

# India's Role in the Post-War Reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of Congo

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## **Abstract**

*The end of the Second Congo War in 2003 brought the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in ruins. It affected almost everyone, left the country with 5.4 million deaths, 3.4 people displaced, destroyed infrastructure and property, deteriorated economy. Once the country returns to almost peace, it needed to rebuild, but, the task of rebuilding the country by itself became a huge task and almost impossible without external help. In regard to this, India has lent a helping hand especially in six main areas: agriculture, education, transport and communication, energy sources, industry and mining. These areas are crucial for the development of DRC.*

The Democratic Republic of Congo is one of richest in natural and mineral resources. However, long period of conflict, devastating civil war brought the country in ruins. Today it is one of the poorest ten countries in the world. When the war came to an end in 2003 it left 5.4 million deaths, 3.4 people displaced. Though India closed its diplomatic mission in October 2003 on economic and security considerations, it reopened its mission in 2006. Since then India has prioritised six areas in its crucial programme of reconstruction. They were: (i) agriculture, (ii) education, (iii) transport and communication, (iv) energy sources, (v) industry, and (vi) mining.

## **Agriculture**

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is blessed with great agricultural potential. It is said that it has the potential to become the

breadbasket of the entire continent. With 80 million hectares of arable land, it used only 10 per cent. Its potential has barely been tapped and DRC is unable to feed its own people. Moreover, agricultural production has fallen 40 per cent since 1990<sup>1</sup> because of the wars and conflicts (1996-2003) in the country. For three consecutive years i.e. from 2009 to 2011 the Global Hunger Index (GHI) has tagged it as the hungriest country in the world. Due to shortage of food, animal farms were looted and animals, main source of protein, were stolen including 'bushmeat' primates supplemented protein shortage.<sup>2</sup>

In regard to this, India has helped DRC in tapping water resources and in the introduction of modern technology in the field of agriculture by using tractors to ensure food security. These tractors are imported from India. In 2006 -2007, India has donated sixty 'Sonalika tractors' with accessories and spares worth US\$0.66 million.<sup>3</sup>

Next to Sonalika tractors, India's Mahindra and Mahindra Tractors have a hold in the DRC, now, after successful launching of its assembly lines in four African Countries i.e. Nigeria, Chad, Mali and Gambia.<sup>4</sup> Known for its fuel efficiency, reliability, and the affordable market price, Mahindra and Mahindra Tractors are considered suitable in Africa. Moreover, the availability of spare parts proved to be a big advantage. Also, the company provides necessary service training to the locales to handle them effectively and to

repair. This can also be used as a means of transportation for short distances.

### **Education**

Education is vital in the process of nation-building. It has been hard hit by the seven years of war. Realising the importance of education, the Government of the DRC, in 2010 announced primary education free and compulsory. Still, according to the findings of a report by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, seven million children remained illiterate, the main reason being the fear of forced recruitment as child soldiers as schools supplied the largest number of their strength. All armed rebels are known to have used child soldiers in the wars.<sup>5</sup> And schools are one of the main centres from where these children are abducted and enslaved by these groups.<sup>6</sup> In addition, poor conditions of the parents and the problem of displacement due to wars are also some of the other main reasons for the lack of education in DRC. Today many organisations have come forward like United Nations, International Rescue Committee (IRC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Development for International Development (DFID), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) etc. However, out of the targeted amount only 8 per cent could be raised. What a pathetic situation?<sup>7</sup>

Here, in the field of education, India has been providing scholarships and training programmes to train its manpower to man the education sector better. In 2012-2013 thirteen ICCR scholarships were utilised and fourteen during 2013-2014 which have been provided by the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme, Africa Scholarship Scheme and under Cultural Exchange Programme. India also offered to set up one IT Centre of Excellence and three working stations under the Hole-in-the-Wall Project, in DRC and also train Congolese women in solar electrification and water

harvesting courses in the Barefoot College, Rajasthan after a Cultural Cooperation Agreement was signed<sup>8</sup>.

