

## **India-Zambia Bilateral Relations**

India and Zambia enjoy warm and cordial relations. India established diplomatic relations with Zambia soon after its independence in 1964. Over these last six decades, India has come to be seen as a reliable partner and friend by successive Zambian leadership. The relationship continues to be driven by mutual respect and is based on a spirit of partnership for mutual benefit. India was among the first few countries to establish diplomatic relations with Zambia just after its independence in 1964. The year 2024 marked the 60<sup>th</sup> year of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

### **High-level visits/meetings**

High level visits have been a feature of India- Zambia historical bilateral relationship.

#### **Visits from Zambia :**

- (i) President Dr. Kenneth Kaunda visited India more than ten times including as a freedom fighter in 1957 and a State visit in 1967. He also paid a private visit to India in June 2012.
- (ii) President Mr. Frederick Chiluba paid a State visit in October 1993.
- (iii) President Mr. Levy Mwanawasa paid a State visit in April 2003.
- (iv) President Mr. Michael Chilufya Sata, accompanied by First Lady Mrs. Christine Kaseba, paid a private visit in March 2012.
- (v) Vice President Dr. Guy Scott led a high-power official and business delegation, comprising Ministers of Commerce, Trade & Industry, Gender and Child Development and Deputy Minister of Mining to the 9<sup>th</sup> CII-EXIM Bank Conclave held in New Delhi in March 2013 at which Zambia was a Focus Country.
- (vi) Vice President Mrs. Inonge M. Wina, accompanied by Minister of Agriculture and Deputy Ministers of Health and Foreign Affairs, represented Zambia at the 3<sup>rd</sup> India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi in October 2015.
- (vii) President Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu paid a State visit to India from 20-22 August 2019. Seven MoUs for cooperation in the areas of Defence, Mining, Health, Art & Culture, Election matters, among others were signed during the visit.
- (viii) Vice President Ms. W.K. Mutale Nalumango led a delegation, including Elias Mubanga, Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises Development of the Republic of Zambia, to the 17<sup>th</sup> CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Growth Partnership held on 19-20 July, 2022 in New Delhi.

(ix) Agriculture Minister Mr. Reuben Mtolo Phiri visited India to attend the Global Millets Conference held in New Delhi in March 2023. He also met Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

(x) Defence Minister Mr. Ambrose Lwiji Lufuma visited India twice to attend Aero India 2023 and Aero India 2025 held in Bengaluru and also held bilateral meeting with Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh.

### **Visits from India:**

(i) Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi visited in 1964 [as I&B Minister] and in 1970 and 1976.

(ii) President Shri V.V. Giri paid a State visit in 1974

(iii) President Shri Sanjiva Reddy paid a State visit in 1981

(iii) Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi visited in 1986

(iv) President Shri R. Venkataraman paid a State visit in 1989

(v) Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari visited in January 2010

(vi) Shri G. M. Siddeshwara, Minister of State for Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises visited Zambia in July 2015, as Prime Minister's Special Envoy to invite Zambian President for the 3<sup>rd</sup> India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi in October 2015.

(vii) President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a State visit in April 2018. He held bilateral talks involving a wide range of issues with his Zambian counterpart on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at State House followed by signing of four MoUs.

(viii) Shri V. Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Zambia from 14-15 October 2019 and inaugurated the CII-EXIM Bank Southern Africa Regional Conclave in Lusaka. He also called on President Edgar Chagwa Lungu and met Foreign Minister Joseph Malanji.

(ix) Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs and Environment, Forest and Climate Change visited Zambia from 04-07 November 2024 to co-chair the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of India- Zambia Joint Permanent Commission.

### **Parliamentary exchanges**

Dr. Patrick Matibini, Speaker, National Assembly of Zambia paid an official visit to India in December 2018. Ms. Nelly Butete Mutti, Speaker of National Assembly of Zambia led a nine-member delegation to India for an orientation visit to Lok Sabha in February 2023. Mr Roy Ngulube, Clerk of the National Assembly undertook an orientation visit to Lok Sabha in April 2024. Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia H.E. Ms. Nelly Butete

Kashumba Mutti visited New Delhi, India, from January 14–16, 2026, to attend the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC). Mrs. Mwangala Zaloumis, Chairperson of Electoral Commission of Zambia visited India to attend India International Conference on Democracy and Election Management (IICDEM)-2026 held from January 21st to 23rd, 2026.

