

India – South Sudan Relations

South Sudan was a part of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, under joint British-Egyptian rule, from 1899-1955. After two civil wars (1962-72 and 1983-2005), a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed between the Government of Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) on 09 January 2005 in Nairobi, Kenya which led to autonomy for the South and a South Sudanese referendum on independence in six years' time. Consequently, South Sudan gained independence from Sudan on 09 July 2011, following a peaceful referendum in which 98.5 percent South Sudanese voted for independence. South Sudan is the 193rd member of the United Nations and 54th member of the African Union. India did not take sides in the two civil wars; therefore, unlike some other countries, it carries no baggage from the past. There were sporadic informal contacts between SPLM and Indian Missions in Kampala, Nairobi, and Kinshasa in the 1980s and 1990s. When the war broke out in 1983, only a few intrepid members of the Indian community stayed on in Juba and other major towns while most left for the North.

India has a long standing relations with the people of South Sudan. In December 1975, the then President of India, Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed visited Sudan and addressed the Regional Peoples' Assembly in Juba. Almost the entire population of Juba had turned out to welcome him. An assessment by the Embassy in Khartoum stated: "On the whole, the visit to Juba made it evident that the Southern Sudanese have deeper respect for India." India increased its engagement with South Sudan after the second civil war ended in 2005. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E.A. Ahamed, attended the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on 09 January 2005 in Nairobi, between the Government of Sudan and SPLM that brought peace to South Sudan. Indian Consulate in Juba was opened in October 2007, which was later upgraded to the level of Embassy in March 2012. India was one of the first countries to recognize Independent South Sudan and Hon'ble Vice President of India Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari attended the Independence Day celebrations in Juba in July 2011.

Important Bilateral Visits

From Indian side, former President Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed visited Juba (then part of Sudan) in December 1975. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed, attended the signing of Comprehensive Peace Agreement between South Sudan and Sudan in Nairobi in January 2005. Subsequently, he led a multi-disciplinary delegation to South Sudan in June 2011. Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari represented India at the independence ceremony in Juba on 09 July 2011. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Salva Kiir Mayardit in New York on 24 September 2011 on the side lines of UN General Assembly (UNGA). The Special Envoy of India to Sudan and South Sudan visited the two countries regularly to discuss

issues of bilateral interest. MOS Gen (Retd) V.K Singh, visited Juba from July 12-13, 2015 as Special Envoy of Prime Minister of India to deliver invitations to South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and Foreign Minister Dr. Barnaba Marial Benjamin for participation in Third India Africa Summit in New Delhi in October 2015. *MOS Gen (Retd) V.K Singh, visited Juba from July 13, 2016 to coordinate and oversee evacuation of Indian nationals when civil war was at its peak in South Sudan.*

From South Sudanese side, a high level delegation from President Salva Kiir's office led by Dr. Priscilla Joseph Kuch visited India in April 2011. Special Envoy of the President of South Sudan, Joseph Lual Achuil visited in November 2011. Former Vice President Dr. Riek Machar Teny, visited India to participate in the conference organized by the Friends of Moral Re-armament at Panchgani in January 2012. Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Cooperatives, Betty Achan Ogwaro, visited in January 2012. Deputy Minister of Commerce of South Sudan, Kengen Jakor Beyo led an eight member delegation to attend the ELECRAMA Exhibition in Mumbai in January 2012 on the invitation of the Indo-African Chamber of Commerce. Chairperson of the Constituency Fund Committee of the National Assembly, Beatrice Aber Samson, led an eight-member delegation on a Study Tour of India, hosted by the Indian Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training in July 2012. South Sudanese President Gen Salva Kiir Mayardit was scheduled to visit India in August 2013, but the visit was postponed at the last minute due to disturbed political situation in the country. President Salva Kiir accompanied by a high level official delegation attended the Third India Africa Summit held in New Delhi in October 2015 and discussed bilateral relations with PM Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the Summit. During the year 2018, there were many visits from South Sudan to attend international conferences organized in India. Mr. Yien Oral Lam Tut, Minister of Higher Education and Science & Technology and Mr. Gabriel Thokuj Deng, Minister of Mining attended the CII-Exim Bank Conclave in New Delhi during March 2018. Ms. Sophia Pal Gai, M/o Water Resources & Irrigation visited India to take part in Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Conference (29th Sept-2nd Oct, 2018). Ms. Josephine Cosmos Napwon, Minister of Environment & Forestry visited India twice to attend International Solar Alliance (ISA) Founding Conference (March 2018) and First General Assembly of ISA (October 2018). Prof. John Apuruot Akec, Vice Chancellor, University of Juba visited India under Academic Visitors Programme (AVP) sponsored by ICCR in August 2018.

Economic - Commercial Relations

ONGC of India - Videsh Ltd. (OVL) has made an investment of about US\$ 2.5 billion (spread over South Sudan and Sudan) in the hydrocarbon sector since 2003. It has 25% Participating Interest (PI) in Greater Pioneer Operating Company Ltd. (GPOC) [Block 1, 2 and 4] in consortium with CNPC of China, Petronas of Malaysia and Sudapet of Sudan. ONGC also has 24.125% PI in Block 5A in the consortium of Sudd Petroleum Operating Company (SPOC) with PETRONAS and Sudapet.

