

India – DPR Korea Relations

According to legends, King Kim Suro of the ancient Kaya Kingdom in Korea married with Ayodiya's Princess of India way back in A.D. 45; Buddhism was introduced to Korea in the early centuries of A.D. to become the state religion of the Paekje Kingdom; On April 2, 1929, India's great poet, Rabindranath Tagore, wrote:

*"In the golden age of Asia,
"Korea was one of its lamp bearers, and
"that lamp is waiting to be lighted once again
"for the illumination in the East."*

India was appointed as Chairman of the 9-member UN Commission to hold elections in Korea in 1947; After the Korean war of 1950-53, India played an important role as the Chairman of the NNRC (Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission); Consular relations with DPRK were set up on March 1, 1962; and The diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on December 10, 1973.

Political Relations

Relations between India and DPRK have been generally characterised by friendship, cooperation and understanding. As members of the Non-Aligned Movement, there is a commonality of views between the two on many international issues, e.g. Disarmament, South-South Cooperation, etc. Both sides continue to work closely at international *fora* and support each other on various issues of bilateral and international interests. India had welcomed the South-North Joint Declaration of June 15, 2000 and favours reduction of tension in the Korean peninsula and reunification of the two Koreas through peaceful means and through direct dialogue between them. India and DPRK have been cooperating in the UN and other international organizations. Regular and meaningful exchange of views on bilateral issues of mutual interest and concern, were conducted through mechanism of Foreign Office Consultancy. The last FOC meeting was held in Pyongyang in September, 2011. India was represented by Secretary (East) and DPRK side by Vice Foreign Minister of DPRK Kim Hyong Jun.

Important Bilateral Treaties and Agreements with brief notes

- i) Agreement between DPRK and India on co-operation in the field of Science and Technology signed on 8.5.1991 (initially valid for 5 years unless decided for its termination by any of the parties). A Protocol was to be signed later for implementation of the agreement, which has not been done so far.
- ii) Agreement on Scientific Cooperation between State Academy of DPRK and Indian National Science Academy signed on 14.6.1994 (initially valid for two years and then to be automatically to be extended to five years if not terminated by either of the parties).

- iii) Protocol on Cooperation between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of DPRK signed on 17.2.1998 (initially valid for five years and then to be automatically extended for a further period of five years unless decided for its termination by any of the parties).
- iv) First Cultural agreement between India and DPRK was signed in 1976. The 11th Cultural Exchange Programme for 2010-12 was signed during the visit of Shri Jawahar Sircar, Secretary, Ministry of Culture in March 23-25 2010. An agreement on cooperation in the field of information between India and DPRK was signed in April 2006. Under Article IX of the agreement, a Joint Committee was to be set up to review the progress of the Agreement. The Indian side formed a Committee in November 2006. The first meeting supposed to be held in Pyongyang has been postponed for one or another reason, would be held once a date is finalized by the both sides
- v) India has been participating in biennial Pyongyang International Film festival. In 11th film festival , Bengali film “Ek Nadir Galpo” (Tale of a river) won the award for its music and in 12th film festival in 2010, Indian feature film “For Real” won a special prize. India proposed its participation in 13th Pyongyang International Film Festival in September 2012 with altogether ten Indian moves. However only five have been selected for screening.

Bilateral visits – Brief details of important two-way visits
(From India to DPRK)

1. Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma, Vice President (April, 1992) at the invitation of DPRK Vice President who visited India in May 1991;
2. Shri H.S. Surjeet, General Secretary of CPI (M) – (April 1993) at the invitation of Central Committee of Workers’ Party of Korea;
3. Shri Jyoti Basu, Chief Minister of West Bengal (May, 1994) at the invitation of Central Committee of Workers’ Party of Korea;
4. Shri P. Shiv Shanker, Governor of Sikkim (August, 1995) to participate on the Liberation Day of Korea;
5. Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, MOS for I&B (September, 1998) to attend 6th Pyongyang Film Festival;
6. Dr. Vishwanath, Director General of International Institute of the Juche Idea (April, 2005) to participate in the ceremony of birth anniversary of Kim Il Sung.
7. Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East) and. Shri Ashok Kantha, Joint Secretary (EA) (June 2005) in connection with the Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) meeting
8. Shri N. Ravi, Secretary(East) visited in May 2008.
9. Shri Jawhar Sircar, Secretary, Ministry of Culture visited in March 2010.
10. Shri Sanjay Singh, Secretary (East) and Shri Sandeep Chakravorty Director(EA) visited Pyongyang in September 2011 for Foreign Office Consultation meeting.

