

India - Rwanda Bilateral Brief

Political Relations

Bilateral relations between India and Rwanda have been cordial and grown steadily over the years. In 1999, Rwanda officially opened its Mission in New Delhi and appointed its first resident Ambassador in New Delhi in 2001. Rwanda opted to become a member of the Commonwealth in 2009 even though it had not been a British protectorate or a British colony. India opened its resident Mission in Kigali on 15 August 2018.

High Level Visits from India

2. Shri Arun Yadav, Hon'ble Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Processing Industries visited Rwanda in May 2011 to advance and strengthen sectoral cooperation.
3. A high-level delegation led by Smt. Preneet Kaur, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs visited Rwanda in February, 2012. The Minister was accompanied by a multi-sectoral CII business delegation.
4. In November 2013, Shri K.H. Muniyappa, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, led a business delegation to Kigali to participate in Technical and Vocational Education and Training Expo and Symposium.
5. Shri Kalraj Mishra, Hon'ble Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises visited Kigali in January 2015 to inaugurate the Vocational Training Institute set-up under GOI assistance.
6. Shri Sudarshan Bhagat, Hon'ble Minister of State for Rural Development visited Rwanda in July 2015 as PM's Special Envoy to extend invitation to the President and the Foreign Minister of Rwanda for IAFS-III.
7. Shri Anil Madhav Dave, Hon'ble Minister of State of Environment, Forest and Climate Change visited Rwanda in October 2016, to participate in the 28th Meeting of the Montreal Protocol.
8. Shri M. Hamid Ansari, Hon'ble Vice President of India visited Rwanda from 19-21 February 2017. During the visit, he called on the President of Rwanda and had meetings with President of Rwandan Senate (Upper House) and Prime Minister of Rwanda. He also interacted with Indian community at a reception hosted by the High Commissioner, attended a business forum event organized by Rwanda Development Board where representatives from FICCI also participated. An innovators exhibition was also inaugurated by him along with Prime Minister of Rwanda. He also addressed students of the University of Rwanda.
9. Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Hon'ble Minister of Jal Shakti visited Kigali on 06-07 September 2018 to participate in the Africa Green Revolution Forum (AGRF).

10. The first State visit of Sh. Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to Rwanda took place on 23-24 July, 2018. The following MoUs/Agreements were signed during the visit:

- i. MoU on Defence Co-operation.
- ii. Bilateral Trade Agreement.
- iii. MoU on Dairy Co-operation.
- iv. MoU on leather cooperation.
- v. MoU on Cultural Exchange.
- vi. Amendment to the MoU on Cooperation in Agriculture and Animal Resources.
- vii. LoC agreement of US\$ 100 million for development of Industrial Parks and expansion of Kigali SEZ.
- viii. LoC agreement of US \$ 100 million for financing components of its Agriculture Project Schemes.

During the Visit, Hon'ble Prime Minister also made the following announcements:

I. Setting up of a Task Force in the field of digital education including the provision of an e-library.

II. Gifting of 100,000 books of the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) and to provide support for digitalization and online access of education books and related learning material.

III. Setting up of the Entrepreneurship Development Centre in Kigali.

IV. Fully funded 25 slots for short term- training in the field of Dairy production and processing.

V. Contribution of US \$10,000 each to the Gisozi Genocide Memorial in Kigali and the Imbutu Foundation run by the First Lady of Rwanda towards the Foundation for the education of the girl child.

VI. Gift of 200 cows worth US\$ 200,000/- to Rwandan Girinka programme, a social protection scheme of one cow - one family.

11. Shri V. Muraleedharan, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of External Affairs visited Rwanda for the period from 13 – 16th November 2021, to co-chair the first India Rwanda Joint Commission Meeting (JCM). The JCM reviewed the entire Government bilateral relations. During the visit Hon'ble Minister of State also inaugurated the Rwanda-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre at Kigali.

12. Dr. S. Jaishankar, Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs visited Rwanda for the period from 22 – 25 June 2022 to attend the Commonwealth Head of Government Meeting 2022 (CHOGM-2022).

13. Shri Harivansh, Hon'ble Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha visited Rwanda for the period from 10-16th October 2022 to attend the 145th assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU).