### **Transport and communication**

DRC faces serious transport problem caused by its terrain and climate. Moreover, internal conflict, corruption, mismanagement aggravates the situation. Out of all the other facilities, inland waterways have been the most used means of transport of the country as most of the rivers are navigable. Roads and highways which provide another means of transport are in bad shape. In fact, many of the roads are mere tracks. One important fact is that most of the navigable sections are connected by roads. Roads consist mostly unpaved. Transport infrastructure is also facing more or less the same faith. During the Second Congo War (1998-2003) most of the vehicles were destroyed. Wikipedia about transport in the DRC writes, "The First and Second Congo Wars saw great destruction of transport infrastructure from which the country has not yet recovered. Many vehicles were destroyed or commandeered by militias, especially in the north and east of the country, and the fuel supply system was also badly affected".<sup>9</sup> In short, transport is almost non-existent and traffic is scarce even where roads are in good condition.

In view of this, DRC's Vice- President Jean Pierre Bemba while calling on the Vice-President of India during his visit to India from 2-4 March 2005 expressed for Indian expertise and cooperation in (i) urban transportation, (ii) education, and (iii) health.<sup>10</sup> India responding to his desire signed an LOC in August 2005 by Chairman and Managing Director of India's Exim Bank T.C. Venkat Subramaniam and DRC's ambassador to India Balumuene Nkuda Francois, at the behest of the Government of India in August 2005. The LOC extended a line of credit of US \$ 33.5 million to the DRC for four projects. One of

them was the acquisition of buses of the value of US \$ 12.5 million.<sup>11</sup> India delivered 250 Tata buses in March 2006 along with a gift of 60 tractors.<sup>12</sup>

Regarding railways India has not done much in the DRC. During the visit of Remi Henri Kuseyo Gatange, DRC Minister of Transport and Means of Communication to India from 13-17 August 2007, he held meeting with India's Railway Minister, held discussions with officials from Rail India Technical Economic Services Railway (RITES) Board.<sup>13</sup> After two years, India's Minister of State for External Affairs SM Krishna, during the meeting with his DRC counterpart Mr. Alexis Thambwe Mwamba, Minister of Foreign Affairs who visited India from 27-30 October 2009 announced a line of Credit of US \$ 263 million for 3 projects including a US \$ 50 million Kinshasa City Urban Railway System Rehabilitation.<sup>14</sup>

Another key area is communication. The telecommunication system in the DRC is the least developed in the region and is extremely unreliable. Most public offices do not have phone lines, and the few that exist either need upgrading or are not operational at all. A barely adequate wire and microwave radio relay service exists in and between urban centres, using a domestic satellite system with 14 earth stations.

International communications are achieved using one Intelsat satellite earth station (Indian Ocean). Cellular phones are being used extensively. Three cellular phone companies share the market, namely, Telecel Corporation, Comcel and Transglobal Telecom. In 2002, there were 10,000 main lines were in use and 1 million mobile cellular subscribers in the year 2003. With respect to Internet services there are 153 Internet hosts (2003) and 50,000 internet users (2002). The postal system is almost non-existent.<sup>15</sup>

Three telecommunication companies operate in the DRC including India's Bharti Airtel DRC. The other two are Congo China Telecommunications (CCT) and Vodacom. However, these two telecommunication companies are far behind Bharti Airtel DRC.

Established as Bharti Tele-Ventures Ltd in 1995 by Sunil Bharti Mittal, now called Bharti Airtel Limited is one of the most successful Indian multinational corporations in Africa. Bharti Airtel Asia successfully launched its operation starting in India in 1995, Sri Lanka in 2009 and Bangladesh in January 2010. In June 2010 it acquired Zain Africa BV mobile services which used to operate in African 15 countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. By the time of its acquisition Zain Africa had a total customer base of over 42 million after signing an agreement with Zain Africa with an asset valuation of US \$ 10.7 billion at the time of its acquisition. With this acquisition, Bharti Airtel became the world's fifth largest wireless company with operations across 18 countries. It was further expected to expand covering 3 more countries: Seychelles, Jersey, and Guernsey. It thus truly became global. The company network will now cover over 1.8 billion people - the second largest population coverage among telecommunication companies globally. It had over 200 million customers (November 2010) across its operations, including 50 million in Africa of which 7 million subscribers are from DRC alone.<sup>16</sup>

