

Brief on India-Niger Relations

Political Relations

India and Niger have cordial bilateral relations. Niger is a land-locked country in sub-Sahara region of West Africa. India recognized the Republic of Niger since it attained Independence in 1960. India established its Embassy in Niamey in May 2009. Niger followed by opening its Embassy in New Delhi in November 2011.

Visits from Niger

There have been several visits from Niger to India. Former **President of Niger, Mr. Issoufou Mahamadou** visited India twice: in October 2015 to participate in India-Africa Forum Summit (**IAFS-III**); and in March 2018 to attend the Founding Conference of International Solar Alliance (ISA).

In addition to above, following Ministerial visits have taken place from Niger since 2015:

- **In 2024:** (i) Mr. Seydou Asman, Minister for Commerce and Industries visited India to attend 19th CII- Africa Business Conclave in New Delhi from 20-22 August 2024.
(ii) Minister of Energy H.E. Professor (Ms.) Amadou Haoua attended the 7th General Assembly of ISA held in New Delhi on 4th November.
(iii) Minister of Hydraulics, Sanitation and Environment HE Colonel Maizama Abdoulaye and (iv) Minister of Petroleum Dr. Oumarou Sahabi from 30 Nov. to 7 Dec. 2024. The purpose of the visit of Ministers was to meet corporate leaders and do field visits for exploring and identification of machinery, material and technical expertise in connection with setting up of a new refinery in Niger.
- **In June 2023:** (i) Mr. Seydou Asman (former DG of Le Riz du Niger) and current Minister for Commerce and Industries

attended 18 CII- Africa Business Conclave in New Delhi.

- **In 2022:** Mr. Alhada Alkache, Minister for Commerce and Ms. Salmou Gourouza Magagi, Minister for Industry and Youth Entrepreneurship attended 17th CII-Africa Conclave held in New Delhi in 2022.

- **In 2019:** (i) In May, Mr. Ibrahima Guimba Saidou, Minister-Special Advisor to President of Niger, visited India to meet officials of Indian Council of Agriculture Research and Department of Agricultural Research and Education to strengthen ties in Agriculture.

- (ii) Minister of Energy visited India from 30 July-3 August to take part in the First Meeting of the Permanent Committee of the International Solar Alliance.

- (iii) Mr. Almoustapha Garba, Minister of Environment, Urban Sanitation and Sustainable Developments, visited India from 8-13 September to participate in the 14th Session of UN Convention to Combat Desertification held from 2-13 September in New Delhi.

- (iv) Mr. Mohamed Boucha, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, also visited New Delhi from 9-15 September to participate in this Convention and the 2nd International Meeting of the World Project.

- (v) Mr. Tidjani Idrissa Abdoukadi, Minister of Vocational and Technical Training, accompanied by his Chef du Cabinet, visited India from 22-24 September to attend the 6th edition of the Asian Summit on Education and Skills which was held from 23-24 September in Bengaluru.

- **In 2018:** (i) Minister and Special Advisor to the President of Niger (In-charge for the African Union Summit) visited India from 17-19 September to sign the MoU (signed on 19 September) for establishment of Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Centre (**MGICC**) in Niamey.

- (ii) Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation visited India from 29 September – 2 October to participate in the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention.

- (iii) Minister of Energy, accompanied by Technical Advisor to

the Minister for ISA, visited India from 2-5 October to participate in the First Assembly of the International Solar Alliance, which was held in conjunction with the second Renewable Energy Global Investors Meet and Expo (2nd RE-INVEST).

- **In 2017:** (i) Minister of Trade & Private Sector Promotion, (ii) Minister Special Advisor to the President of Niger, visited India for attending the 12th CII EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership.

- (iii) Minister for Planning and Deputy Minister for Budget participated in the 52nd Annual meeting of the African Development Bank (AfDB) in Gandhinagar.

- **In 2016:** Minister and Special Advisor to the President of Niger visited India and had met with MoS (VKS), MoS (MJA) and MoS in Ministry of Finance.