High level visits from Rwanda

14. The President of Rwanda, H.E. Paul Kagame has visited India thrice in private capacity and twice on official visits. In December, 2002 he visited India to receive an Honorary Doctorate from the Vellore Institute of Technology. President Kagame visited New Delhi in January, 2009 to participate in the India-Africa Business Forum organized by FICCI, as the Chief Guest. He visited New Delhi in November 2014 to participate in the India Economic Forum. He met the Hon'ble President Shri Pranab Mukherjee during the visit. In January 2017, President Kagame visited India to participate in the Vibrant Gujarat Summit held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. He also met Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the Summit. President Kagame visited Delhi from 9-12 March, 2018 to participate in the founding Conference of International Solar Alliance.
15. Bernard Makuza, Prime Minister of Rwanda participated in the Vibrant Gujarat Summit in January, 2011. During the visit he called on Hon'ble Prime Minister. He again led a 25-member business delegation to India in October, 2011 to explore new investment opportunities.
16. 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.
17. Ms. Rose Mukantabana, Hon. Speaker of Parliament of Rwanda attended the 7th Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament held in New Delhi in October 2012.
18. Dr. Agnes Matilda Kalibata, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources visited India in January, 2013 at the invitation of Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources.
19. Mr. Francis Kanimba, Hon'ble Minister of Trade and Industry led a business delegation to the 9th CII- EXIM Bank conclave to New Delhi from 17-19 March, 2013.
20. Mr. Anastase Murekezi, Prime Minister of Rwanda visited India in October 2015 to participate in the India-Africa Forum Summit – III.
21. From 08-11 July, 2018, Mr. Bernard Makuza, President of the Senate of Rwanda, visited India, where he had a meeting with Shri Venkaiah Naidu, Hon'ble Vice-President of India. A MoU for cooperation between the senate of Rwanda and the Rajya Sabha of India was signed during the visit.
22. Mr. Olivier Nduhungirehe, Hon'ble Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda attended the 9th Vibrant Gujarat Summit in January 2019.
23. Mr. Vincent Biruta, Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Rwanda visited India from December 7-8, 2023. During his visit, EAM and FM Biruta held delegation level talks.
24. Dr. Utumatwishima Jean Nepo Abdallah, Hon'ble Minister of Youth & Arts visited Mumbai from 01-03 May 2025 to attend the WAVES Summit 2025.

25. Ms. Paula Ingabire, Hon'ble Minister of ICT and Innovation visited New Delhi from 17-20 February 2026 to participate in the AI Impact Summit 2026. During the visit, Minister Ingabire co-chaired the session "Shaping Equitable AI Transitions: Building Global Human Capital for the Age of AI" at the Summit. On the sidelines of the Summit, Minister Ingabire held a bilateral meeting with Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble MoS (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences of India.

26. Amb. Olivier Nduhungirehe, Hon'ble Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda visited New Delhi from 02-06 March 2026. During the visit, he co-chaired the Second India-Rwanda Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) with Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs of India on 03 March 2026, and attended the 11th edition of Raisina Dialogue on 05-06 March 2026.

Institutional Mechanisms

27. India-Rwanda bilateral relations have been given impetus by several bilateral institutional mechanisms. These include the Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) at the level of MoS/Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) at the level of Joint Secretary/Director General and the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC).

28. The first India-Rwanda JCM at the Ministerial level was held in Kigali from 14-15 November 2021. Shri V. Muraleedharan, MoS for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs of India Co-Chaired the meeting with Dr Vincent Biruta, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda. During the meeting, the two sides committed to take their relations to new heights both at bilateral and multilateral levels.

29. The Second India-Rwanda JCM was held in New Delhi from 02-03 March 2026. Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs of India co-chaired the meeting with Amb. Olivier Nduhungirehe, Hon'ble Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda. The meeting reviewed the state of cooperation between both countries in the areas of defence, agriculture, trade and investment, health, education, Science and Technology, digital platforms, culture and people-to-people cooperation. The two Ministers also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for the year 2026-2030.

30. The first FOC between India and Rwanda were held on 03 May 2018 in Kigali. The Indian side was led by Joint Secretary (East & Southern Africa), Ministry of External Affairs and the Rwandan side was led by Director General of Bilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MINAFFET), Rwanda. The Second India-Rwanda FOC co-chaired by JS (E&SA), Ministry of External Affairs and DG (Asia, Pacific & Middle East Affairs), MINAFFET took place on 05 December 2024 in New Delhi. During the FOC, India and Rwanda undertook a comprehensive review of bilateral relations, including political, trade & investment, defence, energy, agriculture, health, education, culture, etc. Cooperation in new areas such as space, critical & emerging technologies, cyber security, HA&DR and mining were also discussed.

