INDIA - NIGERIA BILATERAL RELATIONS

OVERALL RELATIONS:

1. India and Nigeria enjoy warm, friendly, and deep-rooted bilateral relations. India, with a population of 1.4 billion, and Nigeria, over 220 million, are large developing and democratic countries with multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual societies. India as the largest democracy in the world and Nigeria as the largest in Africa, become natural partners.

2. The struggle against colonialism and apartheid in the formative years after independence of the two countries laid strong foundation for the engagement of the two countries. India and Nigeria are playing an important role in the South-South Cooperation. In the multilateral organizations particularly United Nations, G77 and NAM, both countries have been articulating the voice of the developing world in a coordinated and effective manner.

3. India established its Diplomatic House in Lagos in November 1958, two years before Nigeria became independent in 1960. Political contacts at the highest level were maintained during the last 65 years.

4. In Oct 2007 Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India visited Nigeria. During this visit both countries raised the status of bilateral relationship to a “Strategic Partnership’. Our diplomatic relations have transformed from “Historical Friendship” to “Strategic Partners”.

5. The presence of a large Indian expatriate community of about 50,000, the largest in West Africa, adds value to the importance of the long-standing relationship between the two countries.

BILATERAL VISITS

6. India’s first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru’s landmark visit to Nigeria in September 1962 and his interaction with Nigeria’s first Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa had created mutual goodwill, respect, and friendship between the two countries and leaders. Two Nigerian Presidents have visited India as Chief Guests at India’s Republic Day i.e. President Shehu Shagari in 1983 and in President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2000 for attending India’s 50th Republic Day celebrations. Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Abuja in December 2003 to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit.

7. Nigerian leadership regularly visited India –with President Obasanjo in November 2004, Vice President Goodluck Jonathan (who later served as President from 2011-2015) in November 2007 and to the first India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi in April 2008. During the historic State visit to Nigeria by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in October 2007, India and Nigeria adopted the Abuja Declaration for Strategic Partnership, which gave a new impetus to the bilateral ties.

8. Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari visited New Delhi in October 2015 to participate in the Third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) The meeting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with President Buhari enabled the two countries to review the bilateral engagement, and to chart a path for further enhancement of the bilateral engagement.

9. The visit of Indian Vice President Hamid Ansari to Nigeria from 26-29 September 2016 and his meetings with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari and Vice President Prof. Yemi Osinbajo provided yet another opportunity to further deepen the bilateral cooperation.

10. Mr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria visited India from 05-10 September 2023 to attend G20 Leaders' Summit. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi met Mr. Tinubu on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in New Delhi.

11. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid a State visit to Nigeria from 16-17 November 2024. The official program included tete-a-tete with President Tinubu, followed by delegation level talks. Both sides reviewed the gamut of bilateral relations and discussed areas of further cooperation including maritime security, energy security, defense, health, education, trade and investment, food security including agriculture mechanization, combating terrorism, piracy, and drug trafficking, cooperation in international forums. After the delegation level talks, State lunch was hosted in the honour of Prime Minister, where he was conferred with the Grand Commander of the Order of Niger Award. The Prime Minister also addressed and interacted with the Indian community. The following MoUs were signed during the visit of Prime Minister in Nigeria (i) Program on Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Federal Republic of Nigeria (ii) MoU of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on Survey Cooperation (iii) MoU of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Custom Matters.

12. Both countries have nurtured the relationship through periodic interactions. Important bilateral visits at the level of Heads of State or Government are given in the table below.

Nigerian Dignitary to India	Period	Event
Mr. Shehu Shagari President	January 1983	Chief Guest Republic Day celebrations.
Gen Sani Abacha President	March 1994	To attend the G15 Summit
Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo President	April 1999	
Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo	Jan 24-28, 2000,	State Visit to India

