

India-Eswatini Bilateral Relations

India's relations with Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) are close, friendly and cordial. Bilateral relations between India and Eswatini have been established in 1970. The first resident Indian Mission in Mbabane started functioning from 13 August 2019. Before that, High Commission of India, Maputo was accredited to the Kingdom of Eswatini. Eswatini does not have a Diplomatic Mission in India yet. Presently, High Commissioner of Eswatini to Malaysia, resident in Kuala Lumpur, is accredited to India. Shri N. Ram Prasad, High Commissioner of India assumed charge on 01 August 2023.

Exchange of visits:

From Eswatini

Visit of Agriculture Minister: Agriculture Minister Mititi Fakudze visited India in March 2007 to attend the FICCI Conference. Enterprise & Employment Minister Lutfo Dlamini attended the CII Regional Conclave held in Maputo from 1-2 July 2007 and met Shri Anand Sharma, MoS for External Affairs on the sidelines of the Conclave.

Visit of Mbabane Police Chief: A six member delegation led by the Police Chief of Mbabane visited India on 19-21 February 2008 to attend the DEFEXPO 2008.

Ministerial delegation to CII-EXIM Bank Conclave 2008: A delegation led by Enterprise & Employment Minister Lutfo Dlamini attended CII-EXIM Bank Conclave held in New Delhi on 19-21 March 2008.

Ministerial delegation to FICCI's India-Africa Partnership Summit 2009: A 13 Member delegation led by Minister of Commerce, Industry & Trade Ms Jabulile Mashwama visited India to attend FICCI's India-Africa Partnership summit held in New Delhi on 19-20 January 2009.

Ministerial delegation for CII-EXIM Bank Conclave 2009: A 4-member delegation led by the Minister of Natural Resources & Energy Princess Tsandzile and including Minister of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Hon Pastor Nelisiwe J. Shongwe attended CII-Exim Bank Conclave held in New Delhi on 22-24 March 2009.

Ministerial delegation to Commonwealth Games 2010: A delegation led by Ms Hlobisile Ndlouvu, Minister of Sports, Culture & Youth Affairs visited India to attend the Commonwealth Games held in New Delhi on 13-14 October 2010.

Ministerial delegation for FICCI's India Africa Business Summit: A delegation led by Agriculture Minister Clement Dlamini visited India to attend FICCI's India Africa Business Summit held in Hyderabad in October 2011.

HMK Mswati-III visits to India: His Majesty King Mswati III visited India first in October, 2015 to attend the 3rd India Africa Summit (IAFS-III) and called on the President and Prime Minister which helped to advance India's profile and presence in the Kingdom of Eswatini. His Majesty again visited India in March 2017 as a Guest of Honour for the CII-EXIM Bank Conclave and was hosted by the President. This visit of His Majesty gave further momentum to India's commercial and cultural profile in Eswatini. Earlier, His Majesty also attended the 2nd India-Africa Summit (IAFS-II) held at Addis Ababa in May 2011, and met with the then Prime Minister, Shri Manmohan Singh on the sidelines.

Visit of Minister of Natural Resources & Energy: Minister of Natural Resources and Energy of the Kingdom of Eswatini, Senator Peter Bhembe, with a three-member delegation consisting of the Managing Director of Eswatini Electricity Company, Acting Chief Geologist and Chief Mining Engineer, visited Delhi, Kolkata and Ahmedabad to study iron and steel production units in India in November 2019.

Visit of Chief Defence Officer: Chief Defence Officer of the Kingdom of Eswatini HRH Prince Hlangusemphi Dlamini took part in the India-Africa Defence Minister's Conclave in Lucknow held from 5-6 February 2020. On 07 February 2020, he visited various rural development schemes implemented by NABARD and was briefed on the capacity building training programmes available at Bankers Institute of Rural Development at Lucknow.

16th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave: Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg and Minister of Natural Resources & Energy Senator Peter Bhembe of the Kingdom of Eswatini participated in the virtual 16th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave held on 13-15 July 2021 and spoke on "Harnessing the Africa-India Opportunity: Connect, Create and Collaborate" and "Propelling Africa's thrust to achieve sustainable energy security" respectively.

Ministerial participation at ISA Meeting: On 26 August 2021, Minister of Natural Resources & Energy of the Kingdom of Eswatini Senator Peter Bhembe participated virtually in the Africa Regional Committee Meeting of the International Solar Alliance.