31. The first meeting of the JDCC between India and Rwanda was held in Kigali on February 8, 2024. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Amitabh Prasad, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defence, India and the Rwandan delegation was led by Brig Gen Patrick Karuretwa, Head International Military Cooperation, Rwanda Defence Force. During the

meeting, both sides discussed a wide range of opportunities to enhance defence cooperation between the two countries, including in areas such as training cooperation, joint military exercises, defence industrial cooperation etc. The Indian delegation highlighted the growing prowess of Indian defence manufacturers to export to friendly countries. In pursuance to discussions during the meeting, a 3-member delegation of Indian Air Force (IAF) visited Rwanda from 02-06 June 2025 to assess the overhaul requirements of Mi-17 helicopters and discuss maintenance training for Rwandan technicians

Cooperation under IAFS

32. India and Rwanda enjoy cooperation under IAFS at the African Union (AU) level and at level of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). India's engagement with Rwanda has been consultative, response-based and focused on developing Rwandan capacities and human capital. Indian assistance to Rwanda has also been guided by the announcements made by India at the India-Africa Forum Summits in 2008, 2011, and 2015.

33. Following the first India Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-I), Rwanda was nominated by the AU as one of the recipients to host the India-Africa Vocational Training Centre (VTC). Shri Kalraj Mishra, Hon'ble Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises visited Kigali in January 2015 to inaugurate the Vocational Training Institute.

34. During IAFS-II, India had announced establishment of several institutions in Africa. As part of its initiatives under IAFS-II, India established India-Africa Entrepreneurship Development Centre (IAEDC) in Kigali in Rwanda. While recognizing that entrepreneurship is one of the most important factors in the development of a country's economy and an antidote to unemployment, the centre will be committed to nurture the spirit of entrepreneurship in the country through education, training and business advisory services.

35. The Rwanda India Entrepreneurship Development Centre was inaugurated by Shri V. Muraleedharan, Hon'ble MoS for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs of India on 15th November, 2021.

Other development cooperation

36. Under the Pan Africa e-Network project, tele-medicine and tele-education centres were established in Rwanda in 2009 with an aim to enable Rwandan doctors consult their Indian counterparts, and ensure world-class medical consultation and treatment for patients and education for students.

37. Solar electrification of 35 schools in Rural Rwanda was completed in 2014 under a grant of Rs. 2.59 Crore from Government of India.

38. India has extended a LoC in 2013 totaling US \$ 120.05 million for the development of Export Targeted Irrigated Agriculture Project and its expansion.

39. A 28 MW Hydroelectric Project on the Nyabarongo River was completed and commissioned in early 2016 under a Government of India assisted Line of Credit of US \$

80 million. The project has substantially augmented Rwanda's total electricity generation capacity.

40. In February 2017, India and Rwanda also signed Bilateral Air Services Agreement and an agreement for the exemption of visa for diplomatic and official passport holders.

41. Medicines worth US \$ 2 million were gifted to Rwanda in early 2019 to fight against HIV AIDS, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.

42. A gift of 50,000 doses of COVISHIELD Vaccine produced by the Serum Institute of India (SII), from India to Rwanda, arrived at the Kigali International Airport on March 05, 2021.

43. India gifted another batch of HIV AIDS medicine on 5th October 2021, worth Rs.1.2 crore.

44. On the request of the Government of Rwanda, a grant of US\$ one million (INR 8,41,90,000) from India-UN Development Partnership Fund was approved in May 2024 for the project, "Aim for change! Advancing Rwanda's Midwifery to accelerate the realization of Zero preventable maternal deaths through South-South cooperation". The project was launched with fanfare jointly by the UNFPA, Government of Rwanda and High Commission of India, Kigali on 20 May 2025.

Scholarships and capacity building programmes

45. The Government of India offers scholarships and fellowships to Rwandans from the Government and private sector to enable them to pursue under-graduate, post-graduate and research courses in India under ITEC/SCAAP, ICCR and IAFS. Officers from the Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) have also been availing of training slots in India. Around 400 Rwandans have attended capacity building programmes under ITEC. In FY 2025-26, 54 Rwandan nationals attended training programmes for civilians under ITEC.

