

Brief Embassy Report on Bilateral Relations – ITJ Division, DGCIS, Kolkata.

India-Kenya Bilateral Relations

A. Introduction:

1. Indian Trade Journal (ITJ) division of the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS) brings out weekly publication on Embassy Profile Report providing information on recent policy changes and happenings in other countries that may be of interest to the Indian trading community. This is the Embassy Profile Report for 07.01.2026 depicting the Embassy of Kenya.

2. India and Kenya are maritime neighbours. The contemporary ties between India and Kenya have now evolved into a robust and multi-faceted partnership, marked by regular high-level visits, increasing trade and investment as well as extensive people to people contacts. The presence of Indians in East Africa is documented in the 'Periplus of the Erythraean Sea' or Guidebook of the Red Sea by an ancient Greek author written in 60 AD. A well-established trade network existed between India and the Swahili Coast predating European exploration. India and Kenya share a common legacy of struggle against colonialism. Many Indians participated and supported the freedom struggle of Kenya.

B. Bilateral Institutional Mechanisms:

- JCM: Bilateral Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) at ministerial level was set up in 1999. The first JCM took place in 2003 in Nairobi. Second JCM was held in March, 2019 in New Delhi and the third JCM at Foreign Minister level was held in Nairobi in June 2021.
- JTC: The India-Kenya Joint Trade Committee (JTC) was set up at Ministerial level in 1983. The ninth session of JTC at CIM level was held in New Delhi in August 2019.
- FOC: An MoU on Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) was signed in 2003. The first bilateral FOCs were held in Nairobi in June 2016 and the second round of FOCs was held in New Delhi on 8th April, 2022.
- First JDCC meeting on Defence was held in February 2019 in India, the second was held in November 2022 in Nairobi followed by a Def Expo and Seminar; and the third was held in September 2024 in New Delhi.

Visit of PM Modi: The State visit of PM Narendra Modi to Kenya on 10-11 July 2016 gave a new impetus to bilateral partnership. PM Narendra Modi and President Uhuru Kenyatta discussed a wide range of bilateral issues. Both leaders witnessed signing of seven (MoUs)/Agreements in the fields of defence, trade and developmental assistance. PM handed over 30 field ambulances for the use of the Kenya Defence Forces. PM and President Kenyatta addressed an India-Kenya Business Forum. Five business to business MoUs were signed on the side-lines of the business event. Both leaders visited the 'India Innovation Pavilion' and released a booklet on 'Doing Business in Kenya'. PM addressed a gathering of over 20,000 Indian community members in Nairobi. Significantly, President Kenyatta joined him during the diaspora interaction. PM delivered a special lecture to a large gathering of students at the University of Nairobi and visited United Nations Office at Nairobi. India announced gifting of a state-of-the-art made in India cancer therapy machine – Bhabhatron II – to Kenyatta National Hospital, grant of USD 1 million for the refurbishment of the Mahatma Gandhi graduate library of the University of Nairobi and holding of the first ever Festival of India in Kenya.

Visit of President William Ruto: President William Ruto paid a State Visit to India from 4-6 December 2023. He met with Rashtrapati ji who also hosted a State Banquet in his honour. He held detailed discussions with Prime Minister. Five MoUs/agreements were signed during the visit in the areas of Sports, Digital Solutions, Culture, Standards, and Education. President Ruto attended the India-Kenya Trade and Investment Forum on 5 December 2023 and also met with select business leaders of Indian companies. Announcements made and documents issued during the visit included - India-Kenya Joint Statement, Joint Maritime Vision Statement titled BAHARI; Kenya's decision to join ISA and the GBA; a LoC of USD 250 million for Agriculture modernization; Customized training program for 20 Space Scientists in ISRO; A geo-spatial information portal for Kenya with Indian remote sensing data and; increase in ICCR scholarships from 48 to 80 per year.

Recent Ministerial Visits from India:

➤ Hon'ble Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Shri. Bhupender Yadav visited Nairobi from 3-4 March 2022, to represent India at the special session of United Nations Environment Assembly - UNEP@50 (50th anniversary of UNEP) at United Nation office in Nairobi. He delivered India's national statement, participated in Leadership Dialogues at the special session and held 11 bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the event. Hon'ble Minister also interacted with a cross-section of the Indian diaspora during his visit. Ms. Leena Nandan, Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change headed the Indian delegation for the resumed fifth session of the UNEA – UNEA 5.2 which was held from 28 February to 02 March 2022.