- **In 2015:** Nigerian Minister of Commerce and Promotion of Private Sector participated in the 4th African Trade Ministers Meeting held in New Delhi IAFS-III.

Visit of other high-level officials

- Senior Colonel Salifou Mainassara, Chief of Air Staff of Niger to attend Aero-India 2025 from 10-14 February 2025 in Bangalore;

- Senior Colonel Moctar Diallo Ibrahim, Deputy Chief of Air Staff visited India from 2-8 December 2024;

- Brig. General Amadou Aiddili, Secretary General, Ministry of Defence visited India 18-20 October 2022 and attended India-Africa Defence Dialogue held on the sidelines of Defence Expo-2022.

Visits from India

Bilateral visits at the level of HOS/HOG are yet to take place. However, the following important visits have taken place from India to Niger in the past few years:

- **In 2020:** Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister (EAM) visited Niamey in 20-21 January. This was the first visit of EAM. He called on President Issoufou Mahamadou and Prime Minister Brigi Rafini, met Foreign Minister Kalla Ankourao and two MOUs (i) Protocol on Consultations; and (ii) Establishment of Joint Commission were signed. On 21 January 2020, Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Centre (MGICC) was jointly inaugurated by the EAM and Niger President.
- **In 2016:** Shri Amarendra Khatua, Dean (FSI).
- **In 2015:** Shri GM Siddeshwara, MoS for Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises, visited Niger as the Special Envoy of PM, to deliver the invitations for the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit and called on the President Issoufou Mahamadou and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Bilateral Institutional Mechanism

'Memorandum of Understanding on Protocol on Foreign Office Consultation and Memorandum of Understanding on Establishment of Joint Commission between India and Niger were signed during the visit of Dr. S. Jaishankar, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister in January 2020. First round of Foreign Office Consultation is likely to be held in Niamey in the month of June 2025.

Economic and Commercial Relations

India has extended Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme to Niger with effect from 27 July 2017. Bilateral trade during the last five years (in US\$ millions) is as follows: -

| Year | Exports to Niger | Imports from Niger | Total trade | Balance of trade |
|---------|------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|
| 2019-20 | 73.60 | 0.90 | 74.50 | 72.27 |
| 2020-21 | 87.03 | 4.12 | 91.15 | 82.91 |
| 2021-22 | 91.62 | 15.99 | 107.61 | 75.63 |

| | | | | |
|---------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| 2022-23 | 83.83 | 119.50 | 203.33 | 35.67 |
| 2023-24 | 47.22 | 139.27 | 186.49 | 92.05 |

Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India

The main items being exported from India to Niger include Rice, pharmaceutical products, cotton fabrics, woven synthetic fabrics, sugar confectionery and processed food & cereals, engineering goods, electrical appliances, construction material, tea, Cereals, articles of Iron or Steel, etc. The main items being exported from Niger to India are Lac, Gum Arabic, Resins, Seeds and fruit, sesame, semi-precious stones, hide/skin of goats etc. Niger is the 4th largest producer of Uranium in the world. Niger has reserves of other minerals also viz. petroleum, gold, lithium, coal etc. There has been no engagement with Niger on these issues so far.

Development Partnership

In order to strengthen bilateral trade and cooperation, India has been extending Grants and Lines of Credit (LoC) to Niger from time to time. Following is a brief account of the same:

Grants:

- A grant of US\$ 35.484 million was extended to Niger for construction of Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Centre (MGICC) in September 2018.
- Govt extended grant assistance of US\$ 15 million to the Government of Niger for defraying part of the expenses towards hosting of the AU Summit in July 2019 in Niamey.
- India has also provided humanitarian assistance, medicines, vaccines and grants for computers and equipment purchases to Niger.

LOCs bilateral

- US\$ 17 million in 2006 for procurement of buses, trucks, tractors, flour mills, motor pumps, etc.

- US\$ 20 million in 2008 for (a) rehabilitation of 6 power stations; (b) purchase of 3 power transformers; (c) rehabilitation and erection of transmission lines.
- US\$ 34.54 million in 2013 for solar electrification of 90 villages (50+ 40) and 7MWp Solar photovoltaic power station at Malbaza.
- US\$ 25 million in 2014 for supply of Potable Water for Semi-Urban and Rural Communities through 500 borewells.