46. Special training programmes for Rwanda have also been organized under ITEC. Under a MoU on Cooperation in Forensic Sciences signed between the Government of Rwanda and Gujarat Forensic Sciences University in January 2017, several Rwandan officials have undergone training in the field of Forensic Science. Forty-Seven Rwandan applicants participated in the special ITEC courses "Bringing Digital Efficiency in Cooperatives" at EDII Ahmedabad from March 4-22, 2024 and "Developing Entrepreneurship within Cooperatives" at EDII Ahmedabad from February 12 to March 1, 2024.

47. 15 diplomats from Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation of Rwanda participated in the first training programme at SSIFS New Delhi from 11-20 December 2024.

48. Col. Callixte Migabo from the Rwanda Defence Force travelled to New Delhi, India to participate in the 65th National Defence College (NDC) course commencing at NDC, New Delhi from January – November 2025.

Commercial Relations and Bilateral Trade

49. In FY 2024-25, the total bilateral trade was 112.44 million, with Rwanda importing goods from India totaling USD 98.74 million and exporting goods worth USD 13.69 million. The most significant imports from India included pharmaceuticals, vehicles, electrical and mechanical machinery, apparel, and beverages. Rwanda's major imports from India also included items like Cereal, flour, starch, milk preparations and products, miscellaneous chemical products, and paper and paperboard.

50. India was the second-largest foreign investor in Rwanda in 2024, after China. Indian investors committed investments worth USD 445.1 million, representing 13.6% of total foreign investments. This marked a significant rise from USD 175.2 million in 2023, when India ranked as the top foreign investor. In total, India accounted for 35 registered projects in 2024.

Kigali as a Conference venue

51. Kigali is increasingly being viewed by the Indian organizations/institutions as a place to host/organize conferences. In July 2019, Indian think tank, Observer Research Foundation (ORF) organized the Kigali Global Dialogue in Kigali. The second and third edition of the Kigali Global Dialogue were organized in 2022 & 2023 respectively. In August, 2019, Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC) organized the India-Africa ICT Expo 2019 in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda in Kigali. The second India-Africa ICT Expo 2020 took place on a virtual platform with the support of Government of Rwanda in December 2020.

Track 1.5 Dialogue

52. On 18 February 2026, the High Commission of India, in collaboration with the Economic Policy Research Network (EPRN) Rwanda organized a Joint Policy Dialogue on the theme "India-Rwanda Socio-economic ties: innovations, opportunities and challenges" at Kigali Convention Centre. This was the first Track 1.5 initiative between India and Rwanda.

Familiarization visits by Rwandan media

53. Four journalists/news editors from Rwanda visited India from 12 -18 December 2024 for a familiarization visit by 35 journalists from the Eastern and Southern Africa region.

54. Three journalists/news editors from Rwanda visited India from 7-15 June 2025 for a familiarization visit by 28 media editors/journalists from the Eastern and Southern Africa region.

Cultural relations

55. An 8-member ICCR cultural troupe "Bollywood Rockers" led by Subhash Goyal visited Rwanda in November 2024, and performed in the capital Kigali and Rubavu district. This was the first ever ICCR cultural troupe to visit Rwanda.

56. A 12-member Rwandan cultural troupe namely "Inganzo Ngari" visited India to participate in the 10th International Dance & Music Festival 2025 held in Prayagraj on the

sidelines of Mahakumbh on 21 February 2025. They also performed in Greater Noida on 27 February 2025 and in Jammu on 28 February 2025.

Indian community

57. There are more than 3000 Indian nationals and PIOs in Rwanda, drawn from around 15 States of India. Rwanda's prominent sugar mill, modern textile mill and FMCG factory are PIO-owned. Investments from India are in tea sector by Luxmi Tea, a Kolkata based company. TVS motorbikes are quite popular in Rwanda. Airtel Rwanda is one of the major players in telecom sector in Rwanda. Iron & Steel companies such as Imana Steel, A1 Iron & Steel Co Ltd & SteelRwa Ltd, and cement producer Cimerwa have greatly aided development of infrastructure sector in Rwanda. Textile company Utexrwa has provided job opportunities to local Rwandans and reduced import of textiles. The Agarwal eye hospital is a prominent hospital in Kigali. Indian nationals and PIOs have also heavily invested in the hospitality sector in Rwanda.

58. The Government of Rwanda has a positive attitude towards the Indian community. During the Genocide of 1994, no Indian national was killed or injured. The evacuation of Indian nationals by the Indian Government from Rwanda to Bujumbura and Nairobi was also not interfered with by RPF or the Government forces. The positive role that the Indian community plays in the Rwandan economy is well appreciated by the Rwandan Government.

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