

Volume 50, No. 3
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- **DIASPORA:** Nostalgia and looking to the future
- **CAPE OF GOOD HOPE:** Of cultural kinship and spiritual affinity

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- **MARITIME PIRACY:** Disquieting trends

INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS





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THE POWER OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY 22

Exchange of ideas, art, and lifestyles across continents has been going on for ages. Today, this process, spurred by India's growing diaspora, holds immense potential for the country, says **Mohammed Khalid**

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■ From the Editor's Desk

The Enigma of Arrival: At home in Africa

The arrival of indentured labourers from India in Natal 150 years ago was a defining event in many ways. The 150th anniversary of their arrival in what is now Africa's most powerful economy is, therefore, a time for celebration as well as introspection.

A veritable cornucopia of Bollywood songs, classical dances, art, and plays, with a smattering of Vedic astrology thrown in, is being put up with much fanfare almost every day to celebrate this milestone in a country where 1.28 million persons of Indian origin now comprise 2.5 per cent of South Africa's population. This intermingling of the two rich but distinct cultures has spawned a sort of cultural alchemy in South Africa, and forged bonds that continue to animate relations between the two emerging economies who are now part of BRICS grouping. Mahatma Gandhi, the most famous Indian to have lived in that country, is an exemplar of this cultural amalgamation. "Both countries contributed to his intellectual and moral genius and he shaped the liberatory movements in both colonial countries," said Nelson Mandela in a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi in *Time* magazine. President Jacob Zuma made it a point to highlight this deeply felt sense of intellectual and spiritual kinship when he visited India in June. "We have been together through difficult times as well as happy times. I enjoyed the music and the food. We are at home in India," said the charismatic African leader in New Delhi, to much applause from the audience.

This feeling of being at home in each other's culture is what imbues the burgeoning India-Africa relationship in the 21st century with an emotive resonance. This edition of *Africa Quarterly* celebrates the power of cultural connections and trains its focus on the Indian diaspora across the continent, especially in African countries situated on the Indian Ocean littoral. In his article, Mohammed Khalid writes insightfully about PIOs in countries ranging from Mozambique to Malawi and Egypt to Ethiopia. As someone said, the sun never sets on the Indian diaspora; there is a place somewhere far off that is forever India.

"The presence of a large Indian diaspora in these countries adds a special dimension to India-Africa relations," Khalid writes, while stressing on the need for leveraging public diplomacy and India's soft power in today's wired world. Calling PIOs as "true cultural diplomats and messengers of India", Khalid is clearly impressed by the relentless efforts put in by the Indian community to keep alive Indian languages and culture even as they adapt and succeed in their adopted lands.

A diaspora festival held in Durban to coincide with Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary on October 2 put the spotlight firmly on the multiple cultural strands that bind the two regions and their people. Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi called for a two-way traffic of ideas and investments. "In the changing economic paradigm, you must increasingly

look at India as a land of economic opportunity," he said at the inaugural ceremony of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-Africa on October 1.

Former South African president Thabo Mbeki has been generous in his tribute to Indians who have made his country their home for decades. "Those who were transported from India and China, whose being resided in the fact, solely, that they were able to provide physical labour, who taught me that we could both be at home and be foreign, who taught me that human existence itself demanded that freedom was a necessary condition for that human condition. Being part of all these people, and in the knowledge that none dare contest that assertion, I shall claim that — I am an African," he said in a stirring speech in Parliament on adopting South Africa's new constitution on May 8, 1996.

While it is true that cultural diplomacy succeeds many a time when hard diplomacy fails, there is no alternative for India and Africa but to complement these historical and cultural bonds with expanded trade and investment and wider security cooperation in combating transnational evils like terrorism and piracy. The visit of Mozambique President Armando Emilio Guebuza to India in September brought the issue of maritime security in the Indian Ocean region to the fore. "We are ready to do our part against piracy and terrorism," the president said, adding that his country wanted to share and learn from India in this area.

Economics and strategy are fine, but more than anything else it is the common impulse for resurgence that is driving India and Africa closer in their quest of a vibrant and contemporary partnership that is underpinned by popular aspirations. Thanks to the miracle of IT, it was thrilling to hear Indian External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna speak to ministers in 12 African countries through tele-conferencing mid-summer. He spoke to each of the African ministers separately, wishing them health and happiness as he launched the second phase of the Pan Africa e-network, the revolutionary India-aided project that seeks to bridge the digital divide across the African continent and bring tele-medicine and tele-education to the African people. It is the transformational power of India-Africa engagement that could show the way to those who are preoccupied with resource diplomacy in Africa. Perhaps this is what Rwanda's high commissioner to India Williams Nkurunziza had on mind when he stressed that the India-Africa partnership must be seen to deliver value to the masses. "The architecture of a sustainable and lasting India-Africa partnership must be built on a clear understanding of our realities and the urgency of our shared purpose," he said at a seminar in Delhi.

A fitting credo, as India and Africa head into their next summit in the summer of 2011.

— Manish Chand

India to partner African resurgence

A day-long seminar focused on the economic revival of Africa and explored different models of engaging the resurgent continent

Rejecting any competition or rivalry with China in Africa, India has underlined that its relations with the resource-rich continent stand on their own and highlighted its plan to jointly combat terrorism and scale up bilateral economic ties.

“India’s relations with Africa stand on their own feet. We are not in competition with anyone,” Vivek Katju, Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), said at a seminar on India-Africa partnership in the Indian capital on October 28.

Stressing that capacity building and human resource development were at the heart of India’s engagement with Africa, Katju added that India and Africa would jointly combat new threats of piracy and terrorism, besides cooperating in pushing reforms of international institutions, including the United Nations.

The day-long seminar, organised by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), a New Delhi-based think tank, focused on the economic resurgence of Africa and explored different models of engaging the resurgent continent that boasts of some of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

“It’s an old relationship, very mature and very productive. It has worked for us and it has worked for them,” Katju stressed.

India’s bilateral trade with Africa is around \$40 billion compared to the China-Africa trade which has already exceeded \$100 billion.

India prefers to build a unique partnership with Africa — one that is



Vivek Katju, Secretary (West) in India’s Ministry of External Affairs

India and Africa will jointly combat new threats of piracy and terrorism, and will cooperate in pushing reforms of international institutions, including the United Nations

focused on trade, technology transfer, capacity building and human resource development compared to China’s perceived focus on extractive resources and oil.

Underlining key features of India’s development-centric partnership with

Africa, Katju said the two sides which fought against colonialism are now engaged in a common struggle against poverty.

“We are engaged in a common struggle — which is perhaps more challenging — in the common task of development and of lifting people out of poverty,” he said.

Rwanda’s High Commissioner William Nkurunziza, Ethiopia’s Ambassador Gennet Zewide, India’s former high commissioner to South Africa R.K. Bhatia, India’s former envoy to Nigeria S. Viswanathan, and Navdeep Suri, Joint Secretary (Public Diplomacy) in the Ministry of External Affairs, were among those who participated in the discussions.

Rwanda’s envoy stressed on moving the India-Africa partnership beyond government-to-government contacts to a larger interaction between businesses, media and civil society.

“It has to be a complete partnership that involves the government, the people, the media and civil society,” he said. “The centuries-old relationship between India and Africa must evolve with changing times,” he said.

Nkurunziza exhorted the Indian media to focus on highlighting positive stories of resurgence and renewal that would enable a better understanding of each other’s society and culture.

Capturing the resurgence of Africa, M. K. Rasgotra, former foreign secretary and president of ORF, spoke about the rise of democracy in Africa and underlined the need to develop African resources in Africa for the African people. ■

India an inspiration, says Rwandan minister

'We want Rwandans to come here to India and learn from the business environment here'

Rwanda, a Commonwealth nation in eastern Africa that is trying to evolve as a nascent democracy, wants the Indian government to get more of its dynamic companies to invest in the continent and is scouting for joint ventures in education, energy, health and other economic sectors.

"The Indian government needs to look at seriously projecting the country as a place of hope and encouraging more Indian companies to go to Africa," Vincent Karega, Rwanda's Minister of Infrastructure, told *Africa Quarterly* in an interview on October 25.

The minister, accompanied by a 15-member business delegation, was on a 10-day long visit to India, during which he also visited Ahmedabad and Mumbai. His last leg was a four-day stay in India's information technology capital of Bangalore.

"India is an inspiration in the way it has become a key global player," said Karega, adding, "This visit is a message that countries from the South, which have shared historical backgrounds, should work together."

Rwanda is today trying to come out of the ravages of a civil war that claimed the lives of a million people. A country of 10.7 million, it is especially interested in capacity building to foster entrepreneurship among its people.

"We want Rwandans to come here to India and learn from the business environment here," he said. Karega is highly impressed by the spirit of entrepreneurship in India. "In Africa, there is a perception that you can start a business only if you have lots of



Minister of Infrastructure of Rwanda Vincent Karega with India's Minister for New and Renewable Energy Dr. Farooq Abdullah in New Delhi on October 22, 2010.

money. But among Indians, they start with a small fund and family support and within a few years, they are in charge of companies with a hundred people. I want to encourage that kind of mindset," he said.

Identifying areas where he would like to collaborate with India, Karega said he was looking at energy, health, education and mining. During his visit, Karega met Renewable Energy Minister, Farooq Abdullah. "He (Abdullah) talked about ways to tap into opportunities in this sector in rural areas," said Karega. The visiting minister was interested in learning about India's expansion plans for solar and bio-gas plants, one area where the South Asian country had developed considerable expertise. Karega was also impressed by the concept of mini-hydropower plants advocated by the renewable energy ministry.

At the meeting, Abdullah offered to bring the benefits of India's knowledge in renewable energy to Rwanda. "The Indian minister committed to do some

pilot projects in one or two villages in Rwanda," said Karega.

India is already investing in Rwanda's energy sector, with a line of credit of \$80 million to fund the country's largest ever hydropower dam with a capacity of 28 megawatt on the Nyabarongo river. A consortium of Indian private company Angelique International and the state-owned Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd, is executing the project, which will be completed in 2012.

The Indian private sector is also showing interest in Rwanda, with Zyus Cadila committed to opening a pharmaceutical plant in India, said the Rwandan minister.

"Essar wants to come to look at prospects for geo-thermal energy and gold mining," he added. Meanwhile, the large Tata conglomerate is being tapped to conduct urban transport studies in the country.

Karega pointed out that there were about 1,000 Rwandan students studying in various Indian institutions. ■

India, Mozambique to work to make Indian Ocean safe

Both nations agree to ramp up bilateral trade to \$1 billion by 2013 and encourage Indian FDI in Mozambique

India and Mozambique plan to work together to combat piracy and terrorism in the Indian Ocean region and to make it safe and peaceful. Both countries also hope to ramp up bilateral trade to \$1 billion by 2013.

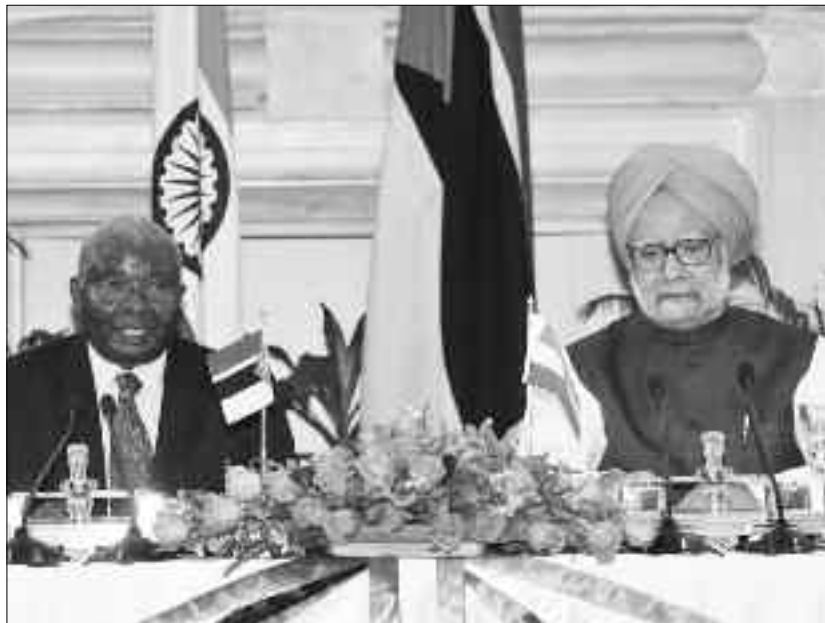
“The Indian Ocean is no more a safe ocean and we are on the shores of this great ocean,” visiting Mozambique President Armando Emilio Guebuza said on September 30 at a joint press conference with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the end of delegation-level talks between the two sides. Singh, too, said they shared “common concerns” as members of the Indian Ocean community. “It is in our mutual interest to ensure the safety and security of sea lanes of communication in the Indian Ocean,” he said.

Guebuza said: “We are ready to do our part against piracy and terrorism,” adding they want to “share and learn” from India. He said this will be necessary to “make our ocean peaceful and safe”.

The joint statement released after the discussions said that both sides will also work together to “revitalise” the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC). Guebuza arrived in India on a five-day state visit, his first trip to a foreign country outside Africa after his re-election in 2009.

After delegation-level talks, the visiting leader of the southeast African country said the talks were “excellent and successful”.

“The challenge is to make sure, on our side, to implement fully (these decisions). But based on our discussions, we may be able to go beyond,” Guebuza said. Three agreements were



Mozambique President Armando Emilio Guebuza and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at a joint press conference in New Delhi on September 30, 2010.

signed by both countries — on avoiding double taxation, on mineral resources and on micro, small and medium enterprises.

Singh said both nations have decided to set a target of increasing bilateral trade to \$1 billion by 2013. Bilateral trade has doubled in the last five years to \$427 million in 2009-10.

Concentrating on economic ties, Guebuza said he hoped to “communicate our invitation to do more” to Indian companies and to ask them to invest in Mozambique.

India is the fourth-largest investor in Mozambique, with investments of nearly \$64.17 million. However, but both leaders called for “greater investment promotion efforts to encourage Indian FDI in Mozambique”. Besides its vast reserves of coal, the president

also highlighted supply of electricity in rural areas as an area of investment. Prime Minister Singh said both countries will create a partnership based on four pillars — “greater political engagement, deepening economic cooperation, strengthening defence and security cooperation and cooperation in capacity building and human resource development”.

India has also offered a line of credit of \$500 million for infrastructure projects, agriculture and energy.

“India will support the establishment of training and planning institutions in Mozambique to support capacity building in the coal industry. India will also support capacity building for the defence and police forces of Mozambique,” said Prime Minister Singh. ■

India a hit with African patients

India seems to have become the most-favoured destination for patients from African countries. Earlier, they would travel to the West, particularly the UK and the US, and even Singapore, but now they are coming in huge numbers to India.

Sagar Hospitals in Bangalore alone gets around 30 to 40 African patients every month and is all set to launch its first information centre in Nigeria. This hospital has signed MoUs with hospitals in West Africa.

According to doctors at Sagar, the healthcare facilities in West Africa are not adequate. They have about 15 to 20 hospitals, but for all complicated cases the patients need to travel abroad. "We are going there with long-term plans and providing technical support to the hospitals there. A cardiology and neurology camp is also being organised at Dhaka which will also be expanded in the future," said senior executive president, Sagar Hospitals, Dr. Madan S. Gaekwad. On September 15, Sagar

Hospitals organised a press meet to discuss their latest initiatives. The hospital has set up cubicle ICUs through which one can watch the patient in the ICU on a video screen and interact with the doctor as well. One could connect to the patient's relatives through the internet too. They have also initiated the '128 slice cardiac CT scan', which involves lower radiation and is more accurate. The operation theatres have been made robotics-enabled at the Banshankari arm of Sagar Hospitals. ■

Nigerian athletes go gaga over Indian medical services

Nigerian athletes Helen Okus and Amas Daniel went home with much more than just memories of the 2010 Commonwealth Games (CWG) in New Delhi. Both had to undergo surgery in a hospital in India and can't stop thanking the doctors for the "excellent" medical services.

Okus, 21, who represented her country in the 72-kg wrestling competition in the Games, won a bronze. Her stint was, however, a painful one, as she was suffering from a condition called prolapsed intervertebral disc, where the spongy part of a disc that lies between two adjacent vertebrae in the spine comes out and presses on the nerve.

"I was diagnosed with this condition at the national training camp in Nigeria before I came to participate in the Games here. The condition was not so severe then. My pain was treated through massages and prescribed painkillers," Okus told *Africa Quarterly*. "However, my condition worsened after the match and I was in so much pain that I could not even lift my arm. I was told by our team of doctors and coach that if I wanted to continue with my game, I should

undergo surgery and so I decided to go ahead with it before flying back home," she said.

According to Arun Saroha, the neurosurgery consultant who operated upon Okus, her treatment involved removal and implant of artificial disc through microscopic spine surgery. "It is a highly specialised procedure and is carried out at selective spine centres in our country," he said.

Daniel, also a wrestler, was suffering from hernia and was in so much pain that he had to wear a belt around his stomach while competing. His treatment involved minimally invasive surgery.

Both the athletes were admitted on October 15 at the Artemis Health Institute, a multi-specialty hospital in Gurgaon, a booming suburban town on the outskirts of the national capital, right after the CWG concluded on October 14. They underwent successful surgery the next day.

Okus said: "In Nigeria, they don't have such tertiary care hospitals. I am happy with the facilities and the treatment. My condition has improved remarkably after the surgery and there is no pain."

The cost of the athletes' treatment

was borne by the Nigerian sports ministry. Talking about their experience in India, both the athletes, who were in New Delhi on their maiden visit, said they loved being here.

Daniel said: "We loved it in India and if we get an opportunity we will come back again. I enjoyed Indian food, clothes and hospitality. In fact, we bought a lot of traditional Indian dresses and artefacts to take back as gifts." They were also all praise for the Games Village and the event itself. The Commonwealth Games were held from October 3-14 and saw players from 71 participating teams.

"It was an amazing experience to meet so many players from different parts of the world. The Games Village was truly world-class," he added.

Talking about her match, Okus said: "I feel elated that I was able to do my country proud on an international platform."

According to an official at Artemis, on average, the hospital receives 50-80 African patients every month. "A growing number of African nationals come to Indian hospitals like Artemis for orthopaedics treatment, IVF, neurological disorders, cancer and renal transplant," the official said.

PAN AFRICA E-NETWORK

South-South Net: Connecting India and Africa

India launched the second phase of the transformational pan-Africa e-network, evoking much enthusiasm in African capitals, writes **Manish Chand**

They were sitting thousands of kilometres across the Indian Ocean, but the sense of camaraderie and kinship was more than evident. From talking about Ugandan students in India to thanking African nations for the hospitality extended to Indian ships, India's External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna sat in a studio in New Delhi surrounded by officials and African diplomats as he spoke to ministers in 12 African countries, from Egypt in the north to Botswana in the south, through a video-conference.

