

## **INDIA – ETHIOPIA BILATERAL RELATIONS**

### **Historical linkages**

- Historical linkages between India and Ethiopia go back about 2,000 years of recorded history. Trade between the two countries flourished during the ancient Axumite Empire (1 Century AD), which is seen to be origin of modern Ethiopia. Indian traders trade silk and spices for gold and ivory through the ancient port of Adulis in the 6 Century AD. In the 16 century AD, the Portuguese assisted the Christian King in Ethiopia to repel Muslim invaders, and with them came Indians from Goa. In 1868, General Robert Napier led a punitive expedition to obtain the release of European diplomats and missionaries who had been imprisoned by Emperor Tewodros II in his bunker fort at Makdala. The 30,000 strong force had 13,000 soldiers from India, mostly Sikhs. The British Army that ended the Italian occupation of Ethiopia (1936-41) also had a sizeable contingent of Indian soldiers. General William Plat, who led one of the three simultaneous attacks, commanded a force consisting of the 4 and 5 Indian Divisions.
- Soon after achieving independence, a goodwill mission led by Sardar Sant Singh was sent to Ethiopia. Diplomatic relations at legation level were established in 1948. Full diplomatic relations were established in 1950 with Sardar Sant Singh as the first Ambassador.
- India Ethiopia relations have been traditionally close and friendly. Ethiopia has been appreciative of the fact that India has never been hostile to Ethiopian interests. Ethiopia has been consistent in their support for India in the international fora on various issues.

### **Visit of Indian External Affairs Minister to Ethiopia (22 June 2022)**

- External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Addis Ababa and met Ethiopian President H.E. Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde. They discussed bilateral cooperation including education, health and investment as also development partnership. Also, they exchanged perspectives on the regional and international situation. EAM, who also exchanged pleasantries with Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mr. Demeke Mekonnen, appreciated their warm sentiment towards India and their good words for our bilateral partnership.
- EAM inaugurated the Indian Embassy's Chancery Building & Residential Complex. He was joined by Ethiopian Minister for Women and Social Affairs H.E. Dr. Ergogio Tesfaye (PhD) and State Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Amb Tesfaye Yilma. Later, EAM and Minister Dr. Ergogio Tesfaye addressed the Indian community.

### **Visit of Secretary (Economic Relations) to Ethiopia (4 Oct 2022)**

- Shri Dammu Ravi, Secretary (Economic Relations) visited Addis Ababa and met with Dr. Monique Nsanabaganwa, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission to discuss India's engagement with African Union. The consultations covered issues related to India's cooperation with African Union including the possibility of holding of the next round of the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS).

- Secretary (ER) met Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Amb. Tesfaye Yilma to discuss various developments in India-Ethiopia bilateral relations, including political exchanges, development cooperation, training and capacity building.
- Secretary (ER) also addressed a gathering of India Business Community organized by the Indian Embassy in Addis Ababa. Over 100 business persons attended the event.

### **Foreign Office Consultations in Addis Ababa (3 Oct 2022)**

- The 4th Round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) between India and Ethiopia was held in Addis Ababa and co-chaired by Joint Secretary (East and Southern Africa), Ministry of External Affairs, India and Director General for Middle East, Asia & Pacific countries Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia.
- Both delegations reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations during the Foreign Office Consultations. Issues discussed included political engagements, trade & economic matters, development partnership projects, cultural and consular matters, cooperation in higher education, people-to-people contacts, etc. It was also agreed to work to expand engagement in fields such as defence, Science and Technology, education, agriculture and allied sectors and civil aviation. Views on regional and global issues of mutual interest as well as AU related matters were also exchanged.

### **Visit of Ethiopian Defence Minister to India (Oct 2022)**

- Ethiopian Defence Minister Abreham Belay attended the India-Africa Defence Dialogue in Gandhinagar (17-20 Oct 2022).
- During the visit, he met Raksha Mantri and discussed bilateral relations including cooperation in the defence sector.

