

* Crafting a unique partnership with Africa (Editorial)

↳ India-Africa relationship has a long history of partnership with solidarity and political affinity dated back to 1920s when both regions were fighting against colonial oppression.

◦ this historical solidarity has today grown into a modern partnership.

↳ India's engagement with African continent has been multifaceted:

- line of credit
- co-operation in range of sectors like energy, technology etc.
- capacity building initiative

↳ India-Africa agricultural co-operation:

- India imports agriculture items like fruits, nuts, grains, pulses from African continent
- Institutional and individual capacity-building initiative.
 - such as India-Africa Institute of Agriculture and Rural Development in Malawi
- extension of soft loans and supply of machinery
- acquisition of commercial farmlands
- Presence of Indian entrepreneurs in African agriculture ecosystem
- active cooperation by subnational actor
 - such as Kerala govt proposals to create a brand of Africa-Kollam cashews.

↳ But India needs to further expand its relationship with Africa in agriculture sector. Significance of such cooperation :-

- India should utilise unexplored potential of Africa in agriculture sector.
- It will help to achieve global food security
- Improvement in trade relations
- Provide credible alternative to the increasing involvement of Chinese stakeholders in the sector

↳ Recommendation

- Incentivise Indian industries to tap into African agri-business value chain
- Indian technology firms and startups should start partnership with counterpart in African agri-tech sector
- prioritize capacity building initiative in agri sector
- State govt and civil society organisations to identify opportunities and invest directly.

* Staging a comeback, India's Africa policy

- India - Africa partnership

- ↳ since 1920s, when both were fighting against colonial oppression.
- ↳ India's support for decolonisation of African countries at UN.
- ↳ Launch of **ITEC (Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation) Prog in 1964** to provide technical assistance, aid for disaster relief, training, donation of equipments, etc

- Recent developments in India - Africa

- Medicine & vaccine help during pandemic
- PM's visit to Uganda in 2018
 - ↳ released "guiding principles of Indian engagement in Africa".
- Total **Line of Credit ~ \$11 bn** extended to 41 African countries (till 2020)
- **India - Africa Forum Summits (2008, 2011 & 2015)**
 - ↳ enhanced engagements
- 2018, GoI approved opening of 18 new Indian missions in Africa.

- Cumulative investments of US \$ 54 bn
 - ↳ India is 4th largest investor in Africa
- Trade composition not changed much since 2000.
 - ↳ India is now Africa's 3rd largest trading partner.
 - ↳ India's top 5 markets are S. Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, Kenya & Togo.
 - ↳ India's exports are mainly mineral fuels & oils (processed petro products), pharma products & vehicles.
 - ↳ India's imports are mainly crude oil & pearls, precious & semi precious stones.
- India's role in peacekeeping missions in Africa
- Support to African counter-terrorism operations

Recent cause of concern

- Slowing trade & investments
- Medical assistance declined
 - ↳ as India itself suffered from vaccine shortage.
 - ↳ while China expanded its footprint by supplying more vaccines.
- Global Competition called 'The 3rd scramble'
 - ↳ in first 2 decades of 21st century

↳ Many countries from Americas, Europe & Asia assisting Africa to benefit from Africa's markets, minerals, hydrocarbons & Oceanic resources.

↳ Main competitors - US, EU, China & Japan.

• Attention to Africa lost out

↳ due to geopolitical tensions in the Indo-Pacific

↳ India's focus shifted to ties with UK, EU & the Quad powers.

- Way Forward

• 4th India - Africa Forum Summit needs to be held asap, even if in a virtual format.

• Fresh financial grants & concessional loans.

• Industry engagements

• Deepening collaboration in health, space & digital tech.

• Cooperation among Intl. allies to counter China

↳ Eg: recent India-EU summit identified Africa as a region for partnership based approach.

↳ Quad summit in Washington should also propose a partnership plan for Africa.