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India and Mali Hold Inaugural India–Mali Forum for Promotion of Exports to Deepen Bilateral Trade and Investment Cooperation

India–Mali Bilateral Trade Surpasses US$326 Million in FY 2025–26, Registers 55 Per Cent Growth India and Mali Focus on Cotton, Mining, Energy, Pharmaceuticals and Social Infrastructure to Deepen Bilateral Economic Engagement Mali Announces Investment Forum in December 2026

In a significant step towards strengthening bilateral economic ties, India and Mali institutionalised their growing commercial partnership through the inaugural India–Mali Forum for the Promotion of Exports, setting the stage for deeper trade and investment cooperation between the two countries.

The two-day Forum, held in Bamako under the theme "Reinforcing Trade and Strategic Partnerships", was presided over by the Prime Minister of the Transition Government of Mali, H.E. Major General Abdoulaye Maïga. It was jointly organised by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Mali, the Embassy of India in Bamako and the Malian Agency for the Promotion of Exports (APEX-Mali). The Forum brought together senior officials from both governments and around 30 Indian business leaders. The Indian delegation was led by Joint Secretary (FT-Africa), Department of Commerce, Government of India, Shri Amit Kumar. The Mission was represented throughout by H.E. Dr. N. Nandakumar, Ambassador of India to Mali.

India and Mali have witnessed robust growth in bilateral trade, which surpassed US$326.61 million in FY 2025–26, registering a 55 per cent increase over the previous financial year. Mali's principal exports to India include raw cotton, finished leather, cashew, lead, gum arabic and sesame, while India's major exports comprise pharmaceuticals, cotton fabrics, two- and three-wheelers, and bicycles. India's Duty-Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme has been the primary catalyst in strengthening bilateral trade. Against Mali's global exports of approximately US$4 billion, untapped export potential in the Indian market is estimated at nearly US$3.96 billion, signalling substantial room for growth.

Following the inaugural session and a visit to the Indian and Malian exhibition stands, featuring Sonalika tractors and vehicles manufactured by Mahindra and Tata Motors, the delegations participated in an intensive series of Business-to-Business (B2B), Business-to-Government (B2G) and Government-to-Government (G2G) matchmaking meetings. The discussions covered renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, textiles, automotive manufacturing and mining, with the objective of converting business opportunities into commercial partnerships and Memorandums of Understanding.

On the second day, the Indian delegation met the Minister of Industry and Trade of Mali, Mr. Moussa Alassane Diallo. APEX-Mali also presented "Ready-Made Business Plans" for immediate investment opportunities. The delegation later called on the Prime Minister of the Transition Government of Mali.

Both sides identified cotton and textiles, mining and energy, agro-industry and shea processing, pharmaceuticals, and social infrastructure, including health and education, as priority sectors for expanding bilateral cooperation. Mali expressed strong interest in India's support for digitising its Certificate of Origin system and in the prompt registration of approved Indian pharmaceutical products. The Indian side sought reconsideration of the shea-nut export ban and reaffirmed the importance of protecting Indian nationals and investments.

The Forum was framed as the foundation of a long-term partnership. It concluded with Mali reaffirming its commitment to securing the business environment and positioning itself as a strategic investment hub for West Africa under its Vision Mali 2063 roadmap. As a concrete next step, Mali announced a dedicated investment forum to be held on 3–4 December 2026, at which additional bankable projects will be made available to international investors.

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