Bharti Airtel decided to invest US \$ 400 million in each operation in DRC by mid 2012. Mobile phone network coverage is relatively extensive in the DRC. Airtel first identified 6 towns with population of more

than 100,000 and 238 with 50,000 thousand or more. It operated in partnership with IBM Sweden's Ericsson and China's Huawei technologies. Bharti Airtel operations in Africa are headquartered in Nairobi. Only one Indian is the Chief Executive Officer in one country others are held by African nationalities.<sup>17</sup> Sunil Bharti Mittal, Chairman and Managing Director made a statement on 30 March 2010 in New Delhi before formalities of the acquisition of Zain Africa were finalised. He said that Africa was the 'continent of hope and opportunity'.<sup>18</sup> Continuing his address he promised to make communication affordable, to meet emerging needs of customers with innovation. It offers mobile voice and data services, fixed line, high speed broadband, IPTV, DTH, turnkey telecom solutions for enterprises and national and international long distance services to carriers. Today it stands for affordability, innovation and community connectivity.

Bharti Airtel has also undertaken social programmes, a commendable mission not only in DRC but all over Africa. Its social programmes include 'three supports', which are incorporated under the sub heading of education:

- (i) Support for Disability;
- (ii) Support campaign for screening Kidney and other diseases; and
- (iii) Support for adopted schools in Africa.

Regarding the first programme of support of the disabilities, it came to the assistance of the NGO known as Collective for the Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (COREPH) in the town of Ndjili east of Kinshasa. The NGO stood for stigmatised, frustrated, marginalised, abandoned and desperate handicaps. Airtel supported the NGO and 'committed to contribute sustainably to improve their living conditions of these vulnerable people'.<sup>19</sup>

Secondly, it also supported the campaign for screening of Kidney Diseases in collaboration with the Department of Nephrology, University of Kinshasa, the prevention campaign and early detection, totally voluntary and free of diseases related to the kidney: renal failure, diabetes mellitus, hypertension and other non-communicable diseases. It spent thousands of dollars to help hundreds of Congolese including children to get tested for the above diseases, a statement of the company said.<sup>20</sup>

Thirdly, it took up another support programme for education in all the African countries where it operates. The Airtel ONE8 initiative a vocal collaboration between nine artists-one international and eight African who created the hit song 'Hands across the world' is one popular programme. The artists include R'n'B star R.Kelly and eight of Africa's biggest selling music stars: 2Face (Nigeria), Amani (Kenya), 4X4 (Ghana), Movaizhalene (Gabon), JK (Zambia), Alikiba (Tanzania), Fally Ipupa (DRC) and Navio (Uganda). Airtel donates a percentage of the revenues from record sales and merchandise to finance one school each of the 15 countries where it operates. For the DRC it selected a government owned co-educational school in one of the poorest areas of Kinshasa, EP NGWANZA. The school has 997 pupils ranging from 6-12 years of age group. The school is devoid of adequate sanitation, clean drinking water. Its teachers were paid irregularly. Books, furniture and other facilities were inadequate. Airtel considering education is 'the pillar for growth in future generations', has generously adopted the school. It bears the responsibility for (i) uniforms, (ii) reading and writing material, (iii) furniture, (iv) teaching and learning aids, and above all (v) broadband connection.

In December 2010 Bharti Airtel signed an agreement with the Manchester United for a

four- year partnership which will identify, coach and train young African footballers.<sup>21</sup>

It is worthwhile to point out that Government of India's flagship project under which India is helping setting up a fibre-optic network to provide satellite connectivity, tele-medicine and tele-education to 53 countries of Africa, has been commissioned in 47 countries out of the 48 that signed the agreement with Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) for participating in the project under the Pan-African e-Network Project.<sup>22</sup>

The Project has been commissioned in the following 47 countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Project is presently being implemented in South Sudan.<sup>23</sup> As mentioned, DRC is one of the beneficiaries.

