

Embassy of India Newsletter

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HOMs CONFERENCE



INDIAN CULTURAL FEST- NAVARATRI



UNITY CHAIN INDIA-SOUTH SUDAN FRIENDSHIP



AMBASSADOR'S PAGE

Vishnu Kumar Sharma
Ambassador of India to
South Sudan

**FOREWORD**

A very Happy New Year to all the readers who follow activities of the Embassy of India and that of Indian establishments on Humanitarian assistance in South Sudan. In 2023, we recommit ourselves to reinforcing the efforts being made by stakeholders and international community for a lasting peace in the country.

The Transitional Government of National Unity in South Sudan achieved several milestones on the roadmap for implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement-2018. The near-completion of Phase-I of unification of forces of over 52,000 troops and kickstarting of the constitution making process are some of the major developments meeting timelines on the roadmap. Though, the eruption of violence in some parts of South Sudan has been a matter of grave concern, the international community remains hopeful about a continued momentum in the peace process, necessary to hold the first general elections in the country within next two years.

To mark the completion of 75 years of India's independence, under the theme of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav", the Embassy continued organizing a number of events. The most prominent event during the quarter was "Navratri" festival alongside a symposium on Mahatma Gandhi held on October 1, 2022, in collaboration with the Indian Association for promotion of cultural ties with Indian diaspora in South Sudan.

India holds the Presidency of the G20 from December 1, 2022 to November 30, 2023 and will be organizing around 200 meetings/interaction/events in the country during the period. Underpinned by India's philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", that is "world is one family", India will work to ensure that the valuable inputs generated from partner countries from Global South, receive due cognizance globally. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India has stated that India's G20 Presidency will be shaped in consultation with not just our G20 partners, but also fellow countries in the Global South, including African countries, whose voice often goes unheard. This is a remarkable initiative for an inclusive growth.

My participation in the Heads of Missions Conference held from 20-22 October 2023, at Ekta Nagar, Gujarat in India, provided a useful insight into current priorities and direction of India's foreign policy as also the new opportunities available for expanding bilateral cooperation in trade and other areas. The Embassy will pursue these avenues more vigorously in the new year to deepen bilateral engagement with South Sudan.

Capacity building and charitable activities by the Indian peacekeepers under UN and missionaries working in religious congregations such as DMI, MMI, etc., witnessed a renewed enthusiasm around Christmas, filling the lives of hundreds of deprived families with hope, love and joy. The Embassy sincerely appreciates efforts of all Indian nationals in South Sudan working towards bringing peace, prosperity and happiness to the people, particularly in conflict ridden and flood affected areas of South Sudan.

Finally, it is a proud moment for me to join the Indian Community in South Sudan in congratulating Mr. Sanjaykumar Shivabhai Patel, Managing Director of JIT Supermarket chain in Juba, on being conferred the Pravasi Bhartiya Samman (the highest award for overseas Indians), for the year 2023, in recognition of his outstanding community welfare service for over a decade. His spirit of service will continue to inspire other Indian diaspora to continue to work for the welfare of Indian diaspora and South Sudanese people.

(Vishnu Kumar Sharma)
Ambassador

CULTURAL EVENING CELEBRATED

The Embassy in collaboration with the Indian Association in South Sudan (IASS), organized a cultural evening on October 1, to celebrate 75 years of India's Independence, as well as to encourage and promote cultural ties of Indian diaspora with the motherland, at the Hindu Temple premises in Juba. A symposium on Mahatma Gandhi, to pay tributes to the great leader on the eve of his birth anniversary, was also held. Around 300 Indian community members and South Sudanese guests took part in the celebrations. Hon'ble Taban Emmanuel Baya, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and acting Minister for Culture, Youth and Sports of Central Equatoria State, graced the festivity as the Chief Guest for the event. Ambassador V. K. Sharma, in his opening remarks summed up the 75 glorious years of independent India. The honourable Minister reminisced his childhood days of learning about India and Indians, and proposed that there should be a South Sudan - India friendship Association in Juba. The other guests, included Mr. Edmund Yakani, the Executive Director of Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) and Dr. Moses Monday John, Organization for Non- violence and Development (ONAD), who shared their views on the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, and their continued relevance in the present day. Thereafter, Chairman of IASS, Mr. Sanjaykumar Patel opened the colourful extravaganza of Indian music and traditional dances; Garba and Dandia. Delicious Indian delicacies served at the dinner added to the flavour of the festivities. Millet (sorghum) dishes, which Government of India is promoting as a nutritious meal, were part of the menu.



