

# Brief Embassy Report on Bilateral Relations – ITJ Division, DGCI&S, Kolkata.

## India-Morocco 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 21.05.2025 depicting the Embassy of Morocco.

2. Relations between India and Morocco go back to the 14th century when the famous traveller and writer from Tangier, Ibn Batuta, travelled to India. In modern history, India was active in the UN supporting the Moroccan freedom movement and recognised Morocco on 20 June 1956 immediately after its independence. Diplomatic relations were established in 1957. Over the years, India and Morocco have enjoyed cordial and friendly relations.

3. Desire to build an intensive interaction culminated in the first landmark visit of our Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Morocco in February 1999 followed by the visit of Moroccan PM Mr. Abderrehman Youssoufi to India in February 2000. After ascending to the throne, King Mohammed VI chose India for his first visit to an Asian country in 2001. Relations have been further intensified since the meeting of King Mohammed VI with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 29 October 2015 on the sidelines of the third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) in New Delhi.

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

4. Bilateral trade between India and Morocco touched USD 3.6 billion in 2022-23 compared to USD 3.2 billion in 2021-22, USD 1.9 billion in 2020-21 and USD 1.75 billion in 2019-20. Exports from India also registered a growth of over 105% in the last two years. Morocco is a top destination for new products from India like mobile phones, petroleum products and honey. Other major items of India's exports to Morocco are auto parts, electronics, textiles, engineering goods, chemicals and specialty chemicals, plastics and spices. Main items of Moroccan exports to India are phosphoric acid, phosphate, metallic cores and metal spray and inorganic chemicals. An account of Bilateral commodities trade in goods from 2019-20 to 2023-24 are as under:

(USD Million)

S.No		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1.	Export	799.45	507.62	962.28	1047.15	1032.58
2.	Import	952.54	1436.82	2244.19	2549.44	1404.28
3.	Total Trade	1751.99	1944.44	3206.47	3596.59	2436.86

(Source: Doc, Ministry of Commerce & Industry)

5. A number of Indian companies have presence in Morocco like IMACID (a Birla-Tata joint Venture with OCP-Office Cherifiende Phosphates, Morocco), Sun Pharma, CIPLA, Varun Beverages (PEPSI), Tata Motors, Sterling and Wilson, Larsen and Toubro, Sumilon, Furnace Fabrica, Satguru Travels, Gujarat Fluoro chemicals Ltd. (GFL), Indore (Optic Fibre), Tejas Network. Varroc Lighting Systems India Pvt. Ltd., Motherson Sumi and the Oberoi Hotel Group. Mahindra & Mahindra, Ashok Leyland, Shakti Pump, Fieldking, Kirloskar, etc. are present through their local representatives in Morocco. Several heavy equipment companies like Bharat Forge, KEC also have presence in the local market. Tata Motors and Mahindra are also getting acceptance in the local automobile market. Samta Group is the latest entrant in the mining sector. Most recently, HCL has set up their full fledged centre in Technopolis Rabat.

6. **Information Technology:** Centre of Excellence in Information Technology has been set up in Technopark, Casablanca under IAF S-II development programme. CEIT has imparted Training to 675 Moroccan students/professionals till date. As per the MoU, the CEIT was handed over to the Moroccan side in January 2020. More than 25 Indian companies and start-ups participated in the prestigious Tech & Start-up event Gitex Africa hosted by Morocco which took place from May 31 to June 2, 2023 in Marrakesh.

7. **Renewable Energy:** There is increasing cooperation between India and Morocco in the field of renewable energy. At the CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Growth Partnership, an MoU was signed on 20 July, 2022 between NTPC and Moroccan renewable energy agency MASEN to work together in the renewable energy sector. The Second meeting of JWG on Renewable Energy was held on 24 January 2023.

8. **International Year of Millets 2023:** The Embassy of India in the Kingdom of Morocco organised month long events in Rabat and Marrakech to mark International Year of Millets 2023. A poster exhibition, display of various millets and millet based food festival were organized in Marrakech in the presence of a large number of local dignitaries, diplomats and media personnel gathered. The event was also supported by Federation de La Millorette, which is also engaged in promotion of millet based foods.

### **C. Other Major Areas of Cooperation :**

Several Agreements/ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) have been signed between India and Morocco for cooperation in the fields of defence, economic and commercial links, technical cooperation and culture.

Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers, Health & Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya visited Morocco from 20-22 January, 2023. He met Chairman & CEO of OCP Dr. Mostafa Terrab and Morocco's Minister of Health and Social Protection Mr. Khalid Ait Taleb during the visit. Three MoUs were signed between OCP and Indian Fertilizer companies under which OCP will supply India with up to 1.7 million metric tons (MT) of phosphate fertilizers in one year. Hon'ble Minister also visited Integrated Phosphatic Fertilizer Complex of OCP at Jorf Lasfar and the Indo Maroc Phosphore SA (IMACID) plant, a Joint Venture of OCP Morocco & Indian companies.

A delegation led by Shri Ghanshyam Tiwari, Member of Parliament visited Morocco to attend the Parliamentary Conference on 'Interfaith Dialogue: Working together for our common future' held in Marrakech from 13th to 15th June, 2023.

Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs of India H.E Nirmala Sitharaman visited Morocco to participate in the IMF-World Bank meetings held in Marrakech from 9-16 October, 2023. She also co-chaired the fourth Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting under G20 India presidency, in Marrakech and also met Minister of Economy and Finance of Morocco H.E Mrs. Nadia Fettah on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank meetings.

Prof. Khalid Ait Taleb, Minister of Health of Morocco, participated virtually in the UBUNTU International Yoga Conference organized by ICCR and Ministry of AYUSH on the occasion of the Seventh International Day of Yoga on 21-22 June, 2021.

