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Situating India-Africa Partnerships in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

By Pamreihor Khashimwo

University of Delhi

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Keywords: india, africa, global affairs, significant actors, historical, engagement and focus.

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Situating India-Africa Partnerships in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

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Abstract- The emergence and assertiveness of India as a major actor and stakeholder in global affairs, as well as the transformation of the India-Africa relationship, are visible in the century. The article begins with a historical perspective before delving into the India-Africa partnership in its key areas. It is critical to provide an overview of the historical context and shared colonial past to focus on and contextualise the emergence of India-Africa engagement, as well as to delve into Africa's unfolding international competition, with a focus on China's growing influence. It examines the continental, regional, and bilateral aspects of India-Africa partnerships and offers a strategy for strengthening and deepening the partnership over the next decade. India now has diplomatic relations with nearly all African countries as a result of the modernisation of diplomatic and commercial representations. India provides economic assistance in the form of grants to promote development in key sectors and areas. Given the widespread criticism of China's involvement in Africa, India must focus on establishing a win-win partnership rather than engaging in behaviours that undermine this basic principle. The effective use of soft power to play to India's strengths is a critical component of India's engagement with Africa.

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I. Introduction

Interactions between India and Africa date back to ancient civilisations. Indian traders travelled to the East African coast regularly, establishing relationships with local inhabitants that led to the establishment of Africa-based family businesses on the continent. Besides, India's political philosophy and ideas influenced African decolonisation movements. Following independence, India and Africa cooperate to establish a just, representative, and democratic global order and strengthened their relations. Regular high-level bilateral, regional, and multilateral visits and summits have aided in the consolidation of political partnerships and other areas of engagement. After being ignored for decades, India re-energised its engagement and Africa has now emerged as the focal point of Indian diplomacy.

It is critical to revisit and critically examine the various dimensions of India-Africa relations to better understand and strengthen ties, as well as to foster greater cooperation in the twenty-first century. What impact did the India-Africa interaction have, and how can they benefit from it? What are the issues that India and Africa should be concerned about? In how India and Africa engage in the century. India has advanced its cooperation with Africa through South-South Cooperation, bolstering its claim to represent developing African countries. India has identified itself as a global South advocate and has found support for this role, particularly in Africa. Economic, political, security, energy, and global issues have recently risen to prominence. Africa becomes far more important and prominent in terms of India's global ambitions and energy sources.

India-Africa relations are thriving and continuing to be charted on the global stage and yet the relationship is being scrutinised and drawing international attention. Following India's economic liberalisation in the 1990s, the African continent became more important for India's economic and energy goals. Several initiatives for economic cooperation with African countries have been launched, including the extension of credit lines to the Preferential Trade Area, an MoU on cooperation between India and the Southern African Development Community, the Focus Africa Programme, and the establishment of an ₹1 billion financing schemes for regional cooperation with Africa. India increased its investments in Africa to strengthen its economic ties and energy security, as well as to develop a mining investment strategy. Three major India-Africa summits took place, resulting in a significant increase in trade volume. The 4th India-Africa Forum Summit is scheduled for September 2020 to assess progress on key pledges and chart the course for an empowering partnership. Nonetheless, the scheduled summit has been cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic concerns.[1]

Based on the 1954 Panchsheel principles of peaceful co-existence, mutual respect, non-aggression, non-interference, equality, and mutual benefits, the underlying principles informing India-Africa relations demonstrate a strong sense of continuity (Renu 2011). India's historical connections remain relevant today. Previously, India in Africa appears less calibrated on the surface but is expressed as a noble and simple language of South-South cooperation. The recent development depicts a story in which growing relations with Africa began and progressed in a much more natural manner, led by business and trade-related groups that supported more networks and the reason

Author: University of Delhi, India. e-mail: khashimwo.jnu@gmail.com

[1] The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), detected in late 2019 in China and declared a pandemic by WHO, has become one of humanity's most difficult tests in modern history. It has overburdened the global healthcare system and resulted in long-term geopolitical shifts.

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for investing in Africa, followed by government entities into official summits. The Indian government did not lead, but rather followed, and it was still plagued by a policy-making capacity deficit (Large 2013). The first India-Africa Forum Summit in 2008 was known as the "India-Africa Framework for Cooperation," and it was attended by 14 African heads of state. The summit issued an ambitious set of commitments to advance key areas of partnership and to officially visualise mutual benefits. Summits of the India-Africa Forum were launched to highlight the two regions' joint resolve to enhance economic and strategic content to multidimensional cooperation. The "Addis Ababa Declaration" and the "Framework for Enhanced Cooperation" were adopted at the second Summit in Addis Ababa in 2011.

The 4th India-Africa Strategic Dialogue on the theme "India and Africa: Deepening Security Engagement" was held in 2018 to broaden the concept of security and suggest ways to strengthen security partnerships. Even though China continues to outperform India in many areas of engagement, India is now widely regarded as an important player in Africa (Ian 2014). Indian policymakers argued that India has a positive image and is not viewed as an aggressive power, but rather as the continent's 'great advantage.' China, on the other hand, is becoming more involved in the African economy, following Western world rules and pursuing stronger political relations with African countries, as evidenced by the establishment of the China-Africa Forum in 2000. Given its regional neighbours and numerous domestic challenges, India has significant foreign policy priorities. As a result, Africa was not India's primary focus for a brief period. However, is critical to understand the historical and political perspectives of the India-Africa partnership.