In those two hours on the afternoon of August 16, one could feel in that long-distance crackle what brings India and Africa together in their quest for mutual resurgence and empowerment. Krishna spoke to each of the African ministers separately, wishing them good health and promising to give more power to bilateral ties as he launched the second phase of the Pan-African e-Network, India's showpiece



In those two hours on the afternoon of August 16, one could feel in that long-distance crackle what brings India and Africa together in their quest for mutual resurgence and empowerment

project that seeks to bridge the digital divide across 53 countries of the African Union and bring tele-medicine and tele-education to the African people. The second phase has brought 12 more African countries within the compass of this ambitious project that promises to script a new path of salvation for the African people through better health and education.

The first phase of the project, covering 11 countries, was inaugurated on February 26, 2009.

"The Pan-African e-Network project is one of the finest examples of the growing partnership between India and Africa," Krishna said after the launch. The enthusiasm was reciprocal.

Siting in Gaboronne, Botswana's Minister of Education and Skills Development Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi said that her country was looking towards more collaboration with India, describing it as a "centre of excel-

Top prize for innovation

In growing global recognition of India's people-focused diplomacy in Africa, its signature Pan-African e-network project, that seeks to empower the resource-rich continent through tele-medicine and tele-education, has won a top international prize for innovation.

The award for contribution in the

field of sustainable development was announced by the European Institute of Creative Strategies and Innovation, a think tank that promotes strategies for innovation and renewal in Europe and worldwide, at a meeting held on May 25, 2010 in Paris.

The Hermes Prize for Innovation 2010 contains a certificate and a statue

of Hermes, the messenger of gods in Greek mythology.

The citation describes the e-network as the most ambitious programme of distance education and tele-medicine in Africa ever undertaken and hails it as "the first example of a large South-South development support" project.

lence”, especially in information technology.

Egyptian Minister for Communication and Information Technology Tarek Mohamed Kamel rejoiced that the Alexandria University will be the hub for e-learning for the network in north Africa.

Krishna made it a point to thank Djibouti for its facilities for Indian naval ships, who regular visit the strategically placed port on the Horn of Africa. The interaction brought alive the multi-faceted India-Africa partnership revolving around the trinity of trade, training and technology.

A brainchild of India’s then president A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, also a rocket scientist, the e-network connects India with 53 African countries with a satellite and fibre optic network and enables India to share its cutting-edge expertise in education and health care. India has signed agreement with 47 countries in Africa for the project, but the infrastructure has been completed in 34 of them so far.

Funded by the Indian government at a cost of \$125 million, it is the biggest project of distance education and tele-medicine ever undertaken in Africa.

The project is being shepherded and implemented by the state-run Telecommunications of India Limited (TCIL) and also includes setting up a “VVIP” network between offices of the heads of state or government across Africa. Thirty VVIP nodes have been set up in African countries for video-conferencing among the heads of states. The project is also equipped to support e-governance, e-commerce, infotainment, resource mapping and meteorological and other services in the African countries.

The e-network is already transforming lives of ordinary Africans. More than 1,700 African students have already registered with Indian universities. Regular tele-medical consultations have also started between the African doctors and the Indian specialists.

Nearly 700 CME lectures have

Countries which joined the Pan-Africa network in Phase 1 (August 16, 2009)

Botswana, Burundi, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia and Uganda.

Countries which joined the Pan-Africa network in Phase 1 (Feb 26, 2009)

Benin, Burkina Faso, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and Seychelles.

(Source: <http://www.panafricanenetwork.com>)

The e-network is already transforming lives of ordinary Africans. Over 1,700 African students have registered with Indian universities. Regular tele-medical consultations have also started between the African doctors and Indian specialists

been delivered by Indian doctors from top Indian super specialty hospitals. Buoyed by the enthusiastic African response, India has even offered training at the regional level by conducting workshops in the tele-medicine and tele-education modules for optimizing benefits of the project.

In a growing recognition of India’s development-centric diplomacy in Africa, the project won the prestigious Hermes Prize for innovation in the field of sustainable development.

The prize was announced by the European Institute of Creative Strategies and Innovation, a think tank

Leading Regional Institutions from Africa

Universities/Educational Institutes

1. Central Region: Yaounde University, Yaounde, Cameroon
2. Eastern Region: Makerere University of Uganda, Uganda
3. Western Region: Kwame and Nkurumah University of Science & Technology of Ghana, Ghana

Super Speciality Hospitals

1. Central Region: Brazzaville Super Specialty Hospital, Republic of Congo
2. Eastern Region: Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospital, Port Louis, Mauritius
3. Western Region: University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan, Nigeria

(Source: <http://www.panafricanenetwork.com>)

that promotes strategies for innovation and renewal in Europe and worldwide, at a meeting held on May 25 in Paris.

The project is being keenly observed by Africa watchers as an example of the kind of initiative Africa needs to empower its people and better its chances in a rapidly globalising world as opposed to investments made by some countries with insidious agendas.

The project comes at a time when most African countries reeling under the onerous impact of structural adjustment programmes imposed by international donors had to slash their spending on the health and education sectors. As the project moves to its final phase, it will be a win-win for Africa in more ways than one. It will help Africa achieve its Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) targets in education and the health sector and enrich the lives of its predominantly young population. Blending technology with social transformation, the project

shows the creative possibilities of using ICT to catalyse lasting socio-economic changes. In an interview, Ghana's then president John Kufuor predicted a marriage of India's expertise and Africa's resources to fructify the full potential of the African continent. No project epitomises this synergy better than the pan-Africa e-network project, which is being hailed aptly as "a shining symbol of South-South Cooperation."

"Both India and Africa are blessed with young populations. It is only by investing in the creative energies of our youth that the potential of this partnership will be fulfilled," Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said presciently at the India-Africa Forum summit in New Delhi in April 2008.

As the two sides brace for the second summit next year, they need to think of more of such transformational projects that will make the 21st century the century of Asia and Africa sooner rather than later. ■

Participating Indian institutions in e-network

Universities/Educational Institutes

1. Amity University, Noida
2. Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani
3. Delhi University, New Delhi
4. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi
5. University of Madras, Chennai

Super Speciality Hospitals

1. All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi
2. Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences and Research Centre, Kochi
3. Apollo Hospitals, Chennai
4. CARE Hospital The Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad
5. Dr. Balabhai Nanavati Hospital, Mumbai
6. Escorts Hearts Institute and Research Centre Limited, New Delhi
7. Fortis Hospital, Noida
8. HealthCare Global, Bangalore
9. Mool Chand Khairati Ram Hospital, New Delhi
10. Narayana Hrudayalaya Institute of Medical Sciences, Bangalore
11. Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Science, Lucknow
12. Sri. Ramachandra Medical College & Research Institute, Chennai

(Source: <http://www.panafricanenetwork.com>)

India to share poverty-reduction strategies

Setting the tone for the second summit with African countries in 2011, India on October 12, 2010 offered to share developmental experiences and poverty reduction strategies with the African continent.

"Our relationship has transformed in recent decades and years. We have now become developmental partners, looking out for each other's interests and wellbeing," External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna said in an interaction with visiting African journalists.

"We have the vision, determination and ability to overcome our principal challenge, that of poverty alleviation. For this purpose, we have to address all that which stands in the way, including infrastructure bottlenecks," Krishna said.

India and Africa will hold their second summit in an African country in



Prime Minister Manmohan Singh addressing the First India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi on April 8, 2008.

2011. New Delhi hosted the maiden India-Africa Forum Summit in 2008 that outlined a blueprint and a plan of action for transforming the India-Africa partnership in tune with realities of the 21st century.

As part of a public diplomacy outreach programme, the External Affairs Ministry had invited 19 journalists from 10 African countries to India for a week's visit.

The journalists met officials of the ministry dealing with Africa and also had an interaction at India's premier business forum, the Confederation of Indian Industry.

They also visited the Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd, the nodal agency in charge of implementing India's iconic pan-Africa e-network in the continent.

The African journalists also visited Ahmedabad in Gujarat. ■

DOING BUSINESS WITH AFRICA

Algeria invites India Inc for \$10-bn gas pipeline

Algerian envoy says he hopes Indian companies will show interest not only for capital formation, but also in capacity building

Oil-rich Algeria, the second-largest country in Africa, has invited Indian companies to participate in a \$10-billion project to build an ambitious trans-Saharan gas pipeline originating from Nigeria and passing through neighbouring Niger.

“We need more foreign partners outside Europe for this 4,000-km-long project,” Algerian Ambassador to India Echarif Mohammed-Hacene said, referring to the pipeline, which aims to provide European companies alternatives to Russian gas.

“We hope Indian companies will show interest — not only for capital formation, but also to build the capacity itself,” Mohammed-Hacene told *Africa Quarterly* in an interview, underscoring how much Algiers is favourably disposed to participation by India Inc.

The ambassador said Algeria, one of the largest producers and exporters of natural gas in the world, has had some good experiences with the state-run Indian Oil Corp that has a \$3-billion pact with his country’s own public sector company Sonatrach. The two state-owned firms had successfully bid for major hydrocarbon blocks in Libya.

Some of the world’s biggest companies have evinced interest in the project, he said, referring to Russia’s Gazprom, Italy’s ENI, France’s Total and Anglo-Dutch Royal Dutch Shell.

Nigeria, which claims the world’s seventh-largest gas reserves with about 183 trillion cubic feet, is willing to set aside 13-15 trillion cubic feet for the project. Algeria’s own pipeline system extends under the Mediterranean Sea to Spain and Italy.

The ambassador said the reason why his country was



“India is our very good partner because the level of political confidence between us is very high. We’ve seen it in the past many examples where we needed foreign assistance”

seeking new partners is simple: the proximity of Europe. “Spain is only 180 km from our coast. The level of European pressure on our economy is so strong it weakens us. We want new partners.”

Mohammed-Hacene said his vision was to see two-way trade between India and Algeria more than double over the next three years from \$2 billion to \$5 billion and for that it was crucial to explore areas that stretched beyond energy and other traditional sectors.

“India is our very good partner because the level of political confidence between us is very high. We’ve seen it in the past many examples where we needed foreign assistance. Where Europe refused us, India accepted. So, it is a matter of confidence,” he said. ■

DOING BUSINESS WITH AFRICA

Apollo's Reddy bets big on Africa, health tourism

Apollo Group chairman Prathap C. Reddy is particularly upbeat on Mauritius, as well as Nigeria and Uganda

Apollo Hospitals, Asia's largest healthcare chain, is betting big on Africa, not just to expand operations there, but also to attract what is called "health tourism" from the vast continent.

Apollo Group chairman Prathap C. Reddy, who pioneered corporate healthcare in India, is particularly upbeat on Mauritius, where the hospital chain already has had a presence for the past four years. The group has also established itself in Nigeria and Uganda as well.

"Africa is going to be the next big thing in everything that's going to happen. China is smart and is present in a majority of African countries trying to build its wealth and influence. Fortunately, China is not in a position to compete with us," he said.

"So, I think, if we won't miss the boat, we will keep ahead of China," Reddy, a trained physician himself, told *Africa Quarterly* in an interview, speaking about his plans for the group, which has 8,500 beds in more than 50 hospitals in India and overseas.

Reddy said five African countries had already expressed interest in collaborating with his group and an in-house team was studying the feasibility of the projects in the near term.

"In Africa, Apollo Bramwell hospital in Mauritius is our showpiece. We had the first anniversary three years ago. Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam himself thanked me. He said it was a 'Kohinoor' (an invaluable gem) in their healthcare system."

The Apollo founder, who was con-



Apollo Hospitals in Delhi



Apollo Group chairman Prathap C. Reddy

Reddy is also keen to promote health tourism in India, especially out of Africa, and feels that there is a potential for at least five million health tourists a year

ferred India's second-highest civilian award by President Pratibha Patil in 2010, the Padma Vibhushan, said the group was also partnering with the Indian government on a Pan-Africa tele-medicine programme.

"It is a great opportunity and a wonderful project. They don't have to pay for anything. It is free. The government of India is funding it. Nigeria and Nigerian doctors are so happy with this project," Reddy said.

He was also keen to promote health tourism in India, especially out of Africa, and feels there is potential for at least five million health tourists a year. "But we need to work on set guidelines. We need to publicise it through the government."

Reddy said the reason why he was keen to draw in health tourists from Africa was that during his own university days in Britain, he had observed a large number of overseas health tourists travelling to India for treatment. "I conducted a study and found that among the large number of patients who came to England for treatment, Africans were the second largest. So there is a tremendous potential for this in India. We are also much more cost-effective," he said.

According to Reddy, the group's target now was to add 3,000 beds to its network by 2013 at an estimated cost of around ₹2,000 crore (\$440 million). ■

India pitches for stake in Ghana's energy sector

India has sought a greater role in Ghana's energy sector, pitching for more tie-ups between ONGC Videsh (OVL), the overseas exploratory and acquisition arm of the state-run upstream major, and oil companies of the African nation.

Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma, who visited Ghana recently as part of India's 'Focus Africa' policy, discussed this in his talks with Ghanaian President John Evans Atta Mills.

Sharma also urged the Ghanaian leadership to ensure gas supply for a 1.15 million tonne per annum ammonia-urea fertiliser plant India was building at a cost of \$1 billion in that country. The project is expected to be completed by 2014.

Sharma also discussed issues relating to availability of land, potable water, infrastructural development for the project.

Officials from ONGC, OVL and



Anand Sharma

GAIL held discussions with Ghana National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC) to pursue joint exploration of the oil and gas finds in the country.

It was only in 2007 that Ghana first discovered it could exploit its oil and natural gas resources commercially. Since then subsequent discoveries have put the estimated total oil poten-

tial at 1.6 billion barrels. During a meeting, Finance Minister Kwabena Duffuor sought India's support for transfer of technology and building local capacity, especially in the downstream and up-stream oil economy, apart from the IT sector. GNPC is also in talks with Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers.

Sharma assured the Ghanaian government that he would look at granting a concessional Line of Credit (LOC) for bridging infrastructural gaps in the Ghana Free Zones Area and for developing an integrated trade centre.

Ghana is one of the highest recipients of LOC from India. India is engaged in executing seven projects worth \$193 million in the country.

Sharma also promised to expedite an agreement between Ghana Heavy Equipment and Bharat Earth Movers Ltd for supply of earth-moving equipment by the end of the year. ■

India to help Kenya revive textile sector

India has offered technical assistance to Kenya in reviving its textile sector, which employs nearly one-third of the East African country's industrial workforce.

"India offered to collaborate in Kenya efforts for revival of its textiles sector by providing technical assistance in skill building for the entire value chain — transfer of technology in ginning and processing, collaboration with Indian Textiles Research Association and exploratory visits for businessmen and buyer-seller meets," an official statement said in Nairobi on October 14.

Commerce and Industry Minister

Anand Sharma met Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Amolo Odinga in Nairobi and offered Indian support to Kenya in several sectors, including agriculture, pharmaceutical, infrastructure and information technologies.

Sharma said India and Kenya have agreed to greater engagement between the Kenya Investment Authority and InvestIndia, which would help in trade and investment flows between the two countries.

The two countries have agreed to fast-track the finalisation of a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) and a

revised Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA).

India and Kenya plan to sign agreements for cooperation in the fields of tourism and civil aviation, human resource development and scientific and industrial research.

The commerce minister also inaugurated "Namaskar Africa", an event in the Kenyan capital organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in association with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Indian firms have shown a growing interest in Kenyan markets and have invested over \$1.5 billion in Kenya so far.

India, South Africa to expand trade, investment

India and South Africa are trying to strengthen trade links, constituting sector-specific task forces to jointly explore business opportunities and putting on the fast track mutually beneficial trade agreements.

A business delegation, led by Commerce Minister Anand Sharma and comprising top executives from India Inc like Tata Group chairman Ratan Tata, was on a four-day-long business event in Johannesburg which ended on September 1.

Among the various positive outcomes during the “India Show” — a promotional event jointly organised by India’s Commerce and Industry Ministry, and industry chamber the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Johannesburg — was the signing of a comprehensive investment and preferential trade agreement between the two countries.

During an interaction with his South African counterpart, Rob Davies, Sharma said both sides would try to resolve all pending issues so that a preferential trade agreement (PTA) reducing duties on collaborative investments could be signed at the earliest. India also urged the South African government to expedite discussions on a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement.

Corporate leaders from both countries, meeting under the reconstituted India-South Africa CEOs forum, agreed to form four sectoral groups in the key areas of energy, financial services, mining, and infrastructure, with chief executives of leading companies from the respective sectors as members. They also agreed to jointly explore business opportunities in the

Corporate leaders from both nations, meeting under the reconstituted India-South Africa CEOs forum, agreed to form groups on energy, financial services, mining, and infrastructure

rest of Africa in diverse fields, such as pharmaceuticals, healthcare, food processing, automobiles, components, biotechnology, information technology, telecommunications, infrastructure, roads and railways.

Tata said the two economies should take advantage of inherent synergies to form more partnerships. He said South Africa can be used as a gateway to distribute products to the rest of the continent, owing to its strategic location and expertise.

CII president Hari Bhartia said Indian pharmaceutical companies were increasingly setting up base in South Africa. The CEO’s forum, which is headed by Tata, is scheduled to be held in New Delhi in March 2011.

India-South Africa trade stood at \$7 billion in 2009. India is one of South Africa’s top ten investors. Sharma said he hoped the trade target of \$10 billion set for 2012 could be achieved in 2011 itself, given the current trend in bilateral trade. South African President Jacob Zuma, who inaugurated the event, pushed for greater trade between the two countries. ■

Tata group sees expansion scope in Africa



Ratan Tata

Ratan Tata, chairman of India’s multinational company, Tata Group, has said he has an “affinity” to South Africa and that

his company was expected to increase its focus on Africa with a slew of new business launches being drawn up.

“In India, we believe in destiny. I find that I have an affinity to South Africa,” he told a daily in an interview, adding: “It’s not brick and mortar that brings people back.” Tata was in South Africa along with Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma to lead the government-corporate mission with targets to boost the bilateral trade to \$12 billion by 2012.

“The low-cost housing segment in South Africa is an area we can make an impact on,” he said, also noting that the opportunity for 4-star hotels in South Africa was huge and should be tapped.

With the Indian Ocean region as the base to launch the Tata brand across the world, collaborating with countries like Mauritius, Seychelles and Maldives to form the link between Africa and India, Tata said that he felt the Indian Ocean would link rather than separate India and Africa.

The Tata group has investments in a ferrochrome operation in Richards Bay in South Africa’s northern Kwazulu-Natal province.

Uganda seeks easier study visas, job permits in India

With over 800 Ugandan students in India, which has emerged as a preferred destination for higher studies among African nations, Kampala is keen to sign a pact with New Delhi to make it easier for study visas and short-term job permits.

"We are discussing the work visa issue with Indian authorities. Hundreds of our Ugandan students who are studying here are also keen to work but are not allowed even part-time jobs," Uganda's Minister of State for Sports Charles Bakkabulindi said.

