

Brief on India-Burkina Faso bilateral relations

Political relations

India and Burkina Faso share cordial bilateral relations. As a small country Burkina Faso looks positively at our friendship and treatment as an important friend. The Embassy of Burkina Faso was opened in New Delhi 1996 and elevated to the level of Ambassador in 2011. India maintained its Embassy in Ouagadougou from November 1996 until its closure in July 2002. In view of the cordial relations, India reopened its Embassy in March 2019 with the posting of an Ambassador.

Visits from Burkina Faso

2. Bilateral cooperation began in March 1976 when an official delegation led by Burkina Faso's Commerce and Industry Minister visited India and signed a Protocol on Economic and Technical Cooperation. Since then, there have been a number of high-level visits from Burkina Faso to India, which include visit of President of Burkina Faso, late Capt. Thomas Sankara in 1983 to attend the NAM Summit, visit by President Blaise Compaore in 1993 (during the visit India offered to assist Burkina Faso in the economic development, particularly in the areas of agriculture, handlooms, mining, irrigation, small scale industries etc.) President Compaore again visited Delhi in July 1994. During his two day transit visits, India extended aid of Rs. 250 million to Burkina Faso comprising a package under the integrated Agricultural Project under which 200 tractors and several other accessories including seeds, implements, water pumps etc. were given and again in 1997.

3, President Roch Marc Christian Kabore visited India to attend the International Solar Alliance (ISA). During the visit, he met our Prime Minister on 11 March 2018. He also handed over the instrument of Ratification of Framework Agreement of ISA to the Prime Minister. Before the visit, the National Assembly of Burkina Faso had unanimously voted in a special session to ratify the Framework agreement of ISA reinforcing the government's desire to move towards renewable energies. There has been strong participation from Burkina Faso at the delegation level in CII-EXIM Bank Enclave held in March every year. Minister of Trade, Industry and Crafts Mr. Kabire Harouna led an eight member delegation to the 13th CII-EXIM bank conclave held in New Delhi from 25-27 March 2018. Minister of Energy, Mr. Bashir Ismael Oederaogo attended the 14th CII-EXIM bank conclave held in New Delhi from 17-19 March 2019. Mr. Batio Basserie, Minister of Environment, Climate Change and green economy

visited India from 8-13 September in connection with UN Conference on Climate and Desertification in New Delhi.

4. Former Prime Minister Tertius Zongo visited India in April 2008 to attend the India Forum

Summit in New Delhi. He met Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and discussed matters of Mutual interest. His visit gave further impetus to bilateral ties. Mr. Yacouba Barry, Minister of Housing and Urbanization, Mr. Mahama Zoungrana, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security and Mr. Jean Koulidiati, Minister of Development of Digital Economy and Post were part of the delegation.

5. Burkina Faso participated in the India-Africa Partnership Conclave in New Delhi in March 2008. It was the partner country in the CII Conclave held in March 2009 in New Delhi. A 22 member business delegation sponsored by the CII visited Burkina Faso in June 2010 and another 19-Member multi-sectoral delegation of Federation of Indian Chamber of commerce and Industries from 10-14 April 2013.

6. Earlier the Foreign Minister Mr. Mousa Bedialzoun Nebi led small delegation from Burkina Faso to take part in the 3rd IAFS(as only a transition government was in place in October 2015 and was facing political turmoil, only the then acting Foreign Minister was able to attend IAFS-III Summit), Mr. Nebi met EAM on 25 October, 2015.

Visits from India

7. From India, MOS for External Affairs visited Burkina Faso in 1987. Prime Minister Shri Narasimha Rao paid a State Visit to Ouagadougou on 2-4 November 1995. This first ever Prime Ministerial visit was highly successful. Hon'ble PM met the President of Burkina Faso and also addressed the Parliament. PM was awarded with the highest civilian award of Burkina Faso. The visit paved the way for a more intensive interaction in several fields. PM also inaugurated the new Indian Embassy with a resident C'dA. The Mission was later closed in July 2002.

8. Special Envoy to PM, Shri Mohanbhai Kundaria, MoS(Agriculture) visited Burkina Faso from 9-10 July 2015 to personally hand over the IAFS-III Summit invitation to the President of Burkina Faso. He called on the interim President Mr. Michael Kafando during the visit.

9. A 3-member Indian delegation led by Shri Arvind Kaushal, Additional Secretary, Department of Agricultural Research visited Burkina Faso in December 2013 in connection with the establishment of Water and Soil tissue test Laboratory in Burkina Faso under IAFS decisions.

