



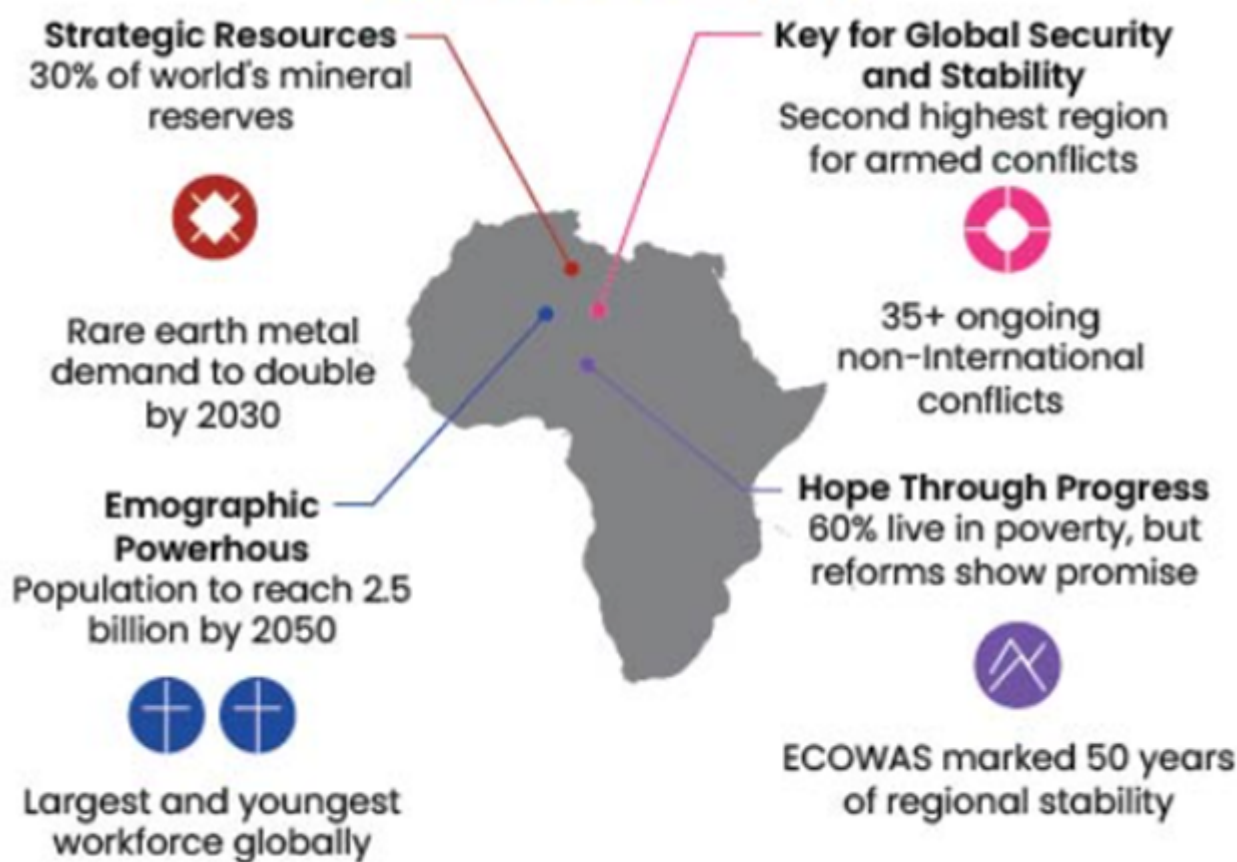
KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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INDIA -AFRICA RELATIONS

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India's partnership with Africa has evolved beyond historical ties into a strategic, multidimensional relationship encompassing trade, investment, and development cooperation.

With bilateral trade reaching \$100 billion annually and cumulative investments of \$80 billion, India aims to achieve an ambitious \$200 billion trade target by 2030.



Africa: The Emerging Continental Power

INDIA -AFRICA TIES:

1. Historical and Cultural Foundations: India-Africa relations date back to ancient times when Indian merchants traded spices, textiles, and precious stones with African kingdoms via the Indian Ocean.