➤ Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs Shri V. Muraleedharan visited Kenya on 13 September 2022 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of President elect Dr. William Samoei Ruto as the 5th President of the Republic of Kenya. He also handed over the congratulatory message from PM Modi. MoS attended the official luncheon at the state house and had interactions with officials and the political leadership of Kenya. During his visit, MoS was also welcomed by the Indian community in an event that was attended by over 300 members of diaspora.

➤ Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla accompanied by a parliamentary delegation paid an official visit to Kenya on 16-18 January 2023. This was first bilateral visit by an Indian Speaker in four decades. He called on President of Kenya and Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua. The delegation held meetings with Speaker of the National Assembly; the Speaker of Senate and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

➤ Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs, Shri V. Muraleedharan paid an official visit to Kenya from 22-23 November, 2023. A 30-member business delegation from the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) accompanied the Minister. He called on Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, and met Cabinet Secretary, Investment, Trade and Industry; and Principal Secretary, ICT and Digital Economy. He also addressed a India-Kenya joint business forum and launched the 'India Kenya Business Council' (IKBC) along with Ms Rebecca Miano, Cabinet Secretary for Investment, Trade and Industry.

➤ A delegation led by Mr Dammu Ravi, Secretary (ER), visited Kenya from 10-12 April 2024 with approximately 25 Indian companies and institutes dealing in Agriculture sector to assess opportunities for investment in Kenyan agriculture sector. Secretary (ER) held discussions with Principal Secretary ASAL Harsama Kello and Principal Secretary for Agriculture Dr Paul Ronoh during India-Kenya Business Forum organised 10 April 2024 which saw participation by over 100 companies. He called on Treasury Cabinet Secretary H.E. Prof Njuguna Ndung'u and held meetings with Principal Secretary

Foreign Affairs Korir Sing'Oei, Governor of Uasin Gishu County Jonathan Bii and Governor of Narok County Patrick Ole Ntutu. He also held meeting with Mr Augustine Cheruiyot, Senior Advisor and Head of Economic Transformation and Secretariat, State House and David Ndii, Chairperson, President's Council of Economic Advisors. The delegation also undertook field visit in Nyandarua and Uasin Gishu County.

➤ Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane visited Kenya from 25-27 September 2024 in a significant effort to further deepen defence cooperation. During his visit, the Defence Secretary held talks with the Cabinet Secretary and Principal Secretary for Defence of Kenya. He laid the foundation stone of a new Radiology Complex, being built and equipped under the bilateral defence partnership.

C. Commercial Relations (Trade and Foreign Investment) – Recent facts & figures

3. India is one of Kenya's top trading partners with the trade relations encompassing various sectors of the economy. According to data from the Department of Commerce, Government of India, the value of trade in FY 2024-25 stood at USD 3456.90 million. Of this, the value of Indian exports to Kenya was USD 3133.69 million while that of imports from Kenya to India was USD 323.21 million. Main Indian exports to Kenya in the period included petroleum products, pharmaceuticals, machinery, cereals, sugars & confectionery, plastics & articles, vehicles, electrical machinery & equipment, organic chemicals and paper & paperboard. Main Kenyan exports to India on the other hand were tea, coffee, soda ash, edible vegetables, copper and articles, fertilisers, metal scrap, miscellaneous chemical products, lead and articles and zinc and articles. The following table summarizes the bilateral trade figures.

Export-Import statistics as per India's Ministry of Commerce data bank from 2020-21 to 2024-25 are as follows:

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
EXPORT	1,895.84	2,631.90	3,273.66	3,174.84	3133.69
IMPORT	130.27	145.35	116.68	176.34	323.21
TOTALTRADE	2,026.11	2,777.25	3,390.34	3351.18	3456.90

(Source: Department of Commerce, India, Figures in USD million)

4. An India-Kenya Trade Agreement was signed in 1981, under which both countries accorded Most Favoured Nation status to each other. The India-Kenya Joint Trade Committee (JTC) was set up at Ministerial level in 1983 as a follow-up to the Agreement. The JTC has met nine times since, the last in August 2019 in New Delhi in which then Cabinet Secretary (Minister) of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives Mr. Peter Munya co-chaired the meeting with the Commerce and Industry Minister (CIM) of India Mr. Piyush Goyal. CIM. Mr. Goyal, along with External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar held a video conference meeting in April 2020 to explore opportunities to promote Indian exports.

