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India and Rwanda Hold First Joint Trade Committee Meeting to Deepen Bilateral Trade and Investment Cooperation

India, Rwanda Commit to Expanding Bilateral Trade and Strengthening Business-to-Business Engagement India and Rwanda Identify Priority Sectors for Cooperation in Critical Minerals, Healthcare and Digital Technologies

The First Session of the India–Rwanda Joint Trade Committee (JTC) was held in New Delhi on 30 and 31 July 2026. The Indian delegation was led by Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Shri Amit Kumar, while the Rwandan delegation was led by Director General, Asia, Pacific and Middle East Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Republic of Rwanda, Mr. Virgile Rwanyagatare.

Delivering the inaugural address, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Shri Yashvir Singh, said the inaugural Session establishes a permanent, structured and periodic apex mechanism to review bilateral commerce, diversify the trade basket, expand two-way investment and address logistical impediments.

Both sides reviewed the current state of bilateral trade in goods and services. India's principal exports to Rwanda include drug formulations and biologicals, two- and three-wheelers, industrial and electrical machinery, oil meals, and iron and steel products, while Rwanda's exports to India comprise lead, spices, essential oils, copper, precious and semi-precious stones, processed agricultural products and minerals. Both sides agreed to make concerted efforts to diversify the bilateral trade basket, facilitate business-to-business engagement and address market access issues.

India highlighted the potential to expand exports of heavy engineering goods, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, refined petroleum products, textiles, marine products, plastics, sports goods and toys, gems and jewellery, and scientific instruments. It was noted that India remains Rwanda's largest source of pharmaceutical imports, accounting for about 24.5 per cent of the country's pharmaceutical imports. Rwanda identified chillies, macadamia, French beans, avocados, essential oils, tea, coffee, other horticultural products, minerals and precious stones as priority exports to India. The two sides also discussed cooperation on harmonisation of standards, including capacity building between the Bureau of Indian Standards and the Rwanda Standards Board.

On investment, Rwanda noted that India is its second largest foreign investor as of 2025 and highlighted opportunities in mining, agro-processing, affordable housing, information and communication technology, manufacturing, healthcare, tourism and financial services. Both sides designated Invest India and the Rwanda Development Board as investment focal points under the JTC framework and agreed to exchange calendars of trade fairs, business forums and Buyer-Seller Meets. Rwanda also highlighted its strategic location as a gateway to the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), offering Indian businesses access to a wider regional market.

The two sides identified several priority areas for sectoral cooperation. In critical minerals, India expressed interest in strengthening collaboration on Rwanda's tin, tungsten and tantalum resources, including institutional cooperation between the Geological Survey of India and the Rwanda Mines, Petroleum and Gas Board. In pharmaceuticals and healthcare, both sides noted that the Memorandum of Understanding between the health authorities of the two countries is at an advanced stage of finalisation for signature. India also proposed recognition of the Indian Pharmacopoeia and expanded cooperation in traditional medicine.

The discussions also covered cooperation in agriculture and agro-processing, including market access for avocados; textiles and leather; green mobility; digital public infrastructure; fintech and cybersecurity; and renewable energy. India offered continued capacity building support through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme, the Study in India initiative and the Skill India Mission, including support for strengthening Rwanda's Technical and Vocational Education and Training ecosystem.

The discussions were held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere. Commerce Secretary Shri Rajesh Agrawal congratulated both delegations on advancing the bilateral commercial partnership and emphasised the need for close monitoring and time-bound implementation of the outcomes recorded in the Agreed Minutes.

The Agreed Minutes were signed in New Delhi on 31 July 2026. Both sides agreed to hold the Second Session of the India–Rwanda Joint Trade Committee in Rwanda after one year on a mutually convenient date through diplomatic channels.

 

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