

**High Commission of India, Pretoria**  
**[Concurrently accredited to the Kingdom of Lesotho]**

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**Brief on India - Lesotho Relations**

India and Lesotho established diplomatic relations on June 8, 1971. Initially, India's diplomatic representation to Lesotho was handled by its High Commission in Botswana and since 1996 it has been concurrently accredited to the High Commission in Pretoria, South Africa.

Following the visit of Prime Minister Mosisili to India in August 2003, Lesotho opened a resident Mission in New Delhi in 2005.

In October 2015, PM Mosisili visited India for attending the 3<sup>rd</sup> IAFS in New Delhi and met PM Modi during the sidelines of the summit.

**Recent Interactions:**

**From Lesotho**

A high level delegation led by Mr. Limpho Tau, Minister in PMO, responsible for defence and security attended Aero-India 2025 at Bengaluru and also held a bilateral meeting with Hon'ble Defence Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Mr. Lejone Mpotjoana, participated in the virtual Foreign Ministers' Session-I 'Charting a unique paradigm for Global South'. The Principal Secretary at the Ministry of Information, Communications, Science, Technology and Innovation, Mr. Kanono Leronti Ramashamole attended the session on 'DPis for Development – A Global South Approach' at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August 2024.

Minister of Environment and Forests, Mr. Letsema Adonts attended the virtual Environment Ministers' Session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Voice of Global South Summit which was chaired by Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change of India on 17 November 2023.

**From India**

Shri Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for External Affairs and Textiles [MoS(PM)] paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho on 21-22 July 2025. The visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho was the first Ministerial visit after a gap of 10 years following the first-ever Ministerial visit from India to Lesotho in July 2015. In Lesotho, Hon'ble Minister of State (MoS-PM) paid a courtesy call on His Majesty King Letsie III, and the Right Honourable Mr. Samuel Matekane, Prime Minister of Kingdom of Lesotho. The Hon'ble MoS also held bilateral meetings with the Mr. Mpotjoane Lejone, Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Ms. Nthati Moorosi, Hon Minister of Information, Communications, Science, Technology & Innovation, Dr. Ntoi Rapapa, Hon. Minister of Education & Training, and Mr. Ts'eliso Mokhosi, Hon. Minister of Labour and Employment during his visit in Maseru.

Hon'ble Minister of State (IC) Culture, Tourism & MoS for Civil Aviation, Dr. Mahesh Sharma visited Lesotho on 9 July 2015 as Special Envoy of Hon'ble Prime Minister to deliver invitations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> India-Africa Forum Summit to the leadership of the Government of Lesotho. During the visit, Minister met with the Prime Minister of Lesotho, Dr. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Mr. Tlohang Sekhamane.

**Joint Bilateral Cooperation Commission Meeting (JBCC)**

The Agreement establishing the Joint Commission was signed in March 2004. First session of JBCC was held in New Delhi in March 2009. The fourth meeting of the JBCC was held in Lesotho on 1 October 2019. The 5<sup>th</sup> round of Joint Bilateral Commission for Cooperation was held in Maseru, Lesotho on 2 August 2023.

## **Defence**

Under India Lesotho defence cooperation, Indian Army Training Team was established in Lesotho in 2001 and organized training programmes for Lesotho Defence Force till 2017. Currently Lesotho forces are trained under ITEC programme in various prestigious defence institutions in India.

## **Agreements / MOUs**

(i) Agreement on exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports was signed between two nations in December 2020.

(ii) An MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Sharing Successful Digital Solutions Implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformation was signed between India and Lesotho on 21 July 2025 in Maseru during the visit of Hon'ble MoS (PM).

## **India's Assistance and capacity building**

On 7 April 2025, 1000 metric tonnes of Rice and 1000 metric tonnes of Sorghum were formally donated by India to Lesotho as a gesture of goodwill and friendship between the two countries and to mitigate the devastating effect of food shortages caused by famine and other acts of nature.

An India-Lesotho Centre for Advanced Education in Information Technology has been set up by India at Lerotholi Polytechnic, Maseru on 29 November 2017, which is a fully funded Government of India project.

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In 2004, LOC of US\$ 5 million was provided to Lesotho for procurement of agricultural equipment from India. The project got completed in 2007.

In 2010, LOC of US\$ 4.7 million was provided for setting up of Vocational Training Centres in Lesotho. The project got completed in 2024.

## **Skill Development:**

(i) For the Financial Year 2025-26, 70 ITEC Slots were offered to Lesotho out of which 51 seats were utilised. 08 participants from Lesotho attended the Special Training Programme For Yoga Trainers in 05-31 January 2026 organised by Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Bengaluru.

(ii) For the Financial Year 2025-26, 35 ICCR scholarships were offered to Lesotho nationals which were completely utilised. ICCR scholarships for Lesotho nationals have been increased from 35 to 40.

## **Trade & Economic Cooperation**

The bilateral trade between the two countries is minimal. India's import from Lesotho for 2024-25 is US\$ 0.98 million. Major item of Indian imports include iron and steel, oil and seeds, fruits, misc.

grains. However, the figure for Indian exports for 2024-25 is US\$ 10.30 million. Major item of Indian exports include pharmaceuticals, rubber, plastic and machinery.

The Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme announced by the Prime Minister at the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in April 2008 has been offered and accepted by Lesotho.

### **Indian Community**

There are about 4000 Indian expatriates and PIOs in Lesotho working as teachers, accountants and other professionals. Some of them are engaged in business as well. The community has a reasonably high economic profile in the country. There is an Indian Association which organises periodic functions and has hosted several cultural events performed by ICCR troupes.

### **Culture**

The IDY 2025 Yoga event celebrated at the Manthabiseng Convention Centre on 15th June in Maseru, Lesotho. The Yoga event was attended by more than 400 people of nationalities, students, Yoga practitioners and members of Indian community. The Hon. Minister of Labour & Employment H.E. Tseliso Mokhsi, Kingdom of Lesotho attended the IDY 2025 Celebration as the Chief Guest. Hon. Minister highlighted the importance of Yoga in our daily life and appreciated this ancient gift of India to the world. The Representatives from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and from other Ministries/Departments also attended the IDY 2025 event.

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**May 2026**