*o*The presence of the Indian diaspora in countries like Kenya, South Africa, and Mauritius has reinforced cultural and economic ties

2. Historical Political Relationship- Gandhi's tools of civil disobedience and non-cooperation were tested on the soil of Africa. India and Africa used this ideological and historical ties in a decolonised world to oppose neo-

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colonialism.

a. Regionalisation and reorientation of global governance norms on the 21st century have produced many strong political institutions amid the south-south Cooperation For ex-Asia Africa Growth corridor(AAGC),Build Back Better(B3W),Blue Dot Network,ADB.

b. India and Africa have converged on the UNSC membership expansion, and India has supported theEzulwini Consensus.

c. India has also stepped its engagement in regional organisations likeECOWAS, African continental Free trade Agreement,BRICS,OIC,NDBetc.

3Economic cooperation-

a. India has increased its investments in Africa to boost Africa's economic growth and reduce the poverty levels in the global southFor ex-EXIM Bank's Focus Africa Programme,India-Africa Partnership project,India-Southern African Customs Union Preferential Trade Agreement.

b. Overall trade between India-Africa has touched\$100 bnin 2022-23.

c.22.5% India's FDI outwards flowis towards Africa. India's current investment in Africa is around \$32 bn with companies like ONGC Videsh making investments in India

3Security cooperation-India-Africa share security cooperation synergies on issues likecurbing piracy,humanitarian and Disaster Relief(HADR) andmaritime security.

4Climate change and Technology cooperation-India and Africa have been cooperating in the climate change domain through organisations likeISAandCDRI. These organisations have also helped India extend its soft power influence in the region of Africa.

5P2P cooperation-India has provided Africa with India's skilled workforce likeengineers,trained nurses, digital public infrastructureandhealth care equity.

What is the significance of India-Africa Relationship?

1. Huge Economic Potential: TheAfrican Continental Free Trade Area(AfCFTA) provides a wide scope to create the largest free trade area in the world by geography and an opportunity to lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty. It can help promoteIndia-Africa bilateral trade and investment under AfCFTA.

2.Potential for Indian Businesses-There are opportunities in services trade with Africa in the fields ofInformation Technology(IT),Mobile payment solutions,banking, andfinancial services.

3Infrastructure Development in the African Continent-India has the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem. Thus, it could count on its strengths tofortify the digital infrastructure in AfricaIt cancontribute to the achievement of the continent'sAgenda 2063.

4Achievement of Common Agendas-Most African nations are developing in nature just like India, which creates a common understanding on multiple issues. India and Africa share common grounds on reformation of the UNSC, Climate change agreements, Trade Issues and WTO negotiations.

5Soft Power-Successful transformation of Africa into a 'continent of growth' from the 'continent of darkness' would enhance India's soft power and leadership position in the global south.

What are the Challenges in India-Africa Relationship?

1Africa as ground of Geopolitical contest-There is sharpening of competition among at least half a dozen external partners such as China, Russia, the United States, the European Union, Japan, Trkiye and the United Arab Emirates. The competition is mainly for strengthening their relations with parts of Africa to ensure market access, gain energy and mineral security, and increase political and economic influence.

2Increasing Chinese assertiveness-China has emerged as 'the infrastructure developer', 'the resource provider', and 'the financier.' It has invested enormously in Africa in terms of money, materials and diplomatic push. Since 2007, Chinese leaders have visited the continent 123 times, while 251 African leaders have visited China. This has limited India's room in the region's geopolitical arena.

3Lack of clear strategy on the part of India-India's model of development cooperation in Africa lacks a clear strategy in comparison with the Chinese Model. India also lacks the deep pockets as China to invest deeply into the African economy.

4Lack of Focus-Geopolitical tensions in Asia and the imperative to consolidate its position in the Indo-Pacific region have compelled India to deviate from greater focus on the India-Africa relationship. Instead, India concentrated on its ties with the United Kingdom, the EU, and the Quad powers.

5Racial Attacks-Incidents of racial attacks on African nationals have severely dented India's image in the region.

Way Forward for India-Africa Relations

- **Boosting Economic Cooperation:** Diversify trade portfolios by focusing on sectors like renewable energy, technology, and healthcare.
- **Enhancing Security Cooperation:** Increase collaboration in counter-terrorism, maritime security, and cybersecurity.
- **Addressing Food and Healthcare Needs:** Partner with African nations on sustainable agriculture and boost pharmaceutical manufacturing within Africa.
- **Sustainable Development Initiatives:** Promote renewable energy and climate action through platforms like the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- **Leveraging India's Digital Strengths:** India's digital stack (e.g., UPI, biometrics, Jan Dhan technology) can be replicated in African nations.

o UPI and RuPay services already operate in Mauritius, with countries like Kenya, Namibia, Ghana, and Mozambique showing interest.