Under the Tele-education part, 9960 students from African countries have already registered with Indian universities and are being imparted Tele-education by Indian universities. 3577 tele-education sessions and 465 Tele-Medicine consultations had also taken place till October 2012. Regular Continuing Medical Education (CME) sessions from Super Specialty Hospitals had started from 22 April 2009. 2496 CME Sessions in English and 181 CME Sessions in French have been held from Indian Super Specialty Hospitals till October.<sup>24</sup>

### **Energy sources**

Energy is another key sector for development. The Democratic Republic of Congo has great potential of electric power generated from various sources. It has substantial amount of petroleum, natural gas and coal. Above all potential of generating hydro- electric power is estimated at around 100,000 MW. Water resources are in plenty unlike most of the African countries. The Inga Dam, alone on the Congo River, has the potential to generate 40,000 to 45,000 MW of electric power, sufficient to supply the electricity needs of the whole of Southern African region.<sup>25</sup>

In 2001, the installed generating capacity of the present Inga dam was estimated at the dam at 2,473 MW. However, it generated only one fourth of its installed capacity i.e. around 650–750 MW as two-thirds of the facility's turbines did not work. Of course, there are plans to expand output of the Inga power station to 44,000 MW capacities by 2010. The African Development bank has agreed to give \$8 million towards it. The government has also agreed to strengthen the Inga-Kolwezi and Inga-South Africa interconnections and to construct a Second power line to supply power to Kinshasa. If harvested to its full potential, the hydroelectricity, the United Nations said that it could provide power for the whole of Africa.<sup>26</sup>

As of today, almost all the power supply comes from hydro-electricity in DRC. In 2008 hydro-electricity supplied 99.4 of its electric consumption.<sup>27</sup> It also exported electricity to Republic of Congo (ROC), Zambia and South Africa. There are plans to build the Western Power Corridor (Westcor) to supply electricity from Inga III hydroelectric power plant to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Namibia, Botswana and South Africa. As of today, 98.2 per cent of electricity was produced by hydroelectric power. However, Only 6 per cent of the population has access to electricity.<sup>28</sup> *Société nationale d'électricité*

(SNEL) or the national power company of the country manages the power sector.

Towards increasing power generation India has undertaken two power projects:

- (i) The Kakobola hydro electric power project.
- (ii) Katende Hydro-electric power project.

### **Kakobola hydro electric power project**

It was during the visit of DRC's Foreign Minister Alexis Thambwe Mwamba from 27-30 October 2009 to India and that he met his Indian counterpart S.M. Krishna in New Delhi. During the meeting Krishna announced a line of credit of US \$ 263 million to DRC for 3 projects. The largest amount US \$ 168 million went for 60-MW Katende Hydro-power project.<sup>29</sup> The second one was for the Kakobola hydro-power project for which US \$ 42 million was earmarked.<sup>30</sup> Following the announcement India's ambassador to DRC D.N. Srivastava informed on 12 August 2010 that an agreement was signed for the construction and commissioning of the Kakobola hydro-power project between Matata Ponyo Mapon, DRC Finance Minister and Nadeem Panjetan, general manager of India's EXIM bank.

This electric power project was taken up by the Indian company Angelique International Limited. The 9.3 MW Kakobola plant will be located in the Kwilu district of Bandundu province and will cater to more than 1.9 million residents in the nearby region. The project is expected to be completed in three years. Congo will start repaying the loan after five years and then will pay 1.75 per cent interest over 20 years, according to reports. This is the third line of credit approved by India to DRC recently.

### **Katende Hydro electric power project**

While Krishna announcing the above line of credit, he also mentioned another important project the Katende Hydro electric power project. The largest amount of US \$ 168 million went for 60-MW Katende Hydro-power project.<sup>31</sup> On 24 October 2011, President of DRC, Joseph Kabila Kabange laid the foundation stone for construction of the 60-MW Katende Hydroelectric Project at the site, Katende, 70 Kilometres from Kananga – the capital city of Kasai Occidental province. The agreement for extending US\$ 168 million as line of credit (LOC) to the Government of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for the construction of 60 MW Katende Hydroelectric Project was signed on 11 July 2011. This deal comes with the \$263 million credit from India to DRC and this is expected to be the largest costing \$168 million. The remaining US\$ 112 million of the US\$ 280 million would be provided by the Government of DRC.