### **Visit of Ethiopian Minister of Women and Social Affairs to India (Aug 2022)**

- Ethiopian Minister for Women and Social Affairs Dr. Ergogie Tesfaye (PhD) was conferred ICCR Distinguished Alumni Award – 2021 in New Delhi (8 Aug 2022).
- During the visit, she met External Affairs Minister, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment and Minister of Women and Child Development.
- Minister for Women and Social Affairs also visited Andhra University and delivered a public lecture. She also visited Bhagwan Mahavir Viklang Sahatya Samiti (Jaipur Foot Rehabilitation Centre) in Jaipur.

### **Visit of Ethiopian Minister of Industry to India (July 2022)**

- Ethiopian Minister of Industry Melaku Aebel participated in the 17th CII-Exim Bank Conclave on India – Africa Growth Partnership (19-20 July 2022). He was one of the speakers at the Trade Ministerial Session – Building B2G Bridge. He spoke about the efforts by the governments to put in place the policy framework for trade and investment to thrive between India and Africa.

- Minister of Industry met Minister of State for Commerce & Industry Smt. Anupriya Patel in New Delhi (19 July). They discussed on strengthening our strong and deep bilateral relationship with a focus on enhanced economic cooperation and bilateral engagement.

### **Visit of Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister to India (Feb 2021)**

- Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen visited New Delhi (17-19 Feb 2021). During the visit, he met External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar and discussed wide ranging issues including bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. Earlier (18 Feb), the two Ministers inaugurated the newly constructed chancery building and residence of the Ethiopian Embassy. DPM & FM Mekonnen and MOS for External Affairs attended the Indian-Ethiopia Business Forum meeting (17 Feb).
- The two sides signed an Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for holders of Diplomatic Passports and a MoU between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Central Research Institute, India and Wollo University, Ethiopia.

### **Meetings**

- External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar met Ethiopian DPM & FM Demeke Mekonnen on the sidelines of UNGA in New York (21 Sept 2022 and 26 Sept 2021). On 27<sup>th</sup> Aug 2021, EAM and Ethiopian DPM & FM had telephonic conversation and inter alia discussed bilateral relations and UNSC matters including the developments in Ethiopia.
- Ethiopian Minister of Trade participated in the CII-Exim Bank conclave (14 July 2021). CEO of Tourism Ethiopia participated in the segment on tourism and hospitality (15 July 2021). Ethiopian Agriculture Minister participated as Guest of Honour in the CII India Africa Agriculture & Food Processing Summit (15 Sept 2021). Ethiopian Minister of Trade & Regional Integration participated in the CII Partnership Summit (13 Dec).

### **Bilateral visits**

- President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a State Visit to Ethiopia (Oct 2017) and held talks with Ethiopian President and Prime Minister. Other high level visits included President S. Radhakrishnan (1965), Vice President Zakir Hussain (1967), President V.V. Giri (1972), PM Manmohan Singh (2011) and Vice President Hamid Ali Ansari (May 2013).
- High level visits from Ethiopia included those of Emperor Haile Selassie (1956 & 1968), Col. Hailemariam Mengistu (1983 and 1985), PM Meles Zenawi (1997, 2007, 2008 & 2011) and PM Hailemariam Desalegn (2015).
- Recent ministerial visits from India included those by External Affairs Minister (2007, 2011), Commerce Minister (2011), MOS for External Affairs (2011, 2012), MOS for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution (2011), MoS for Finance (2015), Health Minister (Dec 2017) and MOS for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (2018).
- From Ethiopia, visits were made by State Minister for Labour and Skills (Oct 2022), State Minister for Innovation and Technology (Aug 2022), Special Envoy of PM & former President Dr. Mulatu Teshome (Nov 2019), Minister of Water, Irrigation

&Electricity for the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance (March 2018), and Minister for Agriculture and Natural Resources (March 2018)

### **Bilateral Agreements**

- Air Services Agreement (1967); 4 MoUs signed subsequently in 1972, 1993, 2004 and 2008.
- Agreement on Technical, Economic and Scientific Cooperation (1969)
- Cultural Agreement (1983)
- Trade Agreement (1997)
- Agreement on Cooperation in Micro Dams and Small Scale Irrigation Schemes (2002)
- Agreement on Establishment of Joint Ministerial Commission (2007)
- Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (2007)
- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Science and Technology (2007)
- Educational Exchange Programme (2007)
- Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (2007)
- Double Taxation avoidance treaty (2011)
- MOU between NSIC, India and FEMSEDA (2011)
- MOU between ICAR and Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (2011)
- Trade Agreement (2017)
- Agreement for Cooperation in the field of Information, Communication and Media (2017)
- MoU for Cooperation between SushmaSwaraj Institute of Foreign Service and Ethiopian Foreign Relations Services Training Institute (May 2018)
- Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for holders of Diplomatic Passports (2021)
- MoU between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Central Research Institute, India and Wollo University, Ethiopia (2021)