### **Institutional mechanisms**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Session of Joint Permanent Commission at Ministerial level took place on 6th November 2024 in Lusaka, wherein both sides undertook a comprehensive review of entire gamut of bilateral relations. JPC discussed the cooperation in the areas of agriculture, education, science & technology, energy, culture, housing and urban development, finance, development partnership, training scholarship and capacity building, defence, mines and mineral resources, transport & communications, water development and sanitation, disaster management, healthcare, cooperative & SMEs etc. The 4<sup>th</sup> round of Foreign Office Consultations was held on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024 in Lusaka. The 3rd session of India-Zambia Joint Trade Committee (JTC) meeting was held virtually on 16 June 2025. On July 18, 2025, an MoU on Promotion of Cooperatives was signed between India and Zambia. The First India-Zambia Joint Working Group on Health was held on 23rd July 2025 in virtual mode. An MoU between the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA), Zambia, was signed on July 21, 2025.

Akums Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited and the Government of Zambia signed a Framework Agreement on 22nd August 2025 to establish a state-of-the-art pharmaceutical manufacturing facility in the Lusaka South Multi Facility Economic Zone.

A delegation from Geological Survey of India (GSI) visited Kasempa region on a recce from 25-29 June, 2025, subsequent to that two more delegations visited from 14 September to 31 October 2025 to explore the sites provided by Zambian side under the MoU for cooperation in the field of Geology and Mineral Resources.

### **Development Cooperation**

Zambia is among the few African countries, which considerably benefited from India's development cooperation programme. India has provided EXIM Bank credits, railway wagons and flood and drought relief grants/assistance and lines of credit besides fully paid scholarships for various higher education courses and ITEC training slots as well as specialized capacity building programmes under IAFS. In 1979 and 1982, India extended government and EXIM Bank credits to Zambia totaling Rs. 25 crores. In 1989, India provided railways wagons costing about Rs. 8 crores to Zambia under the Africa Fund. Other assistance such as Maruti vehicles were given to Zambia News Agency and emergency medical supplies. During President Mwanawasa's visit to India in April 2003, further assistance was provided and India waived off the inter-governmental credit

amounting to about \$3 mn. Pan-Africa E-network Project was implemented at three sites in Zambia in 2009: VVIP Centre for Video Conferencing at the State House, Lusaka; Patient End Location at the UTH, Lusaka; and Learning Centre for tele-education at the Mulungushi University in Kabwe.

### **Lines of Credit**

India provided Lines of Credit (LoC) of US\$ 10 million in 2003, for general purpose, including – purchase of TATA buses, motor vehicles, motor cycles and vocational tool kits. India extended LoC of US\$ 50 million for 120 MW Itezhi Tezhi Hydropower Project (ITHP), a joint venture project of Zambia's State Power utility ZESCO and TATA Power of India. The project was commissioned in March 2016. Out of LoC of US\$ 50 million for the project, Zambian side had utilized US\$ 29 million.

The construction of 650 rural pre-fabricated health posts was announced in 2011 for which an LOC of US\$ 50 million was signed in 2013. Construction of the health posts commenced in 2014. An additional LOC of US\$ 18 million was approved in 2017 to complete the project. Out of LoC of US\$ 68 million, Zambia had utilised about US\$ 60 million. 563 health posts have already been completed and are operational.

### **Buyer's Credit**

The Lusaka City Road De-congestion Project (US \$289.5 million) — implemented by M/s Afcons, a subsidiary of the Shapoorji Pallonji Group and financed by EXIM Bank of India under Buyer's Credit of US\$ 245.74 million and remaining part was funded by the government of Zambia— was formally launched on 12 April 2018 during a ground-breaking ceremony attended by Zambia's President Edgar Chagwa Lungu and the President of India Ram Nath Kovind.