II. Historical and Political

India has been a long-standing African partner and is not a newcomer to the continent. Even today, the civilisational links that exist between India and Africa are acknowledged and used as a bridging factor to strengthen relations. Historically, slaves from India made up more than half of all slaves arriving at the Cape in the 17th century, establishing the link (Ali Sadiq 1987a). The French colonised the Western Indian Ocean islands in the 18th century and began recruiting Indian slaves for Mauritius and Reunion (Dubey 2016). In the late 1800s, Indian labourers arrived in East Africa to help build the Uganda-Kenya railway (Brueggemann 2000). By the turn of the 19th century, approximately 20000 Indian slaves constituted 13 percent of the Islands' slave population (Carter 2006). Later, Mauritius and Reunion recruited Indian masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, and lascars, resulting in an economically stable Indian slave population (Carter 2006). The descendants of these merchants contribute a significant portion of their host countries' local GDP. Many Indian workers stayed on to work as artisans, traders, clerks, and, eventually, small business owners. administrators and some even became doctors and lawyers (Brueggemann 2000).

The relationship began with enterprising Indian merchants seeking ocean trade routes. They set sail across the Arabian Sea to the west in search of profitable markets and commercial frontiers (Dubey 2016). India and Africa became part of the Indian Ocean trade circuit (Dubey 2016; Ali Shadiq 1987b) which not only brought economic benefits but also contributed to the development of internal links in the African continent even before Europeans arrived (Jeevanjee 1912). Periplus demonstrates India's trading contacts not only with Egypt and coastal states, but also with northern Somalia, the ancient Punt, the Kingdom of Kush (now Sudan), and Axum (now Ethiopia). During the ancient and medieval periods, there was a significant presence of Indian traders in Africa. Trade links facilitated the movement of people from both regions.

Even though, the African presence in India is minor in comparison to Indian migration to African territories. They played a positive role; for example, Islamised Africans (known as Siddis) could contribute to development in India's Bengal, Gujarat, and Deccan (Dubey 2016). During Muslim rule in India, it imported African slaves as domestic workers and soldiers. The Siddis first arrived in the subcontinent in 628 A.D. at the port of Bharuch, and with the first Arab Islamic invasions of the subcontinent in 712 A.D., several others followed, and later groups served with Muhammad Bib Qasim's army (Jaysuriya *et al.* 2003). Several Siddis settled on the West Coast (between Bombay and Goa) during the medieval period and ruled this region from the Mughal era to the arrival of European powers in India (Jayasuriya and Pankhurst 2003). They were discovered today in Gujarat, Karnataka, and Hyderabad (Jaysuriya *et al.* 2003). Furthermore, various African communities arose from the 19th-century abolitionist campaign and were channelled to three different locations (Bombay, Pune, and Nashik) and became known as 'Bombay Africans' and 'Nasik Boys' (Ali Sadiq 1987a). They identified with European culture, ideas, and manners, as opposed to local Siddis who adopted local culture and religion (Jayasuriya and Pankhurst 2003).

The concept of a shared historical experience marked by colonialism is an important factor in India-Africa relations. Before 1945, the emphasis was initially on political issues such as fighting racial discrimination and colonial establishment. Human migration from India to Africa, particularly to the east, stems from India's unique relationship with the British Empire and was boosted after 1947 because of its shared historical experience with colonial rule. Poetic and prosaic India-Africa ties grew stronger after Indian independence, particularly under Nehru's charismatic leadership (Daniel

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2012). The common experience of colonialism was most formative, with India serving as a model for colonial Africa. During the independence movement, the Indian National Congress served as a model for certain African political parties, including the Sudanese Graduate Congress and the Transvaal Indian Congress. Such colonial ties and post-colonial legacies continue to influence even today. The official language of India's African relations is an officially sanctioned history (Pham 2011). The emphasis on partnership demonstrates the postcolonial language of political and moral solidarity's strong continuity.

Following India's independence, the focus of India-Africa interaction shifted to political issues such as anti-colonialism and the adoption of South-South cooperation through bilateral and multilateral organisations. However, there have been periods of benign neglect as India's strategic and economic priorities have revolved around improving relations with other parts of the world, particularly with the neighbours. For a brief period, India's relations with Africa were strained, resulting in restrictions on trade and investment. During the early 1960s and 1970s, few Indian companies invested in East African countries because India's domestic policies were highly restrictive in issuing the foreign exchange required for domestic firms to invest overseas. Besides, the Indian diplomatic and economic boycott of South Africa continues until 1994 in protest of the racist regime, apartheid policy, separation, and segregation. In the 1990s, economic, educational, and technical cooperation were prioritised in India-Africa relations. When South Africa became a democratic nation under Mandela's presidency, India resumed trade and diplomatic relations.

In 1955, the African Asian Bandung Conference focused on self-determination, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, and equality for the third world. In the mid-1960s and 1970s changing global circumstances and imperatives forced India to reframe its Africa policy, as it sought a new equation with African countries. Many African leaders began to regard India as a regional power, as events on the subcontinent such as 1962[2] and 1971[3] wars had a direct impact on India-Africa relations. The first NAM Summit at Belgrade in 1961, where Abdul Nasser of Africa and Nehru played a crucial role, marked the beginning of regular institutionalised solidarity meet between India and Africa and other third world countries.

