

Zambia and India seek more bilateral trade

August 22, 2019



President Edgar Lungu with India's President Shri Ram Nath Kovind and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Zambia and India have called for increase and deepening of bilateral trade which stood at 833 million United States dollars in 2018/2019 and was largely dominated by exports from Zambia.

The two countries have stressed the need to expand the basket of traded items, adding that trade and investment cooperation should be expanded and deepened, by encouraging public and private companies to explore trade and investment opportunities, as well as improve the ease of doing business in their respective countries.

President Lungu and President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind acknowledged the steady inflow of Indian private investment into Zambia, in the areas of mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and pharmaceuticals, and agriculture.

The two Heads of State said this when they held bilateral talks, at the ongoing State Visit to India where President Lungu was accorded a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

In a Press statement issued to ZANIS in Lusaka today by President Lungu's Press Aide Isaac Chipampe, the two leaders praised the continued existence of cordial and mutual relations existing between the two countries.

President Kovind warmly recalled his fruitful visit to Zambia in April 2018 and said he was satisfied with the position and progress of the agreements signed, and the decisions reached by the two countries during the said period.

President Lungu also held talks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and reaffirmed the mutual desire to further strengthen economic, commercial, health, infrastructure, capacity building and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

The President further thanked the Indian government for supporting Zambia's developmental programmes in energy, health, infrastructure, trade, as well as contributions towards capacity building to the country's Defense Forces, through the MoU signed on Defense cooperation.

Six MoU's were signed on cooperation, which include Geology and Mineral Resources, Health and Medicine, Art & Culture, Diplomacy and International Studies, Elections and Defense Cooperation as well as an MoU for Zambia's participation in tele-education and telemedicine through the e-VBAB Network Project.

The Government of India also announced its support to set up an SME Incubation Centre, with a view to promote the development of Small and Medium enterprises in Zambia.

In addition, the Government of India announced grants for 100 Solar Irrigation pumps to help boost agriculture in Zambia, 1,000 metric tons of rice and 100 metric tons of milk powder as humanitarian assistance and 5 Fire tenders for deployment at the Zambia Air force bases.

President Lungu thanked the Government of India for the announcements and donations of medicines and medical equipment worth 3 million United States dollars delivered to Zambia, which were pledged during President Kovind's state visit to Zambia last year.

The Zambian Head of State also welcomed the donation of 100,000 dollars to the Mahatma Gandhi Primary School, and announced that as a show of appreciation and in honour of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, the Zambian Government would welcome the installation of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the school.

The two governments discussed the positive impact of cooperation in the Health Sector and expressed satisfaction over the ongoing construction of 650 health posts in Zambia and the ongoing implementation of the Lusaka

City Roads Decongestion Project, funded by the Indian Government under the Buyers Credit scheme of Exim Bank of India.

Meanwhile the Zambian and Indian governments further agreed to cement cultural interactions between the two people and intensify cooperation at the United Nations to address current global challenges such as climate change, peace, security, and sustainable development as well as the reform of the global body.

During the State Visit, President Lungu also visited an agro-business and food processing unit in the NCR region.

President Lungu is accompanied to India by a high level delegation comprising Ministers for Foreign Affairs Joseph Malanji, Presidential Affairs, Freedom Sikazwe, Commerce, Trade and Industry, Christopher Yaluma, Mines and Minerals Development Richard Musukwa, Minister in the Office of the Vice President Olipa Phiri, and Senior Government Officials.

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