D. Trade events organized/facilitated in CY 2024:

5. Within the year, the Mission organized / participated in several trade-related events including India-Kenya Def Expo and Seminar (30-31 January 2024), Panel Discussion on India - Kenya Economic Engagement dubbed "Harambee Factor" in Nairobi (01 March 2024), Basic Chemicals, Cosmetics & Dyes Export Promotion Council (CHEMEXCIL)India-Kenya Chemical Business Meet in Nairobi (19 March 2024), Data Science AI Retreat (DSAIRe) for C-suite Executives in Nairobi (01-02

March 2024), TPCI Source India - East Africa (Buyer Seller Meet) on F&B and Packaging material in Nairobi (18-19 March 2024), India-Kenya Agriculture Business Forum (10 April 2024), Presentations by FAO, ICRISAT, ILRI, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization, CIMMYT and Equity Bank during the aforementioned visit (11 April 2024), Meetings with Governors of Narok and Nyandarua Counties (12 April 2024) (the latter three events were in the context of a Hon'ble Mr. Dammu Ravi, Secretary (Economic Relations), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (GoI) led delegation including 25 agriculture companies and institutions on a visit to Kenya from 10-12 April 2024), India Kenya Business Council (IKBC) Meeting in Nairobi (22 May 2024), Africa International Footwear and Leather Products Exhibition (AFLEX Kenya 2024) in Nairobi (29-31 May 2024), Africa - India Partnership Day in Nairobi (30 May 2024), 25th Build expo Kenya 2024 in Nairobi (05-07 June 2024), 1st edition of Kenya Build con/Wood International Exhibition 2024 (06-08 June 2024), 9th Agritec Africa in Nairobi (12 June 2024) among others.

6. Many business delegations to India have also been facilitated including Mega RBSM/B2B Meet with Indian Manufacturer Exporters and factory visit coinciding with Global Patidar Business Summit (GPBS) in Rajkot, Gujarat (07-10 January 2024), Outbound Travel Mart (OTM) in Mumbai (08-10 February 2024), 5th edition of Delhi International Leather Expo (DILEX) - Reverse Buyer Seller Meet in New Delhi (04-05 March 2024), International Engineering Sourcing Show 2024 (IESS-XI2024) (04-06 March 2024) and Plex connect 2024 in Mumbai (07-09 June 2024) among others.

7. According to the Kenya Investment Authority (Ken Invest), India is the second largest investor in Kenya. Over 60 major Indian companies have invested in various sectors including manufacturing, real estate, pharmaceuticals, telecom, IT & ITES, banking and agro-based industries. Indian investments have resulted in creation of thousands of direct jobs to Kenyans. Indian pharmaceutical companies have a substantial presence in Kenya. A bilateral Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) was signed in 1989. Revised DTAA was signed in July 2016 and came into force on 30 August 2017.

8. Government of India consented to Kenya's request for market access for its avocados. In a ceremonial flag-off, the first cargo of Kenyan avocados to India was dispatched from Nairobi as diplomatic cargo to the High Commission of Kenya in New Delhi on 16 September 2023.

9. EXIM Bank of India established office in Nairobi on 30 May, 2024.

E. Other Major Areas of Cooperation :

➤ **Development Cooperation and assistance:** India offers development assistance to Kenya in the form of loans and credit. The recent cooperations include a loan agreement to extend USD 15 million (as first tranche out of USD 30 million) to IDB Capital Limited (now renamed as Kenya Development Corporation – KDC) for development of SMEs. A Line of Credit (LOC) agreement of USD 61.60 million has been extended for power transmission and substation projects. During the State Visit to India of President of the Republic of Kenya, H.E. Hon. William Samoei Ruto from 04-06 December, 2023, Government of India agreed to extend a USD 250 million Line of Credit (LoC) to Government of Kenya (GoK) for Agricultural Mechanization projects in line with Kenya's national development priorities. The proposed facility is intended for supporting agriculture, one of the key pillars of the India-Kenya bilateral partnership.

➤ A water hyacinth harvesting machine gifted to Kisumu country was jointly inaugurated by the High Commissioner and Governor of Kisumu County in November 2022.

➤ India gifted 15 parachutes to Ministry of Defence of Kenya in August 2023.

➤ On 14 May 2024, High Commissioner H.E. Ms. Namgya Khampa handed over 2nd tranche of

40MT of humanitarian assistance supplies that included medical supplies and other equipment donated by Government of India for flood-affected Kenyans. Earlier on 10 May 2024, Deputy High Commissioner Mr Rohit Vadhwa was at hand to receive Indian Naval Ship Sumedha which as the first responder in IOR, handed over food, relief & medicine supplies for flood victims to the Government of Kenya. Defence Secretary Shri Giridhar Aramane, during his visit to Kenya, laid the foundation stone on 27 September 2024 at Kenyan Navy Base, Mtongwe of the CT scan infrastructure and CT Scan Machine which has been donated by Government of India. Total cost of the project is USD 12,31,210/-.

