

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

India-Sudan Bilateral Relations

A. Introduction

1. Indian Trade Journal (ITJ) division of the Director 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 depicting the Embassy of Sudan.

2. Relations between India and Sudan date back to ancient times. Evidence indicate that there were contacts and possibly trade almost 5,000 years ago between Nilotic and Indus Valley Civilizations through Mesopotamia. Two steel suspension rail bridges in Khartoum and Atbara were imported from India in the 1900s. These bridges are still in use today. Since 1900, Indian experts have been involved in the development of Sudan's forestry sector. Mahatma Gandhi visited Port Sudan in 1935, on his way to England and met with the members of the Indian diaspora in Sudan.

3. The first Sudanese Parliamentary elections in 1953 were conducted by Shri Sukumar Sen, the then India's Chief Election Commissioner (the Sudanese Election Commission, formed in 1957, drew heavily on Indian elections norms and laws). India opened diplomatic representation in Khartoum in March 1955.

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

4. India is a significant trade partner of Sudan. India primarily exports food stuffs, petroleum products, manufactured goods, machinery and equipment, chemicals including pharmaceuticals and textiles to Sudan. Sudan mainly exports sesame seed, gum Arabic, cotton, water melon seeds, hides and skins and ground nuts to India. Bilateral trade between both countries is on a steep rise, Lately. a 14 member FIEO delegation visited Sudan in Nov 2022 to hold meetings with Union of Chambers of Commerce of Sudan to explore opportunities for trade. A snapshot of our bilateral trade in US \$ million is given below,

Export-Import statistics as per India's Ministry of Commerce data bank from 2019-20 to 2023-24 are as follows :

Export-Import statistics from 2019-20 to 2023-24

(US Dollar million)

Year	India's Exports	India's Imports	Total Bilateral Trade
2019-20	1096.88	396.75	1493.63
2020-21	1022.33	368.28	1390.61
2021-22	1077.25	129.15	1206.40
2022-23	1815.84	218.18	2034.02
2023-24	805.04	330.55	1135.59

(Source: Department of Commerce, India)

5. A number of Indian companies have presence in Sudan in different fields such as pharmaceuticals, agriculture, mining, energy services etc. Indian experts and workers are also present in different sectors like IT, pharmaceutical, sugar, steel industry, ceramic industry etc. and are making a significant contribution. A number of steel units are owned by PIOs such as Liberty Steel, Omega Steel and Aarti Steel, which is a subsidiary of Bhusan Group. Indian pharmaceutical companies are very active in Sudan and are a source of formulations and active pharmaceutical ingredients (API). Indian Pharmaceutical machinery manufacturers have put up a number of lines of manufacturing units for the pharmaceutical industry of Sudan.

6. Vegetable oil machinery manufacturers and consultants have put up a number of manufacturing lines for the major food groups in Sudan. Orient Fan, which has a major share and is a market leader in Sudan, is represented by an Indian origin businessman. Major Indian brands in pharma like Sun Pharma, Cadila etc. have representations and so do major automotive companies like Tata, Mahindra and Bajaj. As per National Investment Authority of Sudan, total Indian investments in Sudan up to Dec 2019 amounted to more than US\$ 471.5 million with 86 investment projects including 51 industrial projects, 21 service projects and 14 agricultural projects.

7. Shri V. Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs held a virtual meeting with Acting Foreign Minister of Sudan on 14 December 2020 in which bilateral relations, regional and international issues of mutual interest were reviewed. Both sides identified several areas for furthering cooperation in sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, mining, renewable energy,

health and education, defence & security cooperation etc. EAM and the Sudanese FM Dr. Mariam Al-Sadig Al-Mahdi held a telecon on 27 August 2021.

C. Other Major Areas of Cooperation :

- India and Sudan have almost 30 bilateral agreements covering trade, science and technology, media, culture, consultations, business, small industries, legal matters, air services, agriculture etc.
- The main focus of bilateral engagement has been on capacity building, political, commercial and cultural exchanges. Sudanese scholars have also been selected for the C.V. Raman Fellowship Programme. Sudanese diplomats have been attending Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) organized by Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Services (SSIFS). In November 2019, 40 Sudanese Government professionals had undergone a special English language proficiency course in Hyderabad; 25 Sudanese Judges went to Bengaluru in December 2019 for a special training programme; a group of 50 officials from various Sudanese Ministries/ Agencies attended a special English course in Hyderabad in March 2020.
- Under Government of India's "Pan-African E-Network" project for first phase, which ended in 2017, Sudan utilized the services of tele-education and tele-medicine. Government of India has launched the second phase of this project with enhanced capacity and superior equipment called e-Vidya Bharati (tele-education) and Arogya Bharati (tele-medicine). This project will be set up in three educational institutions and one hospital in Sudan. Enrollment for distance learning courses under e-Vidya Bharati has also taken place.
- In April 2006, India funded a solar electrification (implemented by Central Electronics Ltd) for Khadarab village about two hours road journey from Khartoum, bringing light for the first time into the lives of some 1,500 villagers. The project has been replicated in several other villages.
- Kosti Thermal Power Plant built by BHEL is located at Um Dabaker in Sudan with capacity of 500 MW (4 X 125 MW). This is the largest thermal power plant in Sudan, the biggest combined cycle project built by BHEL in Africa. It is BHEL's largest oil-fired thermal power plant in the overseas market and also its first crude-oil fired thermal power plant in Africa. The project is financed under LoC of US\$ 350 million to Sudan.