11. Dr Vishwanath, Chairman of Interads Group visited Pyongyang with family and friends to attend the week-long Birth Centennial ceremony of Kim Il Sung on 15th April 2012.

(High Level visits from DPRK)

1. Mr. Li Gun Mo, Prime Minister (February, 1988) on a goodwill visit;
2. Mr. Li Jong Ok, Vice President of DPRK (May, 1991 and March 1993);
3. Mr. Yang Hyong Sop, Chairman, Supreme People's Assembly (April, 1998);
4. Mr. Choe Thae Bok, Chairman of SPA as Secretary of Central Committee of the WPK (October, 1998);
5. Mr. Pak Gil Yon, Vice Foreign Minister (April, 2000);
6. Mr. Jang Chol, Vice-Chairman of SPA (January, 2003);
7. Mr. Choe Chang Sik, Vice Minister of Public Health in November 2005 to attend the 3rd GAVI partners' Meeting held in New Delhi
8. Mr. Ma Chol Su, Director of 4th Department in the DPRL Foreign Ministry (March 2006) to discuss bilateral matters with JS (EA)
9. Mr. Ri Ju Kwan, Vice-Chairman of the DPRK Information Committee (April 2006) to sign the agreement on cooperation in the field on information.
10. Mr Kim Yong IL, Vice Foreign Minister visited Delhi in May 2007 and August 2009.

Commercial and Economic Relations, with trade, aid and investment details

Bilateral trade between India and DPRK was declined during the recent past mainly due to the latter's inability to carry on foreign trade due to financial crunch. However it is growing steadily and according to Export/Import data of MOC, India's export to DPRK was US\$ 329.13 million and import was US\$ 143.98 million in the same year in 2010-2011.

The major items exported from India to DPRK are oil meals cotton yarn, fabrics, made-ups etc, other ores and minerals, drugs, pharmaceuticals and fine chemicals, inorganic/organic/agro chemicals, petroleum products, manufactures of metals electronic goods non-ferrous metals, machinery and instruments, gems & jewellery, dyes/antidotes & coal tar chemicals, iron & steal bar/rod etc., finished leather, chemical and allied products, primary & semi-finished iron & steal and meat & preparations. The main items of import from DPRK are iron and steel. There are certain draw back for trade with DPRK such as limited foreign exchange with DPRK, non-availability of direct shipping and non-guarantee of payments through an established banking and insurance system. Because of these factors, Indian exporters have not shown much enthusiasm in exploring this market.

DPRK has expressed keen interest in importing consumer goods from India every year on 'deferred payment basis'. These items include leather shoes, stockings, undergarments, school bags, bicycles, kitchen utensils, etc. They also proposed barter trade by supplying items like steel, magnesia clinker zinc, etc. in

case deferred payment option is not acceptable to India. They also welcomed participation of Indian companies, Chambers of Commerce, Business houses, etc. in their annual trade fairs and various other events for promoting Indian products in DPRK market. They also welcome participation of Indian companies in joint ventures and FDIs.

S&T Relations, cooperation in other fields such as Railways, Space, IT, Biotechnology, Infrastructure, Mining etc.

A number of Koreans underwent trainings in IT in India and are working in important institutions such as KCKCP and Pyongyang Informatics Centre. India conveyed it's no objection for sending 200 students from DPRK to study information and technology, financial management, etc in India on self-financing basis.

