 98.2% of global exports of LDCs. Sudan has completed all formalities to be eligible under the Scheme. Sudan is a beneficiary of India's DFTP Scheme since 2009 and Exports to India from Sudan have been gradually rising. It is observed that out of top 20 exporting items from Sudan, India provides Duty free access to 17 items and preferential duty on another item.

## **Indian Investments**

19. Indian public sector undertakings, ONGC (V) has invested over 2.3 billion in undivided Sudan. Currently, it has share in productive Block 1, 2 & 4 in Sudan. The Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas of India and the then Ministry of Energy and Mining of Sudan signed a Memorandum of Understanding on promoting Cooperation in the Oil and Gas Sector on 8 December 2009 in India.

## **Other Indian companies and their investments in Sudan**

20. As per Ministry of Industry figures the total Indian investment in various sectors upto 2015 is around US\$450 million. A number of steel units are owned by Persons of Indian origins such as Liberty Steel, Aarti Steel which is a subsidiary of Bhusan Group. Persons of Indian Origin with Gujarati roots have been staying in Omdurman area for more than 100 years. They own manufacturing units such as packaging industry, beverage and food and are mostly in trading activities. Indian pharmaceutical companies are very active in Sudan as a source of formulations and active pharmaceutical ingredients (API). The Pharmaceutical industry of Sudan especially manufacturers have a close relations with Indian Pharmaceutical machinery manufacturers who have put up a number of lines of Pharmaceutical manufacturing units in Sudan. Vegetable Oil machinery manufacturers and consultants have put up a number of manufacturing lines for the major food groups in Sudan. Orient Fan which has a major share and is a market leader in Sudan is represented by an Indian origin Omdurman businessman who also has a manufacturing facility. Major Indian brands in Pharma have representations here and so do major automotives companies like Tata, Mahindra, and Bajaj.

## **Capacity Building**

21. In November 2006, Sudan signed the Pan-African E-Network Country Agreement with India for the establishment of a satellite and fibre-optic network to provide effective communication and connectivity among the 53 members of the African Union. Funded by India, this prestigious US\$ 50 million project was implemented by Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd (TCIL). Sudanese utilized services through Tele-education, video-conferencing and tele-medicine. After the successful implementation of the first phase of this project, Government of India is launching the second phase of this project with enhanced capacity and superior equipments called e-Vidya Bharati (tele-education) and Arogya Bharati (tele-medicine) [e-VBAB]. This project will be set up in three educational institutions and one hospital in Sudan.

22. As per the decisions taken during IAFS- III held in New Delhi in October 2015, the number of ITEC slots for Sudan has been increased to 200 from the year 2016-17. The number of annual ITEC slots being offered to Sudan is the maximum to any country under WANA division. The response of the Sudanese government for ITEC programme has been encouraging. A number of Sudanese government employees are also seeking various special training courses offered under 3<sup>rd</sup> Indo-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) which includes specialized training courses in Agriculture, Irrigation, Water resources, Renewable energy, Information Technology etc. Ten Scholars from Sudan have been selected for the prestigious CV Raman Fellowship Programme during the academic year 2017-18. Besides, Sudanese Diplomats have been attending Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) organized by Foreign Service Institute (FSI), Ministry of External Affairs. Also Sudanese students avail of scholarships for higher education in

India offered by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). The below chart shows the slots offered to Sudan under ICCR and ITEC in recent years:

Year	ICCR Slots	ITEC slots
2014-15	27	150
2015-16	27	150
2016-17	27	200
2017-18	27	200
2018-19	27	200

### **Projects and Lines of Credit**

23. In April 2006, India's Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources funded a solar electrification system (implemented by Central Electronics Ltd) for Khadarab village about two hours road journey from Khartoum, bringing light for the first time into the lives of some 1,500 villagers. The project has been replicated in several other villages.

24. A number of Lines of Credit have been extended to the Government of Sudan beginning with Rs. 20 million Line of Credit from India in 1980. As on date, India has extended USD 631.67 million for various projects including two restructuring for nonpayment of pending interest dues. During President Kalam's visit in 2003, US\$ 50 million line of credit was extended to Sudan (the first ever on a Government-to-Government basis) for Indian goods and services in power, solar energy, railways and laboratory equipment.

### **Kosti Thermal Power Plant**

25. Kosti Thermal Power Plant built by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) is located at UM DABAKER in Sudan with capacity of 500 MW (4 X 125 MW). This is the largest thermal power plant in Sudan and the biggest built by BHEL in Africa. The project is financed under Gol Line of Credit of US\$ 350 million to the Government of Sudan. The power plant was commissioned and dedicated to the nation by President Bashir in Feb 2016. Significantly, this is BHEL's largest oil-fired thermal power plant in the overseas market and also its first crude-oil fired thermal power plant in Africa. BHEL executed this project on engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) basis.