- Following record breaking floods in July-August 2020 and the ongoing COVID pandemic, GOI donated 100 MT food aid (75 MT white flour and 25 MT sugar) as HADR supplies on November 2, 2020 at Port Sudan delivered by INS Airavat. In April 2021, GOI also donated 6 Tonnes of life saving essential medicines to Sudan.
- A contingent from Sudan Armed Forces participated in Africa-India Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX-2019) in Pune in March 2019. In 2019, a team of 16 senior officers of National Defence from Nimeiry Defence Academy visited India on study tour which was hosted by National Defence College, New Delhi. High level Sudanese delegation has been regularly participating in AERO-INDIA-2019, DEF-EXPO 2020, AERO-INDIA- 2021 and DEF-EXPO-2022.
- INS Airavat made an OTR port call at Port Sudan on 2-4 November 2020, in a first after 1995, carrying 100 MT of HADR supplies for Sudan. INS Tabar undertook a Maritime Exercise (PASSEX) with the Sudanese Navy in the Sudanese territorial waters in the Red Sea on 10 September 2021. Two Sudanese warships Abdel fadil Almaz and Almak-Nimr took part in the exercises, the first ever bilateral maritime exercise involving a wide range of naval operations. In February 2022, a delegation from Defence Industries System of Sudan visited various Indian Firms. During the visit, three MOUs with Rashtriya Metal Industries Ltd (RIML), Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Limited (AWEIL) and Hyderabad Precision Manufacturing have been signed. DIS has also submitted two MOUs to Yantra India Limited (YIL) and Munition India Ltd (MIL), which are pending with these firms. On 07 July 2022, Joint Maritime Exercises were conducted by the Indian Naval Ship Tarkash along with Sudan Naval ships Almazz and Nimer in the Red Sea.
- Healthcare is an important sector for cooperation between the two countries. In pursuance of the commitments made under IAFS-III, mid-career specialized training courses are conducted at regular intervals at renowned hospitals in India like Apollo, Fortis and Artemis. India has become the major destination for Sudanese patients to avail medical treatment. Mission issued 6175 Medical/medical attendant visas in 2019, 3284 (2020), 4049 (2021) and 1480 (June 2022). Prominent hospitals like Apollo, Yashoda, Fortis are in the process of setting up information centres in Sudan to better serve the Sudanese patients. Recently, a comprehensive draft MOU for Cooperation in Health Sector has been shared with the Sudanese side.

- About 1500 students travel to India annually for higher studies mainly to Pune, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore. More than 100,000 Sudanese, graduates of Indian Universities, have carved a niche for themselves in their chosen fields and some of them are holding high positions in government and business.
- India had in the past provided germ plasm for Neem, Mango and Ashok trees. Sudan had also requested help for technical know-how for rice production; small scale sugar mills of capacity up to 200 TCD (Tones of Cane Per Day). Some areas of cooperation could be twinning of agricultural universities; capacity building in micro-finance; bio- fertilizers; cow and sheep breeding technology; warehousing; rain water harvesting; milk cooperatives etc. During the last Joint Ministerial Meeting, the Indian side suggested to send a multi-disciplinary composite delegation of scientists and experts from agricultural and allied sectors. A comprehensive draft MoU has been submitted to the Sudanese side for consideration.
- On the request of Sudanese side, a virtual meeting between National Information Centre (NIC) of Sudan and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) was held on 23 August 2021 to understand the Aadhaar project of India. On a request from Sudan's PM Office for assistance in developing e-governance system in Sudan, the Mission in partnership with NIC, Sudan organized a webinar on sharing 'India's experience in e- Governance' in Khartoum on 2 September 2021.
- A Letter of Intent (LoI) on cooperation in exchange of ideas, information, personnel, skills, capacity building and regulatory experience was signed between Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and Telecommunication and Post Regulatory Authority (TPRA) of Sudan during a virtual meeting on 6 April 2021. Under the LoI, TRAI has conducted a five-day Capacity Building Programme from 20-24 September 2021 for TPRA officers virtually.
- An MoU between Sudanese Standards & Metrology Organisation (SSMO) and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) was signed on 25 February 2021. To discuss concrete cooperation the two sides held a virtual meeting in March 2021. Under the MoU, BIS provided right to SSMO to use indigenously developed Indian Standards. Some online training programmes will also be offered by to SSMO.
- Government of Sudan has been extending logistic assistance to cultural troupes visiting Sudan. ICCR sponsored cultural troupes regularly visit Sudan. A 15-member Sudanese artisan

and artists group participated in the Surajkund International Crafts Mela in February 2020 and March-April 2022.

➤ To commemorate the 75 years of India's Independence on 1 April 2021, the Mission organised the 'Curtain Raiser to the 75-week countdown to India@75'. Mission organized an official function as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations and to mark the 75th Independence Day of India at on 15 August. Since April 2021, Mission has been organizing several events to mark 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

Source: www.mea.gov.in