ITEC Assistance and programmes

Since 2002-2003, five ITEC slots were being offered to DPRK. For 2004, India agreed to increase the slots from five to ten. Accordingly, ten DPRK nationals were sent to India to participate in "Programme on Development, Implementation and Management of Computer Software Applications", "English for Professionals" and "Visiting Research Fellowships in International Economic Issues & Development Policy Research" courses. The ITEC slots were increased upto 18 in 2008-09. Gradually the slots have been remained underutilized; the number of slots was reduced. For 2012-13, DPRK has been offered ten slots and two slots for DPRK defence personnel for English Language course under ITEC. In September 2001, DPRK requested for providing slot of Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) at the Foreign Service Institute. Accordingly, one slot was offered to DPRK. The DPRK side has, however, requested at least two slots as under the policy, DPRK does not depute single candidate to any foreign country. Their request was considered and two DPRK female diplomats were trained at the 40th PCFD held from 1.2.2006 to 10.3.2006. Despite our best efforts, it could not be made possible since then to accommodate two DPRK diplomats for the course.

Details of Indian Credit Lines/Official Assistance

India has been extending humanitarian assistance to DPRK, which has suffered food shortages during the last few years as a result of natural calamities. The DPRK authorities have expressed their gratitude for India's humanitarian assistance to them from time to time. The assistance provided from India consisted of consignment of blankets, rice, wheat, baby food, polythene sheets, etc. In the recent past, India donated 2,000 MT of white rice in September 2002 and 1000 MT of rice in July 2004. 200,000 Dexamethasone 4 mg. (1 ml injection) were also provided to the DPRK. India also donated medicines for the victims of the Ryongchon train blast. DPRK was also provided 2,000 MT of rice in January 2006 as gifts of government and people of India. India provided food assistance worth US\$ 1.00 million through WFP in 2011.

DPRK Government donated US\$ 30,000 in the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund for the relief of the people affected by the Tsunami that hit India in December 2004.

Cultural Troupes – Incoming and outgoing over last few years

Under the cultural agreement between India and DPRK signed in 1976, ICCR has been sending troupes to the April Spring Friendship Art Festival in Pyongyang every year except in 2003 due to the spread of SARS epidemic in the region. A Bhangra/Giddha dance troupe participated in 2004 Spring Festival to mark the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

Pyongyang International Film Festivals

India has been participating in this bi-annual International Film Festival of Pyongyang on a regular basis. Koreans are fond of Indian feature films and popular films are admired and fondly remembered by the Korean public and authorities. India is also participating in the Film Festival, scheduled to be held in Pyongyang from 13th September 2012.

Korea-India Friendship Association

The Korea-India Friendship Association was established in February 1970 by the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (CCRFC) to foster friendly relations and to project India's cultural image in DPRK. The society is the nodal point for interaction between the Mission and the CCRFC, which is the counterpart of our ICCR. The Association has been organising events from time to time for promoting relations between the two countries. The Association runs a Friendship School and a Friendship Farm. India has donated 100 Kg of wheat seed in March 2006. Computers and Audio Visual equipments were also donated to the India-DPRK Friendship School in August 2006. Department of Culture has been sanctioning Grant-in-Aid to the tune of Rs. 50,000/- to the association. A cheque of Rs. 150,000/- was given to the society in 2010 under the sanction of the Ministry of Culture.

Types of visas issued, and visa details for officials, students, business people, tourists, etc. from India.

No visits by Indian officials, tourists and students were noticed in the recent past except Dr Vishwanath of Interads Group who visited DPRK twice i) in December 2011 and ii) April 2012. In April 2012, he visited with family and friends to attend the Birth Centennial of Kim Il Sung. Shri Beni Prasad Khanduri, a guitarist also visited Pyongyang on invitation from local authorities to participate in cultural programmes for birth centennial of Kim Il Sung.

Air links with India/Convenient Travel Routes

There is no direct air connection between India and DPRK. One can travel via Hong Kong or Bangkok or in the direct flight to Beijing. **Air Koryo operates flights from Beijing thrice a week on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Southern China Airlines operates two flights in a week Mondays and Tuesday during summer between March and October.** Train service between Beijing to Pyongyang is four times a week. (Mondays / Wednesdays / Fridays / Saturdays).

NRIs/PIOs holding significant public offices.

Around eight Indians are working for UN agencies viz, UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, FAO and several NGOs like EUPS-3 , EUPS-7 in Pyongyang.

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