### **Humanitarian Assistance**

26. India donated tents and medicines for flood victims in Gezira state in 1978 and gifted medicines to control the leishmaniasis (kala-azar) epidemic in South Sudan in 1983. India gifted 22,560 tonnes of wheat in 1985 and another 6,000 tonnes in 1987.

27. Following devastating floods in Khartoum in late 1996, India airlifted urgently needed medicines. In October 2003, India announced a grant of US\$ 50,000 of medicines for the victims of the floods in Kassala region.

28. In response to the Sudanese government's request, India donated 20,000 tons of wheat as humanitarian assistance to the people of Darfur in March 2005.

29. ONGC Videsh Ltd has donated generously for a school for special children, sports equipment, prostheses etc. In July 2007, at the request of elders of the Shilluk community, and with the endorsement of the Embassy, OVL donated a powerful generator to Kodok town in Fashdoda County of Upper Nile State. In early 2008, India donated tents and medicines worth US\$ 100,000 for flood relief in north and south Sudan. In the year 2016, OVL donated Solar street lights to a village in Ombadda area of Khartoum State. Under CSR, OVL has been undertaking projects of social relevance in Sudan as per Ministry's advice every year.

30. On 15 August 2007, the private sector Indian company Angelique International Ltd gifted US\$ 5,000 to renovate the Indian school in Kassala town, while OVL helped to refurbish the Indian Club in Port Sudan. Several Indian companies in Sudan contributed generously for repairs of a school in Kadugli done by the Indian army battalion posted there.

31. At the April 2005 Oslo donor's conference, India declared a grant of US\$ 10 million and a further concessional (HIPC terms) line of credit of US\$ 100 million. Out of this grant, US\$ 5 million each has been earmarked for Sudan and South Sudan respectively.

### **Cooperation in Health Sector**

32. Healthcare is an important sector for co-operation between the two countries and there is potential for cooperation both G2G and between the business fraternity. India continues to offer capacity building programmes under ITEC and customized programme under IAFS to Sudanese health professionals and care givers. In pursuance of the commitments made under IAFS-III, mid-career specialized training courses are conducted at regular intervals at renowned hospitals in India like Apollo Hospitals, Fortis and Artemis Hospital. India has become the major destination for Sudanese patients to avail medical treatment in India. Embassy of India, Khartoum has issued more than **3500** Medical visas in 2017 and the trend is on the upswing. India has one of the largest share in Pharma products (formulations and APIs) imports in Sudan. In addition, Pharma manufacturing companies in Sudan also source machinery from India for pharma manufacturing units. The pharmaceutical industry is a priority for Sudan.

### **Educational Cooperation**

33. Annually about 3-4 thousand students travel to India for higher studies under self financing scheme, mainly to Pune, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore. Some 35,000 Sudanese are graduates of Indian universities, some of whom are holding high positions in government and business. The number of Student Visas issued by the Mission is increasing every year. Mission issued nearly 2100 student visas in 2017. Most of Sudanese students after studying in India have carved a niche for themselves in diplomacy, academia, governance and entrepreneurship.

## **Cultural Relations**

34. ICCR sponsored cultural troupes regularly visit Sudan. The last visit was by 7-member Rajasthani Folk Dance & Music Troupe from December 07-12, 2018. On 16 May 2016, ICCR and Alzaeim Al Azhari University in Khartoum signed a MoU to open a Hindi Language Chair at the University which became operational in February 2017 when the first Hindi Teacher joined the Chair for a tenure of two years. Mission has been organizing International Day of Yoga since 2015 with significant participation of the local populace and Yoga enthusiasts. In order to commemorate 142<sup>nd</sup> Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (Rashtriya Ekta Divas), Mission organized various events on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017 and 2018. Mission is organizing various events to celebrate Gandhiji's 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary.

## **Indian Community**

35. Out of about 3500 Indians in Sudan, the settled Indian community in Sudan is now about 1500, which is about 150 years young. The first Indian Luvchand Amarchand Shah, a Gujarati trader who imported goods from India, is believed to have come to Sudan from Aden in the early 1860s. When his business expanded, he brought his relatives from Saurashtra, who in turn invited their own friends and family. This is how the Indian community grew and developed in Sudan initially. From the small towns in the eastern part of the country, (Port Sudan and Sawakin) the early Indian pioneers moved into the interior of the country and settled down in Omdurman, Kassala, Gedaref and Wad Medani.

36. Other expatriate Indian community members are working as professionals in key sectors of the Sudanese economy. There are a few Indian civilian officers working in United Nations missions in Darfur and in Abyei in addition to other UN organisations.

37. The Mission maintains a website ([www.eoikhartoum.in](http://www.eoikhartoum.in)), a Face book Page (India in Sudan) and a Twitter handle(@EoI\_Khartoum) as social media tools and disseminates information pertaining to all aspects of Mission's activities (Press release, Advertisement, ITEC and ICCR related information, visa and consular information, advisories, commercial queries etc.), MEA's publicity contents, fair and festival of India, and so on.

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