President		As the Chief Guest at India's 50th Republic Day celebrations.
Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo President	Nov 2-3, 2004	Transit Visit to India
Mr. Goodluck Jonathan, Vice President	Nov 5-7, 2007 & April 2008	For the Federalism Conference. & April 2008- led a large delegation including Delta & Bayelsa State Governors and MOS (Gas) for the India-Africa Summit in April 2008.
Mr. Muhammadu Buhari President	Oct 26-30, 2015	For the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi
Mr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR President	Sept 5-10, 2023	To attend G20 leaders' Summit 2023
Senator Kashim Shettima Mustapha, GCON Vice President	Sep 11-13, 2026	To represent President Bola Tinubu and head the Nigerian delegation at the 18th BRICS Leaders' Summit 2026 in New Delhi
Indian Dignitary to Nigeria	**Period**	**Event**
Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister	Sep 23-27, 1962	First ever State Visit
Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister	Dec 2003	To attend Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit in Abuja.
Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister	October 2007	Bilateral State Visit
Mr. Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Vice President	September 2016	Bilateral Official Visit
Mr. Narendra Modi Prime Minister	November 2024	Bilateral State Visit

RECENT VISITS AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL:

India to Nigeria

Sr. no	Indian Dignitary	Period	Event
1.	Shri V. Muraleedharan, MoS for External Affairs	22-23 Aug 2022	To attend the inaugural event of Nigeria-India Business Council (NIBC) at Abuja.
2.	Shri Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister	28-29 May 2023	To attend the swearing-in ceremony of President of Nigeria Mr Bola Ahmed Tinubu as a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India at Abuja
3.	Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister	21-23 January 2024	To attend 6th Joint Commission Meeting between India-Nigeria in Abuja

Nigeria to India

Sr. no	Nigerian Dignitary	Period	Event
1.	Mr. Geoffrey Onyeama, Minister of Foreign Affairs	March 2023	G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) at New Delhi
2.	Prof. Bolaji Olufunmileyi Owasanoye, Chairman, ICPC	March 2023	G20: 1st Anti-Corruption Working Group Meeting at at Gurugram
3.	Dr. Osagie Ehanire, Minister of Health	23-26 March 2023	To attend One World TB Summit at Varanasi
4.	Mr. Udi Odum, MoS, Environment	9-10 April 2023	To attend inaugural event for International Big Cats Alliance (IBCA) at Mysuru. Nigeria is a founding member of International Big Cats Alliance.
5.	Mr. Ekunmankama Joseph N,	26-28 April	To attend One Earth

	MoS, Health	2023	One Health event in New Delhi. (6th Edition of Advantage Health care – India AHCI 2023).
6.	Amb. Yusuf Tuggar Foreign Affairs Minister	5-10 Sept 2023	G20 Summit: Accompanied President of Nigeria
7.	Dr. Doris Uzoka Anite Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment	5-10 Sept 2023	G20 Summit: Accompanied President of Nigeria
8.	Mr. Wale Edun, Minister of Finance	5-10 Sept 2023	G20 Summit: Accompanied President of Nigeria
9.	Mr. Olatunbosun Tijani Minister of Communication & Digital Economy	5-10 Sept 2023	G20 Summit: Accompanied President of Nigeria
10.	Mr. Abubakar Atiku Bagudu, Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, Senator	5-10 Sept 2023	G20 Summit: Accompanied President of Nigeria
11.	Mr. Abbas Tajudeen, Speaker	13-14 Oct 2023	To attend 9th P20 Summit and G20 Parliamentary Forum organized by the Parliament of India in collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).
12.	Dr. Bello Mohd Matawalle, Minister of State for Defence	09 – 14 Aug 2025	Interaction with RRM and visit to Indian Defence Industries (Delhi & Bengaluru)
13.	Mr. Dunoma Umar Ahmed Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	14-15 May 2026	To represent the Nigerian Foreign Minister in the 12th BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi
14.	Senator Abubakar Kyari CON, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security	12-13 June 2026	To participate in the BRICS Agriculture Ministers' meeting in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
15.	Ambassador Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu, Minister of Foreign Affairs	11-13 Sept 2026	BRICS Summit 2026: Accompanied Vice President of Nigeria
16.	Dr. Jumoke Oduwole, Minister	11-13 Sept 2026	BRICS Summit 2026:

	of Industry, Trade and Investment		Accompanied Vice President of Nigeria
17.	Dr. Bosun Tijani, Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy	11-13 Sept 2026	BRICS Summit 2026: Accompanied Vice President of Nigeria
18.	Mr. Balarabe Abbas Lawal, Minister of Environment	11-13 Sept 2026	BRICS Summit 2026: Accompanied Vice President of Nigeria
19.	Ms.Hajiya Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, Minister of Women Affairs	11-13 Sept 2026	BRICS Summit 2026: Accompanied Vice President of Nigeria
20.	Dr. Bernard Mohammed Doro, Minister of Humanitarian Affairs & Poverty Reduction	11-13 Sept 2026	BRICS Summit 2026: Accompanied Vice President of Nigeria
21.	Dr. Kingsley Tochukwu Udeh, SAN, Minister of Innovation, Science and Technology	11-13 Sept 2026	BRICS Summit 2026: Accompanied Vice President of Nigeria

INSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUES

13. **Foreign Office Consultations (FoC):** The first round of India-Nigeria Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) was held in Abuja in December 2003 on the sidelines of the Commonwealth Summit. The 2nd FoC was held in New Delhi on 29 September 2022.

14. **Joint Commission Meeting (JCM):** The Joint Commission was set up between the two countries in 1979.

JCM Meetings	Year	Place
1st Meeting	1981	New Delhi
2nd Meeting	August 1989	New Delhi
3rd Meeting	March 2000	Abuja
4th Meeting	October 2003	New Delhi
5th Meeting	March 2011	New Delhi
6th Meeting	January 2024	Abuja

15. **Consular Dialogue:**

Consular Dialogue	Year	Place

1st Meeting	September 2019	New Delhi
2nd Meeting	February 2023	Abuja
3rd Meeting	August 2024	New Delhi

16. **Joint Trade Committee (JTC):** India and Nigeria have agreed in 2017 to establish a Joint Trade Committee (JTC) at the level of Commerce Secretary from Indian side and Permanent Secretary (Trade) from Nigerian side to review he ongoing bilateral trade and commercial relations.

Joint Trade Committee	Year	Place
1st Meeting	December 2019	New Delhi
2nd Meeting	April 2024	Abuja

DEFENCE RELATIONS

17. The Defence Cooperation between the Armed Forces of India and Nigeria has been nurtured over a period and military interactions began right earnest after Nigeria's independence in 1960. India helped set up various military institutions including the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA) at Kaduna, the Naval College at Port Harcourt besides other elite military training establishments in Nigeria. Several Nigerian officers have also been trained over the years in Indian military institutions. These include former Nigerian Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Ibrahim Babangida, Muhammudu Buhari and several other top military officers.

18. After signing a bilateral MoU on Defence Cooperation in October 2007, visits at high-level took place and bilateral interaction for defence cooperation has increased over the years. The Armed forces of both the nations have attended military training together, exchange programmes and served in UN Peace Keeping Operations. These exchanges have assisted in strengthening cooperation not only within the Armed forces but also between both the countries. Defence Cooperation is an integral component of strategic partnership between India and Nigeria. Among the areas of cooperation include counter terrorism and counterinsurgency (CT/CI), sea piracy and exchange visits between training institutes.

19. **Joint Defence Coordination Committee (JDCC)**: The JDCC explores avenues to enhance the bilateral Defence Cooperation.

JDCC	Year	Place
1st Meeting	April 2013	New Delhi

2nd Meeting	May 2014	Abuja
3rd Meeting	August 2015	New Delhi
4th Meeting	November 2017	Abuja
5th Meeting	January 2019	New Delhi

20. **Strategic and Counter Terrorism Dialogue**: The first Strategic and Counter-Terrorism Dialogue between the National Security Advisors was held in New Delhi from 04 – 05 March 2021. The Nigerian NSA Mr Nuhu Ribadu visited India for the 2nd India Nigeria Counter Terrorism Dialogue from 04 to 06 Nov 2024.

21. **Visit of INS Tushil**. INS Tushil visited Lagos, Nigeria from 12 to 15 Jan 2025. The ship was on its maiden operational deployment post commissioning in Dec 2024.

22. **Collaboration in Mountain Warfare Training**. A Nigerian Army Scoping Delegation led by Maj Gen Ajose, Deputy Chief of Operations visited the High Altitude Warfare School (HAWS) and the Counter Insurgency Jungle Warfare (CIJW) School in India from 05 to 11 Jul 2026. The focus of the visit was to seek capacity building support for counter terrorism operations in hilly/ mountainous terrain. As an outcome of the visit, a number of training engagements have already commenced.

23. **Navy Staff Talks**. The 3rd Navy to Navy Staff talks between India and Nigeria were held from 18 to 20 Aug 2026. A delegation led by Rear Admiral AV Kujoh visited New Delhi, India for the talks. The talks covered all aspects of Naval cooperation.

