

## **Bilateral Brief: India-The Gambia**

India and The Gambia share warm and friendly bilateral relations. India established diplomatic relations with the Gambia in 1965, immediately after independence of the latter from the United Kingdom. Then Deputy Minister for External Affairs, Shri Dinesh Singh, visited Banjul to participate in the Independence celebrations on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 1965.

The bilateral engagement stands on the pillars of our amicable political relations, development partnership, trade and people-to-people contacts.

The Gambia has been generally supportive of India in various international fora.

### **Recent high-level meetings**

Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi met President Barrow on sidelines of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London in April, 2018.

Hon'ble President of India paid the first ever State Visit to The Gambia from July 30 – August 1, 2019. During the visit, the two countries signed a MoU on cooperation in the field of Ayurveda and traditional system of medicine and homeopathy.

H.E. Dr. Mamadou Tangara, The Gambian Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad accompanied by senior officials of his Ministry visited India from March 7-12, 2019. This visit was in the context of 10th Anniversary of establishment of the Gambian High Commission in New Delhi (inaugurated in February 2009) and the 54th Independence Day celebration of the Republic of The Gambia. Minister Dr. Tangara held a meeting with External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, in New Delhi on March 7, 2019. An MoU with FSI (on Foreign Service training) was signed. Dr. Tangara also delivered a talk on 'Multilateralism and its Role in Building and Sustaining Peace in Africa and Asia' organised at the Indian Council of World Affairs.

The Gambian Defence Minister Sheikh Omar Faye attended DEFEXPO 2020 and also attended the 1<sup>st</sup> India-Africa Defence Ministers Meet held on the margins.

FM Dr Tangara called EAM in July 2020 to wish for successful UNSC Non Permanent Membership term 2021-22 and to thank for the donation of medicines to fight Covid-19 pandemic.

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri V. Muraleedharan [MOS(VM)] visited The Gambia from 1-2 November 2021 when he held extensive discussion with Foreign minister Dr. Tangara and also called on President H. E. Mr . Adama Barrow. A Framework agreement setting up bilateral Joint Commission mechanism and another one for visa waiver for official and diplomatic passport holders were signed. Also released on 1 November 2021 was the design of a postal stamp to be issued by The Gambia in the context of 75 years of India’s Independence.

**Trade & Economic:**

An agreement on bilateral cooperation inter alia setting up Bilateral Joint Commission was signed on 1 November 2021. It has also been decided to set up Joint Trade Committee.

Bilateral trade between India and The Gambia for the past few years, in \$mn, is given below:

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022 (till Sep 2021)
<b>EXPORT</b>	62	120	157	132	130	82
<b>IMPORT</b>	43	59	45	41	38	23
<b>TOTAL TRADE</b>	106	179	202	173	168	106

export to The Gambia include cotton yarn, fabrics & made-ups; broken rice; and, pharmaceuticals, coffee, biscuits etc.

India’s main items of import from The Gambia are raw cashew nuts, ferrous and non-ferrous scrap.

India has extended its Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) scheme to the imports from The Gambia.

The Gambia has signed and ratified the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement. The Gambian Minister of Petroleum & Energy, Mr. Fafa SANYANG participated in ISA Founding Conference in New Delhi on March 11, 2018, the First ISA Assembly and 2nd Re-Invest in Greater

Noida (October 3-5, 2018) and 2<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly Meeting in New Delhi in Oct 2019.

Embassy regularly organizes regular onsite/ online B2B / track 1.5 interactions covering sectors that hold potential to strengthen bilateral trade and economic engagement, e.g., on Food processing (webinar organized on 3rd July 2020), Digital (24th July 2020), Dairy (25th September 2020), Engineering (Medical Devices, auto Parts & Components, Electrical Machinery & Agricultural Machinery) (21st August 2020) and education (Sep 2020) and on Textiles and Imitation Jewellery (Oct 2020).

### **Development Partnerhship**

The Government of India has extended several Lines of Credit to the Government of Gambia covering diverse areas including Tractor Assembly, construction of National Assembly Building Complex (inaugurated in October 2014), replacement of Asbestos Water Pipes with UPVC pipes; Electricity Expansion Project in Greater Banjul Area (inaugurated in November 2020).

India created Vocational Training Center (VTC) and Incubation Center (IC) in Banjul and handed over to the Gambian authorities in September 2017. The Centre is imparting training in disciplines such as plumbing, welding, electrical, construction sector, carpentry, draftsman-ship, survey, plastic technology demonstration cum training, ICT, agro and food processing, gemstones cutting and polishing etc.

Under ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) scheme, India has allotted 75 slots to The Gambians.

25 Senior Civil Servants from The Gambia participated in the ongoing Special Training Programme held at National Centre for Good Governance, Mussoorie from June 10 to June 25, 2019 under ITEC+ programme.

A Special Training programme from June 20 to July 20, 2018 was organized by Foreign Service Institute for 20 Gambian Diplomats.

Under India's developmental support (capacity Building Measures) to Africa, 10 Solar Mamas (Illiterate women) were trained at Barefoot College in India during March-September, 2019. The training imparted covered solar electrification, solar panel & light installation/maintenance and entrepreneurial skills for a period of six months.

India is exploring setting up in The Gambia a pilot solar hydel project under ISA (International Solar Alliance) framework.

The Gambia joined India's tele-education and tele-medicine platform eVBAB in March 2020; by October 2021, more than 80 Gambian students registered for tele-education courses under this scheme.

An MoU was signed on 8 July 2021 for bilateral cooperation in Administrative Reforms.

Regular OPD medial camps are held in The Gambia with the presence of top doctors from India, the last being in November 2021.

The project 'Using of Drones and Early Warning Systems for Pre & Post Floods Disaster Management in The Gambia' is supported (2020-2021) by India under Commonwealth Window of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund.

### **Education, Culture and Yoga**

President Adama Barrow in 2019 wrote an anthology on "What Gandhi Means to me" as part of ongoing celebrations of 150th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations allots 33 scholarships to The Gambian nationals every year for higher education in India.

ICCR Bollywood troupe Dance Smith gave two performances in Banjul in January - February 2020.

Bollywood is popular among the Gambians with regular TV and radio programs broadcast in the Gambia around the theme of Bollywood.

International Day of Yoga is enthusiastically celebrated in The Gambia every year.

### **Indian community:**

The approximate number of Indian nationals in Gambia is 1600. They are mostly engaged in trading and private businesses including in the construction sector.

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