Bilateral Trade

10. Bilateral trade has been growing over the past few years as can be seen from table below. However the balance of trade is in favour of Burkina Faso. In the year 2018-19 Burkina Faso exported goods worth US \$ 881.27 million to India which included gold, cotton and nuts. In the same period India exported goods worth US\$ 181.44 million only to Burkina Faso which included pharmaceutical products, vehicles and parts thereof, machinery and mechanical appliances, rubber and articles thereof.

All figures in millions of US \$

Year	India's exports to Burkin	India's imports from Burkina Faso	Total trade	Balance of Trade
2015-16	106.79	238.11	346.9	-129.32
2016-17	114.94	256.42	371.36	-141.48
2017-18	148.35	632.57	780.92	-484,22
2018-19	181.44	881.27	1062.71	-699.83
April 2019- June 2019	36.87	242.40	279.27	205.53

Joint Commission

11, Bilateral relations got a boost in May-June 1993 when President Blaise Compaore visited India. During this visit, both countries decided to establish the Joint Commission to foster cooperation between the two countries. The Joint Commission on economic, cultural, political and technical cooperation was established after an agreement signed in October, 1994. So far there have been four Joint Commission meetings. The 4th Joint Commission was held in Burkina Faso. The delegation was led by Shri M.J. Akbar, the then Minister of State for External Affairs and while the Burkinabe delegation was led by Mr. Alpha Barry, FM of Burkina Faso. On the request of Burkina Faso, India offered ten ambulances to meet the requirements of Burkina Faso hospitals and also offered to

provide ten thousand bicycles to Burkina Faso. Indian side highlighted capacity building as an important pillar of our bilateral relationship and offered increased exports of Indian pharmaceuticals and agricultural tools. Both sides agreed to cooperate in solar power projects, health, railways, agriculture and condemned terrorism in all its forms. Other issues discussed were UNSC to make it more representative, issues of climate change and sustainable development, International Solar Alliance, regional issues of importance and projects under the LOCs

Development projects

12. An Indian Farmers' project which was launched in Burkina Faso in 1999 for three years was completed in 2002. Under the project, India had supplied expert farmers to demonstrate to Burkina Faso farmers Indian practices of rice growing, including the use of ergonomically designed hand tools, tractors etc. and to train local farmers in the technology related consumable inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc. Farm machinery equipment, vehicles and other necessary support were donated to Burkina Faso government after completion of the project. A total amount of US \$ 296 million has already been approved for Burkina Faso under LOC projects which include rural electrification, tomato and mango processing plant, low cost housing etc. Burkina Faso was included as one of the nine West African countries under GOI's TEAM-9 (Techno Economic Approach for Africa-India Movement) initiative and Pan-African e-Project network. GOI extended a line of credit (LOC) of US \$ 30.97 million under TEAM-9 for agricultural projects and for construction/Equipping electrification in 2008 for setting up a Tomato Processing factory in 2010 for Public Housing Project and supply of 135 buses for universities and other institutions of higher education, construction of two workshops, construction of covered parking lot and procurement of spare parts etc. in the first half of 2012.

13. On 14 July 2017 former PM Paul Kaba Theiba, accompanied by the Burkinabe Minister for Commerce visited the Tomato and Mango processing plant site at Loubila, a GOI funded LOC project that has run into problems and has not been completed. He also convened a meeting of stakeholders involved in the project including the EPC(Engineering Procurement Contractors) M/s. Mohan Exports International Pvt. Ltd. The Burkina side requested the EPC to deploy a team of experts to evaluate the plant and advise on the way forward to resolve the pending issues and handing over the project. A technical team from M/s Mohan Exports Pvt. Ltd. visited Ouagadougou in April 2018 to evaluate the project. A report

was supposed to have been submitted by the first week of June 2018. This is still awaited.

Training programmes and institutions assisted under IAFS

14. India had offered to set up three projects viz. Vocational Training Centre/Incubation Centre (VTC/IC), a Vocational Training Centre Barefoot College and a Soil and Water Tissue Testing Laboratory in Burkina Faso under the decisions of India-Africa Forum summit (IAFS 1 & II). A two member delegation National Small Scale Industries Corporation (NSIC) visited Ouagadougou in October 2013 for signing of agreement between Ministry of youth, Vocational Training and Employment (MYVTE), Government of Burkina Faso and NSIC for setting up VTC/IC in Burkina Faso. A 3-member delegation led by Secretary, ICAR visited Burkina Faso in December 2013 for discussions and site inspection for establishment of the Soil and Water Tissue Testing Laboratory, MOUs for establishment of Soil and Water Tissue Testing Laboratory in Burkina Faso were forwarded by the Indian side followed by several reminders the last one being in January 2018. The Burkinabe side is yet to revert. Barefoot college has so far conducted two workshops in Burkina Faso and Dr. Bunker Roy of Barefoot college visited Burkina Faso in April, 2015. A MOU for establishment of Barefoot Vocational Training Centre in Burkina Faso was signed in April, 2017 at Ouagadougou. The construction of the training centre started in October, 2017 and is likely to be complete soon. The centre will impart training to illiterate and semi-literate rural women on solar electrification, rainwater harvesting etc. under the ITEC programme.

