

## India-Africa Relation: An Analysis of 'Modi Doctrine'

**Prem Kumar Bharti**

Research Scholar, Dept. of African Studies, University of Delhi. New Delhi, India

**Abstract:** - India has had long-standing ties with Africa which have been characterized by the presence of a large Diaspora, solidarity with African states, anti-colonial struggles, the promotion of non-alignment and South-South co-operation. Besides these, India remains to be a knowledge partner to Africa as it runs capacity building programmes there which help them to realize their true potential and Africa is becoming a strategic partner for India as an alternative source of energy and raw materials. The study analyses the relationship between two blocks in various fields such as trade, education, defence and health sector. The objective is to articulate the theoretical importance of international relations between both the blocks and identify the potential sectors to enhance future cooperation.

**Key words:** - Bilateral, International Relations, Foreign Policy, Health, Capacity building, Trade, Challenges, Defence, EXIM, IAFS.

Seldom have we found any two blocks in the annals of history whose relationship is bound by the depth of enormous cordiality as India and African nations. Over the decades there was a hiatus but India's interests in African nations were undiminished. India's friendship with African nations have galvanized after Narendra Modi's electoral victory. He declared that Africa will be at the top of his priority. From 2014, a total of 29 visits to African nations at the level of president, vice-president and prime minister have been done and at the Ministerial level almost all 54 African countries have been covered from the Indian side. A total of 32 heads of state/government of Africans have also visited India. As a plan to expand political presence in Africa, India has decided to open 18 new embassies in Africa over the period of 2018-21; this will increase India total embassy to 47. First of these embassy opened in Rwanda in July 2018. In 2019 India has opened its embassies in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti and Guinea. In the international solar alliance (ISA), out of the total 83 countries that have signed the ISA framework agreement, 31 countries are from the African continent only. The Indian government extended the line of credit (LoC) for 23 solar energy projects in 13 African countries.

Furthermore, India's relation with Africa has also been fostered through the India-Africa forum summit (IAFS) held in April 2008, May 2011 and October 2015. The summit provides an opportunity for consultation at the highest political level between the government representatives of multiple African nations and the Indian government. The first two summits were based on the Banjul Formula (2006), which was adopted by the African union in 2006 at its summit in Banjul, Gambia. Following this formula only a selected few African leaders were supposed to come to summit. However, Modi government parted with Banjul formula and invited all 54 African Nations in the third IAFS held in 2015, which resulted in a new thrust and vigour in the India-Africa partnership. At this summit Modi announced \$10 billion lines of credit along with a \$100

million Indian development fund and a \$500 million in grants apart from 50,000 scholarships that marked a new approach to engagement with African countries.

### **High level visits**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself visited around 10 African Nations during his first term, which shows how important Africa is for India. Modi started the year 2015 with strategy to focus on the importance of cooperation among the Indian Ocean countries. He visited Seychelles and Mauritius to strengthen maritime ties and enhance bilateral cooperation. Modi is India's only second Prime Minister to visit Seychelles after Indira Gandhi. Mauritius welcomed Indian PM as chief guest for its National day celebrations. India and Mauritius have signed five agreements for cooperation in medicine, agriculture, ocean economy, sustainable development in the Indian Ocean region and for enhancing sea and air connectivity between the two countries. Just eight month after the IAFS meet, in July 2016 Modi visited to Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya. India and Mozambique has signed three MOUs in the field of Drug trafficking, Pulse trading and Sports. Kenya signed pacts with India in the field of defence and security, avoidance of double taxation. Before this trip of Prime Minister the then Indian President Pranab Mukherjee visited to Ghana, Ivory Coast and Namibia. It was maiden visit of any Indian President to the states of Ghana and Ivory Coast while the visit to Namibia was the second after a gap of 21 years. India and Ghana have signed three bilateral agreements to tighten co-operation, which includes - nuclear cooperation, setting up a joint commission and visa waivers for holders of diplomatic and official passports. Ivory Coast government has awarded Indian President with the highest civilian award of Ivory Coast.