"Children of any person of Indian origin born in Uganda gets citizenship automatically. In fact, we treat Indians as our own and want the same treatment for Ugandans in India," Bakkabulindi, also a member of Ugandan parliament representing workers, told *Africa Quarterly* in an interview in New Delhi on October 8.

"Our students really like it here and

also want to work here for some time."

According to the Ugandan High Commission here, over 800 Ugandan students pursue higher studies at various universities in India, mostly in the national capital, at any given time.

Uganda has already signed a pact with India to facilitate the flow of investment and trade and several Indian corporate groups, including telecom-to-retail major Bharti Enterprises and the diversified conglomerate Tatas, have invested over \$1.8 billion in Uganda so far.

"It is time we also had a pact on student visas and work permits," said Bakkabulindi.

"Indian companies are playing a significant role in the growth and development of Uganda. So is the case in many other African countries. We urge Indian companies to increase their investments in Uganda," he said, adding: "We assure a business-friendly environment."

With bilateral trade pegged at around \$1.1 billion, Uganda is India's largest trading partner in the Central African region, officials said.

India's exports to Uganda rose over 40 percent and imports from Uganda by 30 percent last year.

The minister said the target was to double bilateral trade in the next two-three years.

In a bid to strengthen trade and economic ties, India and Uganda have also signed a double taxation avoidance treaty, Bakkabulindi said, adding the two countries should also enter into a free-trade agreement with African countries, including Uganda, to boost trade.

"There is a huge potential to increase trade. Free trade agreements will be beneficial for both the regions," he said, and urged Indian companies to take advantage of Uganda's membership of the East African Community. ■

India's Exim Bank gets \$150 mn to push India-Africa trade

India's Export-Import Bank has secured a \$150-million international loan to help expand access to finance for Indian exporters, including small and medium enterprises, and support their exports to Africa. International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, and the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ Ltd have each provided a medium-term trade-finance loan of up to \$75 million to Exim Bank, the IFC announced on October 8, 2010.

IFC said it supports the transaction as part of its strategy of promoting trade and investment among countries

in emerging markets.

"A large number of Indian corporations, including small and medium enterprises, have started looking at Africa as an export destination," said T.C.A Ranganathan, Exim Bank's chairman and managing director.

"The financing agreement with IFC and BTMU marks a key step in our relationship with them and in our strategy to provide finance to India's exporters with a focus on Africa," Ranganathan said.

Rashad Kaldany, IFC vice-president, Asia, Eastern Europe, Middle East and North Africa, said: "With this agreement, IFC will contribute to the

development of long-term partnerships between strong emerging-market players in India and Africa, helping them invest and accelerate development in other emerging economies."

Katsunori Nagayasu, BTMU's president, said: "We are pleased to be associated with IFC and Exim Bank in a medium-term trade finance transaction that will have such a clear benefit to both Indian and African markets." The tie-up continues the long-standing relationship that IFC shares with Exim Bank and BTMU to provide support to emerging economies.

DIASPORA

India Inc seeks deeper ties with Africa

India intends to take its engagement with its diaspora to a global level

Corporate India on October 1, 2010 sought deeper economic engagement with people of Indian origin in Africa at a well-attended event to mark the 150th anniversary of the arrival of first indentured labourers in South Africa from India.

Organised by India's Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, the business event was a part of the larger Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-Africa to coincide with the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, who was himself a resident of this city. The South African government, the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal, as also the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), were the partners of this event, with the central theme: 'Building Bridges'. "India already shares strong political ties with South Africa. We need to strengthen our economic ties with the Indian diaspora in Africa," Dr. A. Didar Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, told *Africa Quarterly*.

"The Indian diaspora can play a major role in building bridges and India intends to take its diaspora affairs to a global level," Singh said at the event, which supplements the main Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in India every year. Representing the South African government, a member of the executive council for transport and community safety and liaison of KwaZuluNatal, Thembinkosi Willies Mchunu, appreciated the role played by the Indian diaspora in their contributions to the South African economy.

South Africa is home to 1.28 million people of Indian origin who con-



A view of Durban, home to a large Indian diaspora.

South Africa is home to 1.28 million people of Indian origin who constitute around 2.5 percent of its population

stitute around 2.5 percent of its population. Gandhi himself lived here for 21 years since 1893 and it was here that the seeds of his non-violent movement were sown and practised first.

"This year marks the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Indians here. No one community can claim it got democracy for South Africa. Indians have left a remarkable legacy with their

contributions to the freedom struggle and building our economy," Mchunu said. The event also showcased the links between corporate India and the Indian diaspora here, like the Johannesburg Stock Exchange-listed Keaton Energy Holdings, represented by Ramun Mahadevey.

"The Abhijeet Group is my Indian partner," Mahadevey said, referring to the Ranchi-based Indian engineering company. "We will like to partner Indian enterprises in the mining sector. We are negotiating with more companies in India," he said.

The business roundtable saw active participation of nearly 50 registered participants — and many more in attendance — to discuss various business opportunities. ■

DIASPORA

Do business with India, Indians in Africa told

Africans of Indian origin should look at India as a “land of economic opportunity” and connect more through business and education, besides traditional social and cultural ties, Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi said at the inauguration of a conclave to connect the scattered Indian diaspora in the continent to the land of their forefathers.

“For Africans of Indian origin, the bonds tying them to the land of their origin have hitherto been social and cultural. In the changing economic paradigm, you must increasingly look at India as a land of economic opportunity,” Ravi said at the inaugural ceremony of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-Africa (PBD-Africa) in South Africa’s KwaZulu-Natal province on October 1, 2010. Ravi, together with KwaZulu-Natal Premier Zweli



Minister Vayalar Ravi

Mkhize, inaugurated the PBD-Africa event in the South African city of Durban to coincide with Gandhi Jayanti, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The year also

marked the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first indentured sugarcane labourers from India whose descendants have today risen to become flourishing entrepreneurs.

“India and its diaspora needs to connect through various means like business, education, social and cultural relations... We share a great leader Mahatma Gandhi and that makes it more relevant to be here on this occasion,” Ravi said.

The inaugural ceremony was followed by a cultural programme put together by artistes from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

Also commemorating the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, the ICCR troupe performed an extract from his short story *Khudito Pashan* (Hungry Stones). ■

Durban street now named Juma Masjid Square

A plaque renaming as ‘Juma Masjid Square’ the street outside one of the oldest mosques in South Africa built on a plot owned by a Gujarati immigrant was unveiled by India’s Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi.

“It was the happiest moment of my life when I unveiled the plaque by the name Juma Masjid Square in the street where one of the oldest mosques of the country (South Africa) stands,” a delighted Ravi told *Africa Quarterly* after unveiling the plaque on October 1. “I feel great as I also prayed at this glorious sacred place of worship,” he

added. A.V. Mahomed, chief trustee of the mosque and a second-generation South African of Indian origin, said the time chosen to unveil the plaque “couldn’t be better” as it marked the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

The land was purchased by a Muslim from Porbandar — Gandhi’s birthplace, he added. “The Queen Street plaque was finally removed and replaced with that of Juma Masjid square. It was a great feeling,” Mahomed added. The 130-year-old mosque was erected on a plot bought by Aboobaker Amod Jhaveri, regarded

as the first Indian trader to have arrived in KwaZulu Natal province.

Being the largest mosque in the Southern Hemisphere, it can accommodate at least 7,000 worshippers across three floors.

Around the mosque are several Indian food outlets, a popular one serving uniquely Durban ‘bunny-chow’ (half a loaf of bread scooped out and filled with curry-bean curry for vegetarians and mutton for meat lovers). Also in the area is the Victoria Street Market offering incense, henna tattoos, spices, scarves, sweets and other delicacies.

The power of cultural DIPLOMACY

Exchange of ideas, art, and lifestyles across continents has existed for ages. Today, this process, spurred by India's growing diaspora, holds immense potential for the country, says **Mohammed Khalid**



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh lighting the lamp to inaugurate the Eighth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-2010, in New Delhi on January 8, 2010. Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi is also seen.

Cultural diplomacy is a vehicle that fosters a variety of cultural exchanges. It is the exchange of ideas, information, art, lifestyles, value systems, traditions, beliefs and other aspects of culture. It has always existed for ages as a form of acknowledged diplomatic practice. This could be observed in different forms of exchange in the fields of art, sports, literature, music, science and economy.

Cultural diplomacy plays a key role in integrating nations, such as among the countries of African Union, the League of Arab States, and the European Union and so on. It also helps in improving the international relations and secure agreements that cover issues like trade, investment, tourism and security. Private and public enterprises, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) often employ cultural

diplomacy, as a means to influence government policies for their benefit or the benefit of a given cause.¹ Individuals also use cultural diplomacy to deepen friendships, or in discussions to influence opinion about a particular subject.

The oldest civilisation on the Indian Ocean littoral, India is a cultural hub of South Asia with a hoary history. Home to extraordinary diversity, India is known for its rich cultural heritage. Cultural and religious sites, temples, and monuments are important symbols of Indian culture. A fascinating blend of cultures, also characterised by enormous contrasts, India has thus exerted considerable influence on the Indian Ocean littoral.²

However, it has been a two-way process. Travellers and pilgrims, who came to India at different times in history, have consistently highlighted the richness and diversity of Indian culture to the outside world. But the most effective medium of spreading Indian culture has been people, who

have migrated to the nook and corners of the Indian Ocean through the centuries. Here, we take up the role played by the Indian diaspora in spreading Indian culture on the African littoral — South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Sudan and Egypt — and how they have helped in galvanising India's relations with these countries.

Indian Diaspora

The Indian diaspora is currently estimated at 27 million and spread across 130 countries. Composed of NRIs (Non-resident Indian) and PIOs (Person of Indian Origin), they cover practically every part of the Indian Ocean. The Indian diaspora today constitutes an important, and in some aspects, a unique force, in world culture.³ Indians have migrated to far-flung coasts of the Indian Ocean, for trade and commerce, since ancient times. Their presence in the coastal towns and ports of many of the African countries, dates back to more than a thousand years. Many thousands of Indians were sent as indentured labourers by the British to South Africa and Kenya in the 19th and early 20th centuries. A large number of Indians fought on behalf of the British Empire in the Boer Wars (1880-81 and 1899-1902). Indians have been an important force of transformation in the host countries. In recent decades, professionals in almost every field have gone to these countries to provide technical skills and expertise.

On the African littoral of the Indian Ocean, there is a significant presence of PIOs in south and south-east Africa but their number is less in Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea and Egypt. Indians are not only prominent investors, but also decision-makers in their respective countries. They also hold important posts in government and in key non-government sectors.⁴ They have set up Indian associations and organisations at local, regional and national levels. Some of these organisations are regional, religious and caste based creating 'mini-Indias' on the African continent. In fact, they act as true cultural diplomats and messengers of India. A study of Indian organisations/associations in the African states of the Indian Ocean reveals a variety of patterns of migration from India, preferred destinations from particular Indian regions and communities, and also the kind of activities they carry out, to keep Indian languages and culture alive as outlined below.

South Africa

A number of Indians have made South Africa their home. Some of the Indian organisations/associations in the country are the Art of Living, which has its branches in Pretoria,

Durban, and Johannesburg, and the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha has its office in Durban. There are organisations based on Indian regions, such as Andhra Maha Sabha of South Africa, Kwazulu-Natal; Gujarat Sanskruti Kendra, Natal; Gujrati Parishad, Transvaal; Gujarati Parishad, Vereeniging; Gujarati Seva Smaj; Shree Benoni Gujarati, Natal; Tamil Vedic Society, Durban; South African Tamil Federation, Western Cape; and Tamil Federation, Cape Town.

Religion-based Indian organisations in South Africa include Bal Bhakte Bhajan Mandal; Divine Hindu Association, Kwazulu-Natal; Hindu Maha Sabha; Islamic Organisation; Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj; Pretoria Hindu Organisation; Surat Hindu Association, Kwazulu-Natal; Shree Azadville Hindu Seva Samaj, Roodepoort; Shri Pretoria Hindu Seva Smaj, Pretoria; Shree Sanathan Dharma Sabha; ISKCON, Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa, Transvaal; Hindu Seva Smaj; Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (BAPS) Mayfair West; and Satsang Mahila Mandal. Other Indian organisations include Indian Academy, Indian Association of South Africa, Buzme Adab, The Indian Academy of South Africa Kwazulu-Natal, Aryan Benevolent Home Kwazulu-Natal, and the Indian Business Forum, Durban.⁵

Composed of NRIs and PIOs, Indian diaspora cover practically every part of the Indian Ocean. Today, the Indian diaspora constitutes an important, and in some aspects, a unique force, in world culture

Mozambique

Indian organisations in Mozambique include Associacao Muculmana De Tete (Sunni-Jamat-Muslim Association of Tete); Comunidade Hindu, Nampula; Comunidade Mahometana, Maputo (Muslim Community); and the Indian Professional and Business Council (INCON), Maputo.

Tanzania

Tanzania has a large number of organisations formed by the PIOs. Such organisations/associations include Bilal Muslim Mission Dar es Salaam, Khoja Shia Ithnasheri Supreme Council Dar es Salaam, Shree Hindu Mandal, Shri Jain Sangh, Shree Hindu Council of Tanzania,

Sanatan Dharma Sabha in Tanzania, and Swaminarayan Mandal. Organisations based on Indian castes include Shree Bhatia Mahajan, Shree Lohana Mahajan, Shri Gurjar Suthar Gnati Mandal, Shri Rajput Bhojraj Gnati Mandal, Shri Vagheshwari Soni Samaj, Shri Koli (Divecha) Gnati Mandal, and Tamil Sangam. There is also the Indo-Tanzania Cultural Centre and Kalamandalam at Dar es Salaam.⁶

Kenya

Religion-based Indian organisations in Kenya include Arya Samaj, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Eastern Africa, East Africa Shree Swaminarayan Mandal, Kenya Brahma Sabha, Shri Gayathri Parivar, and Sanatan Dharam Sabha. Indian Christians have created St. Xavier's Society and Sikhs have

Sri Gurudwara Bazaar and Sikh Women Society. The Aga Khan Ismaili Council of Kenya and Dawoodi Bohra Muslim Community are organisations established by the Bohra Muslims. Associations based on Indian castes in the country include East Africa Rajput League, Lohana Mahajan Mandal, Patel Brotherhood, Shri Gurjar Sutar Community, and Shri Navnat Vanik Mahajan Mandal.

Indian professional and business associations in Kenya include the Chandaria Group of Companies, Harbans Singh Associates, M.D. Kaycee Auto Parts Ltd, and Sameer Investments Ltd. Welfare associations created by Indians include Indian Citizens' Welfare Association of Kenya, Kenya Pragati Mandal, Karuna Charitable Trust, and Kenya India Friendship Association (KIFA). Societies promoting Indian culture include Kamini's School of Dancing, Ma Sharda School of Music, and South Indian Cultural Society. Associations based on Indian regions include Maharashtra Mandal, Shri Cutchi Madhapur P.G.M, Shri Kathiawar Jansari Mandal, Tamil Association of Kenya, and The Goan Gymkhana.⁷

Ethiopia

Associations formed by Indians in Ethiopia include the Indian Association, Hindu Mahajan, Kerala Samajam, Indian Women's Association, Indian Muslims Cultural Committee, Addis Ababa University Indian Teachers' Forum, Tamil Sangam and Indian Cultural Association, Dire Dawa. There is an Indian National School, an autonomous institution set up in 1947 under the auspices of the Indian Association. Around 200 students study in the school from Grade I to XII and the curriculum followed is that of the Central Board of Secondary Education. Public examinations for Grade-X and XII are conducted at the Indian Mission.

Djibouti

The Indian community in Djibouti number around 600. Majority of them belong to Rajkot and Jamnagar in Gujarat, and some are from Kerala. They are involved in trading and the agency business, representing companies from India, China, South Korea and Taiwan. The companies involved in the Doraleh Port Project have also engaged a number of Indian experts and technicians. A number of Indians are also working in the Djibouti port and refinery projects. The late J.J. Kothari, grandfather of the present Honorary Consul of India, Nalin J. Kothari, was one of the 10 people who initially came to Djibouti in 1910 and set up the country's shipping and import business. There are also French nationals of Indian origin, numbering around 100. The community has set up an Indian School up to Grade-IV level.

Sudan

The Indian community, mainly Gujarati, numbers about 1,500, of which about 800 are settled in Omdurman, 250 in Kasala and about 300 in Port Sudan. There is an Indian School in Khartoum.

Egypt

At present, the Indian community in Egypt numbers around 3,000, mostly concentrated in Cairo. There are small numbers of families in Alexandria and Port Said. They have set up the Indian Community Association of Egypt (ICAE) in the country. It brings together Indians living in Egypt, and helps them connect, share and enhance their life. Indian community members from all over Egypt organise their activities through ICAE.

Many activities taken up by the Indian associations in these African countries have helped consolidate Indian cultural penetration in other ethno-cultural zones, ensuring a process of mutual cultural enrichment. They have showcased syncretism and pluralism of Indian culture.⁸ The trend is not new, because India has had a long history of cultural ties with Iran, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia and the Arabian Peninsula. Relations with most African countries emanated from trade and commerce, which has consolidated over the years and facilitated the Indian diaspora to strike deep roots in these countries.

Diplomatic Relations

To liaise with Indians settled in the countries of the Indian Ocean, India set up its embassies, high commissions, and consulates in these countries after Independence, in 1947. However, in some of these countries, India sent its ambassadors, even before its Independence. India has diplomatic representation in 26 littoral states and seven island states of the Indian Ocean. Among African countries, it set up the Indian High Commission in South Africa after the end of the apartheid regime there in 1993, and has now established Consulate Offices in Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town. India established diplomatic relations with Mozambique in 1975 — the year it gained independence — and has its Embassy in Maputo. It is currently accredited to the Kingdom of Swaziland. It set up diplomatic ties with Tanzania in 1961 — when Tanganyika became independent. India established a diplomatic mission in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1948 and the Mission was elevated to the status of a High Commission in December 1963 when Kenya became independent. Presently there are no diplomatic ties between India and Somalia, as the country reels under violence and anarchy. India sent a goodwill mission to Ethiopia led by Sardar Sant Singh in 1947 and set up diplomatic ties at legation level in 1948 and sent its first Ambassador to Ethiopia in 1950. India set up its liaison office in Khartoum (Sudan) in March 1955 — well before the country's independence. In 1947, India set up its embassy in Egypt. India also has full-fledged diplomatic ties with Djibouti and Eritrea.⁹ These missions organise cultural activities in the countries of their operation and keep liaison with local Indian expats.