It was in Lusaka NAM Summit that proposed South-South Cooperation through which India was to provide economic and technical aid among developing nations to counter neo-colonial policies perpetuated by the industrially advanced countries (Dubey 2016). Centred on the shared colonial experiences, India and Africa worked closely in the newly set up intercontinental institutions and promote closer South-South cooperation. During the Cold War period, decolonisation, and the abolition of racial discrimination in Africa became focal points of India-Africa interactions, this resulted in multidimensional partnership; fight against racism, support for liberation struggles, Afro-Asian assertion culminating in NAM, economic diplomacy alongside security, and peacebuilding under South-South cooperation (Gupta 2018). However, it is argued that India's participation in the NAM group's activities is purely symbolic (Mahaprastha 2012).

Nehru later became the chief architect of the Indian National Congress's African policy. Under Nehru, India linked the Indian freedom struggle to the African struggle against imperialism and colonialism, and it saw African decolonisation as a continuation of its struggle (Dubey 2016). Nehru carried forward the liberation movement and the fight against racial discrimination in Africa. As a result, after independence, decolonisation, and the end of racial discrimination in Africa became the focal point of India-African relations. During the first year of Indian independence, African countries recognised the Indian position by involving it in African struggles. India provided diplomatic support for liberation struggles at various international forums such as the UN, Commonwealth, NAM, and others.

The push for India's Africa policy has been critical in making Africa more visible within India. India became interested in Africa, a process accelerated by China's massive visible presence on the continent following the third Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2006. Africa is a critical support base for India's United Nations Security Council (UNSC) goal. This is also reflected in India's participation in various regional organisations, the most prominent of which is the BRICS framework. Furthermore, the trilateral India-Brazil-South Africa Forum fosters India-Africa engagement. Despite fierce competition from China, India pursues its strategic interests on the continent through multilateral participation and support for African organisations on security issues. It has been bolstering military ties with African countries along the Indian Ocean, including Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar, Tanzania, Mozambique, and, most notably, South Africa. Since 2008, the Indian navy has also contributed to anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden.

Gandhi was instrumental in bridging the gap between India and Africa. India and Africa were linked through Gandhi, the Indian National Congress, diasporas, and the same British colonial rule. Gandhi's philosophy captivated people all over the world, particularly African leaders. Gandhi had a significant impact on African history. African leaders have shared

[2] The negative impact of the 1962 India-China war on Indian foreign policy was reversed by India's victory in the 1971 Bangladesh war.
[3] Following its decisive victory over Pakistan in 1971, India emerged as the subcontinent's primary dominant power.

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the views of Gandhi's Indian National Congress, asserting the right to equality, political participation, and non-violence protest. In 1928, the All India Congress met in Calcutta and established an overseas department to establish contact with political formations and leaders in Africa. K Nkrumah of Ghana was convinced of the Gandhian liberation strategy, which was developed in India to fight the war of independence. Ceasley Hayford, a Ghanaian nationalist established the West African Congress on the model of the Indian National Congress (Huttenback 1966).

Another aspect and benefit of Indian interaction is the presence of large diasporas in Africa. Under Gandhi's leadership, the Indian diaspora established various political organisations in South Africa to combat British discrimination, including the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1894, the Transvaal Indian Congress in 1903, and the South African Indian Congress in 1920. African leaders are at ease with leaders of the Indian diaspora, as well as India's support and connections to the Indian diaspora in Africa. Gandhi, Nehru, and the INC inspired and exhorted the Indian diaspora to begin liberation struggles against colonial powers in South Africa, Kenya, and Mauritius. This left a long legacy of participation in Africa's anti-colonial struggle by India and the Indian diaspora.

Now, with over 2.8 million Persons of Indian Origin in Africa, India has the world's second-largest diaspora. India has a stronger diaspora connection. The Indian diaspora in Africa has a long history rooted in colonial and post-colonial advantages over China. To capitalise on the roles and contributions of the Indian diaspora, India established the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in 2003, which provided the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman to Indians living in foreign countries, including those in Africa. It grew into an annual gathering to strengthen diaspora ties. In 2010, it established the Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre to foster economic ties, with Africa playing a key role. Besides, mini *Pravasi Bharatiya 'Divas-Africa'* was held in Durban as part of the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first indentured Indian labourers in Africa in 2010. The Indian government has supported and strengthened Indian communities in Africa as well as India's interests; however, this is a negotiated relationship with no such automatic synergies (Viswanathan 2018).

In the new circumstances of a more open and globalising world, it is not always easy to reconcile with recent forms of more material, pragmatic, and economically driven business on the continent. To keep pace with the rapidly changing relationship landscape, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a set of ten guiding principles for India's engagement with Africa in 2018. Modi used the 10th BRICS Summit in 2016 to expand India's Africa outreach project. India and several African countries are now associated politically, economically, and in the energy sector. New Delhi remains committed to expanding and strengthening its commercial ties with other African countries.

India now responded to the Chinese aggressive move in Africa through economic diplomacy, regular leader visits, and other major drivers that guided India's Africa policy for both short-term and long-term engagement. Since the 1990s India's Africa policy has expanded its engagement to several important areas. The Indian policy in Africa is now to forge new connections and renew old friendships to reverse India's declining image and influence among Africans and bring new areas of engagement such as security, energy, health, agriculture, technology, education, trade, economics, development, etc.