➤ Kenya is offered 300 civilian slots for training in various fields under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and roughly 80 ICCR scholarships. Apart from this, many Kenyan students go to India under the Study in India programme and as self-financing students. Three specialized ITEC courses were conducted for Kenyan officials during 2024 namely Gender Responsive Governance for 20 Kenyan nationals from 11-22 March, 2024 at Entrepreneurship Development Institute Of India; SMARTGRIDS course for 19 Kenyan Energy Officials from 19 – 23 February, 2024 at NTPC School of Business; and Wind Energy Systems for 19 Kenyan Energy Officials from 18-22 March, 2024 at NTPC School of Business. Previously, Government of India had also organized a special e-ITEC (online) course for Postal Department officers by the Rafi Ahmed Kidwai National Postal Academy in March-April, 2021. Another ITEC programme on Forensic DNA technology for 20 Biology Forensic Analysts of Kenya was organized in November 2022 at the request of Kenya National Police Service.

Regional and Multilateral Cooperation:

India and Kenya cooperate closely in regional and multi-lateral fora. Kenya is important member of the AU Committee of 10 Heads of State responsible for preparation of common African position on UNSC reforms. Kenya has extended (reciprocal) support for India's candidature for a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council for term 2028-29. India and Kenya are also founding members of IORA.

People to people contacts:

➤ A bilateral Cultural Cooperation Agreement was signed in 1981. Mission, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of India and the Ministry of Sports, Culture and the Arts of Kenya organized the first-ever Festival of India in Kenya named "Urafiki Utsav" from 10 October to 28 November 2016. Six cultural troupes from different parts of India performed in five cities of Kenya. Since 2016, under the sponsorship of ICCR, Indian artists are participating as adjudicators for the Kenya Music Festival. Mission distributed grants-in-aid from Ministry of Culture of India to 16 Kenyan organizations promoting Indian culture.

➤ India is the fifth largest source of inbound tourists for Kenya. According to Kenya Tourism Board, out of 2.08 million tourists in 2023, 94,273 tourists were Indians. KTB has launched a marketing campaign in major Indian cities to increase tourist arrivals from India. In the other direction to India, in 2023, total 359 tourist visas were issued by the Mission.

➤ India and Kenya enjoy non-stop air connectivity between Nairobi - Delhi on Air India (thrice a week) and Nairobi - Mumbai on Kenya Airways (twice daily). Recently in August 2023, Indigo Airlines has launched non-stop air service between Mumbai – Nairobi (daily) making it the airline's first foray into Africa. Foreign airlines also provide air connectivity via Doha, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Muscat, Addis Ababa and Kigali. Air India's operations to Nairobi via Aden, which began in January 1951, the carrier's second overseas route after London.

Cooperation in Health

- Many Kenyans travel to India for medical treatment of critical ailments every year. It is understood that 90% of international medical travel from Kenya is to India, followed by Thailand and Turkey.
- President Kenyatta commissioned an Advanced Tele cobalt Cancer Therapy Machine – Bhabhatron II & Digital Radiotherapy Simulator –Imaging, gifted by India, at the Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi in August 2017. In May 2020, High Commissioner handed over the second tranche of essential medicines worth USD 1.54 million to Government of Kenya. The first tranche was handed over in July 2018. In August 2020, a gift of consignment of medicines related to COVID19 was handed over by Acting High Commissioner.
- Under Vaccine Maitri, Kenya was given 1.12 million doses of Covishield in March 2021 (1.02 million under COVAX alliance and 100,000 as gift). A MoU for establishing a tertiary care hospital in Eldoret, Kenya was signed between Apollo Hospital and Baler Healthcare, Kenya. In 2023, Mission issued 1262 medical visas to Kenyans.

Indian Community and Diaspora in Kenya

- A vibrant community of persons of Indian origin presently numbered around 80,000 including an estimated 20,000 Indian citizens. There are many associations representing different communities among the Indian Diaspora as well as several places of worship, schools, etc. Several Kenyans of Indian origin have distinguished themselves as lawyers, judges, doctors and academics.
- Five persons of Indian origin from Kenya have been awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman: Mr. Manilal Premchand Chandaria, Mr.Pheroze Nowrojee, Mr.P.V. Sambasiva Rao, Dr. Prakash M.Heda, and Dr. FRS De Souza (now deceased).

Source: www.mea.gov.in