Cultural Agreements

Sensing the importance of the need for increasing cultural interaction, India set up the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in 1950 with the primary objective of estab-

lishing, strengthening and reviving cultural relations and mutual understanding with other countries. It is the nodal agency that formulates and implements policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations and helps strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. The ICCR has been successful in promoting greater awareness of India's cultural heritage abroad. Under its aegis, India has signed agreements for cultural cooperation with the African countries from time to time. In 2008, then Minister for Tourism and Culture, Ambika Soni, visited South Africa and signed the Programme of Cooperation in the fields of arts and culture between India and South Africa for 2008-2011. An agreement on cultural cooperation with Tanzania was signed way back on January 17, 1975 and with Kenya on February 24, 1981.

India and Djibouti on January 31, 1989 initialled a Cultural Cooperation Agreement. Again, both the countries signed an Executive Programme of Cultural, Educational and Scientific Cooperation for the year 2003-2005 at New Delhi on May 19, 2003.

India signed an agreement for cultural cooperation with Sudan in November 1974. India and Egypt signed a Cultural Cooperation Agreement on September 25, 1955.¹⁰

Indian Cultural Centres

India has established Indian Cultural Centres (ICC), which have become important platforms for the promotion of India's cultural diplomacy in the Indian Ocean region. The ICCR has established 20 cultural centres (and two sub-centres) worldwide.¹¹ Keeping in view the vast spread of the Indian diaspora, these centres take up different activities to help integrate India with the lands and the people of the Indian Ocean region. For instance, India has set up an Indian Cultural Centre in Durban, (South Africa), which functions under the aegis of the Consulate General of India, Durban. Besides organising various cultural programmes in different cities of KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Free State by visiting artistes from India, the Cultural Centre also organises talks, discourses and lectures, dance and music workshops by eminent personalities. The Cultural Centre also conducts



Ambika Soni, the then Indian Minister for Tourism and Culture, at the Gandhi peace march-2008 at Newtown, South Africa.

The Indian cultural centres offer a number of activities, such as exhibiting Indian films, organising book and photo exhibitions, music and dance performances, lectures and seminars on Indian cuisine and Yoga

regular classes to teach Indian dance and music. The centre has a library of more than 3,700 titles on a variety of subjects. An Indian Cultural Centre was also set up at Johannesburg in 1996 at the Consulate premises with the objectives of promoting Indian culture and to foster closer links between India and South Africa.¹²

On demand from the Indian community of Tanzania, the High Commission of India is opening an Indian Cultural Centre in Oysterbay, Dar es Salaam, to help facilitate the teaching of Indian art, literature, music and dance, painting, sculpture and cinema.

Maulana Azad Centre for Indian Culture (MACIC) at the Embassy of India exhibits Indian films, organises book and photo exhibitions, and mounts music and dance performances. It organises lectures, seminars, classes on Indian cuisine, Yoga, and Urdu and Hindi.

Thus, the main activity of these cultural centres is to provide the local population an opportunity to learn about Indian culture. The centres organise

dance, drama, and musical performances, essay competitions, lectures, photo exhibitions, and other similar activities. They also conduct classes for yoga, Indian music and many Indian languages.¹³

Scholarships to nationals of countries of Indian Ocean

Educational assistance forms another important element of India's cultural diplomacy. India offers opportunities to nationals of various countries to visit India to learn about Indian languages and culture. Many schemes to provide scholarships have been set up for this purpose. India awards

324 scholarships under the General Cultural Scholarships Scheme (CGSS) annually, to international students belonging to Asian, African and Latin American countries for undergraduate, post-graduate degrees and for pursuing research at Indian universities. More than half of these scholarships are awarded to nationals from countries of the Indian Ocean region, especially to those from the African countries of the Indian Ocean littoral.

Table- 1
Distribution of Scholarships under GCSS in the African Countries of Indian Ocean Littoral

South Africa	19
Ethiopia	20
Mozambique	15
Djibouti	01
Tanzania	10
Sudan	10
Kenya	12
Somalia	19

Source: Singhvi Committee Report, pp. xvii–xx.

Under other schemes, India awards scholarships to the nationals belonging to these countries. For instance, under the Cultural Exchange Programme, scholarships are awarded by the Government of India to Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Somalia and Egypt, to facilitate study, training and research in various fields. Under the Commonwealth Programme, India offers scholarships in human resource development to four Kenyan nationals, one to South Africa and three to Tanzania.¹⁴ Apart from these schemes, India offers the Africa Day scholarship in memory of the late Dr. Amilcar Cabral, who had led African nationalist movements in Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands and led Guinea-Bissau's independence movement. The scholarship is offered to a national of one African country on a rotational basis for under-graduate, post-graduate, and doctoral and post-doctoral studies.

India also instituted the Dadoo Naicker Scholarship in memory of Yusuf Dadoo and Monty Naicker of the South African Indian Congress. It is awarded to a South African student of Indian origin to pursue post-graduate studies.¹⁵

Under the Apasaheb Pant Scholarship Scheme, one scholarship is offered to a Kenyan national to pursue studies at the post-graduate level, preferably in the field of Economics or International Relations at the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru University.

India offers 10 Craft Instructor Scholarships annually to nationals of Commonwealth countries, which include African countries. Training is offered in teach-

ing craft, carpentry and welding. In addition, South Africa, Mozambique and Tanzania are India's partners in the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme (SCAAP).

Integrating Indian Community with India

Residing in distant lands, Indians have succeeded spectacularly in their respective professions through their dedication and hard work. They have retained their emotional, cultural and spiritual bonds with India — the country of their origin. This strikes a reciprocal chord in the hearts of the people of India. It is a symbiotic relationship. On the recommendation of a committee (appointed under L.M. Singhvi), which submitted its report to the Prime Minister on January 8, 2002, the formation of an organisation on the lines of the Indian Planning Commission was suggested to look after the affairs of the Overseas Indians.¹⁶ Following its recommendations, a full-fledged Ministry of the Overseas Indian Affairs was set up to deal with affairs related to the overseas Indians. India's cultural diplomacy is not seen as an effort towards cultural dominance; rather it is an effort to harmonise cultural linkages and strengthen ties through modern cultural means.

Pravasi Bhartiya Divas

An important aspect of India's cultural diplomacy is to cultivate the Indian diaspora. The Indian government has taken up a number of policy initiatives in order to engage the diaspora. Celebrating Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is one such effort, which began in 2003 and is held annually in January.¹⁷ To recognise the services of Indians settled abroad, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman was instituted in 2003. This honour is conferred on distinguished Indians or PIO/NRIs. In 2003, Prof. Fatima Meer from South Africa, and Manilal Premchand Chandaria from Kenya, were conferred this award. In 2005, Amina Cachalia and Ahmed Kathrada of South Africa, and J.K. Chande of Tanzania were awarded



India's former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam giving away the Pravasi Bharatiya Awards for Community Affairs to Pheroze Nowrojee from Kenya, at the 5th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-2007 in New Delhi.

the same. In 2006, Sisupal Rambharos from South Africa was awarded the Samman. In 2007, Billy Nair from South Africa, and Pheroze Nowrojee from Kenya, were honoured with the award. In 2010, Pravin Jamnadas Gordhan, Finance Minister of South Africa, Tholisah Perumal Naidoo, a publisher from Durban and Rajni Kanabar from Tanzania, were given this award.¹⁸

Remittances

Remittances from the Indian diaspora have become a major source of external development finance. Worldwide, remittances received by developing countries from its nationals abroad exceeded \$250 billion in 2006. The actual size of remittances, including both officially recorded and unrecorded transfers, through informal channels is even larger. Remittances have a tremendous potential to boost development. Remittances to India represent about 3.08 percent of its GDP. In the southern state of Kerala, for example, remittances constitute 22 percent of the state domestic product. Excluding remittances, per capita income in Kerala is 34 percent higher than the national average, while it is 60 percent higher than the national figure, including remittances.¹⁹ About 2 percent of the total remittances to India come from African countries.

Religious and cultural tourism

Being the centre of Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism, India attracts millions of NRIs/PIOs belonging to these religions from various countries of the region. Religious tourism has emerged as a booming market in India. Indians settled abroad also make pilgrimages to Tirupati, Vaishno Devi, Golden Temple and Dargahs of many Sufi saints like Moinuddin Chishti. These pilgrimages help to renew personal relationships between the Indian diaspora and their kith and kin back home. This helps to build close ties with the diaspora. Similarly, cultural tourism in India has seen a meteoric rise in the recent years. Tourists come from far and wide to 'experience' Indian culture and heritage in Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Mandawa in Rajasthan. The most popular states in India for cultural tourism are Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal.

Indian culture in the form of dance, music, festivals, architecture, traditional customs, cuisine, and languages attract thousands of PIOs to India. In Rajasthan, these tourists throng its magnificent palaces and forts, and a number of festivals and fairs, at Marwar and Pushkar. In Uttar Pradesh, they come to see the Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri



The last independent Indian cinema theatre in Johannesburg.

in Agra, besides visiting the holy cities of Varanasi, Allahabad, Vrindavan and Ayodhya. Uttaranchal, which is also a big draw with PIOs, boasts of several ancient temples in the Kumaon and Garhwal regions.²⁰

Indian Films and Promotion of Indian Culture

Indian films are popular abroad, especially in countries with Indian immigrants. These films reach out to global audiences, representing India on an international platform. Cinema is the second-highest foreign exchange grosser for India.²¹ The popularity and demand of Bollywood is a major source of affiliation for the Indian diaspora. Indian films are greatly admired in African countries, especially in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa. The Indian population in these countries grasp every opportunity to stay connected with their roots and Indian cinema showcasing Indian culture is an important vehicle of that connection. Tamil films are also popular among Tamil immigrants in South Africa. Apart from cinema, Indian TV channels, too, help create a bonding between India and its diaspora.

Conclusion

Almost every African country on the Indian Ocean littoral has PIOs. In an endeavour to strengthen its relationship with them, India has actively used culture as an important instrument. The list of instruments used in cultural diplomacy is inexhaustible, such as those discussed above. Cultural diplomacy is carried out by the government to support its foreign policy goals. The countries of Africa on the Indian Ocean littoral are otherwise also important as they are within the maritime and strategic neighbourhood of India. The presence of a large Indian diaspora in these countries adds a special dimension to India–Africa relations. India's cultural diplomacy can help advance its domestic objectives. It is, therefore, a valuable tool of public diplomacy and India's soft power. ■

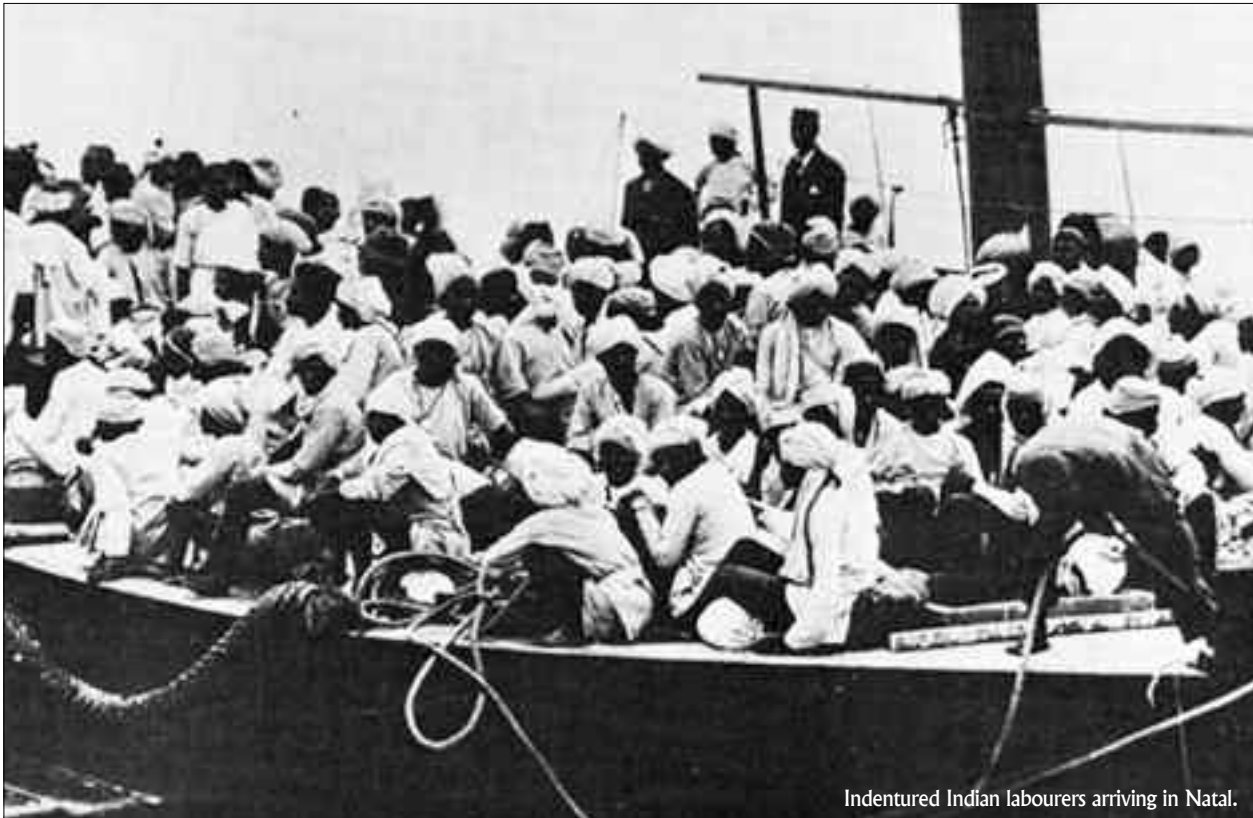
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12. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme was launched on September 15, 1964 as a bilateral programme of assistance of the Government of India. It is the flagship programme of the Indian Government's technical cooperation effort, not only because of its wide geographical coverage but also for innovative forms of technical cooperation. Being essentially bilateral in nature, ITEC is about cooperation and partnership for mutual benefit. It is demand-driven and response-oriented. It is focused on addressing the needs of developing countries. Under ITEC and its corollary SCAAP (Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme), 158 countries in Asia, Pacific, Africa, Latin America,

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 22. *Ibid.*

From dispossession to DESTINY

They arrived in Natal as indentured labourers from India 150 years ago. Today, together with South African natives, Indians form a vibrant and intrinsic part of the country's rainbow community, says **Shubha Singh**



Indentured Indian labourers arriving in Natal.

With the vast waters of the Indian Ocean linking India and Africa, there has been, through the ages, a regular circuit of trade, commerce and travel across the ocean. Since early times, there have been well-established Indian settlements in the coastal regions of Africa and there is evidence of Indian connections in the deep hinterland as well. Over the ages, different kinds of connections have developed and 2010 marks the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Indians in South Africa, where they now constitute a significant minority.

The Indians were brought to Natal under an agreement between the Natal colonial government and the British

government in India. The Indian workers came under a contract that indentured them to work for five years for a master. They were brought to meet a labour shortage in the colony and most of them were put to work on sugarcane plantations and mines. This marked the beginning of a permanent Indian presence in South Africa. Between November 1860 and 1911 (when the system of indentured labour was stopped) over 150,000 indentured labourers from across India were taken to Natal. At about the same time, other Indians arrived in South Africa as 'passenger' Indians; they came at their own expense, mainly as traders, and later, as professionals, such as teachers, accountants and lawyers. It is the descendants of all these Indians who now make up the vibrant Indian community in South Africa.

The arrival of indentured workers from 1860 sparked off organised Indian migration to South Africa. The first record



of Indian presence in the country dates back to the time when the Dutch established their settlement in the Cape Colony (later Cape Town) in the late 17th century. When the Dutch began their colonial settlement, they brought with them some Indian men and women as slaves. There are reports that the Indians were brought in as workers, either bonded or otherwise, by their employers but were later sold or bartered as slaves as their Dutch masters prepared to leave for home in Europe. The Indian slaves hailed from Bengal, the Coromandel Coast and Kerala.

It is estimated that from 1690 onwards, the Dutch brought in thousands of Indian slaves to Cape Colony. For some years, they formed the majority of the slaves in the Dutch settlement till slaves were brought in from other parts of Africa as well. Some of the Indian slaves were freed when their masters left the Cape Colony, while others were able to buy back their freedom. Some former slaves managed to make a good living in the colony. In the early years of the Dutch settlement, Indians constituted a sizeable presence but over time they inter-married and slowly assimilated themselves into the colony's coloured community,

leaving no trace of their identity.

The Indian indenture system was instituted by the British to man sugarcane plantations and the sugar industry that took shape in Natal in the 1850s. Slavery had been abolished in the British colonies and there was no local population that could

carry out sustained agricultural work. The Indian indenture system had worked well in the other plantation colonies of Mauritius, Trinidad & Tobago, and Guyana. The Natal government approached the colonial government in India seeking Indian indentured workers, particularly for Natal, which had become a British colony in 1856. In the following years, the Natal government began negotiations with the British government in India for import of labour. In 1859, the Natal Coolie Law was passed, which enabled the colony to bring in Indian migrants to work on sugarcane farms.

Natal joined the list of colonies importing indentured workers from India when the first batch of 324 Indian workers arrived in Natal on the paddle steamer, the *SS Truro*, on November 16, 1860. The *Truro* had sailed from the Madras port for Durban on October 13, 1860. Ten days later, another ship, the *Belvedere* carrying 305 passengers sailed from Calcutta and arrived at Durban port on

It is estimated that from 1690 onwards, the Dutch brought in thousands of Indian slaves to Cape Colony. They formed the majority of the slaves in the Dutch settlement. Some Indian slaves were freed when their masters left the Cape Colony, while others were able to buy back their freedom



November 26, 1860. During the next six years, nearly 6,448 Indians reached Natal; they comprised 4,116 men, 1,463 women and 869 children.

In that year, an economic depression precipitated a fall in sugar prices, with several indentured labourers going out of work in Natal. Coupled with the numerous complaints about ill-treatment meted out to the workers, the government in India stopped indenture migration till 1874. Migration resumed following fresh negotiations on appropriate working conditions and safeguards for the indentured workers. By the time the last indenture ship sailed into the port city of Durban 51 years later, 152,184 Indian men and women had reached Natal as indentured workers.

Indentured workers came to Natal under a binding contract for five years, to work for the master they were assigned to. After their contract expired, the workers could re-indenture themselves for another five years or they could live and work in the colony as 'free Indians' for five years before they became eligible for a free passage back home to India. The indentured workers were initially meant to work on the sugarcane plantations but were later put to work in the coal mines, the railways, the dockyards, municipal services and in domestic work.

The Indian workers made significant contributions to the economy of Natal colony, which was in the doldrums. Agriculture production went up four times within less than half a decade of the arrival of the Indian workers and the ailing sugar industry was revived. The Indian population in

Natal increased at a rapid pace for the plantations needed regular replenishment of farm workers.

After completing their indenture term, Indians moved away from the plantations and took up various kinds of work. Only a few of them were ready to re-indenture themselves. Life on the plantations was hard, at times oppressive, with an all-powerful supervisor; living conditions were dismal and the work was torturous with arbitrary penalties and physical punishments.

