



India - Africa at CII Exim Bank Conclave

For Prelims: CII EBC, India Africa Trade

For Mains: India Africa Relations and Agreements, Significance of Africa in Indian Economy, Presence of China in Africa, History of India Africa Relations

Why in News?

Recently, at the **17th Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Exim Bank Conclave on India-Africa Growth Partnership (New Delhi, India)**, India has emphasized upon the need for a trade and investment agreement between [India and Africa](#).

- Earlier, the Indian Vice President visited Senegal and [three MoUs \(Memorandums of Understanding\)](#) for cultural exchange, cooperation in youth matters and visa free regime were signed.

What do we know about the CII EBC on India-Africa Growth Partnership?

- **About:**
 - It was launched in the year **2005** with the support of the **Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India**.
 - It had been rechristened as **“CII EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Growth Partnership”** expanding the earlier focus on **“Project Partnership”**.
- **Significance:**
 - The conclave has not only set the ground for many **new cross-border partnerships** to take roots, but also conducted a critical evaluation of the **existing collaborative arrangements** on the basis of which a new roadmap for future Africa partnerships would be designed.
 - It has given **shape to policy** dialogues of the **Government of India, Exim Bank and the Industry**.
 - It has encouraged Indian **exporters to access African Countries**.
 - It has provided a **platform** for discussing more than 4430 projects.
 - It has encouraged companies looking for business opportunities beyond Government of India's [Lines of Credit](#).
 - It has facilitated **dialogue with other financial institutions** in the African region, with competitive **credit facilities** to support business efforts by Indian companies.

What is India Emphasizing in relations with Africa?

- India will be able to **offer new technologies** that will help expand **trade, commerce, business, investment & opportunities** for Africa's youth.
- India's development partnership with Africa will be on terms that will be **comfortable to Africa** that will liberate its potential and not constrain its future.
- India's experience with [digital revolution](#) to support Africa's growth, extend [education, health,](#)

spread [digital literacy](#) and quality infrastructure could be harnessed.

- India's [Startups](#) and digital innovations like [Unified Payments Interface \(UPI\)](#), [Open Network for Digital Commerce \(ONDC\)](#) etc. can benefit Africa immensely.

How has India's relations with Africa been?

▪ High Level Visits:

- During the last eight years, there has been a stepped up engagement with the continent, recording 36 high level visits from India and more than 100 similar ones from Africa.

▪ Loan and Assistance:

- India has extended concessional loans of over **USD 12.3 billion to Africa**.
- In addition, India has granted **USD 700 mn of grant assistance**.

▪ Projects:

- India has completed 197 projects so far, 65 more are currently under execution and 81 at the pre-execution stage.
- In **Gambia**, India has constructed the **National Assembly building** and undertaken projects in **water supply, agriculture and food processing**.
- In Zambia, India is involved in an important **hydro-power project**, in the erection of **pre-fabricated health posts** and in the **supply of vehicles**.
- In **Mauritius**, recent notable projects include the **metro express, the new Supreme Court and social housing**.
- In **Namibia**, a **new Centre of Excellence in IT** has just become operational.
- Whereas in **South Sudan**, India is focusing on training and education.

▪ Covid - 19 Assistance:

- 32 African countries received 150 tonnes of medical assistance from India.
 - Many of them also utilized '[Made in India](#)' vaccines received directly or otherwise from India.
 - At international forums, India has worked together to press for equitable and affordable access to vaccines, including through a [TRIPS](#) waiver.

▪ Human Resource:

- India had announced **50,000 scholarships during [India-Africa Forum Summit \(IAFS\)-III](#)** in 2015, out of which more than 32,000 scholarship slots have already been utilized.
- To provide high quality [virtual education](#) and medical services to partners, the [e-VidyaBharti and e-ArogyaBharti](#) networks were launched in 2019 for [tele-education](#) and [tele-medicine](#) respectively.
- India has helped African countries to promote digital transformation through setting-up of **IT Centres, Science & Technology Parks and [Entrepreneurship Development Centres \(EDC\)](#)**.

▪ Help & Relief Assistance:

- **Operation Sahayata** to assist [cyclone IDAI](#)-hit **Mozambique** in 2019, **Operation Vanilla** to provide relief to flood victims in **Madagascar** in January 2020, the support to **Mauritius** in containing the [oil spill due to the grounding of ship Wakashio](#).

▪ Energy:

- [The International Solar Alliance](#) is a notable platform that has promoted the rapid development of [clean energy technologies](#).
- This has been followed by the '[One Sun One World One Grid](#)' initiative to further promote solar and renewable energy.
- In recent years, **clean and green energy** have been increasingly prominent in India's development programmes in Africa as also in third country collaborations.

▪ Trade and Economics:

- India's bilateral trade with Africa has now reached USD 89.5 billion in 2021-22 compared with USD 56 bn the previous year.
- With cumulative investments at USD 73.9 billion from 1996-2021, India is among the top five investors in Africa.
- Through the **Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP)** Scheme that extends duty free access to 98.2% of India's total tariff lines, India has opened its market to African countries.
- So far 33 LDC African nations have been entitled to get benefits under this scheme.

What are the Opportunities in India Africa Relations?

- **Addressing Food security:**
 - **Agriculture** and [food security](#) can also be a fulcrum for deepening ties.
 - Africa has a major chunk of the **world's arable land but produces a very small percentage of the global agri-output.**
 - India has proven **expertise in the agriculture sector**, being the top producer of much agricultural produce.
- **Combating Neo-Colonialism:**
 - China has been actively pursuing **Chequebook and donation diplomacy in Africa.**
 - However, Chinese investment is seen as **neo-colonial** in nature as it focuses on **money, political influence, hard-infrastructure projects and resource extraction.**
 - India's approach, on the other hand, is one that focuses on **building local capacities and an equal partnership** with Africans and not merely with African elites concerned.
- **Preventing Global Rivalries:**
 - In recent years, several global economic players have **strengthened** their engagement with African states, with an **eye to rising economic opportunities**, including in **energy, mining, infrastructure and connectivity.**

Way Forward

- **Food and Energy Security:**
 - **Food security** and [energy security](#) have come into special focus in the context of the [Ukraine conflict](#).
 - India and Africa can **work together for mutual benefit.**
- **Enabling Strategic Convergence:**
 - Both **India and Japan** share a common interest in forging a partnership for **Africa's development** through the [Asia-Africa Growth corridor](#).
 - In this context, India can **leverage its global status** to establish Africa on the strategic map of global politics.
- **Others:**
 - **Higher education** or **skill development**, building **stronger financial partnerships** or strengthening **value chains** in **agriculture** and **food processing**, all these should be the significant sectors of cooperation between India and Africa.
 - As global engagement in Africa increases, India and Africa can ensure that **Africa does not once again turn into a theatre of rival ambitions.**

[Source: PIB](#)