III. Trade, Economic, and Development

India's economic relations with Africa remain the focal point of its engagements. Heretofore, India and Africa traded largely in traditional goods like jute, textiles, and clothing. In the 1970s and 1980s, raw cotton, raw cashew nuts, nonferrous metal, pearls, semi-precious stones, rock phosphate, dyeing, tanning, and colouring materials were among India's imports from Africa. Africa now accounts for nearly 9 percent of India's imports, up from 3.5 percent in 2005. India's trade with Africa increased from $1 billion in 1991 to $7.7 billion in 1999, and it increased significantly from $42.8 billion in 2009 to $70 billion in 2014 (Gupta 2018). In 2009-10 India invested $1.52 billion in Africa. Several aspects of India's economic profile in Africa conform to larger patterns, such as trade, geography, and the composition of trades based on products and services (Modi 2010). The India-Africa economic dynamics have made significant inroads in recent decades, with trade between India and Africa increasing from $70 billion in 2014 to $90 billion in 2017-2018. India's main African trading partners include Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, and Egypt. Following the economic reforms of the 1990s, India's economic diplomacy began to focus on African countries that responded favourably to Indian moves. This enabled India to forge new economic partnerships, and commercial considerations pushed Indian foreign policy toward a more pragmatic approach.

India's exports to Africa are more diverse, including automobiles, manufactured goods, machinery, transportation equipment, food, and pharmaceutical products. Most Indian exports to Africa are made up of manufactured goods. The interaction of India with African countries drives economic interests to expand, India's imports from Africa are crude petroleum, gold, and inorganic chemical products. Oil accounts for roughly 20 percent of India's fuel imports from Africa. Several Indian companies are looking to Africa to increase their overseas investment and the government intends to promote even further. Many Indian companies are now investing in Africa, such as Carborundum

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Universal Ltd, which purchased a 51 percent stake in South Africa's Foskor Zirconia Proprietary Ltd, the world's third-largest producer of zirconia. Financial Technologies India Limited group completed a deal to acquire a 60 percent stake in Botswana-based Bourse Africa. Bharat Heavy Electricals invested $2 billion in three coal-fired power projects, and National Thermal Power Corporation Limited secured 3 million tonnes of LNG per year in exchange for building three power plants in Nigeria. MTN-Bharti secures a US$ 10.7 billion bid for Zain Telecom in 2010, Essar Group acquires a majority stake in Econet Wireless, Jet Airways expands transport links from South Africa to India, and ONGC increases investments in West Africa.

One aspect of India's economic relations with Africa that stands out is its position as the world's largest customer of gold bullion and the world's leading diamond processor, accounting for roughly 86 percent of the global market. To meet rapid domestic demand, India is eyeing Africa's resources such as copper, uranium, iron ore, and others. ArcelorMittal, an Indian company signed a US$1.6 billion agreement with the Liberian government in 2007 for iron ore exploration, and Vedanta Resources owns a stake in Zambia's Konkola Copper Mine. The high levels of liquidity of Indian multinationals, as well as Africa's growing consumer market, are increasingly appealing to Indian companies. The Indian pharmaceutical industry is estimated to be worth US$1.119 billion on the African continent.

India's development assistance has become more intertwined with commercial considerations. India's Africa development collaboration policy is built on economic and technical cooperation. The former focuses on trade and investment, while the latter promotes business regulation and opportunity. India established a novel development partnership administration to synchronize the work of Indian development agencies and simplify aid spending. The growing scale of development aid and future ambitions underscored the intent to manage more effectively and strategically, including in terms of public diplomacy, to build India's image around the world (Dubey 2010). Previously, the reasons for the following economic diplomacy were purely political.

India is now more carefully defining and redefining its national interests and pursuing them with zeal. Earlier, the Ministry of External Affairs was the primary coordinator of Indian development aid, but the Ministry of Commerce or Exim Bank now plays a larger role in managing concessional finance agreements and trade with African countries. Financial credit mechanisms are also a part of India's economic engagement, supporting business expansion and funding various projects. Africa is the largest regional recipient of Exim Bank's total line of credit and launched a duty-free tariff preference scheme in 2008. Numerous key initiatives are in place to strengthen economic ties including preferential market access for exports from low-income countries in 33 African countries. India implemented the "focus Africa" program to increase interaction by identifying potential areas of bilateral trade and investment. The program, which involves 24 African countries aims to increase Indian exports of textiles, drugs and pharmaceuticals, machinery, transportation equipment, and telecom and information technology. The Trilateral Commission is also an initiative of India, Brazil, and South Africa designed to foster cooperation in fields such as health, information technology, civil aviation, and defence, as well as business exchanges in infrastructure, technology, and sustainable development. To facilitate joint projects, India-Africa project partnership conclaves were held between various Indian ministries and banks and the African Development Bank. This conclave explored over 200 projects worth $30 billion in infrastructure, mining, agriculture, telecommunications, and healthcare (Munjal and Wutawunashe 2012).

Indian business has also been linked with technology transfer, pursuing approaches such as the 'Triple-A' strategy championed by the Confederation of Indian Industry for affordable, adaptable, and appropriate technology. India even launched the Techno-Economic Approach for Africa-India Movement, a special credit facility for eight West African countries to promote socio-economic development through access to Indian technology. With African Union (AU) cooperation, India's Pan African e-network Project connects academic institutions and hospitals in many African countries with Indian counterparts via a satellite network enabling tele-education and telemedicine. The project, worth US$117 million is a collaborative effort between the AU and the government of India to make Indian expertise and facilities available to Africa.

India's TEAM-9 initiative was to reach out to West Africa, collaborated with eight West African countries to share expertise, intellectual and physical resources, and create economic opportunities. Under these initiatives, India is transferring technical skills and technology to Africa in agriculture, small-scale industries, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, information, and infrastructure development (Bijoy 2010). In addition, India provides US$5 million in lines of credit (LoC) each to the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank), the Industrial Development Bank Ltd. of Kenya, and the Eastern African Development Bank. India provided billions of dollars in grants and LoCs to African countries for projects ranging from an IT training centre in Lesotho to rural electrification in Mozambique and Ethiopia, railways in Senegal and Mali, and cement factory in Congo. India's commercial relations with Africa have

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evolved into an important component including the energy of its relations.