Some former indentured workers leased small bits of land and began farming and market gardening; others became petty traders and hawkers. Most Indians stayed on in Natal while a few thousand moved into neighbouring Transvaal. Only about 26 percent of the former indentured workers decided to take up free passage to go back to India after five years. By 1886, there were more free Indians than indentured Indians in South Africa.

Apart from the indentured workers, the other category of Indians arriving in Natal in the later decades of the 19th century were the 'free' or 'passenger' Indians; who had paid their own fare for the passage to Natal. The first passenger Indians arriving in Durban in 1869 were Indian traders from Mauritius. The next wave of arrivals were small-time merchants from Gujarat, some of whom were Bohra Muslims. The new arrivals found different areas to work in. After the traders who set up shops and small trading establishments, teachers, accountants, lawyers and priests followed, to serve the growing Indian community. Some

migrants came to South Africa to work as domestic servants, such as laundrymen, waiters and house-servants.

Traders from India and Mauritius came to do business in Natal and it was not long before the White settlers began to resent the foray of Indians into trading as it began cutting into their profits. An anti-Indian sentiment was generated especially among small shopkeepers who were directly affected by Indian competition. The growing hostility spread through the White settler community, which grew apprehensive of the growing numbers of Indians in Natal. The colonial administration sought to restrict the activities of Indians by bringing in discriminatory and restrictive laws that prevented them from opening new enterprises or expanding them.

A poll tax was imposed on all free Indians living in Natal. The government of Natal had imposed a residential tax of £25 on Indians who chose to remain as free Indians in the colony after completing their indentured service. The tax was reduced to £3 and was later abolished after a long agitation by the Indians. The Natal government wanted Indians but only as indentured workers; it did not want Indians to compete with the White settlers.

Indian leaders submitted a petition to the government seeking a termination of indenture migration. But the Natal authorities were writing to the government in India and the Colonial Office in London to relax the rules for recruitment to meet the increasing demand for miners in the coal mines. This request was made about the same time that the Natal government had extended the poll tax to include children.

When Mahatma Gandhi went to South Africa as a young lawyer he was deeply moved by the plight of the indentured workers who lived and worked under wretched and exploitative conditions under the total control of plantation supervisors.

Mahatma Gandhi led the campaign in South Africa for ending the indenture system. It was under Gandhi's leadership that the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) was established in 1894 with Gandhi as its secretary. Later, the Transvaal and the Cape Indian Congresses were formed. The political organisation was in response to the proposed Franchise Bill, which was meant to disenfranchise the Indians.

In 1927, the South African government and the British government in India concluded an agreement under which Indians would be encouraged to return to India and the South African government would facilitate their repatriation and would also improve the conditions under which the Indians lived in South Africa. Few Indians opted for repatriation and the South African government did

little to alleviate their conditions in South Africa.

It took another six and a half decades — after the Franchise Bill — before Indians in South Africa were granted full citizenship rights in 1961. But it made no difference to the discrimination Indians faced under the apartheid administration. Both Indians and Africans faced similar discriminatory laws.

Following the agitation for removal of the poll tax, Indians became involved in the political life of the country. The discriminatory practices against Indians and later the government's racist, apartheid policies forced Indians to fight for their rights and become an active part of the struggle for freedom and democracy. There were towering leaders in the Indian community who forged alliances with the African National Congress to fight the apartheid regime.

The Indian population in South Africa is concentrated in Kwa-Zulu Natal province and particularly around the cities of Durban and Pietermaritzburg.

The Indian population in South Africa is concentrated in Kwa-Zulu Natal province and in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. The Indian community has retained its traditional cultural practices and rituals. Festivals like Diwali and the Tamil Kavady festival are celebrated with gusto

The Indian community has retained its traditional cultural practices and rituals. Festivals like Diwali and the Tamil Kavady festival are celebrated with gusto. The South African Indian community in South Africa currently numbers around 1.28 million and forms about 2.5 percent of the country's population. South African Indians are involved in almost all walks of life in South Africa — from politics to social and economic spheres as well as the arts. Indians have also become highly successful business tycoons.

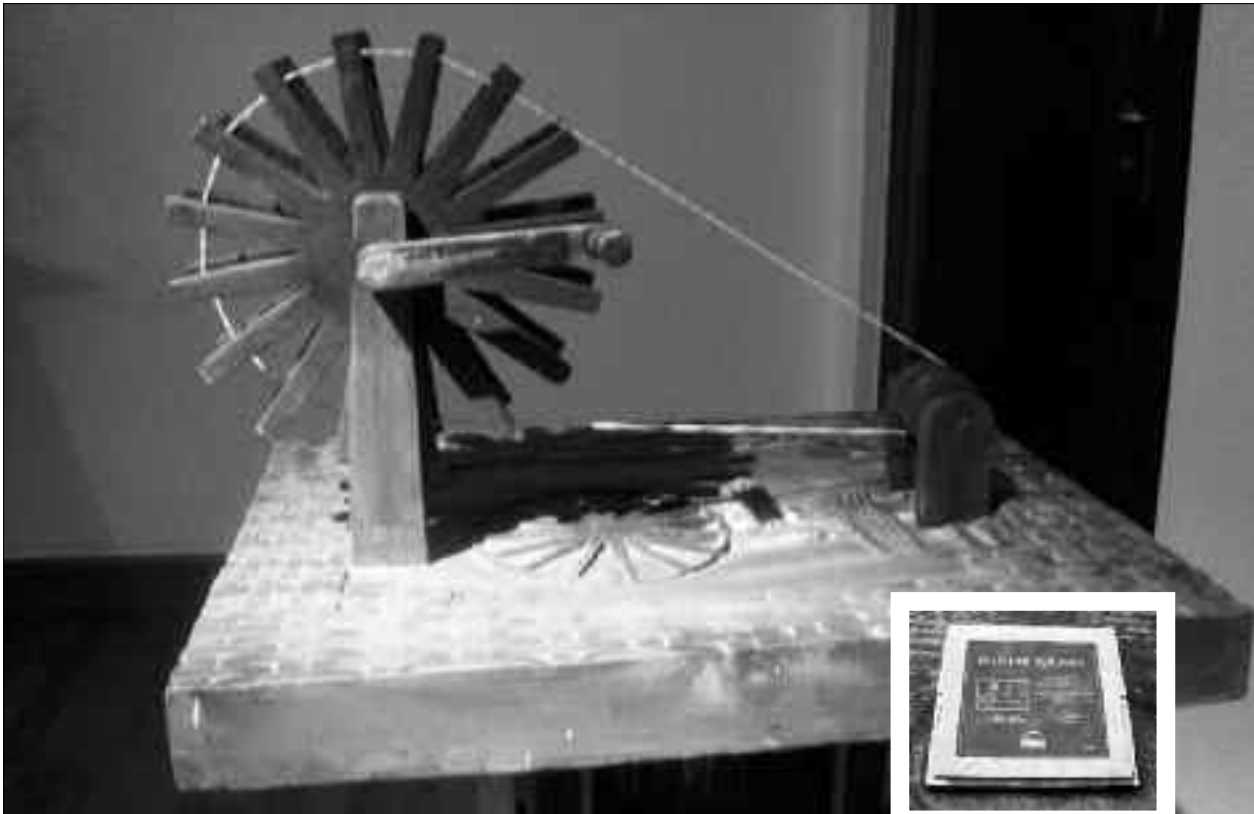
Former President Thabo Mbeki made a stirring speech in parliament following the adoption of South Africa's new constitution that sought to bind all ethnic minorities in the country into an undivided family. Referring to Indians, he said: "Those who were transported from India and China, whose being resided in the fact, solely, that they were able to provide physical labour, who taught me that we could both be at home and be foreign, who taught me that human existence itself demanded that freedom was a necessary condition for that human condition. Being part of all these people, and in the knowledge that none dare contest that assertion, I shall claim that — I am an African."

For many years, the South African Indian community was cut off from India when India had severed all contact with the racist South African regime in the international struggle against apartheid.

The difficult times Indians faced under the apartheid regime and the need they felt for forging alliances with other ethnic groups helped the Indian community evolve a 'South African Indian identity' and become an intrinsic part of the South African rainbow nation. ■

Gandhi and South Africa

Mahatma Gandhi, who first tested his most powerful tool of Satyagraha in the political laboratory of South Africa, has left a legacy that continues to inspire political discourse in that country, says **Rajiv Bhatia**



The Charkha: The tool that Mahatma Gandhi used as a powerful political symbol in galvanising people towards self-reliance; (Inset): Gandhi Square in Johannesburg.

While celebrating the 150th anniversary of Indians' arrival in South Africa, it is impossible to ignore the two decades spent in the country by the most celebrated Indian — the one who came as a lawyer in May 1893 and left as “a near Mahatma” (in Nelson Mandela’s words) in July 1914. Two days before his assassination, Mahatma Gandhi observed at his prayer meeting in Delhi: “I have myself lived in South Africa for 20 years and I can therefore say that it is my country.”

In a *Time* magazine tribute, Mandela said Gandhi was both an Indian and South African citizen, adding: “Both countries contributed to his intellectual and moral genius, and he shaped the liberatory movements in both colonial countries.”

A string of memorials in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) province, Johannesburg area and elsewhere serve as reminders of

Gandhi’s life and times. The Pietermaritzburg Railway Station, where he was thrown out from the first-class compartment because of the colour of his skin — a defining moment in Gandhi’s development — evokes a deep sense of history among informed visitors, but to others it is merely a not-so-well kept railway platform. The Phoenix Settlement outside Durban, where Gandhi practised his ideals of commune life, is a link to an important part of his life work, even though many feel that the Settlement could perhaps undertake welfare projects for local communities.

The Tolstoy Farm is now a non-descript, abandoned spot, with no indication of its link to Gandhi’s stay there. A visit to the permanent Gandhi Exhibition at the historic Constitution Hill is, however, deeply fulfilling. In other parts of the country, there are many Gandhi statues and busts. Visiting these sites, an introspective visitor is able, with some help from the Shyam Benegal film *The Making of the Mahatma*, to visualise clearly how Gandhi’s life might have unfolded in South Africa.

A series of activities, celebrations and events in recent years

has helped unfold the Gandhi legacy to people. The centenary celebrations of the launch of the Satyagraha movement brought India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to South Africa in 2006. Along with President Mbeki, Dr. Singh participated in important activities showcasing Gandhi's contributions in kindling and nurturing the people's desire to fight discrimination, oppression and injustice. Re-enactments in Durban of the iconic and epoch-defining Dandi Salt March and celebrations of Gandhi Jayanti elsewhere have been used regularly to educate people about what Gandhi stood for.

During my time, a special occasion was the '1908 Gandhi Bonfire Walk' from Museum Africa in Johannesburg to Hamidia Mosque in Newtown on August 16, 2008. The Walk highlighted Gandhi's contributions not only to the welfare of Indians but also to the beginnings of political development of an apartheid-torn society.

During the same week, Kader Asmal, a former education minister, delivered a lecture at Constitutional Hill in which he explained the "seminal effect" of the burning of passes under Gandhi's leadership in 1908 and the Satyagraha movement in general. (Under the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of 1906, which was followed by the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907, Indians and Chinese were expected to register their fingerprints and carry "passes" to move about in Transvaal.) Kader pointed out that the shift from submitting petitions to taking direct but non-violent action was "without parallel in history"; that the struggle mounted by Indians under the leadership of Gandhi was non-sectarian; and that Gandhi's movement was important because of "the mass nature of the struggle". In time, all these elements would evolve on South African soil, and would be replicated by Gandhi in India and by South African leaders in South Africa itself.

Another memorable occasion was the lecture delivered by Congress Party president Sonia Gandhi at the University of Cape Town. In thought-provoking remarks, she argued that Gandhi's message was not just worthy of "continued admiration and awe", but was highly relevant to our age as the world craved peace, harmony and inclusion.

In preserving the Gandhian legacy, an informal alliance of people and institutions has played a critical role. Ela Gandhi, the Mahatma's granddaughter, has been in the forefront, managing trusts and organisations, holding events and also embodying Gandhian values in her personal life. The first time my wife and I spent an hour at her modest apartment in Durban, she spoke candidly about her childhood memories of her famous grandfather. I felt bold enough to refer to the criticism Gandhi had faced in his lifetime and later — that he had struggled only for the welfare of Indians and not the majority black community who had suffered worse humiliations. Ela pointed out that Gandhi was convinced blacks would throw up their own leaders in due time. Indeed they did.

Kirti Menon, a great granddaughter, has quietly played a focal role in promoting Gandhian ideas in Johannesburg area. Several Indian business families, especially in Durban, as well as municipal and provincial governments in KZN and

Gautang provinces have contributed generously to the cause. A number of civil society organisations have worked on peace studies and projects, strengthening the cause of non-violence and peaceful methods as instruments for dispute resolution, racial harmony, gender equality and social equity.

Finally, political leaders of both countries have constantly highlighted the various dimensions of Gandhi's political vision and legacy. Mandela called him "The Sacred Warrior".

President Mbeki spoke about Gandhi on numerous occasions. His remarks at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Freedom Charter are notable. Referring to Anand Sharma (then Minister of State for External Affairs/Information & Broadcasting, and currently Minister for Commerce and Industry) whom Mbeki introduced as "Director of Information of the Indian Congress Party, Mahatma Gandhi's movement", the President said that "Indian and South African people can and do claim parentage of a most eminent and historic human being, Mahatma Gandhi".

In fairness, however, it must be recorded that criticism of Gandhi persists even now in South Africa. From time to time, the value and relevance of his legacy and his attitude towards blacks are questioned. Besides, there exists a largely unspoken perception that while many among minority groups care for Gandhian ideas, the majority, particularly the youth, is ignorant about them or indifferent to them. In my view, this debate underlines the need for an imaginative recontextualisation of Gandhian philosophy today. Many problems and conflicts around the world, be it political, religious, environmental or ideological, have solutions in Gandhi's vision.

At the Hamidia Mosque event, Pallo Jordan, Minister of Culture, observed that Gandhi would not have been "even a small footnote in history" if the Indian community had not come forward to support his movement. Perhaps this is essentially true. Every struggle needs a cause, a leader and followers. South Africa's brutal apartheid regime provided the cause; Gandhi became the central leader; persons of Indian origin or South Africans of Indian descent were largely his followers.

The Indian community in South Africa has since changed considerably. It has different concerns now. It retains memories of the land of its ancestors and, more importantly, of the role the community had played, under Gandhi's leadership and subsequently of others, in the fight against oppression.

The community's contribution to the country's socio-economic development since the emergence of democracy in 1994 has been noteworthy. Much has been done to connect it to India through culture, cuisine, cricket and much else. However, the community's potential to serve as the bridge between India and South Africa needs to be deepened.

One of the most austere men of his times, about whom Albert Einstein said, "Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this walked the earth in flesh and blood", Gandhi summed up his life thus: "My life is my message."

Few men can be the medium and the message at once. ■
(The author was India's High Commissioner to South Africa from 2006-09.)

Cape of Good Hope

The India Africa relationship has been defined by a unique alchemy forged across centuries — it's one of deep cultural kinship and spiritual affinity, says **Manish Chand**



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and South African President Jacob Zuma witness the signing ceremony of pacts between India and South Africa, in New Delhi on June 4, 2010.

It's India time in South Africa. A veritable carnival of Bollywood songs, classical dances, art, and plays, with a sprinkling of Vedic astrology thrown in for the exotic touch, is captivating South Africans as the country celebrates the 150th anniversary of the arrival of indentured Indian labourers in their midst. The site of the radical transformation of an Indian lawyer into 'Mahatma' Gandhi nearly a century ago, South Africa, home to around 1.5 million persons of Indian origin, is a microcosm of India's age-old cultural and economic ties with Africa, intersecting the present with the past.

When South African President Jacob Zuma visited India in June days before the World Cup soccer mania gripped his country, he made it a point to shower praise on the Indian community and waxed lyrical about how he felt at home in India. Highlighting the historic and unique relations between the two countries dating back to the struggle against apartheid,

Zuma said in Delhi: "We have been together through difficult times as well as happy times. I enjoyed the music and the food. We are at home in India," said the charismatic African leader.

This feeling of being at home is no metaphor; it's for real. It comes from a deep sense of cultural kinship and spiritual affinity that dates back to the time when Indian traders set sail in wooden dhows (boats) centuries ago to African countries circling the Indian Ocean. It wasn't a colonial impulse that propelled Indian traders to these distant lands, but a combination of adventure, enterprise and profit seeking.

In his travelogue, the legendary Marco Polo writes of seeing merchants from Gujarat and Saurashtra on Africa's East Coast and lauded them as "the best and the most honourable that can be found in the world". Subsequently, Indian trade with East Africa expanded so much that the rupee replaced the Maria Theresa thalers as the principal currency in East Africa. The construction of the railway line between Mombasa and

Kampala in the late 19th century was another milestone in the history of India's tryst with Africa that brought in around 34,000 Indian indentured labourers and led to greater cultural assimilation.

Traces of Indian cultural influence can now be seen everywhere in East Africa where *chapattis* are served for Christmas and *biryani* is a must for wedding receptions. And samosas are forever. Indian-origin words and expressions like *duka* (shop), *chapatti*, *kachumbari* and *harambee* are firmly embedded in the texture of Kiswahili.

In most East African countries, South Africa besides, there are all-Indian malls, any number of Indian restaurants offering mouthwatering cuisine from different corners of India and theatres showing Indian films, giving visiting Indians a feeling that they never left India. Every time an East African sits down to eat, he is in some sense connecting with India. And each town in East Africa reflects the cultural mosaic of India, playing host to a Hindu temple, a mosque and a gurdwara. This familiarity with India and things Indian is not surprising; over 200,000 persons of Indian origin have been living in East Africa for over a century.

Bollywood films are popular and Hindi music has influenced African music. Mombasa singer Juma Bhalo is known for improvising on Indian film songs. Taarab, a local music show very popular in Zanzibar, includes a singer, backed by a 40-piece orchestra, drums, horns and strings. One can hear the same spiritual impulse animating Indian and African sufi music. Recalls Ali Mazrui, leading Africanist and writer: "When I was growing up, Indian movies were a regular feature in Mombasa. There even used to be a special institution called Ladies' Night — a screening of Indian movies, especially organised for ladies, where men were not allowed." Mazrui feels that India's "soft power" has had a much bigger cultural impact on Africa than the Chinese or the Japanese. "An older Asian power in Africa is Japan and it has next to no cultural impact except for economic, trade and some diplomatic cooperation. You don't easily get to listen to Japanese music or Chinese movies," he says in an interview to *Africa Quarterly*.

Other scholars have also spoken about the cultural connect between India and Africa. Says eminent scholar Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai, also chairman of the UNESCO Executive Board: "I am no Orientalist, but I know that African cultures and the cultures of India are convergent. The two cultures are based on a very similar Weltanschauung. For millennia, they have emphasised the oneness of existence, the harmony between gods, nature and human beings. They both believe in the formula: I am because we are."