PROMOTION OF SWATCHHTA (CLEANLINESS)

In line with Government of India's priority programme "Swatchh Bharat" (Clean India) initiative, the Embassy carried out a cleanliness drive at its premises on 2 October which happens to be the Birth Anniversary of India's father of nation. Mahatma Gandhi believed that Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Another special cleanliness drive was carried out on 12 October.



MEETING WITH INDIAN BUSINESSMEN

The Ambassador called a meeting of Indian businessmen in South Sudan on 06 October for a brainstorming session with a view to finding avenues to boosting bilateral trade and investment between India and South Sudan. The businessmen made several suggestions to attract Indian investment in various sectors including agriculture, health, education and animal husbandry. They also shared their concerns on the challenges being faced in running their businesses and about certain institutional assistance they needed from the Government of India. The Ambassador assured them of Embassy's continued support.

Members of Indian Association and some prominent Indian business community members in South Sudan called on the Ambassador also on 22 December. Among others, Consular, Commercial and Cultural issues came up for discussions. Indian community members assured of their support in all endeavours of the Embassy.



HEAD OF INDIAN MISSIONS CONFERENCE

Ambassador Vishnu Kumar Sharma & other Heads of Mission (HOMs), who hail from the state of Rajasthan, called on Hon. Kalraj Mishra, Governor of Rajasthan, on their first day of their state visit from 17-18 October to Rajasthan to benefit from Hon. Governor's vision & directions on how to contribute to state's development through external engagement. HoMs also had detailed discussion with representatives of Department of Industries & Commerce, State Government of Rajasthan & many stakeholders on the roadmap to promote trade & investments and tourism in Rajasthan with an aim to promoting One-District-One-Product as a key priority. This was followed by a detailed presentation, and a lively discussion on Mission "Amrit Sarovar". This flagship project aims to develop & rejuvenate 75 water bodies in each district of the country, which is transforming lives and environment through water conservation. The HOMs visited karouli district to familiarize and had discussions with district authorities on various government schemes in the district.

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi, interacted with HoMs from all over the world at the 10th HoMs Conference in Kevadia in the state of Gujarat, and laid out the vision for India's foreign policy, providing guidance and setting the tone for the 3-day conference from 19 October to 22 October.



PROMOTION OF AYURVEDA

The Embassy organised a short event for the promotion of Ayurveda on 20 October as part of 7th Ayurveda Day celebrations. A brief presentation on the benefits of Ayurveda, a holistic ancient Indian medical science was made. This apart, benefits of common herbs & spices – essential part of Ayurveda - for a healthy living in our daily life were also shared with the participants.



INTERACTION WITH ITEC NOMINEES

Nominated South Sudanese trainee participants on "Best Practices in Power Distribution Sector" at REC Institute of Power Management and Training, Hyderabad, and on "Performance Audit" at International Center for Information Systems and Audit, Noida were presented with air tickets on 10 November. The training is under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme of the Government of India.

Ambassador of India, Mr. V K Sharma and Embassy officials on 23 December interacted with South Sudanese officials working in Government and Public Sector who are set to attend various training programmes under ITEC in different cities in India starting in January 2023. The ITEC nominees were also, among other things, briefed about food, culture and places of interest in India. They made use of the opportunity to get their various concerns and queries addressed.



CELEBRATION OF UNITY DAY

The Embassy held a symposium on Unity Day in the evening of 31 October to pay tributes to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on his birth anniversary. The event began with singing of National Anthems of India and South Sudan, which was followed by the address of Ambassador Sharma who spoke about the life and work of Sardar Patel, and his extraordinary role in unifying and integrating India amid extremely challenging circumstances. Among others present, was Dr. Moses Monday, Director, ONAD who shared with the audience the struggles of the people of South Sudan in attaining freedom, and in integrating the nation, in building peace and capacity. Participant from UNMISS spoke about the role of the agency in maintaining peace, stability and capacity building in the country since 2011. Short documentaries on the life of Sardar Patel and Statue of Unity, the world's tallest statue, were also screened. The celebrations ended with plantation of the 'Unity' Tree sapling at the Embassy compound.



