

Qatar, South Africa trade rises by 70%

The trade volume between Qatar and South Africa has increased by 70% during the post-blockade period as a result of emerging market opportunities and strong bilateral relations, said ambassador of South Africa to Qatar, Faizel Moosa.



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The ambassador said that post-blockade time had seen a huge increase in bilateral trade volume largely on imports into Qatar from South Africa. "We have seen a 70% increase from pre-blockade to post blockade."

South Africa exports fresh fruit and vegetables, agro-processed food products and other items to Qatar. At present, South Africa is seeking to introduce meat and livestock products in the Qatari market as well as opening a meat processing facility here.

To formalise the efforts, both countries are likely to sign a bilateral animal health agreement, which will ease trade of live animals and chilled meat.

A visit by the SA president

South Africa is also pursuing Qatari investment in the oil and gas sector and expecting a prominent representation by Qatar at the upcoming International Investor Conference of the South Africa president, Cyril Ramaphosa in Johannesburg in October, according to Moosa.

Taking an important step in enhancing the bilateral relationship in trade, business and other areas, the South African president is expected to visit Qatar.

"There is an intention for the South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa to come to Qatar before the end of this year. We are confident that our president will be coming soon, accompanied by government ministers, officials and South African captains of industry," said Moosa.

Tourism and business travel between Qatar and South Africa is another sector which has been enhanced in recent years. "The Number of people travelling from Qatar to South Africa has seen a very healthy increase as well. In the first six months of this year, we received 1,136 visa applications, of which 40% are Qataris. About 380 Qataris visited South Africa in the first six months. In total, 10% travelled for business and the others for tourism."

Tourism enhanced

The recent decision by Qatar to grant on-arrival visas for South African nationals has made a huge impact on the number of people choosing Qatar as a tourist destination.

"The on-arrival visa scheme has made it much easier for South Africans to come here. Many of them see Qatar as an option for tourism."

Regarding the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the ambassador said: "We are willing and eager to share our 2010 World Cup experience with Qatar. Our biggest challenge was security and we proved to the world that South Africa had a first-class World Cup without incident. We want to bring our world cup experience here and share it with the Supreme Committee. We want to bring a delegation to do a presentation for the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy on legacy around our preparations for security," said Moosa.

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