24. **Participation in Aero India 2025**. The Nigeria delegation led by the Chief of Air Staff Air Marshall H B Abubakar along with the Chief of Training visited Bengaluru from 10 to 14 Feb 2025.

25. **Inaugural UN TCC Army Chief's Conclave.** Maj Gen Aligbe Kevin, Commander, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and Maj Gen Adedoja Ademola, Commandant Nigerian Armed Forces Leadership and Peace Keeping Centre also represented the Nigerian Army in the inaugural UN TCC Army Chief's Conclave in Delhi from 13 to 17 Oct 25.

26. **IFR 2026 and MILAN 2026.** Rear Admiral Abdulahamid Baba-inna, Naval Secretary, Nigerian Navy and Commodore AA Abu participated in the event in Vishakapatnam from 15 to 20 Feb 2026.

27. **Participation in Exercise Tarang Shakti.** A team of six officers of the Nigerian Air Force participated in Exercise Tarang Shakti 2026 at Jodhpur as observers from 28 Sep to 11 Oct 2026.

28. **Deployment of Indian Army Mobile Training Team (IAMTT).** An IAMTT comprising of five personnel has been deployed to Nigeria for conduct of 81mm Mortar Training from 20 Sep to 17 Dec 2026.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT RELATIONS

29. In the year 2025, among the top 5 export destinations of Nigeria, India is at 2nd place after Netherlands and at 4 th place in import after China, US and Netherlands. The Bilateral trade volume between Nigeria and India has fallen from US$ 14.95 billion in 2021-22 to US$ 7.13 billion in 2024-25. This is mainly because of decrease in the volume of oil purchased from Nigeria. The fall in quantum of oil purchase is also attributable to non-nomination of cargo from Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) which had signed a G2G term contract for supply with Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). Now from 2025-26 the trade data shows upward momentum to 9 billion.

30. **India-Nigeria Bilateral Trade Statistics** (Value in **US$ million**)

India's	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Exports	3,134.89	4,663.17	5,159.44	3,663.49	2,945.50	3132.34
Imports	5,672.38	10,291.58	6,692.65	4,229.81	4,192.22	5895.84
Trade	8,807.27	14,954.75	11,852.09	7,893.30	7,132.72	9028.18

Source: Department of Commerce Website(DGCIS)

31. During 2025-26, the High Commission participated/organized 18 business events, trade shows, road shows, B2B Meetings and other Meetings (CII, ODOP, Defense, Trade Fairs et al). High Commission organized an **India Trade Expo** to showcase the presence of over **200 India companies** in Nigeria. Besides, the High Commission has been regularly providing in-depth sectoral analysis of economic and industrial data of Nigeria to provide an edge to policy makers and companies for making judicious business decisions and enhancing of exports to Nigeria.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

32. India is emerging as a development partner of Nigeria in two fronts – by offering developmental assistance through concessional loans and by offering capacity building training program. Government of India, in total extended Lines of Credit(LoC) worth US$ 395.44 million to Republic of Nigeria. Out of the total LoC granted to Nigeria, only US$ 60 million for project of gas turbine in Cross River State and solar project in Kaduna State of Nigeria have finalised.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES

33. **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC):** Since 1964, India has been supporting Nigeria's efforts in capacity building under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Program. Every year India offers about 250 civilian and 150 defense training slots under ITEC/e-ITEC to Nigeria.

34. **Training Program under the 03rd India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III):** Consequent to the third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) that was held in New Delhi in October 2015, India has been offering additional training program to Nigeria in diverse subjects ranging from agriculture, health, hydropower, water resources, etc. In the year 2018-19, about 74 Nigerians have been trained under IAFS-III Program in premier Indian institutions.

EDUCATION:

35. India has been a destination for Nigerian students for pursuing higher education since 1955. Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR)'s instituted scholarship program which is fully funded by it, became the main vehicle for Nigerian students to study in India since 1960s. The Indian educational institutions system became popular for its quality and cost-effective education. Large number of Nigerian students are studying in various Indian universities.

36. **ICCR Africa Scholarship Scheme:** Every year, the Indian Council of Cultural relations ICCR offered around 30 fully funded scholarships under the "ICCR Africa Scholarship Scheme" for Nigerian nationals to pursue under-graduate, post-graduate and higher courses in India. For 2026-27 the slots have been increased to 40.