Production of crude oil was disrupted since 2013 due to outbreak of civil war in the country. Upon signing of Revitalized Peace Agreement between South Sudan Government and opposition rebels in September 2018, the oil production has been revived at a minimal level. It is presumed the pre-war level production could be achieved by mid-2019.

India's trade with South Sudan is very sparse. The main items of Indian imports from South Sudan are oil and timber and India's exports mainly comprise of consumer and household goods, food items, pharmaceuticals, two and three wheelers. As Indian trade is mainly through third countries (Uganda, Kenya, UAE), precise data is not available. South Sudan's estimated global imports in 2016 (up to which data is available) were US\$ 348 Million and exports approximately US\$ 1.3 billion, with China, Uganda and Kenya being the major trading partners.

Some Indian companies are operating in the area of construction, borehole drilling, printing, trading, and services to the oil industry. Indians also operate small hotels and supermarkets in Juba. They are mostly concentrated in Juba, the capital city.

Development Assistance Partnership

At the April 2005 Oslo Donors Conference, India announced a grant of US\$10 million for infrastructure, capacity building and social sector projects such as hospitals and educational institutions in Sudan. Half of the US\$10 million grant to Sudan was allocated for construction of a hospital in South Sudan. The proposal to construct a medium sized hospital in Juba is under active consideration and MoU to start the work on the project is likely to be finalized shortly between GoSS and GOI. In January 2008, India also donated US\$100,000 worth of tents and medicines for flood affected areas to be shared between Sudan and South Sudan.

Other development assistance initiatives

(i) **ICCR Scholarships:** Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has allocated 10 (7) scholarships for South Sudan nationals for higher studies in India for the academic year 2018-19 and 07 scholarships have been utilized.

(ii) **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Training Slots:** Ministry of External Affairs has allocated 200 slots for South Sudan under the ITEC Programme for the year 2018-19.

(iii) **Vocational Training Centre (VTC):** The VTC is an India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) commitment. The Government of South Sudan has proposed setting up of VTC in Wau State in Western Bahr el Ghazal State and matter is under discussion with the Government of South Sudan.

(iv) **Solar Electrification:** A solar electrification project, implemented by Central Electronics Limited of India near Juba had drawn widespread appreciation. However during the civil war, the installation got destroyed.

(v) **Construction of Hospital:** Proposal to provide financial assistance to South Sudan for construction of hospital in Juba is under active consideration and MoU will be signed soon to start the construction of hospital in Juba. A combined team of CPWD and AIIMS is expected to visit Juba in early January 2019.

(vi) **Pan Africa e-Network Project:** The Agreement for the implementation of the project in South Sudan was signed in February 2012. The classes were conducted between 2013-15 and thereafter the project got discontinued due to civil war. It is sought to be resumed and a TCIL team is expected to visit Juba in early 2019.

Indian Contingent in United Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

India has provided a battalion of 2400 defense personnel for the peacekeeping operations in South Sudan. The battalions are deployed at Juba, Jonglei and Upper Nile Regions. Additionally there is a police component (UNPOL) of around 23 Indian Police Officers attached with UNMISS in the country. Apart from the peacekeeping operations, the Indian soldiers have been performing community welfare activities viz. medical clinic for the general public and veterinary clinic to assist the local community with huge cattle population. The Indian peacekeepers have also been assisting local youth in capacity building training like repair of computers, diesel gen-sets and other technical skills. To empower women of South Sudan, the peace keepers have been teaching agriculture methods of growing vegetable and pulses and also taught how to produce clean milk from the cattle resources. The battalion in Bor State have started installing community solar lights in village for the benefit of the students to study at night and for security reasons. In 2013, the Indian peacekeeping battalion had lost seven of their soldiers who got killed in two different attacks in Jonglei State. The bravery and social welfare activities of the Indian peacekeepers have been highly commended by the local population and Government of South Sudan.

Indian Community in South Sudan

Presently, there are about 1000 Indian nationals in South Sudan. Some of them have set up businesses in Juba and others are working in various small sized companies. A considerable number of Indian nationals also work in Christian missionary organizations / NGOs in South Sudan. Indians have been among the first to open hotels, borehole companies, printing presses and departmental stores in Juba in early 2006. Indians have formed an Association (IASS), whose membership is presently around 400. The Embassy maintains regular contacts with the Indian community in South Sudan and attend various social gatherings and events organised

by them. Periodic medical camps and blood donation camps especially on the occasion of Indian Independence Day and Republic Day are held in collaboration with National Blood Transfusion Centre in Juba. Indians are in number two position in the country in blood donation campaign. International Day of Yoga is organized every year by the Mission in collaboration with IASS and Indian Peacekeepers in UNMISS since 2015. Regular open house is held in the Embassy to address the grievances of the Indian community. *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* (PBD) is also celebrated on January 9, every year for promoting Diaspora interests in South Sudan.

Useful Resources:

Embassy of India, Juba website:

<http://indembjuba.gov.in/>

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