IV. India's Energy Footprint and Engagement

India imports more than 80 percent of its crude oil from abroad, and demand is rapidly increasing. India's share of global energy consumption is currently 3.5 percent and is expected to reach 10 percent by 2031. With only 0.3 percent of global oil reserves but one-fifth of the global population and energy consumption is expected to grow at a 4.2 percent annual rate, allowing it to surpass China as the world's largest energy market by 2030. In the context of India's changing internal and external environments, expanding market size, and rising rate of consumption, India sought new energy sources to meet rising demand. India is attempting to diversify its energy sources by investing in foreign energy assets. India urgently needs to diversify its energy sources to close the demand-supply gap, as indigenous energy production is insufficient to meet the country's high demand. India has limited domestic energy resources, and its reliance on energy imports will likely continue for the next two decades or more. India faces numerous energy security challenges, the gravity of which will grow in the future as energy demand outstrips supply. Oil and coal will continue to dominate India's energy mix, but their shares are declining as natural gas and renewable energy sources gradually increase their percentage share.

Energy security has emerged as a critical component of India's foreign policy focus to sustain the country's high growth rates and development. The Middle East is the primary supplier of oil and gas. However, due to precarious security and unstable political concerns, as well as the rise of transnational terrorist outfits such as Al Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS), the radicalisation of Islam, and other security-related concerns, this region is no longer a secure source of energy supply. India must diversify its energy sources and design policies that reflect domestic sentiment. In this context, Africa is one of the best energy-producing regions for India, and it is becoming an increasingly important component of engagement. India should certainly step up its energy diplomacy in Africa, particularly with oil-producing countries such as Nigeria, Niger Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Ghana, and others. Africa has vast reserves of fossil fuels, accounting for 14.5 percent of global oil reserves and 23.2 percent of gas reserves. Sudan, Mozambique, Tanzania, Libya, Ghana, Egypt, and Algeria are the hub countries. Africa has become an important and alternative source of energy for India to meet the rising energy demand.

The current energy debate in India is shifting to Africa as a source of oil and gas. India's investment in Africa has increased, and engagement has gradually gained momentum, manifesting itself visibly in the energy sector. Energy security has influenced India's moves into the African oil sector (Gupta 2018). Today, energy resources have become one of India's primary interests in Africa. Indian energy companies gradually began to establish themselves in Africa's energy assets. In all this cross-cutting cooperation, the energy sector deserves an evaluation, given the opportunities and challenges that India faces with oil and other energy-related issues. Africa is vital to India's energy interests, and it is rapidly becoming a major energy source for India, with Nigeria and Angola supplying a large portion of oil and South Africa supplying coal. The main issue is how India will respond and engage in a manner that is different from the traditional African buyer. Moreover, 89 percent of its oil is delivered by sea, posing a security risk.

India's energy strategies in Africa were considered benign casualties; however, which appear to have been reconsidered and critically reassessed. With the 'Make in India' initiative and other programmes, oil-rich African states are becoming more relevant to India. Because the engagement is not only fast-moving but also intensifying, it has become even more important to reflect on the changing contours of the multifaceted partnership and have a realistic assessment of the energy sector. The current rate of India's economic growth will drive energy demand and increase the country's reliance on imported energy. Africa is likely to be a significant source of augmenting and supplementing India's increasing energy needs. The partnership in the energy sector would benefit both regions and deepen economic and political cooperation. Energy issues did not previously figure because energy was not perceived as a national security issue, and slow economic growth and lack of industrial growth meant low demand for energy. Today, India recognises the importance of forging stronger and longer-lasting energy ties with Africa.

The nature of India-Africa engagement and energy investment has shifted dramatically. Indian energy companies such as Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), and Oil India Limited (OIL) own a 30 percent stake in the Rovuma area of Mozambique, which borders South Sudan. Indian firms are establishing gas compression plants and LNG terminals in various African countries. The ONGC has invested in oil exploration ventures in Libya and Nigeria, and hydrocarbon sector of Sudan and offshore drilling in Côte d'Ivoire. Many private oil companies, including Essar Oil Limited, OVL, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), and Mittal Energy Limited (MEL), have agreed to share

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resources in exchange for the development of local infrastructure. For example, an OVL-MEL joint venture was awarded oil exploration rights in Nigeria in exchange for the development of $6 billion in oil-refinery and power-generation infrastructure (Lucey et al. 2015). OVL is currently the most active Indian company, OIL, Bharat Petroleum (BP), and Hindustan Petroleum (HP) are other companies active in Africa. IOC purchased an offshore block in Cote d'Ivoire, and other Indian energy firms purchased stakes in oil and gas blocks in Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, and Senegal. There are numerous exploration projects underway in Libya, Nigeria, Egypt, Sudan, Mozambique, and the joint Development Zone along Nigeria's maritime border with Sao Tome and Principe.