Eswatini delegation to 12th Edition of DefExpo 2022: HRH Prince Sicalo Nkopolo Dlamini, Principal Secretary, M/o National Defence & Security led Eswatini delegation at the 12th Edition of DefExpo 2022 held in Gandhinagar on 18-22 Oct 2022. His delegation included UEDF Commander (General Mashikilisane Moses Fakudze and three other officials. On the sidelines of DefExpo 2022, Eswatini delegation took part in the India-Africa Defence Dialogue and confirmed their approval for the Gandhinagar Declaration.

Visit of Minister of Education: Minister of Education Lady Howard Mabuza visited India to participate at the valedictory ceremony of the India-UNESCO-Africa Hackathon held on 22-25 Nov 2022. As many as 11 students and one coordinator from Eswatini took part in the Hackathon.

Eswatini delegate to Aero India 2023: Mr. Sanele Cyprian Malambe, Under Secretary, Ministry of National Defence & Security represented the Kingdom of Eswatini at the Aero India 2023 held at Bengaluru on 13-17 February 2023.

AFINDEX 2023: Maj Gen Sisusa Monusukaphi Dlamini represented the Army Commander of the Umbutfo Eswatini Defence Force at the Army Chiefs' Conclave held at Pune on 27-31 Mar 2023 on the side lines of Africa-India Defence Exercises 2023 (AFINDEX 2023). Maj Thokozani German Dlamini and Lt. Col. Sifiso Mel'Sizwe Mtsetfwa took part in AFINDEX 2023 as Observers from Eswatini.

Visit of Eswatini Minister of Economic Planning & Development: Dr. Tambo Gina, Minister of Economic Planning & Development led a three-member Eswatini delegation for the met the 18th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave held on 14-16 June 2023 in New Delhi. In addition to participation in the Conclave, he met Secretary (ER) in the Ministry of External Affairs on 14 Jun 2023. He also met senior officials of EXIM Bank of India on the sidelines of the Conclave.

Eswatini Minister of Tourism & Environmental Affairs participates at VOGSS 2.0 Ministerial: Ms. Jane Mkhonta, Minister of Tourism & Environmental Affairs of the Kingdom of Eswatini has participated in the Ministerial session of the Environment Ministers pertaining to the 2nd Voice of Global South Summit 2023 held virtually on 17 November 2023. The meeting was chaired by Shri Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. In her remarks, the Eswatini Minister

said that the Kingdom of Eswatini has always emphasized the common but differentiated responsibility and that those countries which have accumulated wealth while emitting greenhouse gases should lead the way in mitigation.

Visit of Eswatini Chief Justice to India: At the invitation of the Chief Justice of India, His Lordship Bheki Maphalala, Chief Justice of the Kingdom of Eswatini has visited India on 27-30 Nov 2023 to participate at the 1st Regional Conference on Access to Legal Aid: Strengthening Access to Justice on the Global South held on 27-28 Nov 2023. Ms. Lungile Nompumelele Magagula, Director of Legal Aid and Mr. Phakama Chillies Shili, Senior Legal Aid Officer from the Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs of Eswatini also represented Eswatini at the Conference.

Visit of Eswatini Attorney General for CASGC 2024: The Attorney General of Eswatini Mr. Sifiso Mashampu Khumalo, accompanied by Mr. Sinoniso Hlawe, Senior Crown Counsel at the Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs participated in the Commonwealth Attorney Generals and Solicitors General Conference (CASGC 2024) held in New Delhi on 02-04 Feb 2024.

From India

Visit of Addl. Secretary, M/o Coal: Shri Rajiv Sharma, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Coal visited Eswatini on April 5, 2007 and held discussions with the Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Ms Dumsile T Sukati and invited her to India to visit coal mines.

Visit of Speaker, Lok Sabha: In May 2010, former Speaker of Lok Sabha, Smt. Meira Kumar, visited Eswatini to attend the Mid-year Executive Meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). During the visit, she also called on King Mswati III and the Prime Minister of Eswatini.

Visit of MOS, M/o External Affairs: Smt. Praneet Kaur, then MoS for External Affairs in 2011, visited Eswatini as PM's Envoy to invite the King to the IAFS-II held in Addis Ababa.

Visit of MOS, M/o Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation: Dr. Mahesh Sharma, MoS for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation visited Eswatini in July 2015, as a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister to invite King Mswati III to the IAFS-III held in New Delhi in October 2015.

Visit of Hon'ble President of India: On 09-10 April 2018, Hon'ble President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, accompanied by the First Lady and a large delegation visited the Kingdom of Eswatini. During the visit, the President addressed a Joint Session of the Eswatini Parliament and conveyed Government of India's decision to open a resident Indian Diplomatic Mission in Eswatini. He was also conferred the highest honour of Eswatini, 'the Order of the Lion'. During the visit, the President witnessed the signing of MoU on Cooperation in Health Sector and an Agreement for exemption of visas for holders of diplomatic/service passports. The President also inaugurated the Royal Science & Technology Project, built with the Government of India Line of Credit of US\$ 20 million.