### **Grants / Humanitarian Aid**

In fulfillment of the announcement by Rashtrapatiji during his state visit to Zambia in April 2018, medicines worth US\$ 2 million were handed over to Ministry of Health in December 2019. To augment Zambia's fight against COVID-19 pandemic, essential medicines including HCQ, weighing 6000 kgs were donated to Zambia in May 2020. As announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister during H.E. President Lungu's visit to India in August 2019, 1000 MT of non-Basmati rice was delivered to Zambia in October 2020. To help Zambia fight against cholera, humanitarian assistance weighing approx. 3.5 tonnes comprising chlorine tablets and ORS sachets was handed over in February 2024. India also provided humanitarian assistance of 2500 MT of maize in December 2024 to help Zambia in its fight against drought. Medical equipment worth US\$ 1 million were handed over to the Ministry of Health in April 2025. These medical equipment were installed by Indian technicians on 24 locations across all 10 provinces of Zambia. Basic training to operate these equipment was also imparted to Zambian professionals. On 14 October 2025, India donated 500 sewing machines and 100 embroidery machines to the Zambia,

aimed at empowering women and youth by supporting skills development and sustainable livelihoods.

### **Bilateral Trade**

Bilateral trade has immense potential of further increase in various areas, particularly agriculture, mining, pharmaceuticals and petroleum products etc. The figure of bilateral trade in the last three years is as below :

**(US\$ million)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Exports by India</b>	<b>Imports by India</b>	<b>Total Trade</b>
2022-23	280.68	184.93	465.61
2023-24	244.31	204.08	448.39
2024-25	212.56	167.00	379.56

India's export items include drugs and pharmaceuticals, machinery and instruments, transportation equipment, cotton yarn and fabrics, plastic, rubber, chemicals, and electronic goods. India's imports from Zambia include non-ferrous metals, ores (copper and cobalt), semi-precious stones and raw cotton.

Zambia signed the Letter of Intent to utilize Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme (DFTP) in May 2010 and in April 2012 Zambia was notified as one of the beneficiaries of the scheme.

### **Indian Investment**

Zambia, with its rich natural resources, has become an important destination for Indian investments particularly in the mining sector. India's pledged investment is valued over US\$ 5 billion making India one of the leading investors in Zambia. Prominent Indian Investments in Zambia include, Indo-Zambia Bank, M/s Vedanta Resources Ltd, M/s Maamba Energy, M/s Bharti Airtel, M/s TATA, M/s R. J. Corporation, M/s Mount Meru, M/s Yash Pharmaceuticals, Neelkantha Group of Companies etc. In addition, there are several other Indian companies who have made sizeable investments in various fields of the Zambian economy and trade.

Indo- Zambia Bank was established in 1984, as a joint venture between Government of Zambia and three Indian public sector banks viz., Bank of India, Bank of Baroda and Central Bank of India. The three Indian PSUs hold 60% equity with the remaining 40% held by the Zambian government. It is a milestone in India's relations with Zambia, and an example of a mutually beneficial, joint venture partnership that has withstood the test of time.

## **Cooperation in Culture**

An ICCR sponsored 'Vande Bharatam Rekha Dance Group' also visited Zambia in June 2022 and performed in Lusaka and Ndola. A six-member group visited India in July 2022 under the Generation Next Programme of ICCR. A 20 member Zambian cultural troupe participated in the Surajkund Mela from 03-19 February 2023. An MoU on establishment of Chair of Indian Studies at University of Zambia was signed on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023. A 07 member Carnatic Cultural Troupe sponsored Indian Council For Cultural Relations visited Zambia in August 2023 and performed during 'India Week' celebrations. A 15 member Zambian cultural troupe participated in the Surajkund Mela in February 2024. A 07 member Gujarati Folk dance group 'Nrtiyavali' visited Zambia in June 2024 and performed during 'UTSAV 2024' organised by Lusaka Indian Ladies Association in collaboration with the High Commission. An 18-member Zambian cultural troupe participated in the Surajkund Mela 2025. Lusaka Indian Ladies Association in collaboration with High Commission organised "Mahotsav 2025" in August 2025. An ICCR-sponsored Kathakali Troupe performed in Ndola and Lusaka on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 further deepening cultural ties. A 14-member Zambian cultural troupe participated in the Surajkund Mela 2026.

### **Useful resources :**

Website : <https://www.hcizambia.gov.in>

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/HCIZambia>

X : <https://x.com/indiainzambia>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/indiainzambia/>

YouTube : <https://www.youtube.com/@indiainzambia>

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