LOCs through ECOWAS

Projects totalling US\$ 131.50 million have been approved for Niger from the LoCs extended to ECOWAS Bank for Investment & Development (EBID). (Niger has withdrawn from ECOWAS subsequent to coup of July 2023) These are as follows:

- US\$ 10 million for electrification of 50 villages through Solar Photovoltaic Systems in the regions of Dosso, Tillabery and Tahoua.
- US\$ 39.70 million for Solar electrification of 250 rural communities.
- US\$ 56.70 million for upgrading and extension of Potable Water Supply Networks in cities of Maradi, Dosso and Diffa.
- US\$ 10.50 million for Electrification of resettlement sites under the Resettlement Action Plan of the Kandadji Dam and upgrading of the Power Distribution Network Project in the dam area.
- US\$ 14.60 million for Agriculture & Irrigation Project for the Resettlement Sites of the Kandadji Dam's Resettlement.

India has also been providing assistance to Niger in capacity building. Following are details of assistance provided to Niger:

- In 2006 Indian experts visited Niger to ascertain the requirement for computerization of Niger's (a) Ministries of Foreign Affairs, (b) Mines & Energy; and (c) Dry-land Agricultural Research. Technical assistance was provided to Niger in ICT and agriculture sectors.
- In 2011 a cash grant of Euro 86,452 was provided for purchase of two Television Cameras for the National Television of Niger.
- In 2012 Gol supplied 100 Computers and 100 Printers (worth

Rs. 67 lakhs) to Niger Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- In 2015 India gifted 10 Laptops (worth Rs. 12,98,120) to the Office of the Director General, Radio Broadcasting and Television of Niger (ONEP).
- The Pan African e-Network Project Phase-1 (PAeNP), funded by India, was successfully completed by Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) in September 2017 in Niamey. For the execution of Phase-II, which is called e-VidyaBharthi and e-AarogyaBharthi (e-VAB), in Niamey, the Niger Government has identified 2 Universities in Niamey and Maradi, and forwarded concurrence to the proposed text of MoU. They have sought few clarifications and response on them is awaited from MEA. Niger has also expressed its interest in the Digital India Programs in the context of its own Programs for Smart Villages and development of a Technology City for possible cooperation with India.

India offers training to Niger in the areas of human resource development under ITEC Program and also under the decisions taken at the Indian Africa Forum Summits (IAFS). Following is a brief account of slots allocated to Niger under different Programs:

- ITEC: Niger has been allotted 156 of ITEC slots. More than 1300 Nigerien officials have been imparted trainings.
- Defence cooperation: Nigerien defence personnels have been participating defence training programs since 2018. For the year 2025-26, slots have been allotted to Nigerien defence personnel.
- 40 Nigerien civil servants have also attended various training courses in India under the India-Africa Forum Summit program.
- Niger students are granted 5 scholarships under ICCR Programme

Humanitarian assistance

- In 2005 India provided a relief package of basic medicines to Niger as humanitarian assistance for the food crisis.
- In 2010 a cash grant of US\$ 1,00,000 was provided to Niger to

help it tide over the on-going food crisis.

- Life-saving medicines to support the management of COVID-19 pandemic in Niger and other essential medicines worth US\$ 40000 were donated to Niger as humanitarian relief. Under the Vaccine Maitri initiative, 25000 doses of Covishield were donated to Niger in March 2021.

Cultural Relations

- Nigerien cultural troupe and artisans have been participating in the annual Surajkund International Crafts Mela since 2019 held at Faridabad, Haryana.
- As a part of 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi, the Niger Post released two commemorative Postage Stamps on Mahatma Gandhi.
- ICCR has allotted 5 Scholarships to Niger.
- The International Day of Yoga is organized every year. The 10th International Day of Yoga was celebrated on 21 June 2024.

Indian Community

There are about 250 Indian nationals residing in Niger. While a number of Indian community members are traders or have retail grocery outlets, including restaurants, some members run major business operations.

March 2025