ITEC DAY CELEBRATIONS

The Embassy organised a get together of ITEC Alumni on 16 December at the Embassy. Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Vishnu Kumar Sharma, gave a brief account of the training being conducted under ITEC Programme in India. He mentioned that over 1000 South Sudanese had attended ITEC training courses in India, fully funded by the Government of India, and appealed to ITEC alumni to help foster even closer bilateral ties between the two countries by acting as a bridge. The Chief Guest, Hon. Prof. Dr. Julia Aker Duany, Undersecretary, Ministry of Public Service & Human Resource Development thanked the Government of India for its contribution in capacity building. In his remarks, Mr. Joseph Droto, Director General from Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism pitched for investment and cooperation in developing tourism in South Sudan. Mr. Bryan Elwich, Representative from Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, made a presentation on agriculture potential of South Sudan, particularly the millet cultivation. Some ITEC alumni present at the event, including Hon. Peter Loro Alberto, Under Secretary from Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism talked about their experiences in India and gave valuable feedback about the various programmes they attended in India and how these benefited them in their career. Presentations on Tourism and Trade Promotion between the two countries were also made during the course of the event. The platform was also used to promote United Nations International Year of Millet (IYOM) 2023. Representatives from concerned Ministries, who were also ITEC alumni, shared their insightful perspective in these areas. Among others present, were representative from Satguru Travels, a leading Tour Operators in Juba, who made a presentation on promotion of tourism between the two countries. The participants relished delicious Indian cuisine including millet dishes to kick-start IYOM 2023 and enjoyed themselves dancing to Indian & South Sudanese foot-tapping music.



AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV PROMOTING INDIA'S RICH HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

1) Tributes to Mahatma Gandhi & Lal Bahadur Shastri

This Embassy paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi on his birth anniversary in the morning of 2 October. In his remarks Ambassador highlighted the unparalleled and unique contributions of Gandhiji, remembered as the Father of the Nation, and his principle ideals of non-violence and truth, with which India achieved its freedom from colonial rule on 15 August, 1947.

A pushpanjali ceremony was also held in the honour of India's 2nd Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri on his birth anniversary on 2 October. Paying glowing tributes to the leader, Ambassador specially talked about his simplicity, commitment and humility above all among his many virtues.



2) Tributes to Sardar Patel, Iron Man of India

This Embassy celebrated National Unity Day marking the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel during 30-31 October 2022. The activities included, a Unity run on 30 October; a pledge taking and Pushpanjali ceremony to pay tributes to Sardar Patel on 31 October. Participants formed a Unity Chain portraying the symbol of unification, strong bilateral relationship and friendship of India and South Sudan.



3) Constitution Day



Preamble reading on Constitution Day (26-11-2022)

4) Solidarity Walk- Trek to Jebel Kujur

In keeping with the motto of "Unity in Diversity" and on the eve of Constitution Day of India on 26 November 2022, Embassy of India organised a Solidarity Walk in the morning of Saturday the 26 November at Jebel Kujur Hill in Juba. Members of Indian community and friends of India in South Sudan joined this Embassy for a trek to the top of the hill with great enthusiasm and in the true spirit of togetherness and solidarity.



5) Tribute to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

On the Occasion of "Mahaparinirvan Diwas" on 06 December, Embassy officials paid floral tributes to Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, Father of the Indian Constitution. Ambassador also briefly addressed those present for the occasion and talked about the life and virtues of Dr. Ambedkar.



BILATERAL ENGAGEMENTS

Ambassador had, among others, the following important engagements during the period -

04.10.2022 - With the National Minister of Information, Communication Technology and Postal Services, Hon. Michael Makuei Lueth and discussed means for strengthening cooperation in the fields of Information Technology and E-Services.

02.11.2022 - Met the South Sudan National Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture officials. A proposal for visit of a group of heads of South Sudanese companies in different sectors to India to familiarize the business ecosystem there and explore business opportunities, was discussed.

07.11.2022 - Meeting with Dy. Minister of Defence and Veterans' Affairs of South Sudan, Hon. Chol Thon Balok to follow up on his participation in India-Africa Defence Dialogue in October 2022.

