



India-South Africa Bilateral Meeting

For Prelims: UPSC, IAS, India-South Africa Relations, Skill Development, National Education Policy, BRICS, IBSA, G20, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), World Trade Organisation (WTO), Make in India, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD), World Hindi Conference.

For Mains: Effect of Policies & Politics of Countries on India's Interests, India-South Africa Relations and Way Forward.

Why in News?

Recently, [India and South Africa](#) agreed to develop institutional mechanisms for **tie-ups between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) & Skill Institutions**.

Why are the Key Highlights of the Meeting?

▪ About:

- The bilateral meeting was held in **Bali, Indonesia**.
- It was decided to develop institutional mechanisms for **educational tie-ups**.
- Also, it was agreed to set up a **Joint Working Group on Education** between the two countries.

▪ Significance:

- This would further **extend the cooperation** that already exists and also to realise the full potential of bilateral cooperation in education.
- Introduction of [National Education Policy \(NEP\)](#) has already paved the way for the **internationalisation of Indian education**. India and [South Africa](#) relations are close and friendly and are rooted in shared values and interests.
 - Institutional mechanisms for educational tie-ups would strengthen **the academic & skill development partnerships** and bilateral education cooperation.
 - Further, it will be helpful in **mutual recognition of skill qualifications & capacity building in skill development**.

How has been the India-South Africa Relations?

▪ Background:

- India's links with the **struggle for freedom and justice in South Africa** date back to the period during which [Mahatma Gandhi](#) started his **Satyagraha movement in South Africa** over a century ago.
- **India was** at the forefront of the international community **in its support to the anti-apartheid movement**.
 - It was the first country to sever trade relations with the apartheid Government (in 1946) and subsequently imposed a complete -- diplomatic, commercial, cultural and sports -**embargo on South Africa**.
- After a gap of four decades, **India re-established trade and business ties in 1993, after South Africa ended** its institutionalised racial segregation ([apartheid](#)).

- In November 1993, **diplomatic and consular relations were restored.**

▪ **Political Relations:**

- After South Africa achieved democracy in 1994, it was the **Red Fort Declaration on Strategic Partnership between India and South Africa, signed in March 1997** which set the parameters for a rekindled relationship.
- The Strategic Partnership between the two countries was again reaffirmed in the **Tshwane Declaration (October 2006).**
 - Both these declarations have been **instrumental mechanisms** that have contributed in the past to both South Africa and India for **achieving their respective national objectives.**
- India and South Africa have a long history of working together by **coordinating their views and efforts in institutions of global governance/multilateral fora**, in order to achieve greater autonomy and ensure that the agenda of 'South' is prioritised.
 - For Example: [BRICS \(Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa\)](#), [IBSA \(India, Brazil, and South Africa\)](#), [G20](#), [Indian Ocean Rim Association \(IORA\)](#) and [World Trade Organisation \(WTO\)](#).

▪ **Economic:**

- In 2016, both the countries agreed to **collaborate in the defence sector, especially in terms of the opportunities available for South African private sector under 'Make in India' initiative**, energy sector, agro-processing, human resource development, and infrastructure development.
- Trade between India and South Africa has **exceeded the USD 10 billion target set by the leaders of the two countries in 2020.**

▪ **Science & Technology:**

- The Department of Science and Technology of both countries have collaborated, especially in the [Square Kilometer Array \(SKA\) project](#).

▪ **Culture:**

- With the help of the [Indian Council for Cultural Relations \(ICCR\)](#), an **intensive programme of cultural exchanges is organised** throughout South Africa including scholarships for South African nationals.
- The 9th [World Hindi Conference](#) was held in September 2012 at Johannesburg.

▪ **Indian Community:**

- The major part of the **Indian origin community came to South Africa from 1860 onwards as farm labours.**
- South Africa is home to the **highest number of Indian Diaspora in the African continent**, with a total strength of 1,218,000 thereby constituting 3% of South Africa's total population.
 - Since 2003 onwards, **India has celebrated [Pravasi Bhartiya Divas \(PBD\)](#) each year on 9th January** (the day Mahatma Gandhi returned from South Africa to India).

What should be the Way Forward for Both Countries?

- **Academic collaboration and student exchange programmes** should be commenced in the field of **Sanskrit language, Philosophy, Ayurveda and Yoga.**
 - This will pave the way for **broadening the understanding of Hinduism and the shared spiritual, cultural & economic ties.**
- Arrangements for the **collaborations in skilling sector** must be made.
 - It will encourage **tourism preneurship, help build capacities in emerging areas of travel, tourism, hospitality & business and boost people-to-people linkages.**

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. With reference to a grouping of countries known as BRICS, consider the following

statements: (2014)

1. The First Summit of BRICS was held in Rio de Janeiro in 2009.
2. South Africa was the last to join the BRICS grouping.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q.“If the last few decades were of Asia’s growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa’s.” In the light of this statement, examine India’s influence in Africa in recent years. **(2021)**

Source: PIB

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