### **Bilateral Trade**

- Bilateral trade between Ethiopia and India stood at USD 1.8 billion in 2021, out of which Ethiopia's exports were about USD 75.13 million. In 2020, bilateral trade between Ethiopia and India was USD1.14 billion, out of which India's exports to Ethiopia were USD 1.08 billion and imports were USD 56.55 million (Source: National Bank of Ethiopia).
- Exports from India mainly include primary and semi-finished iron and steel products, drugs and pharmaceuticals, machinery and instruments, manufactures of metal, etc. Major imports by India from Ethiopia were: pulses, precious and semi-precious stones, vegetables & seeds, leather and spices.
- India is the second largest trading partner for Ethiopia, accounting for 10.2% of Ethiopia's global trade.

### **Cultural Cooperation**

**2022**

- As part of AzadiKaAmritMahotsav / India@75 celebrations and 75 years of diplomatic relations between India and Ethiopia, a number of cultural/sporting events were organized during the month of October - India Culture Day and Unity Day was celebrated at Embassy (29 Oct). More than 700 guests attended the event. Also, Ayurveda Day was celebrated at the Embassy (23 Oct). India Cup (Volleyball) was organized in Addis Ababa (9 Oct). Also, a free medical camp was organized at the Embassy (9 Oct). About 350 people attended the medical camp. ICCR also sponsored the visit of Kathak group (10-12 Oct). The group performed in Addis Ababa and Bole Lemi.
- ICCR also sponsored the visit of Qawwali group (12-14 Sept). The group performed in Bishoftu, Addis Ababa and Hawassa. During the month of May/June 2022, Embassy took the lead in celebrating International Day of Yoga in Ethiopia, and 214 events were held in various places in Ethiopia including factories (100), universities (35) and schools (24).
- During 2022, National Day Receptions were held in Addis Ababa and Hawassa (Jan). Dr. Ergogie Tesfaye, Minister of Women and Social Affairs who was conferred the Distinguished ICCR Alumni Award 2021 was felicitated during the Reception in Addis Ababa. ITEC Day was celebrated at Adama Science and Technology University (22 Jan) and Ambo (8 March).
- On the occasion of Independence Day of India (15 Aug), a flag hoisting function was held at Embassy of India premises in Addis Ababa. This was followed by cultural programme. Receptions were also held in Bishoftu (Oromia region) and DebreBirhan (Amhara region). Embassy celebrated National Youth Day / Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda (12 Jan), and organized Kite flying festival in Addis Ababa (15 Jan) & Bishoftu (16 Jan), India Cup – Cricket (March), India Cup – Golf (March), Holi festival (20 March), Nowruz celebrations in Addis Ababa (27 March), India Cup – Badminton (15 May), Bachcha's Got Talent (22 May), Sporting Day Out at Embassy (10 July), National Handloom Day (7 Aug), Hindi Diwas (13 Sept), ITEC Day in Addis Ababa (16 Sept) and Gandhi Jayanti (2 Oct).
- Indian films were screened at Wollega University (March), Gambella University (March) St. Mary Convent School, Babich (March), KidaneMehiret School, Nekemte (March), Don Bosco School in AdamiTullu (April), Mary Help School, Zway (April), WolaitaSodo University (May) and Don Bosco School in Gambella (May). Tree plantation drives were held in Arbaminch University (Feb), Gambella University (March), Don Bosco School, AdamiTullu (April) and Don Bosco School in Gambella (May).
- During 2022, Mission has reached out to universities in Ethiopia and held discussions on possible areas of collaboration with India – Adama Science and Technology University (Jan), Gambella University (Feb & May), Ambo University (March), Wachemo University (March & May), Arbaminch University (March & April), WollaitaSodo University (April), Mettu University (April), Werabe University (May), Wollega University (May), Samara University (May), Harambee University (May, June & Sept), Bahir Dar University (June), Unity University (Aug) and Infolink University (Sept).