### **Industry**

Congo was the second most industrialised country in Africa after South Africa immediately after its independence in 1960. However, two Congo wars and conflicts ruined the industries. Today, Industry is relatively underdeveloped despite its huge potential. In 2002, industry accounted for only 18.8 per cent of GDP, with only 3.9 per cent attributed to manufacturing. As a result of foreign exchange scarcity and depressed demand, the utilisation of manufacturing capacity has been seriously depressed. Primary industrial sectors are cement, engineering, agro industries, mineral processing, diamonds and consumer products. It is significant to note that on 24 August 2005 T.C. Venkat Subramaniam, Chairman and Managing Director Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) and Balumuene Nkuna Francois DRC's ambassador to India signed an agreement in which the Exim Bank extended a Line of Credit of US \$ 33.5 million

for four projects. As mentioned earlier, out of which a sum US \$ 13 million was earmarked for setting up a cement factory in the DRC.<sup>32</sup> It was on 12 March 2008 that the then Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee and DRC's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi signed a pact in New Delhi on establishing a joint commission for enhancing trade and technology which was regarded as a "significant milestone".<sup>33</sup> DRC sought Indian expertise in diamond processing, cutting and polishing to bolster its diamond industry.<sup>34</sup> India's Oil major ONGC-Videsh is actively scouting for opportunities in the region.<sup>35</sup> Some Indian Industries such as TATA Motors have distribution centres in DRC.<sup>36</sup> Companies like Miniratna Manganese ore India Ltd (MOIL) is eyeing for manganese properties in Congo. Jindal Steel and Power (JSPL), Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India Ltd and others have successfully made a foothold in the country. Moreover, DRC also expressed India's large scale investment in small and medium scale industries. It was expressed by the DRC's Vice-President Jean Pierre Bemba when met India's Vice President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat on 6 March 2005.<sup>37</sup>

## **Mining**

Apart from the above five aspects, Indian companies have shown interest in mining too. The DRC is potentially one of the richest in mineral resources not only in Africa but also in the world. Citing the edition of the *African Business*, "DR Congo's \$24 trillion fortune" (February 2009) the value of DRC's mineral wealth is estimated at \$ 24 trillion, amount equivalent to the combined GDP of Europe and the United States.<sup>38</sup> The article further informs that it has the world's largest reserves of cobalt and significant quantities of the world's diamonds, gold, copper and oil. Another source of information says that DRC has 65 per cent of copper and cobalt in the

world.<sup>39</sup> This makes the DRC potentially the richest country in the world. Above all, the country is the principal exporter of coltan (Columbite-tantalite) highly in demand in the electronic world. However, the country remains one of the poorest and most underdeveloped countries in the world.

## **Indian Mining Companies in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

DRC time and again has urged the Government of India to participate in mining industry in almost every meeting between the representatives of both the governments whenever they exchange visits since the end of the two Congo wars. DRC has invited Indian firms to take part in the exploration of mines and production of minerals in the African country for mutual benefit. As it has plenty of minerals, diamond, gold, copper, cobalt and zinc among others, it wants Indian companies to come to Congo for help in exploration and production of minerals. So far, there are three main medium size mining Indian companies operating in DRC: Rubamin, Chemaf, Somika.

### **Rubamin**

Rubamin is India's largest processor of zinc oxide and cobalt. It is an early entrant to the DRC through its subsidiary Rubaco SPRL in copper mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and enjoys the first entry advantage. Rubaco SPRL has substantial mining areas, totalling nearly 4000 sq kms in the DRC. It runs a leased copper blister manufacturing plant in the country and is in the process of setting-up a large green field pyro-metallurgy plant for the manufacture of copper blister on 61 hectares of land at Likasi, which is in the middle of the copper and cobalt rich Katanga province.<sup>40</sup> According to the available sources of information, the company has a mineral exploration group comprising of a highly experienced team of geology, Remote

Sensing, Geophysical and Exploration experts.<sup>41</sup> Rubamin holds 8 mineral concessions spread over 550 Sq Kms which are strategically located in the Katanga Province on the Central African Copper belt which forms one of the largest metallogenic provinces of the world. These belts are encircled by various operating /old mines and deposits and therefore quite promising.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, the belt has been systematically explored using latest techniques of Remote Sensing, Geochemical / Geophysical operations and drilling which has proved the potential of these deposits. Additionally, the Group holds an Exploration Contract on a Gecamines SARL property for Copper & Cobalt.<sup>43</sup>

