

INDIA - ETHIOPIA BILATERAL RELATIONS

Historical linkages:

- Historical linkages between India and Ethiopia goes back 2,000 years of recorded history. Trade between the two countries flourished during the Axumite Empire (1st century AD). Indian traders trade silk and spices for gold and ivory through the ancient port of Adulis in the 6th Century AD. In the 16th century AD, the Portuguese assisted the Christian King in Ethiopia to repel Muslim invaders, and with them came Indians from Goa. In 1868, General Robert Napier led a punitive expedition to obtain the release of European diplomats and missionaries who had been imprisoned by Emperor Tewodros II in his bunker fort at Makdala. The 30,000 strong force had 13,000 soldiers from India, mostly Sikhs. The British Army that ended the Italian occupation of Ethiopia (1936-41) also had a sizeable contingent of Indian soldiers. General William Plat, who led one of the three simultaneous attacks, commanded a force consisting of the 4th and 5th Indian Divisions.
- Soon after achieving independence, a goodwill mission led by Sardar Sant Singh was sent to Ethiopia. Diplomatic relations at legation level were established in 1948. Full diplomatic relations were established in 1950 with Sardar Sant Singh as the first Ambassador.

PM's meeting with Ethiopian counterpart

- On the sidelines of G20 summit at Johannesburg, PM with Ethiopian PM Dr. Abiy Ahmed and held a discussion on boosting ties in sectors like technology, skilling and more (22 November 2025).
- Ethiopian PM participated in the third Voice of Global South chaired by PM (17 August 2024)
- Ethiopian PM participated in the inaugural Leaders' Session at the Second Voice of the Global South Summit (17 Nov 2023).
- PM met Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Johannesburg. They discussed ways to expand bilateral cooperation in areas like parliamentary contacts, development partnership & capacity building, trade & investment, defence, ICT, agriculture, skilling of youth and people to people linkages. (24 Aug 2023)
- Earlier (6 May 2020), PM had a telephone conversation with PM Dr. Abiy Ahmed (6 May 2020). The two leaders discussed the domestic, regional and global challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and expressed solidarity with each other during the health crisis.

Visits/Interactions of EAM (13 April 2023, 22 June 2022 & 2021)

- On the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting in Johannesburg, EAM met with Ethiopian Foreign Minister and discussed bilateral

cooperation and strengthen diplomatic relations between the two nations (February 20, 2025)

- EAM met Ethiopian FM on the sidelines of 79th UNGA (September 25, 2024) discussed bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation.
- EAM visited Addis Ababa (13 April 2023) and met Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister. They discussed bilateral relations, developments in the region and shared views on our multilateral cooperation including in the African Union and United Nations. During his visit in Mozambique, EAM had telephonic conversation with Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed (14 April 2023).
- EAM visited Addis Ababa (22 June 2022) and met Ethiopian President. They discussed bilateral cooperation including education, health and investment as also development partnership. Also, they exchanged perspectives on the regional and international situation. EAM, who also exchanged pleasantries with Ethiopian Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, appreciated their warm sentiment towards India and their good words for our bilateral partnership. EAM inaugurated the Indian Embassy's Chancery Building & Residential Complex. He also addressed the Indian community.
- EAM met Ethiopian DPM & FM on the sidelines of UNGA in New York (21 Sept 2022 and 26 Sept 2021). On 27 Aug 2021, EAM and Ethiopian DPM & FM had telephonic conversation and inter alia discussed bilateral relations and UNSC matters including the developments in Ethiopia.

Other recent visits/interactions

- A high-level ISA delegation led by Mr. Ashish Khanna, Director General of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) visited Ethiopia and met with H.E. Dr. Eng. Sultan Woli, Hon'ble State Minister of the Ministry of Water and Energy, Ethiopia, in Addis Ababa to discuss the country's solar energy development plans. (11-15 Aug 2025)
- On June 11-12 2025, a three-member delegation led by Secretary (ER) visited Ethiopia for preparatory meetings ahead of the upcoming Fourth India Africa Forum Summit (IFS-IV). Over the two-day visit, the delegation held constructive discussions with key stakeholders, including the Chairperson and senior Commissioners of the African Union Commission, the Director General of Africa CDC, the Executive Secretary of UNECA, the Secretary General of the Organisation of Southern Cooperation (OSC), and Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- A multi-party Parliamentary delegation, led by Ms. Supriya Sule, visited Ethiopia from May 30- June 01, 2025. This visit was part of a four-nation tour planned following the April 22 Pahalgam terrorist attack, 'Operation Sindoor', and the subsequent developments. During their visit, the delegation held wide-ranging discussions with Ethiopian dignitaries, including former Prime Minister Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn; Mr. Adem Farah, Deputy Chairperson of the Prosperity Party with the rank of

Deputy Prime Minister; Mr. Tadesse Chafo, Speaker of the House of People's Representatives; and representatives from the African Union. They also interacted with members of the media, academia, civil society, think tanks, and the Indian diaspora in Ethiopia. The discussions focused primarily on India's unwavering stance on 'zero tolerance towards terrorism'. Ethiopia expressed strong solidarity with India and reiterated its own firm commitment to combating terrorism.

