

## **India - Albania Relations**

India and Albania established diplomatic relations in 1956. Albania had a Mission in New Delhi since early 2008 and the first Albanian Ambassador to India presented his credentials to the President in October 2010. The Mission was closed down in 2014. Government of India has decided to open a resident Embassy in Tirana, Albania. The Government of Albania has also decided to re-open its Embassy in New Delhi.

### **Bilateral Relations**

At present, the bilateral relations between India and Albania are characterized by their positive, amicable, and future-oriented nature. Additionally, both nations engage in cooperative endeavors within various multilateral forums.

### **Recent High-Level Interactions**

- External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, met Albanian Foreign Minister Mr. Igli Hasani on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi on February 22, 2024.
- EAM met Deputy Foreign Minister of Albania, Ms. Megi Fino, on the sidelines of the UNSC CTC meeting on October 29, 2022, in New Delhi.
- In September 2022, EAM met the then Albanian Foreign Minister Ms. Olta Xhacka on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York.
- External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar had a meeting with then Albanian Acting Foreign Minister Mr. Gent Cakaj on the sidelines of the 74th Session of the UNGA in New York in September 2019.
- Then Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, Ms. Olta Xhacka addressed Foreign Ministers' session of virtual "Voice of the South Summit-23" on 13 January 2023.
- Ms. Albana Tole, Deputy Minister of Education and Sports of the Republic of Albania participated in the Voice of Global South Summit held on 17 November, 2023.

### **Recent Bilateral Visits**

- Mr. Igli Hasani, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania visited India to participate in Raisina Dialogue from 21-24 February 2024. FM Hasani was accompanied by an eight-member business delegation.
- Minister of Railways, Shri Suresh Prabhu, paid a visit to Albania from 23-26 October 2016.
- Three officials from Government of Albania and one Member of Parliament visited India to attend 11<sup>th</sup> Batch of GenNext Democracy Network Programme from 17-26 August, 2023.
- Dr. Ornela Cuci, former Vice Minister of Environment and Tourism of Albania visited India under ICCR's important Visitor's Programme from 1 – 8 October, 2023. During this visit, she delivered lectures at OP Jindal Global University, Sonapat and Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi and also met DG (ICCR).E

### **Foreign Office Consultations**

Three rounds of Foreign Office consultations have been held - the first was held in February 2003 in Tirana where the delegation was led by Shri Shashank, Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs; the second FOC was in New Delhi in January 2006, and third was held in March 2023 in New Delhi and was led by Shri Sanjay Verma, Secretary in Ministry of External Affairs. Albanian side was led by Mr. Gazmend Turdiu, Secretary General of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

## **Agreements**

Following protocol/agreement have been signed between India and Albania:

- i) FOC: A Protocol on India-Albania Foreign Office Consultations was signed in February 2003 in Tirana.
- ii) DTAA: The Agreement was signed in July 2013.
- iii) Visa Waiver Agreement for Diplomatic and Official Passport was signed in Tirana on 27 November 2015. The Agreement has come into force w.e.f. 20 January 2018.
- iv) MoU for Cooperation in the Field of Elections Commission of India and the Central Election Commission of Albania was signed in September 2020.
- v) MoU on mutual recognition of Covid-19 vaccination certificates was signed in February 2022.

## **Trade and Investment**

India-Albania trade statistics for the last five years are as follows:

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Export</b>	<b>Import</b>	<b>Total Bilateral Trade</b>	<b>Trade Surplus</b>
2019-20	44.12	47.51	91.63	-3.39
2020-21	46.75	8.30	55.05	38.45
2021-22	55.16	30.71	85.87	24.45
2022-23	250.96	10.57	261.53	240.39
2023-2024	1154	7.59	1161.59	1146.41

(Department of Commerce, Govt. of India statistics US\$ million)

The main export items from India to Albania are: Petroleum Products, ceramic products and glassware, engineering goods, mica, coal and other ores, coffee, marine products, drugs and pharmaceuticals, oil seeds, Plastic and linoleum, Tea, Cotton Yarn/ Fabrics/ handloom products etc.

The main import items from Albania to India include iron and steel, salt, sulphur, earths, stone, plastering materials, lime, and cement.

## **GOL Assistance to Albania**

India has extended humanitarian assistance of 50,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccine (Covishield) to the Republic of Albania to fight the pandemic on 18 April 2021.

## **ITEC and Other Exchanges**

Albania has been availing of the ITEC slots offered to it by the Government of India under its ITEC Scholarship programme. In 2023-24, three slots were allotted to Albania out of which two slots were availed of by the Albanian participants. Albanian diplomats have also attended various courses conducted by SSIFS, New Delhi, for Foreign Diplomats.

Two journalists from Albania visited India from 13-20 March 2024 under Familiarisation Visit Programme of XP Division of Ministry of External Affairs for Journalists. During the visit,

the journalists also visited Agra and Hyderabad and also had interaction with EAM.

## **Culture**

Indian films are shown on Albanian television which is state-run and a few Indian films have been shot on location. An International Film Festival was held in Tirana where six movies directed by the renowned Indian filmmaker, Satyajit Ray were screened during 24-28 September 2023.

The International Day of Yoga has been celebrated in Tirana, Albania every year since 2015. The 10<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga 2024 was celebrated in Tirana and more than 100 yoga enthusiasts participated in the event.

## **Indian Community**

There is a small Indian community in Albania of approx. 400. Most of them are temporary workers.

**Bucharest  
15 July 2024**