Indian delegation for 62nd International Sugar Organisation Council Session: A two-member delegation led by Shri Anoop Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra visited Eswatini on 05-08 Jun 2023 to participate in the Council Session of the 62nd International Sugar Organisation held at Royal Villas, Ezulwini. The other member of the delegation was Mr. Sangeet, Director, Department of Food & Public Distribution, Government of India.

Bilateral Consultations

- In August 2017, bilateral consultations between the two countries were held in Mbabane. The Indian side was led by Dr. Neena Malhotra, Joint Secretary (E&SA).

- A virtual Study Tour was organized for the Minister of Justice & Constitutional Affairs Ms. Pholile Dlamini Shakantu, Principal Secretary Ms Lorraine Hlophe, Deputy Attorney General of Eswatini Ms. Zandile Dlamini and 14 legal officers through the National Judicial Academy (NJA), Bhopal on 23 October 2020.
- In May 2021, the Kingdom of Eswatini formally conveyed their Agreement for concurrent accreditation to Eswatini of Defence Advisor Capt (IN) Nitin Kapoor, HCI Pretoria.
- Government of India offered two (2) slots under ITEC for Defence personnel of the Kingdom of Eswatini for the Training Year 2020-21 one of which was availed. For the Training Year 2021-22, Eswatini has been allocated 08 training slots. For the Training Year 2022-23, 26 defence training slots were offered. For the Training Year 2023-24 and 2024-25, 15 slots each were allocated under defence training.
- The first meeting of the JWG for consultations on implementation of MoU on Health Cooperation signed in April 2018 scheduled for February 2020 could not take place due to COVID-2019. Efforts are being made to constitute the JWG meeting.
- The Second India-Eswatini Foreign Office Consultations were held in Mbabane on 19 Feb 2024. Mr. Puneet R. Kundal, Additional Secretary (East & Southern Africa), Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi and Mr. Nthangase Sizwe Newman Nthangase, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation of Eswatini co-chaired.

Multilateral: The two countries hold identical views on many regional, international and multilateral issues. Eswatini continues to support India and its candidature at various International Fora. Eswatini supported India for the non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for the period 2021-2022. The Kingdom of Eswatini signed the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement in July 2021. Ratification of the same is awaited by the Parliament of Eswatini.

Bilateral Agreements/MOUs: (i) Trade Agreement - A bilateral Trade Agreement was signed by India and Eswatini in April 2002; (ii) MOU in the field of Health & Medicine - During the visit of Rashtrapati ji in April 2018, India and Eswatini signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine; and (iii) Visa Waiver Agreement - During the visit of Rashtrapati ji in April 2018, India and Eswatini signed a visa waiver agreement for diplomatic and official passport holders of both countries. A protocol for including 'Service Passport' of the Kingdom of Eswatini in India-Eswatini visa waiver agreement has been agreed between the two countries and the same has been implemented w.e.f. 15 Nov 2023.

India's Development Partnership with Eswatini: Agreements for two Lines of Credit for US\$108.28 million for construction of Eswatini Parliament Building and US\$10.4 million for establishment of a Disaster Recovery Site for the National Data Center at the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP) were signed in June 2021 and they are at various stages of implementation. RSTP itself was constructed with a Line of Credit of US\$20 million and the same was inaugurated during the visit of Rashtrapati ji in April 2018. An Agriculture Development and Mechanization Project under US\$37.9 million LOC was completed earlier, which resulted in improving the maize productivity of Eswatini by six times.

Grant assistance: During State visit of Hon'ble President of India in April 2018, India gave a cash grant of US\$1 million to the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA). An in-kind donation of 700 tons of rice and 300 tons of beans was also made to NDMA. Medicines and medical equipment worth US\$ 3 million were granted. A grant assistance of US\$ 400,000 for construction of irrigation infrastructure in Lubuyane in the Hhohho region was also announced, which has since been completed. It helped the local farmers overcome from subsistence to commercial farming. The First Lady Mrs. Savita Kovind made a donation of 500 blankets to the Philani Maswati Foundation and the Khulisa Umntfwana Project, two charitable initiatives patronized by Her Majesty Queen Mother. India donated medicines worth Rs. 10 million on 26 June 2020. India was the first ever country to have donated 20,000 doses of Covishield/Covaxin vaccines to Eswatini on 11 March 2021 at a time most

of the developed world was hoarding vaccines to cater to their own requirements. Under an MOU to strengthen bilateral cooperation in computer-aided education of children at elementary-level, three Hole-in-Wall Learning Stations were established. A total of 200 solar lamps provided by IIT Mumbai for school children in Eswatini for assembly and distribution were delivered to the school children from Sithobela on 27 February 2020. In December 2020, the Board of Directors of the India, Brazil and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Trust Fund) has approved the proposal of the Kingdom of Eswatini titled “Addressing Water, Health and Poverty Nexus through WASH initiatives for Covid19 and Climate Change responses in Eswatini to receive funding to the tune of US\$ 999,350/-.

