

Ethiopian Foreign Minister Visit: India must play the card for Economic Diplomacy

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen Hassen was on a 4-day official visit to India from February 16-19, 2021 during which he held talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan on a range of bilateral and global issues of mutual interest.

This is the first by Demeke as Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ethiopia. The new Chancery and Residence at Ethiopian Embassy in New Delhi was inaugurated on Thursday in the presence of India's External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar. On Friday, India and Ethiopia have signed several agreements in the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Demeke Mekonnen Hassen India's External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar. EAM Jaishankar then tweeted that he feels pleasure joining Ethiopian DPM and FM Demeke Hassen at the inauguration of their new Chancery complex on Shantipath which is India's main diplomatic avenue. He added that it was a clear testament to the priority that India's foreign policy accords to Ethiopia.

Welcomed DPM&FM [@DemekeHasen](#) of Ethiopia. Useful & productive discussions on a range of bilateral & regional issues. Agreed to expand our bilateral agenda esp defence, economic, S&T, digital & cultural cooperation. Appreciated his detailed briefing on the current situation in the region pic.twitter.com/YYDtnbIHdU

— Dr. S. Jaishankar (@DrSJaishankar) [February 19, 2021](#)

On Friday, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Hassen met his counterpart EAM Jaishankar and held talks on various bilateral and global issues of shared interest. Ethiopia is an African nation and the 2nd most populous country in the region following Nigeria. Ethiopia is also the fastest-growing economy in the region. Nonetheless, it's also one of the poorest nations with a per capita income of \$850. On Wednesday, External Affairs Minister for States V Muraleedharan said that while Indian investors have "invested strongly" in Ethiopia and trade & economic relations between the two countries are booming still there's huge scope to expand and diversify trade in the bilateral relationships through "development partnership".

Speaking at the [India-Ethiopia Business Forum](#), V Murleedharan said noted that Ethiopia is the second-most populous African country, which has pushed the economy to a double-digit

growth rate for over 15 years together with its highly-educated, skilled populace and sound economic policies, makes it an attractive investment destination for Indian entrepreneurs. Focusing on expanding the economic collaboration between India and Ethiopia, the minister highlighted that despite the Covid-19 global pandemic, Indian businessmen have continued to look out for investment opportunities in the African country and “during the past year, India has had 35 new Indian investments in Ethiopia.” The Minister continued to say the state visit by the Ethiopian deputy PM will deepen ties inevitably leading to a robust and long-lasting relationship and India would continue to be a partner in the country’s growth story.

While Addressing Indian entrepreneurs at the India-Ethiopia Business Forum organised by The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) Ethiopian deputy PM Mekonnen said that bilateral trade ties between India and Ethiopia reached \$1.23 billion. Over the years, he noted that the exportable goods to Ethiopia from India have shown exponential growth, although Ethiopia’s export to India remained as low as was before. Speaking at the forum Ethiopian deputy PM Invited Indian businesses and assured facilitation from his government for prospective Indian investments.

Witnessed signing of two agreements on visa facilitation and leather technology.
pic.twitter.com/uRGxixIJqt

— Dr. S. Jaishankar (@DrSJaishankar) [February 19, 2021](#)

The current high-level visit by Ethiopia’s Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen is important considering India’s long historic and cultural ties along with the rising economic and commercial linkages with this strategically important country in the Horn of Africa. This also demonstrates the priority India attaches to Ethiopia. Back in 2017, Indian President Ram Nath Kovind for his maiden visit chosen Africa clubbing Djibouti and Ethiopia. This high-level was the first visit by an Indian president to Addis Ababa in 45 years since President V.V. Giri’s visit in 1972. However, India will have to proactively pursue its economic diplomacy with Addis Ababa for building lasting ties and keeping up the momentum in the bilateral relationship. There is immense scope for cooperation in bilateral relations for mutual benefit and to strengthen ties through continuous economic partnerships and diplomacy.

Ethiopian Foreign Minister Visit: India must play the card for Economic Diplomacy



The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Kootneeti Team

Facebook Comments