

India in Africa

International Solar Summit Helps India Take on Leadership Role

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The maiden International Solar Alliance (ISA) Summit is not only an attempt to fight climate change through cost-effective renewable energy means, but also a concerted attempt by India to acquire a leadership role in the developing world where China, by virtue of its economic prowess, has made huge inroads over the past two decades.

Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi's initiative that culminated in this Summit would India express power in a manner that is being democratic and rule-based unlike China's more aggressive and expansionist postures in geo-politics.

India's goodwill backed by French economic clout created a new development-oriented narrative at the Summit that witnessed presence from 60 signatory countries and delegates from over 60 other countries who are prospective ISA members. The group of over 120 nations once in place would contribute to India's Power projection in the 21st Century.

The African Development Bank's (ADB's) Vice-President for Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth, Amadou Hott participated in the ISA in New Delhi, India co-chaired by Prime Minister of India and President of France Emmanuel Macron. Hott joined a Panel of Ministers, international financial institutions and CEOs to discuss the financing of solar projects and concrete mechanisms to reduce risks.

"This signing is an important milestone for the ADB in its efforts to lead the continent's transformation

towards sustainable energy, through the use of solar technologies, and extend universal access to energy in Africa", Hott mentioned.

Besides, the Alliance is conceived as a coalition of solar resource rich countries to address their special energy needs. It will provide a platform to collaborate in addressing identified gaps through a common, agreed approach. So far, 32 of the 60 member countries who have joined the alliance are from Africa.

In his opening remarks, President Macron identified the three top priorities of ISA as identification of solar projects, mobilisation of public and private finance at scale with a focus on guarantee instruments, and transfer of innovative technology solutions and capacity-building.

Prime Minister Modi highlighted the need to ensure that better and more affordable solar technology is available and accessible to everyone. While India has significant footprints in Eastern and Southern Africa, it is keen to raise its profile in Western and Central Africa – Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, Togo, Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo (Central Africa), Gabon, Rwanda and Equatorial Guinea.

Top leaders of all these countries were present at the Summit which was put together by India after months of painstaking efforts. Interestingly, all these nations except Rwanda, Equatorial Guinea and Ghana were French colonies, and France still maintains strong ties with these countries. Modi made it a point to hold separate meetings with leaders of each of these nations soon.

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India Bans Legume Imports

Tanzania's US\$240mn pigeon pea industry is on a sharp nosedive after India banned import of the legumes from Tanzania. The unanticipated restriction is now wreaking havoc on hundreds of pigeon pea farmers and traders across the country, who are holding hundreds of tonne of the legume for lack of market.

India's Ministry of Commerce issued a trade notice No. 13 (2015-2020) restricting imports of commodities from countries with no bilateral agreement on the crop with the South Asian nation. Some reports have attributed the restriction to over-production of the legumes in India in the last two years.

(<http://www.thecitizen.co.tz>, 19.03.18)

New Indian Missions in Africa

The Indian Government in March 2018 approved the opening of 18 new Indian missions in Africa with an aim to expand India's footprints in Africa. The new Indian missions will be set up over four years i.e. from 2018-2021.

The new Indian missions will be opened in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Swaziland and Togo.

The decision will enhance India's diplomatic outreach in the African continent and allow India to engage with Indian diaspora in African countries.

(timesofindia.indiatimes.com, 21.03.18)

GNCCI-PHDCCI MoU Signed

The Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GNCCI) and the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to leverage their own resources and expertise to develop business opportunities in Ghana and India for members of the two organisations.

The President of the GNCCI, Nana Appiagyei Dankwawoso (I) said the MoU was in line with the objective of strengthening the mutual economic relations between Ghana and India. The Agreement covered a wide range of areas, including the promotion of trade and investment relations between the countries. (*B&FT*, 27.03.18)

Boosting Bilateral Interests

Indian President Kovind is scheduled to visit Equatorial Guinea and Swaziland in the African continent from April 07-13, 2018. The President feels Africa has been a neglected continent. Apart from this, President Kovind appears to be conscious of the fact that Africa and the Indian Ocean region are vital for Indian foreign policy.

President Kovind's visits to Africa are a pointer to the importance being attached by the Narendra Modi government to the continent. India is striving to deepen levels of political, economic and technical engagement with African countries and is assisting them for economic growth and national development.

(<https://www.pressreader.com>, 31.03.18)

India-Ghana Shares Global Vision

India and Ghana has nurtured a shared global vision and mutuality of interest through a long standing historical relationship, which over the years has deepened and diversified the High Commissioner of

India to Ghana, Birender Singh Yadav said.

A series of policy interventions on the part of India like 'Team-9' initiative and the India Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) process have added a new dynamism and momentum to the relationship. The 2011-2012 trade between both countries crossed US\$1bn for the first time and in 2015-2016 the total trade stood at US\$3.6bn, added Singh.

(<https://www.financialexpress.com>, 26.03.18)

India-Africa for Food Security

A Conference will be held on January 23-24, 2018 in Mumbai, India will compile evidence-based case studies from Africa on the contribution of Indian investments in agriculture allied sectors through the extension of India's development compact aid, trade, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and capacity building initiatives.

The Conference will look at the role of Indian FDI for capacity building and value addition to the agricultural sector through private sector and government-led initiatives.

It will also explore the potential for export of key agricultural commodities from countries in Africa to India through the Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) programme launched at the India-Africa Forum Summit.

(<https://www.orfonline.org>, 03.01.18)

Africa-India Trade Deepens

Africa and India are increasingly becoming more prominent partners in each other's trade with significant growth in the market shares of their respective imports and exports. There is recognition on both sides of the importance of the other as a market and as a long-term trade partner.

Trade and investment between India and Africa is hampered by structural and institutional problems ranging from bureaucratic hurdles to limited infrastructure. The various bottlenecks that Indian investors face in Africa and vice versa have not stood in the way of efforts to keep up the momentum for strengthened India-Africa trade and investment partnerships.



(<https://www.tralac.org>, 29.03.18)