### **2021**

- Embassy and Indian Women's Association organized a cultural evening (6 March) to commemorate the International Women's Day. It was attended by Minister of Labour & Social Affairs, Members of Parliament and about 250 guests. During the National Day

Reception (26 Jan), Embassy felicitated Shri M Sardarwallah, the only PBD Awardee (2021) from Ethiopia and Indian school teachers who have served in Ethiopia for the past 40 years.

- During the month of June 2021, Embassy took the lead in celebrating International Day of Yoga in Ethiopia, and 100 events were held in various places in Ethiopia including universities (26), schools (2), factories (43) and community events. The main IDY celebration was held in Addis Ababa on 27 June 2021. Other events included yoga seminar, quiz competitions and a yoga session at the prestigious Unity Park in Addis Ababa.
- Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated at Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Addis Ababa (2 Oct). On the occasion of Hindi Diwas, KaviSammelan was held for the first time in Ethiopia at the Embassy premises (18 Sept). Embassy organized the participation of ShriArun Gemini and Smt. MumtazNaseem from India at the KaviSammelan. Other cultural events included India food festival (21 Aug), Independence Day Special Week (15-20 Aug), Sports evening (11 April) and Holi celebrations in Bishoftu (30 March). Also, Mission conducts free yoga sessions every Saturday and Sunday and Indian Dance classes every Saturday.
- Indian films were screened at Mettu University (Aug) and Indian film evening at Addis Ababa Science & Technology University (Aug). Tree plantation drives were held in Kombolcha Institute of Technology (July), BuleHorra University (Aug), Hawassa University (Aug), and DambiDollo University (Oct).
- During 2021, Mission reached out to universities in Ethiopia and held discussions on possible areas of collaboration with India – Gambella University (Dec), Arba Minch University (Dec), Bahir Dar University (Dec), Adama Science & Technology University (Nov), Assosa University (Oct), Jimma University (Oct), Jigjiga University (Oct), Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa University (Sept), St Mary's University (July), Oromia State University (June), Wachemo University (April), DambiDollo University (March), Dire Dawa University (March), Haramaya University (March), Oromia Police College (March), Adama Science & Technology University (Feb), Hawassa University (Jan) and Ambo University (Jan).

### **Visits from Ethiopia**

- An Ethiopian cultural group participated at the SurajKundMela (March-April 2022). The group's visit was sponsored by Government of India and State Government of Haryana. Earlier, Meskerem Asseged, a renowned art critic in Ethiopia and Director, Zoma Contemporary Art Centre, Addis Ababa visited India under ICCR Academic Visitors Programme (Feb/March 2015). Ms. ZenebuTadesseWoldetsadik, Ethiopian Minister of Women, Child & Youth Welfare was selected by ICCR in 2015 for the Distinguished Alumni Award for her outstanding contribution towards bilateral relations between India and Ethiopia in the field of promotion of welfare of women, children and youth in Ethiopia. Dr. NegeriLencho, Minister of Communication Affairs visited India (March 2017) under ICCR Distinguished Visitors Programme. Ethiopian traditional dance troupe YeTemesgenLijoch, was sent to India in October 2015 for performance during IAFS-III. An Ethiopian cultural troupe performed in India during the Africa Day Celebrations in

Delhi (May 2017). Ethiopian National Theatre Traditional Band gave performances in New Delhi, Bhubaneswar and Goa (May 2018).

### **Indian Community**

- The early settlers among the Indian community in Ethiopia came from Gujarat in the latter years of the 19th century. During imperial times, there were also tens of thousands of Indian teachers in schools all over Ethiopia, even in the most remote parts.
- Today, the Indian community has a sizeable presence in the educational sector of Ethiopia. There are about 1200 Indian Lecturers/Professors in about 40 Universities and higher educational institutions.
- The Indian Diaspora in Ethiopia is estimated to be about 5000. There are a number of Indian companies in this country. There are also several Ethiopian companies who engage Indian workers.

**October2022**