15. NSIC successfully set up the Vocational Training Centre in Ouagadougou and handed over the project to the local agency under the Burkinabe Ministry of Youth Professional Employment and Training on 3 November 2016. In a function organized in Ouagadougou, the Burkina Faso government expressed appreciation for the completion of the project and welcomed skill development and capacity building options that the project offered to the Burkinabe youth.

16. Three participants from Burkina Faso visited India for a five day Exposure visit for policy makers organised by the IL&FS Cluster Development Initiative in December 2012 under the Cotton Technical Assistance Programme (TAP) implemented under the IAFS-II. A second group of five persons visited India in January 2013 for a training programme on Post-harvest management Crop residue. A two member IL&FS Cluster Development Initiative Ltd., NOIDA visited Burkina Faso in

November 2013 for discussions with stakeholders in the cotton sector under the Cotton TAP I for Africa.

17. Burkina Faso has signed and ratified the International Solar Alliance(ISA) Framework Agreement. They responded positively to the solar projects by National Institute of Solar Energy under the International Solar Alliance initiative and the NISE is currently in correspondence with relevant Burkinabe agency for further implementation which involves setting up of solar home lights and water pumping systems in Burkina Faso.

Grants

18. GOI sent a consignment of medicines to Burkina Faso to help people affected by the severe floods in 2008. Another donation of US \$ 213,356 was made to Burkina Faso as India's contribution towards flood relief assistance in September 2009.

MGICC, Ouagadougou

19. GOIs offer of setting up a Mahatma Gandhi International Convention centre through grant assistance was accepted. Burkina Faso has been identified by GOI to be covered in the first phase for construction of MGICC. M/s NBCC has been identified by GOI for construction of the centre and a team from NBCC visited Burkina Faso in end-June 2018. The Government of Burkina Faso is very keen on early start of construction of the Project.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme

20. ITEC programme with Burkina Faso began with the Agricultural Development Project of US \$ 6 million. India has rendered technical assistance to Burkina Faso in its human resource development through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation(ITEC) programme. Burkina Faso utilized 22 ITEC slots during 2013-14, 26 during 2014-15, 12 in 2015-16, 6 2016-17. Burkina Faso rate of utilization ITEC slots is very low(2 out of 10 last year) It has been offered five slots for 2019-20. Five Burkinabe scientists were awarded CV Raman Fellowships for carrying out research activities in India between June and December 2013. During the period 2015-18, Burkina Faso did not utilize any slot under ICCR scholarships, CV Raman Fellowship ad IAFS.

UN

21. Burkina Faso is appreciative of India's bid for permanent seat in the UNSC. Joint Statement issued after President Compaore's visit to India in 1997 expressed Burkina Faso's support for our candidature but has not given a formal commitment. Burkina Faso has been supportive of our candidatures for various international bodies especially to the UNESCO Executive Board and for the inscription of Nalanda on the World Heritage list. Burkina Faso had shown positive interest in supporting inscription of Jaipur as a world heritage city recently.

Culture

Since 2015, the International Day of Yoga is being celebrated in Burkina Faso. ICCR had deputed a Yoga teacher to Burkina Faso for the event in 2015 which attracted a good participation from the small expatriate international community. Since then IDY has been celebrated in Burkina Faso every year. The fifth International Day of Yoga was celebrated on 22 June 2019 at an indoor hall in Ouagadougou. Around 150 yoga enthusiasts participated. An eight member cultural dance troupe from Rajasthan visited Burkina Faso in Sept. 2015. The troupe was sponsored by ICCR. Two performances were organized in Ouagadougou. To mark Freedom 70 celebrations, performance by an Odissi Dance Troupe sponsored by Ministry of Culture was organized on 12 August 2017

Indian community

The Indian community in Burkina Faso is around 300. Some of them are engaged in manufacturing, trading, business while the rest are their employees. Some are also doing business in Cotton and Gold.

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