11.11.2022 - Hosted a get-together over lunch of resident and some non-resident Ambassadors accredited to South Sudan. Ambassadors/Cd'As of 20 countries attended the lunch. Hon'ble Deng Dau Deng Malek, the Deputy Foreign Minister of South Sudan also graced the occasion.

1.12.2022 - The Ambassador alongwith other resident Ambassadors in South Sudan and several International agencies participated in a briefing organized by UNMISS. A joint statement was issued by UNMISS after the briefing expressing concern over escalation of violence in Upper Nile State appealing the government to engage the elements involved in the violence to de-escalate the situation.

09.12.2022 - Participated in an Annual Award event organized by the South Sudan National Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. The winners of award, are planning to visit India on a business trip being facilitated by the Indian-African Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Mumbai.

16.12.2022 - Met the Central Equatoria State Minister of Housing to discuss issue of allotment of land to Indian community for Hindu temple and cremation ground. Issue of compensation for an Indian national was also followed up.



18.12.2022 - With Deputy Foreign Minister. Reviewed progress of bilateral relations and discussed avenues of cooperation during 2023.



24.11.2022 – With the Governor of Lakes State Mr. Rin Tueny Mabor. Issues related to capacity building and ICCR scholarships were discussed.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

MMI Missionaries at Qurei, Juba, distributed food material to 150 most vulnerable people in surrounding areas on Christmas eve. Special thanks to Mr. Arun, M/S Blue Star, for his contribution to the donation.



ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY SOCIETY OF MARY IMMACULATE AND COLLABORATORS (SDMIC)

Activities in Juba -

- On 21st November, SDMIC organized certification ceremony to give away certificates and start-up kits to 159 youth who completed vocational skill training.
- On 9th December, DMI Sisters organized a rally against Gender Based Violence, in which 1000 South Sudanese women and men from DMI-promoted three Federations participated. The rally was supported by UNMISS, FAO, JICA, NCA, Misereor and Mensen Met een Missie (Netherlands).
- SDMIC supported 312, P-8 and S-4 students with examination fee for the National Examination, provided mid-day meal to 753 children in DMI school in IDP Camp3 and provided dignity kits to 221 adolescence girls.
- Provided a Grinding Mill to DMI-promoted Farmers Association in Bori. And as part of FAO project, Boma Development Committees were formed in 23 Bomas to provide training to undertake public works.
- They also organized medical camps in IDP Camp -3 and in Mangateen, 545 IDPs received treatment and medicines.
- SDMIC identified 100 children from ten community schools on the outskirts of Juba and made them aware of GBV and gender equality. The project team organized competition in writing poem, drawing and singing on the theme of GBV and gender equality.
- They provided grant of 87000 SSP to 183000 SSP to ten women's savings and lending groups to start group businesses.

In Gogrial, SDMIC distributed non- food materials for 300 families affected by flood

In Malakal, SDMIC reached out to 638 families with family food rations. These families were temporarily displaced due to eruption of violence in November'22



INDIAN PEACE-KEEPERS IN SOUTH SUDAN - INDBATT-I

- INDBATT-I alongwith a team of Humanitarians successfully organised a medical camp and established a water purification plant at Kodok AOB. Humanitarians aid was also distributed to the IDPs.
- INDBATT-I excelled in its traditional role such as CIMIC, Winning Hearts and Mind, confidence-building efforts & community security measures, in conjunction with the various UN agencies and local government, which were vital for maintaining a high level of safety and security in the AOR. The Battalion has provided veterinary assistance by conducting 12 veterinary camps and have treated more than 1900 domestic animals belonging to the local populace. Other CIMIC activities include awareness on gender equality, importance of girl's education, assistance to local community in terms of providing sports items and first aid kits has had tremendous impact on perception among locals about UNMISS.
- Indian contingent's work at Kodok AOB provided a silver lining in the dark sky for the IDPs who had to leave their homes to evade ethnic clashes in the Upper Nile State. INBATT-I went a step further by organizing Christmas festivities for IDPs, that uplifted the cramped-up spirits of IDPs, who expressed their gratitude towards the kind gesture of peacekeepers working under the UN flag.
- At Kodok COB in Upper Nile State, INBATT-I conducted a friendly football match among the teams selected from the IDPs on 31.12.22 marking New Year – A STEP TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW. The County Commissioner thanked the AOB Commander and lauded the efforts of INDBATT-I in maintaining peace in the area.