In the past, Rubamin had suffered significant losses because of inflation. It also suffered from the withdrawal of permit by the Gecamines, DRC's mining company. However, it has been operating successfully after relying on purchasing ores from Canada's Anvil Mining (often misidentified for Australia),<sup>44</sup> and from artisanal diggers. Reliance on these sources has made access to copper and cobalt ores more difficult and less predictable. However, it endeavours to increase its yearly copper and cobalt ore production to 50,000 tonnes.<sup>45</sup> The company exports its output almost exclusively to China.<sup>46</sup> Additionally Rubamin has also expanded its operations into mining services in the DRC with the purchase of 9 diamond drill rigs.<sup>47</sup>

Rubamin has well established local and community relations enhanced by the provision of employment and services to the local community and a strong logistical and administrative presence in the province. Currently it employs approximately 350 Congolese at their copper processing site spread over 61 hectares of land in Likasi village, Katanga Province.<sup>48</sup> Further Rubamin has 200 hectares of adjacent land for the

agriculture of maize for the benefit of the local community. It also works to improve the quality of life and environment for local communities and employees. It has taken up 4 major community programmes. Firstly, it supports for agriculture in which it has undertaken seed/fertilizer distribution and large scale maize plantation in DRC for providing food to workers, staff and local community. Secondly, health care is another important aspect for which it has installed several hand-pumps in villages to provide clean and ready supply of water around Likasi. Thirdly, it has constructed a fully self-funded Primary School at Likasi and also made generous contributions to renovation of local Secondary Schools in DRC.<sup>49</sup> Finally, it also created awareness for tree plantation and organized programmes for ensuring greener surroundings in and around the factory premises.

### **Chemaf**

Chemaf (shorter form of Chemical Africa) was founded in 2001 and is based in Democratic Republic of the Congo. Chemaf SPRL is a subsidiary of Shalina Resources Ltd engaged in mining and producing copper and cobalt carbonate metals.

In 2003, Chemaf acquired from Gécamines the Etoile open pit mine and Usoke mineral processing plant, near Lubumbashi. It established a processing plant at Etoile and has been mining copper and cobalt since then. The company owns Etoile mine 100 per cent including a number of old ore dumps on the site under exploitation licence, which provides oxides for the nearby processing plant at Usoke. The current copper cathode output is 16,000 tonnes per annum and this is being developed in 2008 to increase to 30,000 tonnes per annum.<sup>50</sup> Cobalt production will be over 6,000 tonnes per annum during 2008. Its resource base area covers more than 15,000 sq. kms.<sup>51</sup> The group is developing an



extensive exploration programme with the objective of finding new resources of copper, cobalt and other minerals. Chemaf is already one of the largest investors in Katanga, having invested over US \$100 million over the past five years.<sup>52</sup>

Since 2004, Chemaf has installed crushing equipment and plants to facilitate and improve the efficiency of its cobalt-crushing and processing using the latest technology known as Heavy Media Separation (HMS) for the enrichment of copper and cobalt metal. Using this process the Etoile mine is able to treat 100 tonnes of ore every hour, producing around 18 tonnes of copper and cobalt rich concentrate each time. Its product then is by road to Durban, an important port of South Africa. Then the consignment is shipped to China for final processing.<sup>53</sup> The HMS plant has been successfully operational since 11 July 2008.

Chemaf's recorded output in 2010 was 504 tonnes of cobalt concentrate, 17 055 tonnes of cobalt carbonate, and 15 196.5 tonnes of copper cathode.<sup>54</sup> It depends on the raw materials being delivered by subcontractor miners who source the material from local cobalt mines and deposits. Despite its successful operation, its Usoke plant has, however, earned a reputation for alleged environmental pollution affecting residential area of Lubumbashi. However, apart from its mining activities, it has rendered community service. It has agreed to finance road-building projects and has opened the Shalina Eye Clinic for free eye treatment in the town of Lubumbashi. It also trains local people for career opportunities. Other projects include education, free hospital treatment, agriculture and fish farming.<sup>55</sup>

### **Somika**

Somika S.A.R.L (*Societe Minere Du Katanga*) is another Indian company actively engaged in s made a beginning.

mining, processing and producing copper and cobalt concentrates in the DRC. It has been active in Katanga since 2001, and operates a mine in Kolwezi as a joint venture with Gécamines, and a processing plant in Lubumbashi. According to Somika management, the plant produces 300 tonnes of copper cathode, and a further 300 tonnes per month of cobalt concentrate. It sells its output to China.