- Indian Delegation led by Economic Advisor, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance participated in the first session of Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) held in Addis Ababa from 21st July to 27th July 2024.
- Indian Delegation led by Additional DG (Project Tiger & Elephant) participated in Global Cheetah Summit held in Addis Ababa during 28th-31st January 2024.
- The sixth Joint Trade Committee meeting at the level of Joint Secretary / Director General was held in Addis Ababa (6-7 Nov 2023).
- Ethiopian Finance Minister participated in Finance Ministers Track meeting of the 3rd Voice of Global South.

Foreign Office Consultations in Addis Ababa (3 Oct 2022)

The 4th Round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) between India and Ethiopia was held in Addis Ababa and co-chaired by Joint Secretary (East and Southern Africa), Ministry of External Affairs, India and Director General for Middle East, Asia & Pacific countries Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia.

Both delegations reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations during the Foreign Office Consultations. Issues discussed included political engagements, trade & economic matters, development partnership projects, cultural and consular matters, cooperation in higher education, people-to-people contacts, etc. It was also agreed to work to expand engagement in fields such as defence, Science and Technology, education, agriculture and allied sectors and civil aviation. Views on regional and global issues of mutual interest as well as AU related matters were also exchanged

Ethiopian Parliamentary delegation to India (20-24 Feb 2023)

- A 50-member Ethiopian Parliamentary delegation attended a training programme at the Parliamentary Research & Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE) in New Delhi. The delegation consisted of govt whips, chairperson & deputy chairperson of various standing committees and speakers of 12 regional parliaments.

Visits from Ethiopia

- Six Member African Union team visited Delhi from 01-05 December, 2025 for the consultations on 4th India Africa Forum Summit to be held in New Delhi.
- A delegation headed by State Minister of Health H.E. Ms. Firehiwot Abebe Gobena visited India from November 08-16, 2025 as part of the study tour conducted in collaboration with World Bank, to engage in discussion and exploring opportunities for enhanced collaboration with the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors.
- Gen. Teshome Gemechu, Director General for Defence Foreign Relations and Military Cooperation of Ethiopia visited New Delhi from 15-17 October 2025 for the first ever Joint Defence Cooperation meeting. The visit marks a milestone in long standing bilateral defence relationship between the two countries.
- A seven-member Ethiopian delegation, led by the Chairperson of the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), visited New Delhi from 26–30 August 2025.
- Ms. Seble Shambel, Lead Executive Officer at the Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority, attended the 2nd Policy Makers Visit at New Delhi from 16-19 June 2025.
- A 60 Member security personnel from Ethiopian Federal Police attended forensic course at National Forensic Science University, Gujarat.
- A 41 Member delegation led by Deputy Speaker of the House of Federation of Ethiopia attended a capacity building programme at National Centre for Good Governance at New Delhi from 12-17 May 2025 under ITEC.
- Mr. Melkamu Haile, a Film Director & Writer and Mr. Fisehatsion Nibret, Cinematographer & Filmmaker from Ethiopia participated in WAVES summit from 01-04 May 2025.
- Ethiopian Defense Minister visited India and signed a defense cooperation MoU at the sidelines of Aero India 2025 (11 February 2025). She also had a bilateral meeting with Defence Minister of India
- Four Member African Union team visited Delhi from 21-28 April, 2024 for the technical consultations on 4th India Africa Forum Summit to be held in Addis Ababa.
- A 3-member delegation led by State Minister of Water and Energy of Ethiopia participated in the India Energy Week 2024 held from 06 to 09 February 2024.
- Minister of Industry Mr. Melaku Alebel participated in Bharat Tex 2024 in New Delhi in February 2024.
- State Minister of Trade and Regional Integration visited Delhi to attend Global pulse Confederation in February 2024.

Bilateral visits

- President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a State Visit to Ethiopia (Oct 2017) and held talks with Ethiopian President and Prime Minister. Other high level visits included President S. Radhakrishnan (1965), Vice President Zakir Hussain (1967), President V.V. Giri (1972), PM Manmohan Singh (2011) and Vice President Hamid Ali Ansari (May 2013).
- High level visits from Ethiopia included those of Emperor Haile Selassie (1956 & 1968), Col. Hailemariam Mengistu (1983 and 1985), PM Meles Zenawi (1997, 2007, 2008 & 2011) and PM Hailemariam Desalegn (2015).