Dr. Ghita Mezzour, Minister Delegate for Digital Transformation, along with a high level delegation, visited India from 27<sup>th</sup> May till 4<sup>th</sup> June 2022 during which she met Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture and Shri Rajeev Chandrashekhar, Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Electronics and Information Technology.

A high level delegation led by Mr. El Abed ALAOUI BOUHAMID, General of the Air Force Division participated in the Def Expo held in Gandhinagar from 18-22 October, 2022.

A high level delegation led by Mr. MAHOUAR HASSANE, General in the Royal Armed Forces of Kingdom of Morocco participated in Aero India 2023 held in Bengaluru from 11- 19 February, 2023.

Mr. Mohcine Jazouli, Minister Delegate to the Head of Government for Investment, Convergence, and Evaluation of Public Policies visited India from 4-10 March, 2023 during which he met Shri Mansukh Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizer, Health and Family Welfare and Shri Piyush Goyal, Commerce and Industry Minister.

A delegation led by Ms. Zineb El Adaoui, First President, Court of Accounts of Morocco visited India to attend the SAI 20 Summit held in Goa from 12-14 June, 2023 upon invitation of Shri Girish Chandra Murmu, Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

**Foreign Office Consultations:** The 5<sup>th</sup> India-Morocco Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) were held in Rabat on 24-25 November 2022 co-chaired by Secretary (CPV & OIA), Ministry of External Affairs during which a wide range of bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest were discussed.

**Joint Working Groups:** Joint Working Groups on various subjects of mutual interest have been formed and meet regularly. The first meeting of the India-Morocco JWG on Counter Terrorism was held in Rabat on 29 December, 2022. 2nd meeting of India-Morocco JWG on Health was held in virtual mode on 12 Jan 2023 and the Second meeting of JWG on Renewable Energy was held on 24 January 2023. The Second meeting of the Joint Committee under the Memorandum of Understanding of Mining and Geology between India and Morocco was held on 2 February, 2021. Third India-Morocco JWG on Water Resources was held on July 6, 2021. The first meeting of JWG on Fertilisers was held on March 10, 2023 in virtual format.

There is an abiding interest in Morocco for Indian art and culture. Hindi films are very popular in Morocco and Moroccan TV regularly telecasts Indian feature film every week. A Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) between India and Morocco for the years 2016-19 was signed on 31 May 2016. In the last few years, artists representing the diverse facets of Indian classical music and dance have visited Morocco under the Cultural Exchange Programme. Conversely, Moroccan calligraphy artists went to New Delhi, Jaipur and Bhopal to exhibit Moroccan calligraphy, renowned Moroccan singer Mr. Aziz

Ozouss and his group represented Morocco in the 8th International Jazz Festival in New Delhi and 8 member cultural troupe 'Abidat Rma' participated in the 6th International Folk Music and Dance Competition in New Delhi from 01-08 December 2019. ICCR sponsored Kathak and Sitar groups participated in the Fez Festival of Sufi Culture from 22-27 October, 2022.

To celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Mission has been interacting with all stakeholders to carry out a number of programmes. Mission has conducted a number of programmes to celebrate International Day of Yoga 2021, Independence Day and ITEC Day 2021. On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti on Oct 2, 2021, Ambassador visited Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane and paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi's bust located in the university, planted a sapling and engaged with the academia. 8<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga was celebrated at the UNESCO World Heritage site and iconic location of Kasbah des Oudayas and the event was telecast on Doordarshan as part of Guardian Ring of Yoga. 9<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga was celebrated on a grand scale in the landmark Hassan-II Parc, Rabat which saw participation of more than 200 people from various walks of life. Other successful programmes across various cities of Rabat, Casablanca, Kenitra, Marrakech and Tangier were also organised in Morocco.

**TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING:** ITEC courses are extremely popular in Morocco. Till date, a total of 779 Moroccan nationals have attended ITEC courses with record number of 264 participants from Morocco in 2022-23. Special ITEC courses have also been organised for Moroccan participants on subjects covering deep learning, cyber security, water resource management etc. Morocco has been allotted 4 scholarship slots under ICCR Africa Scholarship Schemes. Further, diplomats from Morocco regularly attend PCFD courses at SSIFS, New Delhi. A Special training of two weeks at SSIFS for 16 Moroccan diplomats was organized from 15-27 April 2019. Representatives from the Government of Morocco also actively participate in various capacity building programmes under IAFS-III. In 2021, 4 students from Morocco were accepted to study Hindi at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan Agra under the Promotion of Hindi Language Abroad Scheme.

**VISIT of NAVAL SHIPS:** Indian Naval Ships have been visiting Morocco regularly for goodwill visits. Indian Naval Ship Sumedha and Royal Moroccan Naval Ship L C Arrahmani (501) conducted a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) on September 25, 2023. Last year, INS Tarkash conducted a Maritime Patrol Exercise (MPX) with Royal Moroccan Naval Ship Hassan-II on July 26, 2022, off Port Casablanca. The exercise was aimed at strengthening maritime ties & enhancing inter-operability between the two Navies. Earlier, INS Tarkash had visited Casablanca and Tangier Port in 2017 and 2019. INS Tabar visited Casablanca for a technical port call in August 2021. During the visit, INS Tabar carried out PASSEX exercise with Royal Moroccan Navy.

**INDIAN COMMUNITY:** Indian community in Morocco numbers around 400-450. Many of them are engaged in businesses and are based in the city of Casablanca, the commercial and trade hub of Morocco. Indian community also comprises of Indian professionals working with Indian companies and multinationals based in Morocco.

**Source:** [www.mea.gov.in](http://www.mea.gov.in)