Apart from mining, processing, and producing copper and cobalt Somika included Tin and Tantalum (Coltan) mining, of course undertaken by a separate division namely Mining Mineral Resources (MMR). Established in 2009, it started its business by collecting coltan from the artisanal miners in North Katanga. One big advantage it has now is that it is operating in a conflict free zone. In 2010 the provincial government of Katanga awarded to it an exclusive right to mine at four new sites. Somika constructed a new tin smelter adjacent to its existing copper and cobalt processing plant at Lubumbashi. It became operational sometime in 2011. The company also like other companies has its own social service programme. Somika has contributed to social cause by way of extending support to local schools, supplies to hospitals and old age homes, medical supplies to Military Hospitals, sponsoring sports events, water wells and electrification for local residents in Lubumbashi, Likasi and Kolwezi.

To conclude India has played a role in the post-war reconstruction of the DRC especially in the aforesaid six key areas. Further improvement of relations between the two countries is expected in view of the return to almost peace. However, India's role in its reconstruction is dwarfed by other countries like China, Canada etc. But it ha

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<sup>1</sup>Information updated in September 2014, See <http://www.usaid.gov/democratic-republic-congo/agriculture-and-food-security>, accessed on 03 January 2015.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.new-ag.info/en/country/profile.php?a=641>, accessed 03 January 2015.

<sup>3</sup> India-Democratic Republic of Congo Relations at [mea.gov.in](http://mea.gov.in), accessed 25 October 2010.

<sup>4</sup>Democratic Republic of Congo - Tractors, [http://www.mahindractorworld.com/congo\\_republic.html](http://www.mahindractorworld.com/congo_republic.html), accessed on 11 April 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Child soldiers also known as ‘Kadogos’, Swahili term meaning “little ones who fight” is a widespread phenomenon in the rebel militia dominated areas of the DRC. Different sources put their around 30,000. Even the United Nations believes that 15-30 per cent of the newly recruited combatants of the militias are under 18 years of age. Even 6 years old is found to be conscripted as child soldier according to IRIN News. See [child-soldier.org](http://child-soldier.org), accessed on 23 June 2015

<sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education\\_in\\_the\\_Democratic\\_Republic\\_of\\_the\\_Congo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_the_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo), accessed 08 January 2015.

<sup>7</sup> “Cursed by conflict: Education in DRC”, at <http://www.osisa.org/education/blog/cursed-conflict-education-drc>, accessed 09 January 2015

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Annual Report, 2009-2010 (New Delhi), p.68.

<sup>9</sup> “Transport in the Democratic Republic of the Congo”  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transport\\_in\\_the\\_Democratic\\_Republic\\_of\\_the\\_Congo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transport_in_the_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo), accessed 03 March 2015.

<sup>10</sup>Congo wants Indian investment in SME sector dated 6 March 2005, <http://www.financialexpress.com/news/congo-wants-indian-investment-in-sme-sector/128289> Accessed 24 April 2011.

<sup>11</sup>Exim Bank Extends US \$ 33.5 MN LOC to Congo, <http://www.eximbankindia.com/old/press116.html>, accessed 14 May 2011.

<sup>12</sup>Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Annual Report, 2006-07 (New Delhi), p.76.

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Annual Report, 2007-08 (New Delhi), p.66.

<sup>14</sup> India announces \$ 263-mn credit for Congo dated 29 October 2009, <http://www.topnews.in/india-announces-268mn-credit-cingo-2230132>, accessed 23 December 2010. Also see Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Annual Report, 2009-10 (New Delhi), p. 68.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas (2009), “Congo’s postal service needs you”, at <http://hubert.fennor.com/post/2009/05/09/Congo-s-postal-service-needs-you2>, accessed 23 April 2015.

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