At a time when India is trying to build its presence in Africa, Indian President Ram Nath Kovind made his first foreign trip to Djibouti and Ethiopia. His visit to Djibouti was first by any Indian leader while to Ethiopia it is the first by an Indian President in past 45 years. India helps Ethiopia in power sector, healthcare and education sector and extended USD 195 million for power transmission sector and another USD 2 million line of credits for medicines. They too released a book named 'India-Ethiopia: 70 Years of Diplomatic Relations.'

The year 2018 begins with the President Kovind five days visit to Mauritius and Medagascar. He was invited by the Mauritius as the chief guest to the commemorative events marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its independence. In Medagascar Indian President was accorded the Grand Cross of the second class, which is the highest honour Medagaskar bestows on a non-citizen. Further, during the vice President of India tour to Botswana, Zimbabwe and Malawi India was allowed to buy Diamond directly from Zimbabwe. The two sides have discussion on issues like - combating terrorism, climate change and renewable energy. In Malawi Vice- President announced a new line of credit of USD 215.16 million for 18 water projects. The two nations also signed MOUs on extradition, cooperation in atomic energy and visa waiver.

Prime Minister tour to Rwanda, Uganda and South Africa from 23 to 27 July 2018 reiterates the growing importance of Africa for India and will go a long way towards revitalizing relation with the continent. Modi's first stop was Kigali (Rwanda). India signed eight MOUs and other agreements for cooperation in trade, agriculture, defence, leather and dairy products, including

two lines of credit valued at USD 100 million each for the development of industrial parks and an agriculture irrigation scheme. Modi's next stop was Kampala, Uganda where he signed four MOUs on defence, culture exchange, and diplomatic ties and for the setting up of a material testing laboratory for highway construction. This visit by Indian Prime Minister came after a long gap of 21 years. Modi was also the first Indian prime minister to address the Ugandan Parliament. While addressing Kampala parliament he outlined 10 guiding principles to strengthen the relation with African Continent. On the last leg of his trip, Modi visited Johannesburg, South Africa, the venue of the 10<sup>th</sup> annual BRICS summit.

In 2019 South African president Cyril Ramphosa visited India as the chief guest for the 70th Republic day celebration of India. He is the only 2<sup>nd</sup> president of South Africa after Nelson Mandela to be the chief guest of the Republic day of India. Modi said that this visit will "cement ties between India and South Africa. Ramphosa too argued that India is South Africa 2<sup>nd</sup> largest trading partner in Asia and there are a number of areas for future cooperation. Modi argued that India is delighted to be a part of South Africa skills story through the launch of the Gandhi-Mandella skills institute. This initiative is mainly for empowering youth. South Africa also agreed to simplify the business visa regime.

India as one of the fastest growing economies and its need of energy requirements have pushed it to forge close relationship with West African countries Nigeria and Angola. India with the help of these nations can fulfill its high demand for oil, crude and petroleum. Indian president Ram Nath Kovind paid a visit to three of West African countries in July, 2019. The visit starts with Benin. India extended here soft line of credit of USD 100 million for the government flagship project- Revealing Benin: Government action programme 2016-2021. Four MOUs signed on: cultural exchange programme for the year 2019-2023; e-vidyabharti and e-arogyabharti (e-VBAB) network on tele-education and tele-medicine; mutual exemption from visa requirements for holders of diplomatic or official passports and cooperation in the field of export credit and investment insurance. After Benin he visited to Gambia where both nations signed MOU in the field of Ayurveda and traditional system of medicine and homeopathy. The last destination of president was Guinea. Kovind met here his counterpart Alpha Conde and discussed the ways to combat terrorism and boost defence ties. Three MOU signed in Conakry are: co-operation in the field of traditional system of medicine and homeopathy; renewable energy and participation in the e-VBAB network project. India has also announced a new line of credit of USD 170 million for water supply project of the metropolitan city of Conakry.

India and Zambia signed 6 MOUs in several areas during the three day visit of Zambian President Edgar Chagema Lungu's to India in August 2019. These are:-in the field of geology and mineral resources; defence ; arts and culture; e-VBAB; between election commission of India and electoral commission of Zambia and between foreign service institute of India and Zambia institute of diplomacy and international studies. In joint press conference with Zambian president, Modi said that both the countries will increase their participation in the fields of tourism, healthcare, mining, agriculture and food processing.