Today, Indian firms are lining up to gain a stake in Africa's energy sector. ONGC Mittal Energy Ltd. has collaborated with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation on the construction of a Greenfield petroleum refinery plant, Essar in Nigeria and Madagascar, and Reliance in Sudan, which have demonstrated how Indian oil companies are steadily expanding their interests and presence in the continent's petroleum sector. International Coal Ventures Private Limited, National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, National Mineral Development Corporation, Coal India Limited, and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited acquired a 65 percent stake in the mines of Benga, Zambezi, and Tete. Taurian Resources Private Limited and Earthstone FZE are two Indian private players currently operating in Niger, while Varun Energy Corporation is active in Madagascar.

India's infrastructure associates and Overseas Infrastructure Alliance signed an MoU with Cameroon to improve the country's energy and infrastructure construction, rehabilitation of rural, low-voltage power grid, and development of small hydropower projects to address the rural power supply problem in the country. The emergence of interdependence between India and Africa will be driven by Africa's energy resources. With complementarities between the economies and excellent political relations, the India-Africa energy partnership is likely to develop and strengthen as an important component of future relationships. However, there are several challenges and barriers to effectively addressing Africa's energy sector. For example, ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) experienced diminishing returns because of declining output, insecurity, and political uncertainty. Terrorism and piracy are critical issues because African oil sources are mostly found offshore and are vulnerable to piracy. Can India overcome this constraint with technological assistance? Greater cooperation in the energy sector will have a knock-on effect on socio-economic growth and development, as well as strong energy ties.

Nuclear energy cooperation can play an important role in the India-Africa energy partnership through uranium trade. To support its nuclear energy expansion strategy, India requires a steady supply of uranium. South Africa is a potential uranium supplier; other African countries with proven uranium reserves include Algeria, Malawi, Burundi, and Congo. India is confronted with numerous energy security challenges. The India Hydrocarbon Vision 2025 urged India to ensure energy security by increasing indigenous production and investing in equity oil abroad. While imagining a greener, cleaner India powered by renewable energy. India and Africa are demonstrating potential collaborations in the renewable energy sector. India has set an ambitious goal of adding 175 GW of capacity by 2022 (MNRE, 2018), and East Africa is also seeing significant growth. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) offers an excellent platform to strengthen cooperation in the renewable energy sector. Through the ISA, India has now created a channel of uncoerced influence on 14 African nations that have signed and joined the ISA (Patey 2013). As a smart counterbalance to China's influence in the continent, the key concepts of India's relations with Africa are characterised by a blend of inter-related political, strategic, security, energy, agriculture, capacity-building, and economic factors.

V. Agriculture, Capacity Building, and Skill Training

Agriculture employs more than 70 percent of the African population and it is one of Africa's top economic development and job creation options. The World Bank recognises the expansion of the African food market, which is expected to be worth $1 trillion by 2030. This explains why Africa will have a massive food demand. Africa needs to transform an existing farm-centred system into a more commercialised and productive business. Today Africa's agricultural output is gradually increasing, and more jobs are created along value chains such as agricultural trade, farm servicing, agro-processing, urban retailing, and food services. These will improve Africans' living conditions while also benefiting small-scale farmers and small and medium-sized enterprises in the agri-food system (Udensi 2020). To maintain these gains and propel Africa's agricultural transformation, massive investment in the sector is required. These dynamics are creating opportunities for growth in Africa's food system, which will certainly necessitate strong collaboration and partnerships in the sector with India.

Agriculture in Africa has an enormous trade potential, India encourages agribusiness in Africa by establishing vocational training institutes and incubation centres, such as the Agri-business Incubation Program in Ghana, Cameroon, Angola, Mali, and Uganda (Large 2013). Fruits, nuts, edible vegetables, coffee, tea, spices, oilseeds, and other products are among the African agricultural imports to India. Around 80 Indian

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agricultural companies invest in Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal, and Mozambique. Notwithstanding a public-private partnership between the government and Indian Agro companies. India proposed establishing food-testing laboratories in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Gambia, Rwanda, and the Republic of Congo through the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics. The India-Africa Seeds Bridge Project in Liberia, Kenya, Malawi, and Senegal aims to provide quality seeds to African farmers while creating a market for Indian seed companies in African markets.

The collaboration in the food processing and agriculture sectors is gaining traction. India's bilateral partnership with African nations through a training programme that provides soft loans in agriculture and allied sectors to improve farming techniques, irrigation, and soil quality. Through the IBSA fund, trilateral cooperation between the Indian Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management, and the US Agency for International Development to train agricultural practitioners from African countries in specialised practice to improve income and productivity. Notably, India's approach to development partnerships aligns with both the SDGs and Agenda 2063 and is well-received in Africa (Viswanathan and Mishra 2020).

India and Africa have deep roots in human resource development and capacity building, especially in generations of Africans educated in India, and in the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme since 1964, which links to the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme (SCAAP). The ITEC Programme is an Indian aid programme that provides technical assistance to developing countries, including many African countries. India's role and partnerships in Africa emphasised local skill development and a people-centred approach to development (Dubey 2010). Human resource development is a distinct aspect of India's engagement, which is competitive because India has a high-quality, affordable higher education sector and advanced information technology. India-Africa Summit launch several training initiatives and pledged to work for the economy, science and technology, capacity building, and infrastructure preferential market access for Africa's 34 least developed countries.