This cultural connectedness, rooted in history, traditions and criss-crossing of language over centuries, has given a special resonance to the burgeoning relations between India and Africa in modern times. Led by the private sector, bilateral trade has grown to \$39 billion, recording a more than ten-fold increase in the last 15 years.

Almost every week, an Indian firm announces a new busi-



Then President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam discussing the Pan-African e-Network Project with an African Union delegation.

ness venture in an African country. Tata buses and the Kirloskar pump, made by Indian companies, have become iconic brand names in many African countries. Jonathan Wutawunashwe, Zimbabwe's ambassador to India, is fond of recounting that if someone loses his way in African villages, he is told to go to the Kirloskar pump and find his way! Africa is "the continent of the future", says Adi Godrej, a top Indian industrialist.

Trade, technology and training now forms the triumvirate that underpins India's engagement with the African continent that is directed at forging a win-win partnership by empowering the people-rich African continent. India's emphasis on technology transfer, human resource development and value-addition, as opposed to the preoccupation of some countries with Africa's extractive resources, has earned admiration from a new generation of African leaders who are increasingly looking at India as an equal partner in Africa's renaissance.

Many of these African leaders often describe India as "an elder brother", indicating a sense of shared cultural history and deep trust that underpins their 21st century partnership. "If India's experience is married to Africa's vast natural resources, it will result in the accelerated development of Africa," says Ghana's former president John Kufuor, encapsulating the essence of the symbiotic and mutually empowering relationship between India and Africa.

This is precisely what India is doing as it plans to set up 19 institutions in Africa in areas of diamond polishing, IT, vocational education and the Pan-African Stock Exchange. India wishes to be a partner in Africa's resurgence, Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh said memorably at the 2008 India-Africa Forum summit.

The 150th anniversary of the arrival of Persons of Indian Origin in Africa is just the apposite time for the two sides to leverage their strengths and shared cultural history to push for reforms of global decision-making bodies and make the 21st century the century of Asia and Africa. ■

Looking TO THE FUTURE

The architecture of a sustainable and lasting India-Africa partnership must be built on a clear understanding of realities and the urgency of a shared purpose, says **Williams Nkurunziza**

As I thought about the trajectory of the India-African partnership and what must be done to reinvigorate it, a particular image kept springing into my mind: that of former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda. Even in the twilight of his life, Kaunda still plays the guitar and sings love songs to his wife of 63 years. I saw him enthral a crowd at a function to celebrate the recent swearing-in ceremony of President Paul Kagame in Kigali, Rwanda, with a love song in honour of his wife — and for President Kagame's love for his country. As we watched him strut his stuff on a new guitar, his age did not seem to matter. What did, was his message: real relationships are nurtured all the time. So, while we acknowledge the historical India-Africa connection, we must accept that it must evolve in response to changing times and circumstances. And the direction of this evolution is a factor of the decisions made and the actions taken by parties in this relationship.

True, current efforts aimed at enhancing the India-Africa partnership are laudable. In particular, the visible commitment of the Indian government to support Africa's development and the continent's quest for prosperity. Over \$1.5 trillion have been pumped into development programmes across the continent. Programmes such as the Pan African Network and the Hole-in-a-Wall Project are designed to assist the continent bridge the digital divide while delivering education and health to people across Africa. Yet the demands of the moment and the untapped opportunities in trade and investment suggest that 'our engagement' is inadequate. More needs to be done. It is our considered view that in helping Africa, India is consolidating its relationship with the continent while securing its own future. But India is not only the government. Its private sector and civil society must share its passion for a stronger India-Africa partnership and work to translate this passion into actual acts of engagement.

As one sage once said, '...he who has, is the one that gives'. India is the stronger in the partnership under review. To strengthen the future of the India-Africa partnership, it is our view, that India must undertake the following four actions:



1. Communicate to eliminate uncertainty and shed light on opportunity.
2. Provide technical education to empower the drivers of Africa's economic transformation.
3. Guide and/or invest in Africa's industrialisation to add value and enhance competitiveness of its goods.
4. Build infrastructure to connect markets and end Africa's marginalisation.

We live in an increasingly interdependent world. Advances in science and technology, particularly ICT in which India is a global giant, have flattened the limitations of time and space. Today, it is possible for you to follow events in Delhi as quickly as those unfolding in Kigali or Kinshasa, Cairo or Casablanca, Accra or Ankara, Port Louis or Port of Spain, China or Chad. All, in real time. Very often, we fail to see, not because images are blurred, but because we choose to. Very often, we fail to hear, not because the sound is distorted, but because we choose to. Very often, we fail to feel, not because our senses have been numbed by some biological defect, but because we choose to.

Undoing Distortions

What do we see of Africa in the Indian media? Very little. What do we hear of Africa in the Indian media? Very little. But:

Is it OK to ignore a continent that hosts the world's third-largest population?

Is it OK to ignore a continent that holds the world's largest deposits of gold, diamonds, bauxite, copper, arable land as well as fresh water lakes and rivers?

Is it OK to ignore a continent with whom your trade has double-digit growth annually and with whom your total trade is projected to reach \$150 billion by 2012?

Is it OK to ignore a continent that has historically been home to a commercially significant Indian diaspora now standing over two million people?

It is not OK. It is neither in India's or Africa's interest. In the absence of correct and constructive information about Africa in this country's mainstream media, for many in India's emerging corporate sector, Africa remains either a dark or demonised continent. The Indian media needs to do more.

Lasting partnership between India and Africa must be built on a foundation of understanding and mutual respect. To build this understanding as a precursor to a lasting partnership, we must eliminate, through deliberate and sustained Indian media coverage, the many misconceptions often orchestrated by the western press and which tend to negatively influence people's attitudes around the world about the content and character of Africa, the mother of human civilisation.

The Indian private sector needs to define a constructive agenda built on clear understanding facilitated my mainstream media focus on Africa. Equally, the Indian civil society needs to seriously engage and tell the African narrative of opportunity, humanity and potential.

To this end, consider these:

1. Annual media tours of Africa by leading Indian media houses;
2. Introduction of African programmes on Indian TV and radio stations;
3. Provision of a page dedicated to African issues in leading Indian newspapers and print publications, and,
4. Introduction of a course on Africa politics, economy and cultures in local mass communication training programmes.

Beyond communication, India has a unique opportunity to take charge of Africa's technical education and training so critical to the continent's agenda for economic transformation. Many of the countries on the continent run subsistence economies with little industrial activity. Little investments were made in technical and industrial skills development. India can and should leverage its rich industrial experience, especially within the SME sector, and take charge of the development of requisite industrial and technical skills, focusing on those critical to the continent's economic transformation.

The sectors of focus should be agriculture, mining and mineral beneficiation, power generation, pharmaceuticals, food processing and packaging, mechanics and machine tooling. With projections indicating that by 2025 Africa will have a population of 785 million people within the 0-24 age bracket and accounting for 24 percent of global youths, the need for a robust skills training infrastructure becomes all the more important.

Win-Win Proposition

India's partnership with Africa must be built on a win-win proposition. A relationship based on an extractive strategy is neither sustainable nor desirable. India can only secure its greatness in the world by taking charge of Africa's industrialisation through sharing of technology, technical expertise and investments in industrial production. While the government has championed this course, a lot of the Indian engagement with Africa has tended to be through LoC-supported projects. While we welcome the pioneering role of corporates like Reliance, Tata and Mahindra in Africa, it must be noted that there is still need and room for more Indian private equity in, and ownership of, projects in industrial and transformational projects in Africa. And the list is endless:

Today, 35-50 percent of Africa's agricultural produce goes to waste for want of processing technology and infrastructure. Indian investments and technology can change this.

Today, most minerals mined on the continent are exported in raw form, living little benefit for the Africans who either own them or mine them. Indian investments and technology can bring a sparkle to a mineral-rich continent.

Today, Africa sleeps in darkness inspite of its huge hydropower, petroleum, gas and solar potential. Indian investments and technology can replace darkness with light while improving their bottomlines. Today, much of Africa imports marble and granite even though the self-same stones adorn the countryside. Indian technology and investments can chop and shape matter to bring shine to a rugged land.

At this moment we say: Africa's current condition is not acceptable, so is the slow pace of India's private sector engagement and media's inattention. Today, this moment may be the time for India to make a difference by forcing a paradigm shift in its economic relationship with Africa. India can choose not to be like all the rest. India can choose to build Africa's industrial capacity by expanding its own industrial base across the Indian Ocean.

To be sustainable, the India-Africa partnership must be seen to deliver value to the African masses through an improvement in their condition resulting from industrialisation, value addition and competitiveness of their goods and services in regional and global markets. Equally, growing industrialisation must be accompanied by a corresponding increase in investments in infrastructure such as roads and railways to ensure that goods get to the market well in time.

In sum, the architecture of a sustainable and lasting India-Africa partnership must be built on a clear understanding of our realities and the urgency of our shared purpose. We shall triumph; we shall prevail if our search for prosperity is a factor of a deliberate shared enterprise. ■

(This is an edited version of a paper presented by the writer, who is Rwanda's High Commissioner to India, at a seminar on India-Africa relations in New Delhi on October 28, 2010. The seminar was organised by the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi.)

BRIC boost to India's ENGAGEMENT with Africa

As part of the BRIC grouping, India's engagement with Africa will get an added impetus in the years ahead in terms of economic cooperation and security ties, says **Aparajita Biswas**



Leaders of BRIC countries (from left to right): Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, then Brazilian President Lula da Silva, Chinese President Hu Jintao and Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at the BRIC meeting, in Brasilia, Brazil on April 15, 2010.

India's foreign policy has undergone a metamorphosis in tune with the changing global scenario since the 1990s. The disintegration of the USSR, the demise of the bipolar world, and domestic economic problems prompted India to reassess its foreign policy and recast its foreign relations of the earlier decades. Serious domestic and international problems compelled India to realign its foreign policy on the basis of more pragmatic considerations. In today's era of globalisation, it has improved its relations with United States and other western countries, established relations with Israel and embraced multilateralism, to solve major problems on the economic front. This is in sharp contrast to the earlier era of rigid bipolarity and East-West

rivalry, which was marked by ambiguity among Indian foreign policy makers with regard to transnational cooperative arrangements.

Since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, multilateralism has gained renewed salience in international relations as well as in Indian foreign policy. According to IR theory, multilateralism involves justice, obligations and an international rule of law. For Keohane, multilateralism is "the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of three or more states, through ad hoc arrangements or by means of institutions".¹ Since the 1990s, India has actively engaged itself in several multilateral forums like ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), G-8-05, G-20, IBSA (India, Brazil

and South Africa), IOR-ARC (Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation) and ACD (Asia Cooperation Dialogue), among others. India's active participation in the formation of the Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) forum with these emerging powers shows its willingness for multilateral cooperative arrangements to solve shared problems and the challenges of globalisation.

This article provides some initial perspectives on the evolution of multilateral forums like BRIC and also examines India's recent cooperation with the BRIC countries, to better understand its emergence and implications. It also examines BRIC's engagements with African countries, and its implications.

BRIC

The acronym, BRIC, was coined by Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs in 2001. He predicted that by year 2050, Brazil, Russia, India and China would become bigger than the six most industrialised nations in dollar terms and would completely change the power dynamics of the last 300 years.² The first Summit of BRIC was held at Yekaterinburg in Russia in 2009 in the midst of the profound global crisis.³ The Summit was intended to officially announce the creation of this loose blocs at a time when the G8, consisting of the advanced industrialised countries, was increasingly becoming shorn of legitimacy and its dominance was being questioned.

Despite a range of differences among the four countries, BRIC has outstripped most expectations in recent years, in forming a promising political grouping. Building upon other meetings between the newly emerging powers, most importantly the trilateral Russia-India-China (RIC) arrangement, the BRIC foreign ministers met in 2006. Cooperation among BRIC countries was preceded by two finance ministers' summits, leaders' meetings, and a stand-alone BRIC leaders' summit in June 2009, which was marked by a joint communiqué. Russia and Brazil have together been the driving force that has transformed BRIC from an abstract financial notion into a genuine political grouping.

Although there seems to be a broad consensus within BRIC about the probable changes in power dynamics, there is much less agreement about how the process will unfold. There is speculation and debate among scholars about the possible role of BRIC's member-states — whether the forum would like to challenge the existing world order or challenge the United States, collectively.

In fact, the BRIC countries are deeply concerned that America's dominant power position will allow it to behave as it pleases and damage their fundamental interests. However, there is very little evidence that any of the

BRIC members would prefer a hardline anti-U.S. coalition.⁴ As evident from the statements and deliberations of the BRIC Summit meetings, the purpose is not really to challenge the 'hegemony' or to emerge as the new "hegemons", at least in the immediate future, but to protect and secure safe places within the current hegemonic order, which is, however, far from absolute.

Establishing an anti-hegemonic political front is not the main focus of the BRIC countries. In fact, they accept the hegemonic stability theory that states that the international system is more likely to remain stable "when a single nation state is the dominant world power, or hegemon". They believe that when a hegemon exercises leadership, either through diplomacy, coercion or persuasion, it is actually deploying its "preponderance of power". Thus the dilemma of the BRIC countries is that, although they are the newly emerging powers and are becoming a powerful group in international politics, they are not questioning the fundamental global order of U.S. supremacy.⁵

Till now, cooperation and accommodation have been the strategic approach of BRIC. In the past couple of years, the member-states of BRIC have formed a more formal political pressure group as distinct from an abstract perception of Goldman Sachs, and regularly convene official BRIC Summits and issue joint communiqués. According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry official, Wu Hailong, "Four-country [BRIC] cooperation is open and transparent cooperation, not aimed at third parties."⁶ In fact, a previous attempt by Russia in 1998 to form a strategic triangle between China, Russia and India was rejected by both India and China, both of whom agreed only to trilateral cooperation, based on the principles of "no alliance, no confrontation, and not targeted at a third country".

It may be recalled that in the first summit of BRIC countries held in Yekaterinburg in 2009, the group directly attacked the Bretton Woods institutions and talked about reforms of international financial institutions in the backdrop of changes in the international system. Russia had even called for developing new reserve currencies to complement the dollar, and also to explore the possibility of settling bilateral trade in local currency. However, all this did not find any reference in the final statement issued at the summit. Instead, the cautious wording appeared to reflect China's concerns that any anti-dollar statements could erode the value of its currency reserves, given that its dollar reserves had touched \$2 trillion by the end of 2008.⁷

The BRIC countries have proposed a greater role for IMF's quasi-currency, Special Drawing Rights (SDR), as a multilateral substitute for the dollar. The joint communiqué called for active participation of emerging market economies

India's foreign policy has gone through a metamorphosis since the 1990s. The disintegration of the USSR and the demise of the bipolar world have prompted India to adjust its foreign relations of earlier decades



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, then President of Brazil Lula da Silva and South Africa's President, Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma at the 4th (IBSA) Summit Press Conference in Brasilia, Brazil, on April 15, 2010.

and developing countries in the decision-making process of the financial institutions, in line with their relative weight in the world economy.⁸ These challenges have been significant, but they do not necessarily foreshadow more aggressive moves to undermine and destroy the existing international order.

The other area in which BRIC has challenged the international order has been in drawing linkages between its willingness to provide more funds to the IMF to help other countries recover from the crisis and demand that the April G-20 summit endorse changes in IMF and World Bank voting shares.⁹ According to an Indian official, BRIC countries are willing to contribute to the IMF, but they won't contribute heavily to longer-term fund resources until the world body increases their voting shares substantially. "They don't want to get locked into providing more money until they get their (shares) increased." In this case, although it also seems to be a clear example of BRIC pressuring the western powers, it is far from a frontal assault on the existing order, that others worry may come soon.

While the first BRIC summit mainly concentrated on eliminating the negative effects of the financial crisis, the second summit, held in Brasilia, Brazil, on April 16, 2010, stressed on the issues of enhancing the role of BRIC countries in the IMF, World Bank, and on coordinating energy and resource policies among the member-states. The lead-

ers of the four BRIC countries also discussed whether to toe the American line, although this issue is not much of a challenge to the United States.¹⁰

Under the circumstances, it's important to attempt an estimate of India's perception of the scope and role of BRIC.

India and BRIC

Last year, India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was in Brazil to attend both the second Summit of BRIC and IBSA.

The acronym, BRIC, was coined by Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs in 2001. He predicted that by 2050, BRIC would become economically bigger than the six most industrialized nations, changing the power dynamics of the last 300 years

For India, these two groups are extremely important, considering that both aim to collectively boost bargaining power and clout on global issues, and also strengthen economic and political ties among the member-countries on the lines of South-South cooperation. In fact, India took the initiative to call for improving the importance of BRIC and IBSA as groups.¹¹ Dr. Singh called for closer cooperation in the fields of energy and food security, as well as tapping into the potential of other sectors, such as trade and investment, science and technology, and infrastructure. He added that pooling together each other's experiences could lead to more inclusive

growth. "We are four large countries with abundant resources, large populations and diverse societies. We aspire for rapid growth for ourselves and for an external environment that is conducive to our development goals".¹²

This is more so since they share common challenges as developing countries and global challenges often affect them



Prime Minister Manmohan Singh addressing the IVth IBSA Press Conference / Declaration in Brasilia, Brazil, on April 15, 2010.

in a similar way. In addition to discussions on responding to the financial crisis, India exchanged ideas and experiences on food security, agriculture, disease, foreign aid, energy and global warming.

Sharing these experiences not only helps the BRIC member-states themselves, it also allows them to share experiences and “best practices” with the developing world and thereby expand South-South cooperation.

Moreover, India has also tried to use BRIC as a forum to engage China as the latter has become the largest market for the fast-industrialising countries of East Asia. The volume of China-India trade has soared in recent years, and was close to \$60 billion by the end of 2010.¹³ Not only that, India also wants to resolve the age-old mistrust and complicated relationship between the two countries since the 1962 war between them. India shares land borders with China, Pakistan and Bangladesh and faces many potential threats. Although Sino-Indian relations have improved in recent years, India is threatened by China’s expanding presence through bases in Myanmar, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, leading to a possible encirclement around the Indian subcontinent as well as potential competition in the Indian Ocean area. By improving relations with China and by cooperating in a multilateral forum like BRIC, India would like to stabilise the regional environment by keeping China away from the simmering issues between India and Pakistan.

India was Russia’s close ally in the Cold War years, with the latter even helping India in its war with Pakistan in 1971. India wants to strengthen its ties with Russia within the multiple cooperative networks, given that it depends on its support in its efforts to counter terrorism emanating from

Pakistan. India believes that Russia being a great power, can influence the conduct of Pakistan. Prime Minister Singh says, “Russia’s influence will be utilised to convince Pakistan that the strategy of using terror as an instrument of state policy is counter-productive.”¹⁴

India seeks cooperation with Russia to devise effective counter-terror strategies by coordinating intelligence and information gathering systems between the two countries. On the other hand, there are immense opportunities to expand trade, investment and technology flow between the two countries. Cooperation in the fields of energy, nuclear energy programme and defence are the other important aspects of cooperation between the two countries, besides shared views on issues like economic slowdown, climate change and global governance.