Bilateral Agreements

- Air Services Agreement (1967); 4 MoUs signed subsequently in 1972, 1993, 2004 and 2008.
- Agreement on Technical, Economic and Scientific Cooperation (1969)
- Cultural Agreement (1983)
- Trade Agreement (1997)
- Agreement on Cooperation in Micro Dams and Small Scale Irrigation Schemes (2002)
- Agreement on Establishment of Joint Ministerial Commission (2007)
- Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (2007)
- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Science and Technology (2007)
- Educational Exchange Programme (2007)
- Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (2007)
- Double Taxation avoidance treaty (2011)
- MOU between NSIC, India and FEMSEDA (2011)
- MOU between ICAR and Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (2011)
- Trade Agreement (2017)
- Agreement for Cooperation in the field of Information, Communication and Media (2017)
- MoU between FSI and Foreign Service Institute of Ethiopia (2018)
- MoU between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Central Research Institute, India and Wollo University, Ethiopia (2021)
- MoU between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of India and the Information Network Security Administration of Ethiopia in field of Digital Public Infrastructure. (2024)

- MoU between India and Ethiopia on the cooperation in the field of Defence (2025)
- Framework Agreement on “Establishment of the International Big Cat Alliance” which aims to conserve seven major big cat species: tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards, cheetahs, jaguars and pumas.

Bilateral Trade

- According to Department of Commerce, India’s total trade with Ethiopia stood at US\$ 550.19/- million during 2024- 2025. During this period, India’s export to Ethiopia were US\$ 476.81/- million and imports were US\$ 73.38/- million.
- Exports from India mainly include primary and semi-finished iron and steel products, drugs and pharmaceuticals, machinery and instruments, chemical, paper products, plastic products, manufactures of metal, etc. Major imports by India from Ethiopia were: pulses, flax yarn, precious and semi-precious stones, vegetables & seeds, leather and spices.
- India is the second largest trading partner for Ethiopia.

Cultural Cooperation

Year 2025

- The Embassy has organized International Gita Mahotsav from 17 to 22 November 2025, bringing together the Indian diaspora, local community members, scholars, and cultural enthusiasts to honor and celebrate the timeless teachings of the Bhagavad Gita.
- The Onam festival was celebrated at the Embassy of India in Addis Ababa on 11 and 12 October 2025. In his address, Ambassador emphasized the role of cultural celebrations in bringing the community together and showcase India’s rich diversity.
- The Indian community in Ethiopia celebrated Janmashtami, marking the birth of Lord Krishna, with Bhajans and Kathas. The event highlighted Krishna’s teachings of love, compassion, and righteousness, bringing the community together in devotion while promoting awareness of India’s spiritual heritage.
- The Indian community in Ethiopia joyously celebrated Ganesh Chaturthi in Addis Ababa and Bishoftu, embracing the festival with vibrant enthusiasm and spirit. The event not only reinforced cultural traditions but also strengthened the bonds within the Indian diaspora in Ethiopia.
- The vibrant Indian community in Ethiopia celebrated the Rath Yatra festival at the Embassy premises, highlighting cultural traditions and fostering unity.

- Embassy celebrated World environment day with a tree-planting event at its premises, promoting a greener and healthier planet. On this occasion, Ambassador highlighted India's strong commitment to environment protection and sustainable living, emphasizing key initiatives such as Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam, and the visionary Panch Pran outlined by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.
- As part of the lead-up to the 11th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2025, the Embassy of India in Addis Ababa organized a special yoga session at the Indian International School, Addis Ababa. The event saw the active participation of over 400 enthusiastic primary and middle school students, who eagerly engaged with the ancient practice of yoga. The session aimed to familiarize young learners with the holistic benefits of yoga, highlighting its role in promoting physical health, mental clarity, and overall well-being from an early age.
- Embassy organized the celebration of Holi at its premises. The event featured lively color play, spirited cultural performances, soulful music and dance, and delightful festive treats. It was attended by a large gathering of the Indian diaspora, member of diplomatic and local communities.
- The Embassy in collaboration with Indian Women Association organized the International Women's Day on 08th March 2025. The celebration of International Women's Day was marked with enthusiasm and commitment towards, women's empowerment and well-being. As part of the observance, a special Fit India Yoga Session was conducted emphasizing the importance of physical and mental health for women.
- Maharashtra Mandal, Ethiopia celebrated Shivaji Jayanti with enthusiastic participation from the Indian community.
- A Cultural Troupe comprising 20 members, sponsored by the Government of India in collaboration with Haryana Tourism department, actively took part in the 38th edition of International Crafts Mela 2025, from (6-24 February 2025) in Faridabad, Haryana.
- On the occasion of Vishwa Hindi Diwas (10 January 2025), Embassy organized various activities in Embassy and at Bishoftu to celebrate the event. A number of Ethiopian nationals as well as Indian community participated in various activities.
- Conference on 'CONTRIBUTION OF INDIAN TEACHERS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA' organised and saw great participation from Ethiopian Government, Educational Institutions and from the Indian Professors/ Teachers and those who have been benefited by the ICCR

and ITEC Scholarships, apart from subject experts and friends from Media (4th January 2025)

Indian Community

- The early settlers among the Indian community in Ethiopia came from Gujarat in the latter years of the 19th century. During imperial times, there were also tens of thousands of Indian teachers in schools all over Ethiopia, even in the most remote parts.
- Today, the Indian community has a large presence in the educational sector of Ethiopia. There are about 150 Indian faculties in various Ethiopian Universities and higher educational institutions.
- The Indian Diaspora in Ethiopia is estimated to about 2500. There are a number of Indian companies in this country. There are also several Ethiopian companies who engage Indian workers.

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