

## India - Algeria Relations

The diplomatic relationship between India and Algeria was established in 1962, the year Algeria gained independence from colonial rule. Since the beginning, the relations between the two countries have been warm and cordial. Both countries have been consistently supporting each other on vital issues at bilateral and multilateral levels.

### Important bilateral visits

- Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi visited Algeria in 1973 to attend the NAM Summit,
- Shri Rajiv Gandhi visited in June 1985 and the President of Algeria Chadli Bendjedid visited India in 1982, 1983 and 1987.
- President Bouteflika visited India on 24-29 January 2001 as the Chief Guest at the Republic Day Celebrations.
- Besides these visits many Minister-level and official-level visits were undertaken by both the countries. EAM visited Algeria in 2000 and Minister of P&NG Shri Murali Deora visited Algeria in 2007. Minister of State for Road Transport & Highways, Shri Jitin Prasad visited Algeria in May 2011 as Special Envoy of PM.
- Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Algeria on 17-18 April, 2013 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Algerian independence and to mark fifty years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Algeria. .
- India-Algeria Parliamentary Friendship Group was established in 2008. Two Young Algerian Parliamentarians visited India in March, 2013 under the "Leaders of Future" programme. Hon'ble Mr. Ali Melaghsou, MP from the ruling party FLN, visited India from 8-15 March, 2014 under this programme.
- The 5th round of India-Algeria FOCs was held in New Delhi on 7 May, 2015. The Indian side was led by Shri Sandeep Kumar, JS (WANA), MEA, and included DS (FT-WANA), Minister of Commerce. The Algerian side was led by Amb Mr. Boumediene Guennad, Director General (Asia Oceania) in the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs who was accompanied by Algerian Ambassador in India, Mr Hamza Yahi-Cherif. Both sides discussed all pending bilateral issues including restrictions imposed on exports of car manufactured in India to Algeria and unilateral change of payment terms to IRCON.
- The 9th Session of the India-Algeria Joint Commission for Economic Trade, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation was held on 25-26 May, 2015 in Algiers. The Indian delegation was headed by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Hon'ble Minister of State (IC) of Commerce & Industry and the Algerian delegation was led by Mr. Boudjema Talai, Algerian Minister of Transport.
- Dr Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, Hon'ble Minister of State for Agriculture visited Algiers from July 11-13 as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister for delivering invitations for IAFS-III to be held in October 2015 in New Delhi to the Algerian President Bouteflika and the Foreign Minister Lamamra respectively. He met the Agriculture Minister Mr Abdelkader Kadi on 12 July 2015, who was his official host for the visit and discussed enhancement of bilateral cooperation between the two

countries in the field of Agriculture and allied sectors, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr Ramtane Lamamra on 13 July 2015 in his office which was followed by meeting with the Algerian PM Mr Abdelmalek Sellal and a call on the President of Algeria Abdelaziz Bouteflika. Original copies of the invitation for the IAFS III were handed over personally by the Minister to the President and the State Minister of Foreign Affairs. Discussions on subject of mutual interest also took place in these meetings.

### **Bilateral Agreements**

India has signed the following agreements with Algeria:

1. Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement
2. Phytosanitary Agreement.
3. Veterinary Sanitation Protocol Air Service Agreement
4. Agreement between Press Trust of India and Algerian Press Service
5. Agreement on Cooperation in Small and Medium-scale Enterprises Cultural Exchange Programme
6. MoU of Foreign Office Consultations
7. MoU between AIR and Algerian National Radio, and MoU between Doordarshan and Algerian National Television

### **Economic and Commercial Relations**

Bilateral trade between India and Algeria had shown significant growth from US\$ 55 million in 2001 to US\$ 3.33 billion in 2011. In 2014 it came down to US\$ 1.822 billion, mainly due to fall in international oil prices coupled with fall in Algeria's hydrocarbon exports to India. India's exports to Algeria in 2014 were US\$ 1.196 billion. There still remains a huge potential for further expansion of our exports as the imports from India constituted a meager 2% of Algeria's total imports in 2014.

**Major import items from India:** Automobiles and spare parts, agricultural and industrial machinery and equipment, pharmaceuticals, mobile phones and accessories, foodstuff (frozen bovine meat, chickpeas, milk powder, rice, spices, cashew nuts) and cosmetic products.