With Brazil, India has a unique partnership arrangement that has attracted international attention. Both countries have directly challenged Western nations over free trade during various rounds of WTO negotiations, most notably, at the 2003 Cancun meeting.¹⁵

BRIC and Africa

Even though trade and investment remain the principal driving forces behind BRIC’s relations with African nations, factors like age-old historical ties and diaspora networks have also strengthened diplomatic ties between African countries and Brazil, China and India. Over the last decade, all four BRIC member-states have established themselves as increasingly influential players across Africa. Given the large scope of their engagement, this may turn out to be one of the most significant developments for the region in recent years¹. According to Standard Bank of South Africa, BRIC member-states, and not the developed economies, are redefining Africa’s role in the global economy, a direction driven by solid commercial needs and shared interests. Between 2000 and 2008, BRIC-Africa trade has snowballed almost ten-fold, from around \$20 billion to over \$180 billion — a 34 percent compounded annual growth rate. Collectively, the BRIC is now easily Africa’s largest trading partner, with African trade constituting around 2.9 percent, 6.4 percent and 6.3 percent of China, India and Brazil’s total trade, respectively.¹⁶

Although BRIC has immediate interests in Africa’s natural resources, especially oil, it is also motivated by individual aspirations. For example, Brazil wants to create a new “Southern Axis” with itself at the forefront. Russia’s desire is to reframe its image in a new perspective because of its sullied reputation in Africa during the Cold War years. For India, Africa is seen politically as a key ally in the pursuit of a competitive advantage over its Asian competitor, China. For China, African countries are seen as long-term partners in its bid to gain global economic ascendancy.

The importance of Africa to BRIC is reflected in the frequent visit of presidents and prime ministers of these countries to Africa. For example, Chinese President Hu Jintao is

the most frequent flyer to Africa since 2002, followed by Brazil's President Lula. India's prime minister and ministers also have paid several visits to Africa since 2003. In June 2009, in the midst of the worst recession in almost a century, Russia's President Dmitry Medvedev went on a multi-country visit to various African countries. More often than not, these high-level visits have been marked by a raft of bilateral trade and economic cooperation agreements between African countries and BRIC.

The diplomatic efforts of BRIC in Africa are further complemented by the presence of official embassies throughout the continent. In this regard, China is represented in most African countries, with Chinese embassies in 47 African countries. In return, 40 African countries have official embassies in China. For its part, India maintains embassies in 30 African countries, with 37 African countries having embassies in India, while Russia has a strong official infrastructure across Africa, serviced by embassies in 37 African countries. In turn, 29 African countries are represented in Russia. Brazil had embassies in 28 African countries, up significantly from the 13 countries it was officially represented in when President Lula came to power in 2003.¹⁷

Among African countries, South Africa was admitted to the exclusive BRIC Forum at its second Summit held in Brazil on 16th April 2010. BRIC, especially China, India and Brazil, have strong economic relations with South Africa — and for these countries, South Africa has been a gateway hub of BRIC's spread to other parts of the continent. In fact, the Goldman Sachs Report of 2003 has highlighted the economic and political importance of South Africa in the African continent.¹⁸

It may also be noted that, besides BRIC, India has a unique trilateral partnership arrangement with Brazil and South Africa that has attracted international attention. The partnership's aim is to boost their bargaining power and clout on global issues and to strengthen economic and political ties among the three countries.

The involvement of BRIC in Africa is fast changing the dynamics of the continent's relationship with the rest of the world. According to the Goldman Sachs Report, "BRIC's engagement with Africa is not a unilateral act of goodwill; it makes perfect economic and strategic sense". Once branded as a marginalised and hopeless continent in the 1990s, African economies have recorded 5.16 percent rate of growth in 2009. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the strong economic growth performance observed in the region between the second half of the 1990s and the onset of the financial crisis in 2008 was accompanied by a spectacular increase in trade.

Africa's total merchandise trade increased from \$217 billion in 1995 to \$986 billion in 2008. Its share of global trade also increased from 2.2 percent in 2000 to 3.3 percent in 2008. This means that Africa currently has a share of world trade that is higher than its share of world gross domestic

product (2.5 percent), but much less than its share of world population (14.6 percent). Their abundant natural resources, expanding consumer markets and growing clout in the global affairs provides BRIC an opportunity to gain a firm foothold in countries which, coming from a low base, are likely to grow much higher than average rates.¹⁹

The most interesting aspect of BRIC's engagement in Africa is the speed with which it has expanded relations with African countries. China-Africa trade increased from \$3.5 billion in 1990 to over \$100 billion in 2010. China is now Africa's second most prodigious trade partner, behind the United States.

India's trade with African countries, which is currently valued at \$36 billion, is expected to increase to \$150 billion by 2013. Brazil has also shown a significant increase in its trade with Africa, especially after President Lula came to power in 2003.

In 2008, Brazil's trade with African countries accounted for \$26 billion. With regard to Russia, following a stagnant period during the 1990s, it began to revive its ties with African states in the latter stages of former President Vladimir Putin's leadership. It took several initiatives to boost its trade, which stood at \$6 billion in 2008.²⁰

To promote trade and investment across a broad spectrum, BRIC banks are laying a strong foothold in Africa. The first and significant BRIC investment in Africa's banking industry came in 2008 when the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) bought a 20 percent stake in South Africa's Standard Bank in 2007, paying \$5.5 billion. Among other Chinese banks exerting influence in Africa is the Bank of China, the country's most international bank. The bank entered into a pact with Ecobank that operates in 31 African countries. The Export-Import Bank of China, a state entity which promotes trade and investment, has approved loans worth \$20 billion in Africa (including north Africa).²¹

In 2008, Brazil's Bradesco and state-controlled Banco de Brasil announced a new African holding company with Banco Espirito Santo (BES), a Portuguese firm active in Angola.

In 2009, the State Bank of India (SBI) announced that was looking to spend \$1 billion to purchase a bank in Africa, to service a growing number of Indian companies doing business across the continent. SBI has existing joint ventures with banks in Mauritius and Nigeria. India's ICICI Bank, Bank of India, and the Export-Import Bank of India also have representative offices in South Africa.²²

Broad macroeconomic reforms across Africa have inspired increased levels of FDI from traditional and emerging commercial partners throughout the continent. India was the largest of the BRIC countries to establish overseas investment projects in Africa between 2003 and 2009.²³

The Tata Group, India's largest multinational group, was the second most active investor during 2003-2009, investing in a total of 23 projects, second only to Kenya Commercial Bank. While India may have invested in a larg-

er number of projects, the cumulative value of these investments (\$25 billion) trails China's (\$28.7 billion). Brazil (\$10 billion) and Russia (\$9.3 billion) are a distant third and fourth, respectively. In addition, the average annual growth of Chinese FDI projects in Africa between 2003 and 2009 stood at 58.2 percent compared to 42.7 percent recorded by India.

Conclusion

India has made progress towards participating in regional multilateral arrangements in both the economic and security realms. It has also expressed support for some major principles of multilateral cooperation. BRIC came together in a political grouping in a way, that has exceeded most expectations. For India, cooperation with BRIC is more important in terms of addressing its food and energy security issues, and combating terrorism. Engaging China has been one of the important components of India's foreign policy in recent years. Cooperation and negotiations with China

are integral to clearing the mistrust between the two countries. This is where BRIC offers an effective forum.

Both sides have benefited much from the cooperation of BRIC-Africa economic engagement. Many African countries are enjoying rapidly rising earnings owing to BRIC countries' demand for their exports. The involvement of India and China in Africa is also leading to investments in infrastructure, financial services, manufacturing and retail, and in specialised market niches ignored by investors from developed countries. Agricultural development and other technical assistance are also increasing while Africa's access to cheap credit and diverse, inexpensive consumer goods is growing. Infrastructure construction is widely seen as one of the most positive benefits of the Chinese and Indian investments in Africa.

To the extent that China and India also provide credit to Africa, without conditions, such resources may additionally help African governments to autonomously fulfil their sovereign, self-defined development goals. ■

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Pretoria's BRICS diplomacy: The ROAD Ahead

With South Africa joining the elite club of emerging powers, the greatest challenge for the member would be to start making the grouping work for itself, says **Sanusha Naidu**



South Africa President Jacob Zuma and India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, at a joint IBSA press conference in New Delhi on June 4, 2010.

In keeping with its ambitions and aspiring global status, South Africa's foreign policy, is set to start off on a high note in 2011. Assuming a two-year non-permanent rotational seat on the United Nations Security Council while simultaneously becoming the fifth member of BRIC (the Brazil-Russia-India-China multilateral combine — or the 'big four') reflects that the charm offensive of President Jacob Zuma's diplomacy kicked off in 2010 has certainly

paid off. Of course, for some analysts like Jim O' Neill (presently, chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management), who coined the term BRIC, South Africa was not seen as an apt candidate to be included into this clutch of resurgent countries. O'Neill is quoted as saying: "It is not entirely obvious to me why BRIC should have agreed to ask South Africa to join. How can South Africa be regarded as a big economy? And, by the way, they happen to be struggling as well."

Likewise Razia Khan, Head of African Research at

Standard Chartered based in London was bemused at South Africa's inclusion. According to her, "It is not clear how South Africa fits very easily into the BRIC group. And besides the size of its economy and its rate of growth, the most controversial aspect is South Africa's share of global GDP, as compared with the others."

Clearly then, for O'Neill, Khan and other sceptics, the concern was really about whether South Africa's comparative economic advantage was on a par with, or complemented that of its fellow members to make the BRIC club, a global economic hegemon, by 2050.

Consider some economic facts:

Economic Sleepwalking

First, South Africa's economy, population and growth rate are much smaller than what all the other BRIC members possess. Second, the country's GDP last year was \$286 billion — far less than the \$2 trillion of India, China's \$5.5 trillion, Russia's \$1.6 trillion and even Brazil's \$1.57 trillion.

Third, South Africa has recorded a sluggish economic growth. It has been a tepid 3 percent, less than Russia's 4 per cent, Brazil's 7.5 per cent, India's 9.7 per cent and China's 10.5 per cent.

Finally, its population of approximately 50 million people is dwarfed by that of China (1.36 billion) and India (1.2 billion).

Therefore, it is understandable if economists are concerned that South Africa's entry into the BRIC club could have been eclipsed by other better performing emerging economies, such as South Korea, Turkey, Mexico

or Indonesia. These countries have GDP growth rates that are impressive and outstrip South Africa's by a fair margin. South Africa's GDP is less than half of South Korea's \$832.5 billion, Turkey's \$617.1 billion and Mexico's \$874.9 billion. It is two-thirds of Indonesia's \$540.3 billion.

So how should we judge this latest development in President Zuma's BRIC charm offensive?

Geo-politics, Really!

Most analysts have claimed that it is purely geo-politics that informed China's decision to invite Pretoria to join the BRIC club. From a cursory point of view and certainly, from economic evidence, it does seem that geo-politics, instead of geo-economics, played a significant factor in driving the decision.

The geo-politics is really about having a voice at the table that can assist in lobby politics and leverage influence around significant decisions. As Mzubisi Qobo, the Head of the

Emerging Powers and Global Challenges Programme at the South African Institute of International Affairs, while reflecting on South Africa's global role, said: "It's made substantial contributions to global governance issues and has played a very active role in post-conflict reconstruction in Africa. Its voice has been fluent and it's seen as an honest broker in international relations. That would definitely have some influence."

But is it really only about South Africa's political leverage?

The China Factor

Some analysts (including myself) are inclined to believe that China's timing of the decision to invite South Africa to the BRIC club was strategic, and a diplomatic masterstroke on the part of Beijing.

First, Beijing is moving expeditiously to make sure that it has significant political capital in Africa when it comes to taking tactical decisions that affect Africa's domestic and international affairs.

One of these is the referendum on Southern Sudan. Depending on the outcome of the referendum, Beijing has definitely gained an ally at the Security Council to support its views and decision if things regress in Sudan as a result of the referendum results.

Therefore as a P5 member, China played its trump card by being the country to actually extend and support Pretoria's BRIC membership. It was neither Russia nor Brazil, which also clearly demonstrates how Beijing perceives its status in the rotational chairmanship of BRIC. To that extent, this indeed makes Pretoria more receptive to Beijing.

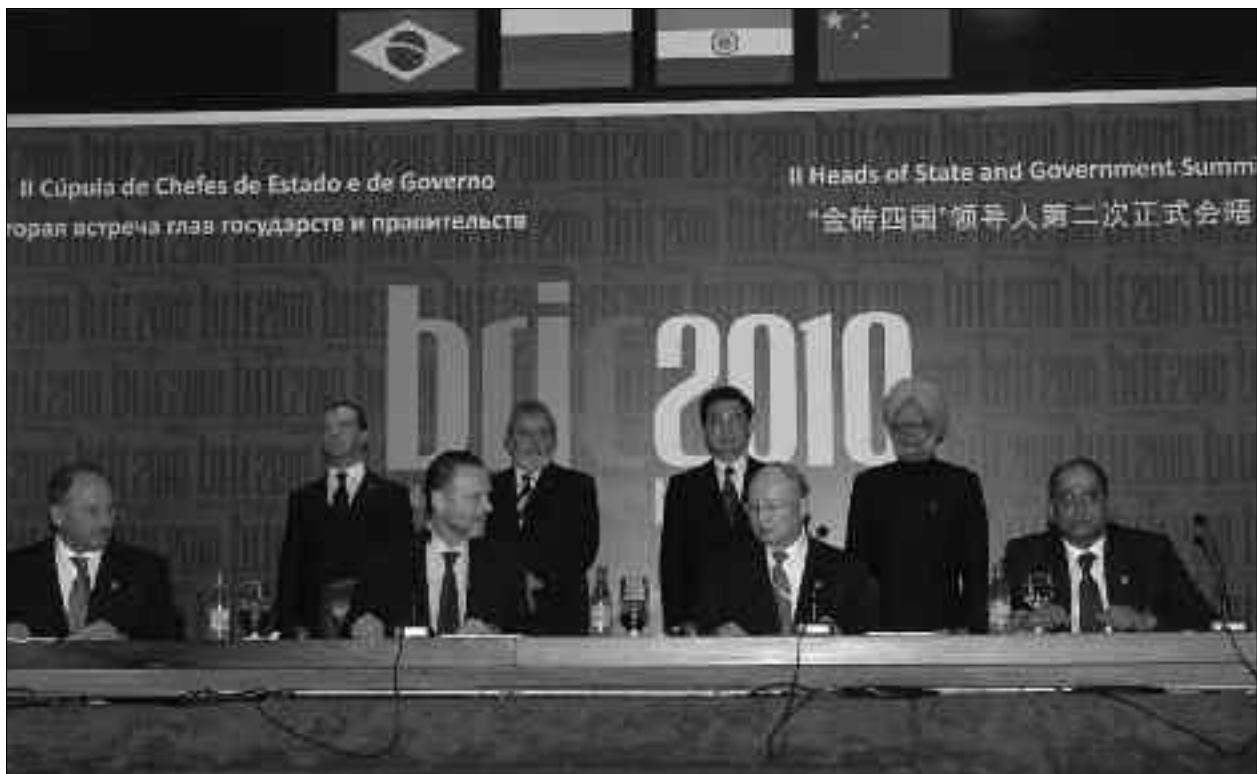
Consider this: The underlying implications of such a move could well mean that there could be simmering tensions when it comes to conflicting views between India and China over issues at the UNSC, especially where New Delhi inclines itself towards Washington's side.

It should also be mentioned here that South Africa's membership in BRIC has received a lukewarm response from New Delhi.

Second, the fact that South Africa offers a gateway into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) market and beyond, also fits into Beijing's strengthening of its corporate strategy. The 'going-out' strategy of Chinese companies will certainly get a boost by joining South Africa's corporates in exploring and exploiting market opportunities in African economies.

Third, it enables Beijing to demonstrate its global leadership qualities, especially in relation to the South and the

'South Africa has made substantial contributions to global governance issues and played a very active role in post-conflict reconstruction in Africa. It's voice has been fluent and it's seen as an honest broker in international relations'



(In background: From left to right) Leaders of BRIC countries Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, then Brazilian President Lula da Silva, Chinese President Hu Jintao, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the signing ceremony of the 11th BRIC Summit, in Brasilia, Brazil on April 15, 2010.

developing world. In fact, this move reflects one of the four cornerstones of China's foreign policy priorities — namely its ensuing engagements with the Third World.

The India Factor

It is not difficult to see why New Delhi would remain reticent about Pretoria's entry into BRIC. Perhaps, part of this is aligned to how China has once again leveraged its geo-strategic status and manoeuvred itself to be seen as championing the voice of Africa, despite the misgivings about South Africa's identity in this regard.

Or maybe, it is because once again, China has overshadowed the political and economic distinctiveness of IBSA where India plays a much more high-profile role and enjoys tactical superiority vis-à-vis its other alliance members.

Whatever the reason for India's tepid response, New Delhi, indeed, has an opportunity to influence some of the posturing within the newly constituted BRICS.

At one level, India can use its position within IBSA to shape a common consensus within BRICS around critical global governance decisions and policy interventions.

Two, India does have comparative advantage, because it now has superior democratic currency within BRICS, which it can use to its own advantage and manoeuvre vis-à-vis China and Russia.

Third, as much as New Delhi may feel eclipsed by

China, it may also stand to India's favour, by working behind the scenes to actually give BRICS a critical identity.

In other words, and at the moment, BRICS does not seem to have a strategic distinctiveness: Is it a political alliance? Is it an economic grouping? Or is it merely, some kind of a 'Musketeers Club'? Nobody knows how to define what BRIC really is.

Finally, the India factor could have a positive impact on the direction that BRICS follows, because it is clear that New Delhi shares a like-minded approach and synergy with all its alliance partners, which is something that must be explored further.

The Corporate Factor

While most commentators were focused on the geo-politics of South Africa's inclusion in BRIC, the corporate factor cannot be ignored as an influential agency in this decision.

The large business delegations that have accompanied President Zuma during his BRIC visits have indeed leveraged their presence during those trips.

For one thing, South African corporate capital needs access to the BRIC markets, as much as the BRIC countries need to enter the South Africa market as a gateway into Africa.

This is discernible as the South African corporates are also on the hunt to boost their presence globally. Similarly, by positioning itself in the BRIC economies, SA Inc. is on the threshold of entering regional markets in China, India, Brazil and also Russia's regional neighbourhood.

Second, the commercial learning that the South African business sector brings to the alliance in terms of technology, research and development, and innovation, may also be a driving factor for admitting South Africa into BRIC.

Third, it is clear that the experiences that SA Inc. represents and its willingness to underwrite risks in the African markets also holds them in good stead for jointly exploiting economic opportunities, not only in Africa markets, but also in regional economic environments, which can be seen as being equally difficult to penetrate.