PCFD: Ms. Nomfanelo Simelane, Protocol Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, participated in the 69th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (69th PCFD from 03-28 Oct 2022). Mr. Muzi Goodboy Dlamini, Protocol Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, participated in the 70th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (70th PCFD from 13-31 Mar 2023). With this, in all, there are 11 Eswatini officers took part in Ministry of External Affairs’ PCFD course so far.

Visit of AIIMS Doctors: In coordination with the Ministry of Health, Kingdom of Eswatini, Prof (Dr) Jyotsna Punj and Dr. Ravinder Kumar Pandey from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi visited Eswatini from 16-18 March 2022 and conducted Workshops for the Medical Officers, Nurses and Paramedics of Eswatini on Basic Airway Management, Difficult & Advanced Airway Management and Basic Life Support under a unilateral programme of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi for training support to African countries.

Witness protection training programme: An online training programme on Witness Protection for 23 legal professionals from the Kingdom of Eswatini was conducted by the National Law University, Jodhpur from 07-11 March 2022.

eITEC/ITEC: In April 2018, during his visit, Hon'ble Rashtrapatiji announced an increase of ITEC slots from 30 to 50 as also a customized accounting training for 50 Treasury officials at the Institute of Government Accounts and Finance in India (INGAF). In fulfillment of these commitments, almost all ITEC slots were utilized and the training of 50 treasury officials was completed in 2018. 26 emaSwati availed ITEC training in India during the training year 2019-20, which include 06 Solar Mamas, 06 Police Officers of the Royal Eswatini Police Service. As many as 166 emaSwati participated in 09 eITEC courses during Covid19 time. Out of these 09 training courses, 06 were exclusive to Eswatini. More than 350 Emaswati government officials have benefitted from the ITEC programme so far. Several UEDF officers have taken advantage of the defence training opportunities offered under ITEC and as awareness of the programme has spread, we have seen increasing participation every year. In the current training year, in addition to the annual allocation of 50 civilian ITEC training slots, Government of India has also allocated 15 defence training slots for the Kingdom of Eswatini.

ICCR Africa Scholarship Scheme: Eswatini fully utilized all 25 slots allotted to it in 2020-21. An additional 15 slots were approved by ICCR in the Academic Year 2021-22, upon full utilization of 25 allocated scholarship slots, as a special case, thus taking the tally for 2020-21 to 40. For the Academic Year 2022-23, 30 Emaswati students have been offered ICCR scholarships under Africa Scholarship Scheme. For the Academic Year 2023-24, 30 scholarships have been offered.

Trade and commerce: India has a Trade Agreement with Eswatini since 2002 whereby both the countries have granted Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to each other.

Import-export: Figures in US\$ million (Source: Dept. of Commerce, GOI):

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24*
India’s total exports to Eswatini						

Pharmaceuticals, distillate fuel, fertilizers and machinery and mechanical parts etc.	19.20	18.57	24.32	26.82	14.98	21.30
India's total imports from Eswatini						
Organic Chemicals etc.	9.60	7.03	50.87	234.98	4.92	7.86

*For Apr-Oct 2023

WAPCOS Limited, a Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India bagged a contract worth E3.2m (equivalent to US\$197,875) for consultancy services to carry out technical feasibility studies and detailed designs for the proposed northeastern grid reinforcement project of the Eswatini Electricity Company in December 2020. WAPCOS has been on the forefront of various developmental projects in Eswatini. It provided Project Management Consultancy services to many key projects of Eswatini. WAPCOS operations in Eswatini have seen prolific growth rapidly expanding its presence in recent times in sectors like Water, Power and Infrastructure.

Idam Infra, an ISO-certified Indian company with 14 years of professional experience in power/energy sector won a contract worth E855,000 (equivalent to US\$55,000) from the Eswatini Energy Regulatory Authority (ESERA) for development of regulatory framework for Mini-Grids and Off-Grid Electricity Supply. With the help of their local partners, they have successfully completed the work during June-December 2021.