**Majors export items to India:** Oil, gas, lubricants and phosphate.

### **Indian companies in Algeria:**

India's PSUs Telecommunications Consultations India Ltd., Engineers India Ltd., and IRCON International Ltd., have been in Algeria for many years and executing their project works. Engineers India Limited has been working as a consultant for Algerian national oil company SONATRACH for more than 25 years. .

Indian private sector companies L&T, KEC International and Kalpataru are active in power transmission sector. Other companies like Vijay Electricals, an Indian company manufacturing power transformers, Dodsai Engineering and Construction FZE, Construction company ShapoorjiPallonjiand. Indian pharmaceutical companies like ZydusCadila, Dabur, Sun pharma, Cipla and Hetro Drugs are present in Algeria.

## **Recent bilateral events**

India participated at the 48th Algerian International Fair on the invitation of the Government of Algeria, as “Guest of Honour” country which coincided with 9th JCM. The Indian Pavilion entitled “Salaam Namaste” was set up up in collaboration with FICCI where more than 70 Indian companies involved in automobile and spare parts, agricultural machinery, including tractors, other machinery, construction sector, pharmaceuticals, food and food processing, construction material, tyres and tubes, etc., participated in the Fair. Mr. Abdelmalek Sellal, Algerian Prime Minister inaugurated the Indian Pavilion on 26 May 2015 alongwith Indian Minister of State for Commerce and Industry by lighting the ceremonial lamp and also witnessed together the performance of the Rajasthani Cultural Troupe.

## **Cultural**

- Under the Cultural Exchange Programme between the two countries cultural troupes of both countries exchange their visits. Algeria sent their cultural troupe ‘Djemawi Africa’ to India during the India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi in April 2008.
- Algeria sent another 32-member ballet troupe to India in December 2010. A 9-member Algerian classical music group participated in the India-Africa Forum summit held in Addis Ababa in May 2011.
- An Indian painting exhibition ‘Women by Women’ was sent to Algeria by ICCR in 2009. The Algerian Government assisted in organizing this painting exhibition in more than 10 provinces including Algiers. The exhibition toured around 2 years and was well received by the people of Algeria.
- A Rajasthani folk dance troupe ‘Meera Kala Mandir’ visited Algeria in December 2009 to participate in the Deserts People Festival.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> India-Arab Cultural Festival was held in Algiers from 20-27 November 2014, jointly inaugurated by the Algerian Minister for Culture, Dy. Secretary General of Arab League, DG, ICCR and the Ambassador. In addition to a 16-member contemporary dance troupe and a 9-member kathak dance troupe sponsored by ICCR, artisans, a calligrapher and a Quran reciter also participated in the festival. An Indian photograph exhibition was inaugurated simultaneously. An Indian Food Festival was also organized in collaboration with Hotel Hilton which ran concurrently with the cultural festival. Four Bollywood movies sent by India were shown at national cinematheque during this period. The festival was spread over seven other major cities and towns of Algeria. In addition to the host Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan and Tunisia participated in the festival.
- The performance of the famous Rajasthani “Sapera” Dance Group was witnessed and applauded warmly by the Algerian and international dignitaries including Mr. Abdelmalek Sellal, Algerian Prime Minister and the Commerce Minister of India Mrs Nirmala Sitharaman during the inauguration of 48th Algerian International Fair from 26 May-2 June 2015, The Indian Pavilion “Salaam Namaste “ in the Fair attracted thousands of visitors from 27 May-02 June 2015, who enjoyed the performances of 7 member Rajasthani Sapera Dance Group and 3-member Puppet Group especially arranged for the occasion through ICCR.

## **Indian Community**

Indian Diaspora in Algeria is very small. There are more than 2100 Indians (though only about 1400 of them have registered themselves with the Embassy) working in various projects and establishments in the country, most of them technically skilled persons working on projects in remote areas. Only a handful of Indians live in the capital city of Algiers including some country heads of companies.

### **Useful resources:**

Embassy of India, Algiers website:

<http://indianembassyalgiers.org/>

Embassy of India, Algiers Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/embassyofindiaalgiers.algiers>

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