INDIAN PEACE-KEEPERS IN SOUTH SUDAN - INDBATT-II**MEDICAL CAMP IN PIBOR, SOUTH SUDAN**

INDBATT-II as part of UNMISS conducted a Medical Camp at Vertait in Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA) of South Sudan on 12 October to celebrate International Day of the Girl Child & also to provide a healing touch to the locals. This is for the first time that such a camp was organized in wet season for providing medical assistance to the locals especially the girl child & women. The camp provided medical care & treatment to 331 female & 274 male patients. During the conduct of the medical camp a lecture was conducted on personal care & hygiene for the local girls & women. A Key Leaders Engagement (KLE) meet was also conducted during the course of the camp. Local leaders were extremely happy for activities being undertaken by INDBATT. The conduct of such events corroborated the continuous efforts being undertaken by INDBATT-II in bringing peace & stability to the strife torn & war ravaged parts of South Sudan.

**FRIENDLY FOOTBALL MATCH AT BOR TOWN – 24 OCT 2022**

In commemoration of the UN Day, UNMISS team represented by INDBATT-II participated in a Friendly football match at Freedom Square, Bor Town with a local club of Bor. UNMISS conducted the event in collaboration with the local administration with an aim to foster peace building initiatives and end ethnic conflicts through promotion of sports and education. A number of dignitaries from the government and UNMISS witnessed the match which ended with the UNMISS team winning the match. The event was also marked by a wonderful cultural display from the local community. INDBATT-II continues its unwavering support to promote peace and development in the region.



A SPECIAL MENTION

Mr. Sanjaykumar Shivabhai Patel, Managing Director of JIT Supermarket chain and the Chairman of Indian Association in South Sudan has been conferred Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2023 - the highest honour conferred on overseas Indians - for his Business and Community Welfare services in South Sudan. Right from showing extraordinary fortitude, resilience and generosity during the dreadful ethnic conflict from 2013 to 2018 in staying put and running his supermarket in a philanthropic spirit, Mr. Patel has always been at the forefront of standing for humanitarian cause and taking up charitable activities, such as organising blood donation camps or in extending continuous support to the Embassy in all its activities. These have all generated immense goodwill and fostered better understanding of India and Indians, among South Sudanese people. The Embassy of India and the Indian Community in South Sudan congratulate Mr. Patel on his grand achievement and hope that his spirit of services will inspire others to emulate his work.



At the Embassy for community welfare issues



At the success of Jaipur Foot Camp (9 July 2022)



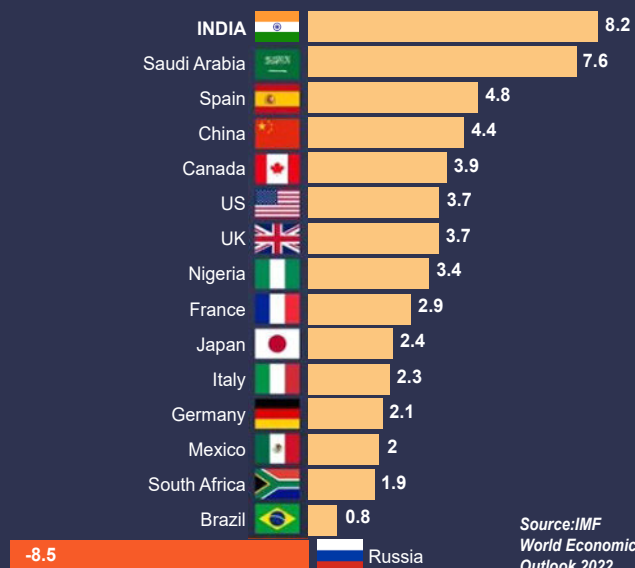
Blood Donation Camp



With MoS Mr. V. Muraleedharan in Indore

INDIA PROJECTED TO BE FASTEST-GROWING ECONOMY IN 2022

GDP Projections (in%)



Source:IMF
World Economic
Outlook 2022



भारत 2023 INDIA

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

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"India is honoured to be at the forefront of popularising Millets. Millet consumption furthers nutrition, food security and welfare of farmers"

MILESTONES OF 2 BILLION

> 25 M doses administered in a day on 17th Sept'21