The Confederation of Indian Industry and India Exim Bank organised annual conclaves on India-Africa to encourage Indian exports to expand their presence in Africa. The assistance to African countries via the SCAAP has provided civilian training, projects and project-related activities, a deputation of Indian experts abroad, study tours, equipment donations, and disaster relief aid to 19 African countries. Most of this assistance is channelled through the ITEC programme. India has pledged to establish capacity-building institutions in Africa, as well as vocational training and human settlement centres, an education project in Namibia, medical equipment procurement in Seychelles, and solar panels and school equipment in Rwanda. India possesses practical skills in a variety of sectors that can be applied to African needs. India's expertise in agro-processing and small farm mechanisation is relevant to Africa's farming industry and has the potential to support African countries in addressing their food security crisis (ADB 2011). At the same time, India is capitalising on emerging agricultural opportunities to reap the benefits of Africa's enormous agricultural potential. Indian agricultural companies have purchased hundreds of thousands of hectares of land in Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal, and Mozambique to grow rice, sugarcane, maize, and lentils for the Indian domestic market (Nelson 2009).

India can provide technology at a very competitive price. India's strengths in biotechnology, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, railroads, and space research are crucial to Africa in the twenty-first century. The India-Africa partnership in these areas can be mutually beneficial and trustable. India is interested in Africa because it is more than just a natural resource provider; it is also a processing and value addition base (Price 2011). India's increased investment in Africa in new industries and sectors such as agro-industries, SMEs, pharmaceuticals, textiles, information technology, banking, and retail offers the opportunity to accelerate diversification and transition from an agricultural to a more industrial and technology-based economy. However, India must capitalise on competition from other countries, particularly China. Because Africa is open and receives the best of all available options, it is well-positioned to take advantage of the multi-polar world order. India must strengthen its bargaining strategies, mitigate risks, and capitalise on medium and long-term opportunities (Roy 2012).

The India-Africa partnership has elicited speculative and ideological reactions, as well as a mix of hope and anxiety. There is a reason for Africans to resist the Indian onslaught. India has been accused of stealing land in Africa. A section of Africans claims that India wants to farm on African soil to feed billions of Indians, accusing them of outsourcing their land while millions of Africans go hungry. Besides, some tension exists in race relations between Indian and black Africans, if left unaddressed, this could escalate into open hostility. Such racial hostility occurred in the past and can easily be overlooked and allowed to fester in the future. When this sensitive issue arises, New Delhi must intervene quickly and effectively to address it and mitigate the potentially damaging flavours it may infuse into India-Africa relations. In addition, there are numerous competitors on the continent, including China. One of the most pressing issues for India on the continent is an active and assertive China, which

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demanded India's immediate attention and effective response.

VI. India and China in Africa

India is currently reshaping its foreign policy and position toward Africa within the international system. Navigating the changing scenario of this relationship, India recognises the opportunities and challenges inherent in Africa. Africa is germinating new economic, market, energy, and other opportunities, and a one-of-a-kind relationship with India is possible. India is neither a newcomer nor a recent arrival in Africa. Yet, creating a sustainable development partnership from this new beginning promises to be a critical task for Indians and Africans in the twenty-first century. On a more fundamental level, however, India ignores the deep-rooted and challenging accounts of the past that go beyond a multifaceted and diverse Indian role in the continent. For many decades, India has engaged in Africa on a much smaller scale than other countries such as China. Nevertheless, India has an advantage because of its greater cultural, historical, and political proximity.

The period of improved relations increased investment, and more involved government engagement has marked a significant departure that, if continued and sustained, appears significant for India to expand its engagement in the continent, with economic and energy quickly emerging as key areas. The underlying shift in India's relationship with Africa indicates business-led and development-focused engagement. With India's focus and pursuit, relations have recently experienced a resurgence with a greater emphasis on action beyond agreements. At the same time, the growth of Sino-African ties is remarkable, and it is quickly becoming a major topic of discussion in India's international relations. This raises the question of how India can increase its engagement with Africa despite capacity and practical constraints. The question is whether India will stick to its principles while expanding its footprint in Africa, or whether it will follow China's lead on the continent.

The rivalry between India and China for Africa's resources, opportunities, and land is simply a modern manifestation of an old relationship; South-South cooperation first emerged in the 1950s in the common struggle of former colonies for independence and greater autonomy (Bloomberg Business Week 2011). Both nations were at the forefront of this movement and have since competed to become the leading representative of Southern states (McCarthy 2011). India and China's diplomatic tensions and boundary disputes have spilt over into their African activities. In response to India's growth, China sees it as a competitor and is actively expanding its presence.

India has an advantage over China in Africa because it is more benign and less domineering. Furthermore, unlike China, India does not engage in political and commercial alliances with rogue African regimes. Because of their shared historical experiences and ties, India is well-positioned to eventually have a strong and more significant presence in the continent. However, not all similarities and connections are positive. There are ethnic issues, even between Africans of Indian ancestry and Black Africans. Tensions can be seen in Kenya, where, despite decades of coexistence, there is still little integration between the two communities. This is not a dynamic that China is currently confronted with. China is viewed as a new power with few socio-historical connections and thus less baggage to bring to the table. Articulating and addressing the complexities of the India-Africa racial dynamic is something that India should be aware of and try to influence positively if it is to compete with China and emerge as a new economic superpower (Sharma 2010).

India's economic liberalisation in the 1990s had a wide-ranging impact on African foreign policy. Its interest in expanding economic relations, ensuring energy security, and diversifying imports have taken centre stage in the country's African foreign policy. As China's growing engagement in Africa for resources and influence has intensified, India's foreign policy toward Africa must be evaluated regularly to reflect changes in the continent's political and economic scenarios. The exploration of alternative energy sources other than the Middle East, as well as the pursuit of alternative energy sources such as nuclear and renewable energy, shape India-China geopolitics (Viswanathan and Mishra 2020). In Africa, India must meet the challenges and consistent competition posed by China and other major countries such as the United States and the European Union. China's aggressive policy and energetic involvement in numerous sectors have given it a significant presence in Africa. India must establish a presence in Africa, despite China's outperformance over Indian firms.