India and Sierra Leone signed six agreements to achieve self-sufficiency in production of rice. The agreement was signed during the vice president Venkaiah Naidu 5-days visit to the West

African countries in October 2019. The agreement extended a credit line of USD 30 million for the cultivation of rice. India has also extended concessional line of credit of worth USD 123 million in different sectors such as agriculture, water and transmission line.

### **Trade in Flow**

India's growing economy and its appetite to invest overseas has led to economic flows in the form of trade, FDI and aid between two regions. Africa will play a decisive role in achieving India's goal of USD 5 trillion economies by 2024. As Africa is adding more and more youth to its population and the same population is entering to consumer class which makes Africa one of the fastest growing consumer markets. It will provide ample opportunity to India's manufacturing sector to flood the African market with Indian consumer goods. India is looking forward to boost its trade with Africa through African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

At present India is providing the duty free tariff preference scheme to 38 of the least developed African nations which leads to increase in India-Africa trade. India's total trade with Africa during 2015-16 was USD 49.22 billion which has increased to USD 58.05 billion by 2018-19. While India total export of 2015-16 was USD 20.44 billion which has increased to USD 22.65 billion whereas import has increased from USD 28.77 billion in 2015-16 to 35.40 billion in 2018-19. South Africa emerged as the best trading partner among the African nations. Export Import (EXIM) bank of India works to energies two way trade and investment flow. Since its inception total 185 projects worth USD 11239.22 million are financed by the bank.

Besides these private companies of India also plays a vital role in Africa. About 600 Indian companies have USD 500 investment. ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) is the largest investor here. Tata group is expanded to around 19 countries. Vedanta Resources has invested in copper mines in Zambia, while OVL has invested in equity assets in Sudan, Nigeria and Libya. Export Import (EXIM) bank of India further works to energies two-way trade and investment flow.

### **Capacity Building**

During his first term Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that "two-thirds of India and African continent population is under the age of 35 years, and if the future belongs to the youth then this century is ours to shape and build". India is providing Africa multiplicity of fellowships and training programmes viz. Indian technical and economic cooperation programmes (ITEC), special commonwealth assistance for Africa programme (SCAAP) and technical cooperation scheme (TCS). During the India-Africa forum summit of 2015, India committed substantial support towards science and technology development in Africa. Through dedicated program 'Partnership for skill in Applied Science, Engineering and Technology' (PASET), Ministry of Skill Development, the government of India is taking partnership between India and Africa to new heights. When President Pranab Mukherjee visited Ghana, Ivory Coast and Namibiain in 2016, he announced an increase in ITEC slots from 250 to 300 and ICCR scholarships from 16-40 in Ghana and in Namibia increased the ITEC slots from 125 to 200. Further he also announced an assistance of one million USD for the India-Ghana Kofi Annan Centre for IT excellence. On 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the Ministry of Skill Development organized a five day

knowledge workshop for African delegation from six African countries namely Rwanda, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Senegal, Tanzania and Ghana in collaboration with World Bank on the theme of capacity building and knowledge exchange support.

On the occasion of 55 years of India's development partnership programme, ITEC in 2019, external affair minister, S. Jaishankar Prasad launched the e-VidyaBharti and e-ArogyaBharti (e-VBAB) – tele-education and tele-medicine project for Africa. It will enable African students to access Indian education institutions and super-speciality hospitals to African doctors and patients. The MOUs for the e-VBAB network has been exchanged with the Republic of Congo, Ghana and Malawi at the Indian-African education and skill development summit held in New Delhi in August 2019. Earlier this month during the president Ram Nath Kovind visit to West African nation similar MOUs were signed with Benin, Gambia and Guinea. Around 100 online classes were launched by January 2020. The Indian government is also offering 15000 scholarships to African students over the next five years to pursue short term courses such as undergraduates and postgraduate. There are about 3500 Kenya's students currently studying in 50 institutions throughout India. Sudan is at present 3<sup>rd</sup> largest sending country of international students to India.