37. **C.V Raman International Fellowships:** Nigerian nationals are regularly availing the C. V. Raman International Fellowships offered by Government of India in doctoral and post-doctoral research training.

38. **Hindi Scholarship**: Nigerian nationals are regularly attending year-long Hindi classes at Central Institute of Hindi in Agra.

39. **AYUSH Scholarship:** Nigerian Students are regularly availing AYUSH Scholarship by ICCR.

40. **Study In India Program (SII)**: Every year thousands of Nigerian students get admitted in various Indian universities under Study in India (SII) program.

41. **e-Vidya Bharati and e-Arogya Bharati MoU**: Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria and Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) signed the e-VBAB MoU in Sep 2021. Under this MoU, India has offered free tele-education to 15000 students and free tele-medicine to 1000 doctors and paramedics. For Academic year 2022, iLearn portal was opened for Nigerian students for online courses and around 11500 students applied for scholarships. Total 4830 Nigerian students got admitted in various Universities in India. In 2023, around 450 Nigerian students got admitted in various Universities in India.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY:

42. An MoU on cooperation in outer space was signed between India and Nigeria on 13 august 2020 in Abuja. The signing ceremony was witnessed online by MoS (EA) Mr. V. Muraleedharan from India and Minister of Science & Technology of Nigeria, Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu from Nigeria. The MoU envisages cooperation in applications in agriculture, environment and mining, micro and mini satellites, and capacity building.

43. **COVID-19:** India's donation of 7.8 tons-consignment of essential medicines, including HCQS and antibiotics, to Nigeria, on 17 July 2020. On 2 March 2021, Government of India has supplied a consignment of 3.92 million doses of Covishield vaccine from the Serum Institute of India (SII), under the Covax scheme of GAVI to Nigeria. The Covishield vaccine is the first Covid-19 vaccine approved by NAFDAC. In addition, India also gifted 100,000 doses of Covishield vaccines to Nigeria on 26 March 21. In Jan 2022, India exported additional 5.742 million doses of Covishield vaccines to Nigeria un-der the Covax scheme. Both countries have approved an Air Transport/Bubble arrangement in September 2020.

CULTURAL RELATIONS:

44. **Visit of ICCR Cultural Troupes:** As per records available, recent ICCR Indian Dance troupes that visited and performed in Nigeria include Kathak group led by Ms. Surabhi Singh (27 Jan-3 Feb 2021), Haryana Folk Dance Troupe (November 2018), Bastar Band Dance Troupe from Chhattisgarh (2-14 April 2019), a Manipuri Dance Group (21-26 November 2019), Odyssey Dance Troupe Kaishiki Dance Academy (23-29 January 2020) and Baba Gorenath Gotipua Dance Association (01-06 November 2021).

45. **Visit of Nigerian Cultural Troupes to India:** A 10 members Afri Theater Artist group participated in second National Tribal Festival in Raipur, Chhattisgarh (28-31 October 2021). In February 2026, a 20 member Nigerian cultural troupe participated in the 39th edition of Surajkund Craft Mela. Nigeria has also participated in the previous four editions of the Mela. The troupes are jointly sponsored by MEA and the Government of Haryana. Recently, Nigerian artists participated in activities on the sidelines of IAFS IV and BRICS Summit in New Delhi in 2026.

46. **NRI/PIO Community:** Indian community in Nigeria is estimated to be 60,000 including Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) card holders. The diaspora is very active and regularly organises Indian festivals/events. The Mission celebrated Holi and the International Women's Day (IWD) in March. The 12th International Day of Yoga (IDY) was celebrated on 22 June with over 2000 participants. The Mission also participated in the International Arts and Crafts (INAC) Expo organized by National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC), Abuja. The Mission organised a befitting event with large participation to commemorate "Diwali goes Global" – Diwali's inscription on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list in December 2025.

There is a CBSE affiliated Indian Language School (ILS) in Lagos with about 1400 students. Indian Culture Association (ICAs) are present in prominent cities of Nigeria including Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Port Harcourt and Ibadan. In January 2021, the Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award (PBSA) was awarded to Indian Cultural Association (ICA), Lagos. This is the first ever award for any individual or organization in Nigeria.

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September 2026