Cultural/Sports Cooperation

- **Surajkund Mela** – For the first time, a group of 7 artisans from Eswatini took part in the Surajkund Mela at Haryana from 1-16 February 2020. A 15-member Eswatini delegation consisting of artisans and dance troupe participated in the Surajkund Mela held on 04-20 February 2022. A record number of a 20-member Eswatini delegation participated in the Surajkund Mela (03-19 February 2023). Another 20-member Eswatini delegation consisting of artisans, cultural troupe and potential buyers participated in the 2024 edition of the Surajkund Mela (02-18 Feb 2024).
- **International Tribal Dance Festival, Raipur** – An 8-member Eswatini team took part in the International Tribal Dance Festival held at Raipur, Chhattisgarh on 28-30 Oct 2021.
- **India@75 Cricket Tournament** – HCI Mbabane sponsored a cricket tournament held on 06 Feb to 24 Apr 2022, as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations in the Kingdom of Eswatini.
- **Deepavali Bazaars** – On 14 November 2020, in a first of such an event, in collaboration with the Department of Handicrafts Promotion, Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Trade and the Ezulwini Municipal Council, High Commission of India Mbabane organized a Bazaar on the occasion of the Festival of Lights (Deepavali) at the Ezulwini Handicrafts Market. The second Deepavali Bazaar was organized by the High Commission on 06 Nov 2021 at the Matsapha Municipal Council, in partnership with the Matsapha Municipality, Eswatini Investment Promotion Authority (EIPA) and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Trade. The third Deepavali Bazaar was organized by the High Commission on 26 November 2022 at the Malkerns Sports Club, Malkerns, in partnership with the Municipal Council of Malkerns, Malkerns Sports Club, EIPA, Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Trade. Many Indian businesses participated in the third Deepavali Bazaar. These events created awareness and enthusiasm in the handicrafts and businesses of both Eswatini and India.
- **India Day** - High Commission of India celebrated India Day 2023 in collaboration with the Municipal Council of Mbabane on 25 November 2023 at the Prince of Wales Stadium, Mbabane. On 24 November 2023, on the eve of the India Day, High Commissioner Mr. N. Ram Prasad together with the Mayor of Mbabane Municipal Council Councillor Vusi Tembe unveiled the logo and brochure for the India Day 2023 at the High Commission. Mr. Bongani Dlamini, Acting CEO of the Mbabane Municipal Council also attended the event. High Commission utilized the opportunity to promote the States of Himachal Pradesh and Andhra

Pradesh by displaying Himachal handwoven shawls and handloom products such as cotton sarees, shirts and ladies tops procured from APCO of the Government of Andhra Pradesh. There were about 10 stalls organized by Eswatini and Indian diaspora businesspersons displaying their various wares and products. The highlight of the India Day was the exhibition by Mbabane Motors of Hero Honda motor cycles made in India.

- **Chess** – Eswatini team participated in the Chess Olympiad 2022 at Chennai and made some small but impressive beginnings.
- **Visit of Manipuri Dance Group** – A 12-member Manipuri Dance Group from the Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy, Imphal visited the Kingdom of Eswatini under the aegis of ICCR from 29 Aug to 02 Sep 2022. An exclusive performance was organized for the Royal Family and two performances were held for the public.

India Corners: As part of outreach activities, HCI Mbabane has set up India Corners at the National Libraries of Eswatini at Mbabane and Manzini. These India Corners are equipped with computer hardware, internet connectivity, digital content and several books received from the Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, including a set each of 'Bharat Ek Parichay'. High Commission also established mini India Corners at (i) the University of Eswatini in Kwaluseni, (ii) Sifundzani High School in Mbabane, (iii) Good Shepherd College of Health Sciences, (iv) Purity High School in Siteki, (v) Woodlands High School in Mbabane, (vi) Matsanjeni Community High School, Lavumisa and (vii) Waterford Kamhlaba High School by donating books to their respective libraries.

Indian community: There is about a 2000-strong Indian community in Eswatini consisting of Indian-origin and Indian nationals. About 90 per cent of Indians community in Eswatini are from the State of Gujarat, belonging to Muslim community. Most of them are living in Eswatini since early 2000s. A few of them have migrated from South Africa over a period of time, having earlier settled there during colonial times. Most of the remaining diaspora members are from States like Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. While most of the Gujarati community members are relatively rich and well off compared to native population. Most of the supermarkets and businesses are owned/operated by them. A small section of other diaspora members are working in the Government departments and engaged in various other professions like practicing doctors, Professors/Lecturers/Teachers.

March 2024