Both nations are concerned about their energy security, which could lead to competition and confrontation in Africa. Though India has more goodwill than China, which could help it expand its presence in Africa. Indian diplomacy in Africa cannot afford to ignore competition with China and its consequences. In recent decades, China has significantly increased its energy footprint and development investment. In terms of capital investment in Africa, India has lagged behind China so far. This is undoubtedly a significant challenge for India, which necessitates the development of a policy framework for improved cooperation with Africa. This will almost certainly increase competition, rather than cooperation, between India and China on the continent in various sectors. Despite all historical ties

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and collaboration, Africa has serious reasons to be sceptical of India's newfound interests in Africa. Mineral fuels account for most of India's African imports, demonstrating the country's seemingly insatiable thirst for energy and other resources. There is a widespread belief in Africa that India will increasingly be used as a source of fuel, with trends indicating that India will continue to regard Africa as merely a supplier of raw materials to meet India's rapidly growing demand.

Is China a competitor to India in terms of energy in Africa? What steps have Indian leaders and policymakers taken to address the challenges? The increasing demand for energy to meet India's ever-increasing needs demonstrates African energy sector assertiveness. India has been playing catch-up with China; in 2009, India lost out on contracts worth US$12.5 billion to China in the energy sector. While the emerging scenario is one of the rivalries that has been somewhat moderated by accommodation, depending on the circumstances, India may be more competitive than China in its engagement strategies with Africa in the medium to long term (Cheru and Obi 2011). While India frequently points to China's voracious appetite for African resources, India also has this appetite (Saidi and Wolf 2011). To compete with Chinese investment, New Delhi must become more involved in the continent. India has lost several commercial battles to China in various infrastructure projects, and oil and energy ventures and China is currently ahead on all fronts. China is relying on the state and the private sector to guide its African policies. In contrast, India's engagement with Africa is heavily reliant on the private sector, with little state involvement in commercial and trade activities. Chinese influence in Africa is growing because of large-scale infrastructure loans for the construction of roads, highways, transmission lines, power plants, ports, and mines across the continent. Thus, New Delhi must increase its engagement and work toward a multifaceted collaboration with Africa.

VII. Conclusion

The relationship is now opening new and exciting possibilities. To realise its full potential, India and Africa must develop comprehensive policies and institutional frameworks and collaborate. The India-Africa project appears to be based on a neoliberal philosophy that minimises the role of the state. The collaborative effort and cooperative effort should focus on distributive justice rather than production, ignoring the rhetoric of poverty reduction in both regions. The approach and partnership must respect market sovereignty while providing effective service to their respective citizens.

While traditional disciplines such as culture, politics, history, and anthropology have dominated previous discourse, new areas such as energy, socioeconomics, trade, capacity building, and technology will supplement its traditional engagement. This is pertinent in the current context of efforts to develop a meaningful way to address rapid economic growth and to create a comprehensive system linking and credentialing socioeconomic engagement. It can also identify critical changes and broad avenues for bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

Despite its numerous advantages and growing ties, India is not alone on the continent and will have to compete with other global powers. One of the main concerns is the threat posed by China, a major player on the continent. India and China's engagement with Africa are more competitive than cooperative. India must implement a multi-pronged and effective strategy to respond to China's growing influence in Africa, which is critical for India's economic and geostrategic goals. The key component of this strategy is for India to use soft power to play to her strengths. Given the widespread criticism of China's involvement in Africa, India must concentrate on establishing a win-win partnership rather than having African enterprises engage in behaviours that undermine this fundamental principle. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant and long-term impact on India-Africa cooperation. Through Vaccine Maitri, New Delhi has played its cards well. While the pandemic is unlikely to alter the positive long-term demographic and policy trends, post-pandemic Africa will continue to offer opportunities as well as challenges.

It criticised India's inconsistent history and present policies toward Africa. Only with an emphasis on making demonstratives does political contact increase. India's foreign policy toward Africa must explicitly state and consider the needs of the African nations for development. While there have been more high-level meetings, visits, and summits recently, the percentage of important topics on the agenda has remained low. Such high-level discussions have not yielded many conclusive conclusions. Several bilateral agreements continue to be ineffectively implemented, and many pledges are frequently delayed or not kept. It suggested that several ministries and institutions working with Africa lacked coordination. The major stream of India's present Africa policy is characterised by ineffective and disorganised lobbying between India and Africa, as well as a lack of information routes at all levels of public speaking. Ideas and intentions are regularly substituted for outcomes in various ways, and worse, India's potential is exaggerated both in open and secret conversations.

Numerous studies point out that India's foreign policy in Africa has not received much attention in terms of institutional and governmental public relations. India must emphasise and take advantage of media outlets in a deliberate effort to create a climate of trust and confidence. Indians must give careful consideration to

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developing a strategic communication team that may emphasise their varied performance and real-world interests in Africa. Largely, India continues to make good investments in the continent's economy and other sectors. However, other major international powers, particularly China, are making significant investments in the continent. India lacks plans for carrying out its progressive policies for Africa. India would likely need to create a model for its communication strategy to successfully convince African leaders to accept the new global order. The strategic partnership with Africa has elevated in importance in these challenging and crucial times in India's foreign policy. The new strategy for dealing with Africa entails creating a modern, sustainable, and mutually rewarding partnership of equals.

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