

INDIA-ETHIOPIA BILATERAL RELATIONS

Historical linkages:

- Historical linkages between India and Ethiopia goes back 2,000 years of recorded history. Trade between the two countries flourished during the Axumite Empire (1st century AD). Indian traders trade silk and spices for gold and ivory through the ancient port of Adulis in the 6th Century AD. In the 16th 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. The British Army that helped Ethiopia to end the Italian occupation of Ethiopia (1936-41) also had a sizeable contingent of Indian soldiers.
- 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.

Institutional Framework:

- An agreement to establish a Joint Commission was signed in July 2007. The first meeting was held in New Delhi (Dec 2010). The second JCM was also held in New Delhi (May 2018), which was headed by FMs of the two countries. MOU between the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service and the Foreign Service Training Institute of Ethiopia was signed after the conclusion of JCM.
- A Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations was signed during the visit of the then EAM to Ethiopia in July 2007. The first FOC was held in New Delhi (March 2010), second in Addis Ababa (Jan 2012), third FOC was in Addis Ababa (Feb 2017) and the last FOC was held in Addis Ababa in October 2022.
- Under the India-Africa Forum Summit initiative, the third 3rd ICWA Conference on "India's Engagement with North Africa and Horn of Africa: Issues, Initiatives and Prospects" was held in Addis Ababa (March

2019). The two days Conference was attended by speakers from 10 African countries including Ethiopia.

Bilateral visits

- Prime Minister paid a visit to Ethiopia on 16-17 December 2025, elevating ties between the two countries to a strategic partnership.
- 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), President Ram Nath Kovind (2017).
- 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).

PM's meeting with Ethiopian counterpart

- On the sidelines of G20 summit at Johannesburg, PM with Ethiopian PM Dr. Abiy Ahmed and held a discussion on boosting ties in sectors like technology, skilling and more (22 November 2025).
- Ethiopian PM participated in the third Voice of Global South chaired by PM (17 August 2024)
- Ethiopian PM participated in the inaugural Leaders' Session at the Second Voice of the Global South Summit (17 Nov 2023).
- PM met Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Johannesburg. They discussed ways to expand bilateral cooperation in areas like parliamentary contacts, development partnership & capacity building, trade & investment, defence, ICT, agriculture, skilling of youth and people to people linkages. (24 Aug 2023)
- Earlier (6 May 2020), PM had a telephone conversation with PM Dr. Abiy Ahmed (6 May 2020). The two leaders discussed the domestic, regional and global challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and expressed solidarity with each other during the health crisis.

Visits of EAM (13 April 2023, 22 June 2022 & 2021)

- On the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting in Johannesburg, EAM met with Ethiopian Foreign Minister and discussed bilateral cooperation and strengthen diplomatic relations between the two nations (February 20, 2025)
- EAM met Ethiopian Foreign Minister on the sidelines of 79th UNGA (September 25, 2024) discussed bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation.
- EAM visited Addis Ababa (13 April 2023) and met Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister. They discussed bilateral relations, developments in the region and shared views on our multilateral cooperation including in the African Union and United Nations. During EAM's visit to Mozambique, he had telephonic conversation with Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed (14 April 2023). Prior to that, EAM met him on the sidelines of UNGA in New York (21 Sept 2022 and 26 Sept 2021). On 27 Aug 2021, EAM and Ethiopian DPM & FM had telephonic conversation and inter alia discussed bilateral relations and UNSC matters including the developments in Ethiopia.
- EAM visited Addis Ababa (22 June 2022) for discussions with Dy PM and Foreign Minister, on wide ranging issues of bilateral, regional and global significance; inaugurated Chancery Building & Residential Complex and addressed the Indian community. He also called upon the PM and President.

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.

Ethiopian Parliamentary delegation to India (20-24 Feb 2023)

- A 50-member Ethiopian Parliamentary delegation attended a training programme at the Parliamentary Research & Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE) in New Delhi. The delegation consisted of govt whips, chairperson & deputy chairperson of various standing committees and speakers of 12 regional parliaments.

Ministerial-level visits from Ethiopia

- Ethiopian Defense Minister visited India and signed a defense cooperation MoU at the sidelines of Aero India 2025 (11 February 2025). She also had a bilateral meeting with Defence Minister of India
- Minister of Industry Mr. Melaku Alebel participated in Bharat Tex 2024 in New Delhi in February 2024.

Visits from Ethiopia

- A 32-member Parliamentary Delegation visited National Centre for Good Governance for a one-week capacity building programme on "Leadership for 21st Century Women Professional" from 09 to 14 March 2026
- Amb. Hadera Abera, State Minister for Foreign Affairs and Ethiopia's BRICS Sherpa, led Ethiopia's delegation to the First BRICS Sherpas' Meeting 2026, held in New Delhi on 9 February 2026. On the sidelines of the meeting, Ambassador Hadera conducted bilateral talks with the Minister of State for Commerce and Industry.
- A delegation led by Amb. Bankole Adeoye, African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) participated in the AI Impact Summit in New Delhi. On the sidelines of the summit, he held discussions with Secretary (ER) and also visited the Center for United Nations Peacekeeping.

