

India-Libya Relations

Though separated by geography, India and Libya enjoy strong bilateral ties. India established its Mission in Tripoli in 1969. The high water mark of Indo-Libya relations was the visit of Late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi to Libya in 1984. India has supported Libya in international fora. India welcomed the UN Security Council resolution 1506 adopted on September 12, 2003, lifting sanctions imposed on Libya. Since then, there has been a series of high-level visits between India and Libya. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Mr. Murli Deora visited Libya in January 2007. EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Libya in May 2007. Deputy Speaker of Rajya Sabha, Shri Rehman Khan visited Libya in September 2009 to participate in the 40th Anniversary of Al-Fatah Revolution. From the Libyan side, Minister for Asian Affairs, Mr. Burrani visited India in March 2007. The Minister for Economy, Trade and Investment Mr. Alasawi visited India in July 2007 on the occasion of 10th session of Indo-Libya Joint Commission. Minister for African Affairs, Dr. Abdussalam Treki, led the Libyan Delegation, which participated in the India-Africa Forum Summit at New Delhi in April 2008. Captain Ramadan, Secretary, Administration Committee of Harbours Authority (Minister of State) visited India in March 2009 for negotiating the bilateral Shipping Agreement. Dr. Treki as UNGA President visited India in 2010. Libyan Foreign Minister Mr. Abdelati al Obeidi visited India in July 2011.

Important Bilateral Treaties and Agreements

Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion (1981),
Agreement for Cooperation in the field of Health and Medical Sciences (1983)
Agreement on Economic Cooperation (1985),
Cultural Agreement (1985)
Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) (2007)
Cultural Cooperation Agreement (2007).

Economic and Commercial Relations

India and Libya have enjoyed close economic ties. In 1978, the two countries signed a framework agreement on “Protocol on Industrial, Economic and Scientific Cooperation”. This was the beginning of consultations on economic cooperation between the two countries under Indo-Libyan Joint Commission (ILJC). Till now, a total of *ten* sessions of ILJC have been held.

The economic cooperation between the two countries spans the entire spectrum of commercial activities. Indian companies especially in Hydrocarbon, Power, Construction and IT sector have several ongoing projects in Libya. Indian Oil majors -Indian Oil, Oil India and ONGC Videsh (OVL) are increasingly involving themselves with Libyan hydrocarbon sector-both in Upstream as well downstream. BHEL has successfully completed execution of prestigious Western Mountain Gas Turbine Power Project. I-flex Solutions is implementing a project on core banking solutions with Central Bank of Libya and other five banks. Also over the past three decades, Indian companies have executed several projects. These included building hospitals, houses, schools, roads, power plants, airports, dams, transmission lines etc.

The presence of Indian Companies in Libya had risen significantly in the last five years including major PSUs like BHEL, OVL, IOC, Oil India, and private companies Punj

Llyod, Unitech Ltd, K E C, Dastur Engineering, Shapoorji Pallonji Intenational, SECON Pvt Ltd, Global Steel ltd (Ispat Group Co.), NIIT, Sun Pharma, Simplex Projects and Simplex Infrastructure Ltd.

Bilateral Trade

As per latest statistics for the year 2010-11 (April – Dec), the bilateral trade stood at \$ 584.58 Million compared to total trade of US\$ 844.62 Million for the year 2009-10. The bilateral trade began showing significant upward trend since 2004-05, peaking to US \$ 1,366.65 Million in the year 2007-08 as compared to US \$ 29.12 Million for the year 2003-04.

The main items of our export basket were Electrical equipments, Machinery, Mechanical Appliances, Vehicles, parts of turbines, Boilers, Iron & Steel articles, Project goods, drugs and pharmaceuticals whereas Libya exported Mineral fuels, Mineral oils and products of their distillation, bituminous substances, mineral waxes.

Trade Data Source: Ministry of Trade and Commerce, GOI and DGCI & S, Kolkata.

Note: The country's total imports since 2000-2001 does not include import of Petroleum Products and Crude Oil

India-Libya Cultural Relations

A Cultural Cooperation Agreement (CCA) was signed in 2007 during the External Affairs Minister's visit to Libya. In the last three years, a number of Indian cultural troupes, sponsored by Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR), have visited Libya and staged cultural performances in different cities. An 8-member Cultural Group of Kathakali, led by Shri Kalamandalam Raman Kutty, visited Libya in August 2008 and staged two performances in Tripoli and in Sirte. An 8-member Libyan cultural troupe sponsored by ICCR had visited India to perform during the first India-Africa Forum Summit, which was held in India in February 2008. A 12-member "Anart" Kathak group visited Libya from 16th November to 22nd November, 2009 and performed in three cities i.e. Tripoli, Sirte & Benghazi

Air links with India

There is no direct flight from India. Convenient air routes were via Dubai (Emirates), London (British airways), Doha (Qatar Airways) and Istanbul (Turkish Airways). After the imposition of 'No-Fly Zone' over Libya, the most convenient route is through Tunis for travelling to the western part of Libya and through Cairo for eastern Libya.

NRI/PIO population

NRI/PIO population in Libya was estimated to be 18,000 prior to the recent conflict in Libya. While most of them left Libya during the present conflict, a few hundred Indians still remain in Libya, mainly working in various universities and hospitals.

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