### **Defence**

As part of defence cooperation, India has extended training to a large number of African military officers. India has military to military cooperation activities primarily related to the training fields, with almost one-third of African nations. India is one of the largest contributors to peacekeeping in Africa, has participated in all the UN peacekeeping missions in Africa

The fifth India-Nigeria joint defence coordination committee (JDCC) was held on 17-18 January 2019 in New Delhi. It aims to enhance bilateral defence cooperation. Several army chiefs of Nigeria are also trained in India. India has maritime relation with Mozambique, Kenya, Tanzania, Madagascar, Seychelles and Mauritius. Indian naval ships constantly involved in maritime patrols in the Gulf of Aden and East African coast. India has also sought to widen influence in the western Indian Ocean. Indian naval ships have been making goodwill visits to Madagascar ports frequently. In October 2019, four Indian naval ships have visited the port of Antsiranana. South Africa and India have frequent defence exchanges. South Africa and India holds the India-brazil-South Africa maritime (IBSAMAR) exercise.

The first ever India-Africa field military exercise "AFINDEX-19" was held in 2019. It was a 10 day exercise between the Indian army and 17 African nations, which was conducted at Aundh military station (Pune) from March 18-27. The Indian contingent was represented by Maratha Light Infantry. 10 personnel from each participating nations are required to take part in the exercise. The aim of AFINDEX-19 was to train the participating continents in Humanitarian Mine Assistance (HMA) and Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) to enhance cooperation, share best practices and achieve interoperability among all African armies. During the exercise, participants will also focus on team building and tactical level operations. This exercise will mark the continued growth of India's outreach to Africa.

Modi 2.0 new defence minister Shri Rajnath Singh three day visit to Mozambique has also boosted our defence and security partnership. During this visit India signed two MOUs i.e. agreement on sharing white shipping information, and cooperation in the field of Hydrography. India has also handed over two Indian made Fast Interceptor Boats (FIB) to Mozambican navy for conducting coastal surveillance operations.

### **Health**

The health sector assumes special importance in the India-Africa development cooperation. India is playing a vital role in extending healthcare services to the African nations to fight the scourge of fatal diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria and Tuberculosis; it also helps to reduce child mortality. As both India and Africa economies are poised to grow rapidly in the coming years, healthcare expenditure per capita would also go up. Some of the major Indian pharmaceutical companies operating in Africa are Cipla Ltd, Ranbaxy laboratories, Dr Reddy's laboratories, Glenmark pharmaceuticals, Parental drugs and Cadila Healthcare. Cipla, has taken the initiative to reduce the cost of HIV/AIDS treatment by bringing down the cost of Antiretroviral (ARVs) below one dollar per day.

Tele-medicine initiative launched by India in 2019 will provide Africa high level expert consultation, medical practitioners and hospitals. India and Africa have been a major trade partners in pharmaceuticals. Indo-Uganda pharma business meet was organized by pharmaceuticals export promotion council of India on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019 in Kampala. It was attended by around 40 Indian companies. In an another two day International Exhibition for Pharma and Healthcare (i-PHEX Africa) organized in Lagos, Nigeria on 14 March 2019, a total of 53 Indian pharmaceutical companies have participated. Medicine of worth USD 250,000 has been handed over in June 2019 to Zimbabwe minister of health and childcare by Indian ambassador. This was announced in November 2018 during the vice-president of India visit to Zimbabwe. India and Guinea have signed MOUs on co-operation in the field of traditional system of medicine and homeopathy during the president Ram Nath Kovind visit to Guinea in August 2019. India has also gifted African nation's cancer therapy machine for better healthcare facility. Various civil society organizations, such as self employed women's association (SEWA), Bhartiya Samruddhi investments and consulting services and participatory research in Asia (PRIA) are actively working in Africa.

**Conclusion:** - Africa is a continent of limitless possibility. There has been a dramatic increase in India's trade, investment and development cooperation relations with Africa in the last decade. Minerals, particularly oil, account for the bulk of the increase in India's imports from Africa. Indian's investments in Africa have also grown rapidly in recent years in a number of sectors. The resurging Africa and rising India can give a strong impetus to South-South cooperation. India engagement with Africa is taking place at faster rate after Modi came to Power. However, India-Africa partnership is yet to achieve its full potential. Hopefully the partnership between India and Africa reflects the beginning of a new era for Africa- an era that will bring power to the people.

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