- Six Member African Union team visited Delhi from 01-05 December, 2025 for the consultations on 4th India Africa Forum Summit to be held in New Delhi.
- A delegation headed by State Minister of Health H.E. Ms. Firehiwot Abebe Gobena visited India from November 08-16, 2025 as part of the study tour conducted in collaboration with World Bank, to engage in discussion and exploring opportunities for enhanced collaboration with the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors.
- Gen. Teshome Gemechu, Director General for Defence Foreign Relations and Military Cooperation of Ethiopia visited New Delhi from 15-17 October 2025 for the first ever Joint Defence Cooperation meeting. The visit marks a milestone in long standing bilateral defence relationship between the two countries.
- A seven-member Ethiopian delegation, led by the Chairperson of the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), visited New Delhi from 26–30 August 2025.
- Ms. Seble Shambel, Lead Executive Officer at the Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority, attended the 2nd Policy Makers Visit at New Delhi from 16-19 June 2025.
- A 60 Member security personnel from Ethiopian Federal Police attended forensic course at National Forensic Science University, Gujarat.
- A 41 Member delegation led by Deputy Speaker of the House of Federation of Ethiopia attended a capacity building programme at National Centre for Good Governance at New Delhi from 12-17 May 2025 under ITEC.
- Mr. Melkamu Haile, a Film Director & Writer and Mr. Fisehatsion Nibret, Cinematographer & Filmmaker from Ethiopia participated in WAVES summit from 01-04 May 2025.

Visits from India

- A delegation led by Secretary (ER) visited Addis Ababa on 23–24 January 2026, meeting the AU Commission Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, as well as senior officials including Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security and incoming Chair of the Permanent Representative Committee. The discussions focused on strengthening collaboration and deepening the India-Africa partnership ahead of IAFS-IV.

- CII Delegation visited Ethiopia and in collaboration with the Embassy, organised an EXCON Roadshow on 12th November 2025 at Sheraton Hotel Addis Ababa.
- A high-level ISA delegation led by Mr. Ashish Khanna, Director General of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) visited Ethiopia and met with H.E. Dr. Eng. Sultan Woli, Hon'ble State Minister of the Ministry of Water and Energy, Ethiopia, in Addis Ababa to discuss the country's solar energy development plans. (11-15 Aug 2025)
- On June 11-12 2025, a three-member delegation led by Secretary (ER) visited Ethiopia for preparatory meetings ahead of the upcoming Fourth India Africa Forum Summit (IFS-IV). Over the two-day visit, the delegation held constructive discussions with key stakeholders, including the Chairperson and senior Commissioners of the African Union Commission, the Director General of Africa CDC, the Executive Secretary of UNECA, the Secretary General of the Organisation of Southern Cooperation (OSC), and Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Visit of Multi-Party Parliamentary delegation to Ethiopia (May 30- June 01, 2025)

- A multi-party Parliamentary delegation, led by Ms. Supriya Sule, visited Ethiopia from May 30- June 01, 2025. This visit was part of a four-nation tour planned following the April 22 Pahalgam terrorist attack, 'Operation Sindoor', and the subsequent developments. During their visit, the delegation held wide-ranging discussions with Ethiopian dignitaries, including former Prime Minister Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn; Mr. Adem Farah, Deputy Chairperson of the Prosperity Party with the rank of Deputy Prime Minister; Mr. Tagesse Chafo, Speaker of the House of People's Representatives; and representatives from the African Union. They also interacted with members of the media, academia, civil society, think tanks, and the Indian diaspora in Ethiopia. The discussions focused primarily on India's unwavering stance on 'zero tolerance towards terrorism'. Ethiopia expressed strong solidarity with India and reiterated its own firm commitment to combating terrorism.

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 between FSI and Foreign Service Institute of Ethiopia (2018)
- MoU between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Central Research Institute, India and Wollo University, Ethiopia (2021)
- MoU between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of India and the Information Network Security Administration of Ethiopia in field of Digital Public Infrastructure. (2024)
- MoU between India and Ethiopia on the cooperation in the field of Defence (2025)
- Framework Agreement on “Establishment of the International Big Cat Alliance” which aims to conserve seven major big cat species: tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards, cheetahs, jaguars and pumas.

- Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Custom Matters (2025).
- MoU on Establishing Data Centre at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (2025).
- Implementing agreement between CUNPK, India and IPSTI, Ethiopia for Cooperation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Training (2025).
- Ethiopia has endorsed the AI Impact Summit Declaration (New Delhi 18-19 February 2026)

Bilateral Trade

- According to Department of Commerce, India's total trade with Ethiopia stood at US\$ 550.19/- million during 2024-2025. During this period, India's export to Ethiopia were US\$ 476.81/- million and imports were US\$ 73.38/- million. From April 2025 till January 2026, India's total trade with Ethiopia stood at 544.20 million. According to UN Comtrade Database, India's export to Ethiopia were US\$1.64 bn and imports were US\$139 mn.
- Major items of Exports: Pharmaceuticals, vehicles, machinery, electrical, iron & steel products, chemicals, paper products, plastic products, textile products, electrical machinery & equipment cereals, aluminum, etc.
- Major items of Imports: Pulses, flax yarn, precious & semiprecious stones, vegetables, lead & articles, oil seeds, spices and leather s.

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 150 Indian faculties in various Ethiopian Universities and higher educational institutions.
- The Indian Diaspora in Ethiopia is estimated to about 2500. There are a number of Indian companies in this country. There are also several Ethiopian companies who engage Indian workers.

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