Therefore, as we contemplate South Africa's entry into BRIC, the corporate factor provides an interesting impetus to the formation of perhaps a new 'BRICS Transnational Corporation' that will wield strategic economic power and penetration.

So, while Pretoria and SA Inc. may exult in the glory of its conquest, there are certain caveats, which have been identified that need to be assessed.

Not a BRIC of Roses

First, the Chinese newspaper, the *People's Daily* was quoted as saying that "By joining the BRIC countries, South Africa also hopes to become the gateway for the BRIC countries' entry into Africa ... South Africa has the ability to promote agendas related to Africa on the international arena. This is an important factor that makes South Africa valuable as a BRIC country."

As much as this may reflect a normative and rhetorical approach to how South Africa is perceived by the outside as representing the African voice on multilateral fora, it is not clear whether the African bloc actually sees South Africa in this manner.

Clearly, the attempt to identify Pretoria as having the same agenda and pushing forward the African agenda could, in reality, create a backlash because of the prejudices of a post-apartheid South Africa and xenophobia against African migrants. Moreover, the behaviour of corporate South Africa and its links to Southern TNCs could easily be interpreted by what Patrick Bond calls South Africa's "sub-imperial agenda" in Southern African, and across Africa.

Will membership to the BRIC premium club stop with South Africa? Or are we likely to see more members being added? Are we going to witness a new era of South-South cooperation, where BRIC will be expanded even further?

So, it may be premature to assume that South Africa and the continent speak in one voice.

Second, as South Africa contemplates its role and duties, it would be critical to evaluate how this will intersect with its interests at the India-Brazil-SA (IBSA) forum, and the G20. By becoming a member of BRIC, this definitely constitutes an overlap in membership and a contradiction in behaviour and outcomes. How will Pretoria decide which club takes precedence? Which decision will override the other? What kind of rationality and harmonisation will there be, when belonging to several groupings?

Surely, these issues must be given consideration, as it will affect global governance issues that BRIC seeks to reshape, and the polycentric world order that it wants to create.

Finally, is BRIC becoming the equivalent of the G8? Will membership to this premium club stop with South Africa? Or are we likely to see more members being added to the

Club? There are definitely other countries waiting in the wings such as those mentioned above, including the Next 11 or CIVETS (minus South Africa). If so, then are we going to witness a new era of South-South cooperation, where BRIC will be expanded and it will follow the same history and evolution of the G8? And will we see another set of countries challenging the dominance of BRIC, as we saw when the G8 invited the Outreach 5 countries to attend their summits?

Conclusion

Whichever way South Africa's position within BRIC is interpreted, one thing is certain and that is, Pretoria must certainly start punching above its weight. Moreover, not only

does it need to demonstrate to BRIC partners the confidence they have shown in its membership, but it must also illustrate to South African people, the efficacy of being part of BRIC.

Alliance politics should not only be about multilateralism, and a kind of musketeer ideology. Rather, it should be directly linked to how domestic challenges and aspirations are going to be addressed through the BRIC Club, especially those related to unemployment, a viable industrial policy, and social development.

Therefore, the greatest challenge for South Africa is to start making BRIC work for itself, while at the same time reconciling the expectations its BRIC partners have, including the promises and trade-offs President Zuma may have made to his BRIC allies during his lobbying visits to the BRIC countries last year. ■

Turkey's rise and Africa's OPPORTUNITY

Unlike India and China, Turkey's growing engagement with Africa has not attracted much attention. Ankara's emergence opens up new opportunities for Africa, says **Sandeep Chakravorty**



Turkey's president Abdullah Gul (seen on TV monitor) speaks as others listen during the Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit in Istanbul on August 19, 2008.

While discussing the increasing involvement of emerging economies with Africa, the names of two countries — India and China — appear to dominate the discourse. Some commentators even talk about a race between India and China in Africa. Another Eurasian country, which is slowly, but steadily, raising its stakes in Africa, but is rarely mentioned or appears in the limelight or media, is Turkey. Turkey has traditionally maintained good relations with the African continent. The Ottoman Empire had extensive equations with Africa over the

centuries. The territory of many present-day African countries, such as Algeria, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya, Niger, Somalia, Sudan, and Tunisia were part of it until as late as 1912. Bilateral relations between the Turks and the North Africans were shaped from 1453 — when the Ottomans flourished as the new superpower of the Middle Age — until 1919 with the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. For instance, Libya was under the Ottoman rule from 1551 to 1911. Algeria was under Ottoman rule from 1514 until the French occupied the country in 1830. Volkan Ipek writing for Africanews.com says that the concept of Africa as a whole, has been something very new for Turkey.

The influence of the Ottomans was not only religious; it

had its impact in terms of security, trade, geopolitics, and politico-economic benefits. Even during the Ottoman rule there were examples in the 16th century of naval journeys to East Africa, perhaps with a view to stopping Portuguese colonialism, whereby Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia and parts of Ethiopia, became Ottoman lands. The Ottomans also tried to stop the Spanish expansion in the Mediterranean, in present-day Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. At the end of the 16th century, Turkish Admiral Turgut Ali Paa (Mayor of Trablus) established relations between the Kanem Bornu Republic and the Ottomans. Kanem Bornu is what is today's Northern Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and North Cameroon. In 1574, Kanem Bornu sent a delegation to Istanbul led by Elhac Yusuf to the court of Sultan Murad III. The Ottomans also had a presence in South Africa.

In 1861, the Muslim South Africans wanted the British to send them a leader that they could consult with. Upon this, in 1862, Ebu Bekir Efendi was sent by Abdülaziz to South Africa. Ebu Bekir taught the community the principles of Islam. His son Ahmetullah Efendi became the director of the first Muslim school in 1884. The Turkey-Africa relationship all but came to an abrupt halt with the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1919.

After 1923, Turkey-Africa relations languished for decades. As John C. Daly, says in his article, "Turkey Courts Africa" (*Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume 5, Issue 183, September 24, 2008), "... from 1923, until well into the 1990s, insofar as Turkey had an Africa policy, it was no policy. While Ankara played a minor role in assisting the anti-colonial struggles in Zimbabwe and Namibia, overall it limited itself to simply according recognition to all the newly independent countries and establishing diplomatic relations with them, albeit usu-

ally non-residential." Quite simply, according to Daly, the Turks had enough on their hands with all the challenges of consolidating their own modern secular state, to be engaging in adventures geographically distant from their immediate neighborhood at the crossroads of Europe and Asia.

However, since 1998, there has been a concerted and conscious policy to improve and develop political, economic, commercial, and cultural interaction with Africa. The Turkish Foreign Ministry calls its foreign policy towards Africa as being based, not only on economic and trade objectives, but also on a comprehensive approach which include the development of Africa through technical and project assistance in fields, such as education, healthcare, agriculture, irrigation, energy, and regular flow of humanitarian aid. A scrutiny of Turkish involvement on the ground reveals a fascinating pattern of growing involvement in Africa, partic-

ularly in the last decade and a half.

Things really began to change in the late 1990s. In 1998, under Prime Minister Ahmet Mesut Yilmaz, Turkey adopted an "Opening Up to Africa Policy" with the goal of developing its political, economic, and cultural ties with African countries. This was maintained by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) when it came to power in 2002. In 2005, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan proclaimed a "Year of Africa" in Turkey, and became the first Turkish head of government to travel to Southern Africa, when he visited South Africa and Ethiopia. In 2006, Erdogan visited Sudan. In 2007, Prime Minister Erdoan addressed the annual summit of the African Union (AU). Erdogan told the AU — "that our political, economic and cultural relations are far from reflecting the existing potential between Turkey and the African countries", and pledged to work "to revitalise these historical friendly relations and subsequently, to bring them to the desired level".

Thereafter, there has been a flurry of activities, with Turkey institutionalising its multi-dimensional interaction with Africa, as highlighted by the Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit of 2008.

In 1998, Turkey adopted an "Opening Up to Africa Policy" ... Thereafter there has been a flurry of activities, with Turkey institutionalising its multi-dimensional interaction with Africa

Writing in the *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (Cambridge: Dec 2010, Vol. 48), Mehmet Özkan and Birol Akgün say that as part of ongoing multi-dimensional foreign policy changes in recent years, there has been since 1998 a revival in Turkey's relations with Africa. Initially rather passive, after 2005 this became a massive effort to develop relations with the whole continent. However, Turkey's Africa policy is unique in Turkish foreign policy, as it is for the first time that it is driven and complemented by the activities of civil society organisations in Africa. The idea of Africa in Turkish society has changed dramati-

cally in less than a decade, and the recent Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit should be seen as part of this trend. Turkey's opening-up to Africa is not a short-term fad, but is likely to develop and deepen in the coming years.

The "Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit" (TACS), held on August 18-21, 2008 in Istanbul, with 49 African countries participating, was an important milestone and is regarded as the beginning of a steady and sustainable process of cooperation. Viewed in the context of the Japanese TICAD (first held in 1993), China's FOCAC (2006), the India-Africa Forum Summit (2008), Turkish efforts to reach out to all of Africa are indeed significant. While addressing TACS, Turkey's Foreign Minister Ali Babacan said, "We have come together to evaluate the current state of affairs in the Turkish-African Partnership following ten years of a gradually evolving Turkish policy of opening up to Africa". The Summit adopt-



The Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit, hosted by President Abdullah Gül, in Istanbul on August 18-20, 2008.

ed two important documents: “The Istanbul Declaration on Africa-Turkey Partnership: Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future” and “Framework of Cooperation for Africa-Turkey Partnership”. The summit resolved to hold a High-Level Officials Meeting at the end of 2010, a Ministerial Level Reviewing Conference in 2011, a second High-Level Officials Meeting in 2012 and the Second Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit in 2013.

Since TACS, Turkey’s African script has unfolded itself to a plan, with a dense network of institutional mechanisms establishing itself firmly. The deep political engagement between Turkey and Africa has also clearly led to heightened diplomatic, economic, developmental, and security cooperation. Turkey already has embassies in all countries of northern Africa. It will open 15 new embassies, in addition to what they already have. Presently, Turkey has 20 embassies in Africa of which 15 are in sub-Saharan Africa. Turkey is also training young African diplomats in Ankara.

In January 2008, the 10th African Union Summit welcomed Turkey as a strategic partner. Today there are only three countries in the world which the African Union sees as strategic partners — namely, China, India and Turkey. This is a significant position enjoyed by Turkey, considering China and India have much greater economic and people-to-people involvement in Africa.

Turkey also enjoys ‘observer status’ in the African Union (2005) and is a non-regional member of the African Development Bank (2008). Turkey has also worked to improve connectivity with Africa. Today, Turkish Airlines, Turkey’s national carrier, has scheduled

flights to regional hubs of Addis Ababa, Khartoum, Lagos, and Johannesburg and, most recently, Nairobi.

Turkey is also a member of the Inter-governmental Authority on Development Partners Forum (IGAD) since 2008 while the Turkish Embassy in Abuja has been accredited to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) since 2005. The Turkish embassy in Dar-es-Salaam is also accredited to the East African Community (EAC). The Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) Programme Coordinator Office in Africa was first opened in Addis Ababa in 2005, and later in Khartoum and Dakar, in the years 2006 and 2007, respectively. TIKA offices support development projects in their respective regions.

The government of Turkey established the African Studies Research and Application Centre at Ankara University in 2008, with the mandate of training researchers specialising in the African continent. Since 2000, Turkey has provided higher education scholarships to almost 2,000 students from African countries. Turkey operates a pharmacy and two hospitals in Africa to assist local communities.

Turkey is also playing an active diplomatic role vis-à-vis the continent. In 2005, it put special focus on Africa — linked to its aspirations for a non-permanent UNSC seat. It won all African votes except one. With Egypt, it co-chaired an “International Donor’s Conference for the Reconstruction and Development of Darfur” in Cairo on March 21, 2010. At the Conference, Turkey pledged \$65 to 70 million of humanitarian assistance, mainly in health,

agriculture and education to Africa.

Turkey also hosted the Istanbul Somalia Conference organised within the UN framework between May 21-23, 2010. The conference provided an important support for the Djibouti Peace Process and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The Istanbul Declaration, adopted during the conference, constitutes a roadmap for the settlement of the Somali issue. Since early 2009, the Turkish Navy has deployed half a dozen frigates as part of the United States-led Combined Task Force (CTF) 151, a multinational naval force carrying out anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia.

For sometime in 2009, the task force was even commanded by a Turkish officer, Rear Admiral Caner Bener, the first time ever that Turkey had assumed leadership of such a joint maritime mission. Turkey is currently contributing personnel and finances to six of the existing eight UN missions in Africa.

Turkey's economic engagement with Africa is also booming. Total trade volume between Turkey and African countries has amounted to \$16 billion in 2008, rising from \$5.4 billion in 2006. Turkey has set an ambitious trade target of \$30 billion by the end of 2010. Imports of Turkey from Africa have risen from \$3.3 billion to \$7.7 billion in 2008. Turkish construction firms have undertaken nearly \$4 billion worth of projects in Africa by 2008. Some 400 Turkish businesses, mostly small and medium-sized enterprises, have invested over \$500 million in various African countries by 2009.

According to Tamer Takin, chairman of the Turkish-African Business Council, which operates under the umbrella of the Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEK) for Turkey, Africa was not a temporary alternative market to Europe but a permanent export destination.

Another latent but powerful dimension of Turkey's appeal for many African countries is Turkey's brand of moderate Islam — a unique blend of democracy and a market-based economy. Mosques, madrassas and schools built, restored or run by Turks are welcome across the continent. Turkey's largest Islamic fraternity, led by a moderate

Muslim cleric Fetullah Gulen, is active in Africa. Gulenists are reported to run 60 schools in 30 African countries. Staffed by locals and Turks alike, the schools are patronised by those Africans who aspire for a modern, liberal education.

Although Turkey's footprint in Africa is small as compared to China or India's, Turkey is moving fast. Over the past decade and a half, Turkish policymakers have carefully shaped the African dimension to the country's foreign policy. What is noteworthy is that the thrust to engage with Africa has emerged on many fronts. In some ways, Turkey has history on its side.

Turkey's experience as a medium-sized country that has both modernised politically and developed economically, is one that resonates with many African countries. Some say it is probably a more reasonable model for their emulation, than China or India. From the African point of view, the

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African states stand to gain from Turkey's heightened interest in Africa since it gives them diversity of choice. They need not be solely dependent on either the old colonial powers, or the emerging economies of China and India. And while Turkey does provide Africa with a new market in the backdrop of a growing Turkish economy and at a time when its European integration is in doubt, Ankara is keen to diversify its diplomatic portfolio. It is in sync with growing diplomatic activity demonstrated recently by Ankara — be it the Conference on Afghanistan, or negotiating the enriched uranium deal for Iran along

with Brazil. Africa forms an important part of the recalibration of Turkey's foreign policy. Also important in this calculus is Turkey's soft power appeal. The Turkish example of secularism in politics in the modern period is probably one that is worth considering for African nations. From India's point, Turkey's emphatic return to Africa needs close scrutiny and serious analysis so that India is able to finetune her strategy for Africa, not only to avoid duplication, but also for the opportunities it holds out for both India and Turkey in terms of combining their efforts and resources for Africa's development. ■

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India-Africa Cooperation: THE COTTON FACTOR

Policies followed by multilateral institutions towards cotton farming in Africa lack fairness. India must be proactive in order to widen development responsibilities towards Africa, says **Dr Suresh Kumar**



With Africa emerging as a global business destination, leading world powers are eyeing the continent for its natural resources, which includes cotton, one of the continent's key cash crops. The world's top cotton producers are China, the United States, India, Pakistan, Zone Central Africa Franc (CFA), Uzbekistan, Brazil, Turkey, Australia and the European Union. The top cotton exporters are the United States, Zone CFA, Uzbekistan, Australia, Brazil, European Union, Syria and China (Source: ICAC, 2004). The three groups of exporters, such as the United States, Central Asia and Francophone Africa account for more than two-thirds of global cotton exports.

Sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) share in world cotton trade increased from 7 percent in 1960 to 15 percent in 2006.

Cotton, however, is not part of the commodity price boom that began in mid-2004, despite record consumption of cotton worldwide.

Cotton is a major source of foreign exchange earnings in more than 15 countries across all regions of SSA and is a crucial source of income for the rural areas of these countries. The key countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Mali, in West and Central Africa (WCA), and Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, in East and Southern Africa (ESA).

The crop is, therefore, a critical instrument in the fight against poverty. However, a key factor in the matrix is the authorship of policy: in many cotton-exporting countries of SSA, it is the World Bank and other multilateral development institutions that determine policy through investments as well as policy and institutional reforms.

These programmes are conducted according to World Trade Organisation (WTO) guidelines and generally entail

redefining the role of the state; facilitating greater involvement of the private sector and farmer organisations; ensuring greater competition in input and output markets; improving productivity through R&D, extension, and technology dissemination; and, seeking value additions through market development and processing of cotton lint and by-products.

In recent years, world cotton prices have declined significantly. Small-scale cotton farmers in WCA, whose livelihoods depend on cotton, have borne the brunt of this decline. The key factors behind declining prices are the cotton production and export policies of the U.S. and the European Union. Besides, China, as the world's leading cotton producer, exerts a strong influence on world cotton prices. Recently, China has committed to reducing subsidies to its cotton sector in the context of its accession to the WTO regime. These policies, however, sit uncomfortably with the spirit of WTO rules as recently confirmed by the WTO Dispute Settlement Body in relation to some U.S. cotton subsidies.

It is also much less known that these policies contradict the spirit of international human rights law. This example provides an overview of the impact of U.S. and EU cotton production and export policies on the lives of farmers in WCA countries.

Also, the changes in processing (spinning) technology has increased the demand for quality cotton lint, with a corresponding increase in penalties for contaminated cotton (by non-organic matter), which has had a negative impact on the continent's agricultural labourers. The characteristics of African cotton typically place it above the A Index in quality, as nearly all of it is hand picked which helps preserve these qualities. However, an inability to control contamination has led to a situation where handpicked African cotton now trades at a discount in relation to machine-picked cotton. If contamination were to be reduced in African cotton, it would help raise its premium by as much as \$0.10 per pound over the Cotlook A Index, or about 20 percent of typical global price levels. Capturing this premium calls for effective coordination throughout the local supply chain, while the ability to achieve such coordination depends on sector structure and governance.

Colonial parallel

The historical contradictions and irony of cotton/textile trade during the colonial times were cogently interpreted by Mahatma Gandhi. In his analysis, Gandhi identifies the whole process of the trade, which, in the ultimate analysis, hardly ever benefited the producer — the poor Indian cotton farmer. Cotton, picked by India labourers/farmers at around seven cents a day, was shipped to London on board British vessels. The freight, and the arbitrage thereof, accrued to British commercial liners. The cotton would be turned into cloth in Lancashire by English workers who were paid better than their Indian counterparts. In tandem,



the steel companies of England profited by building the factories and machines required to produce cloth. The wages and the profits were thus spent in England.

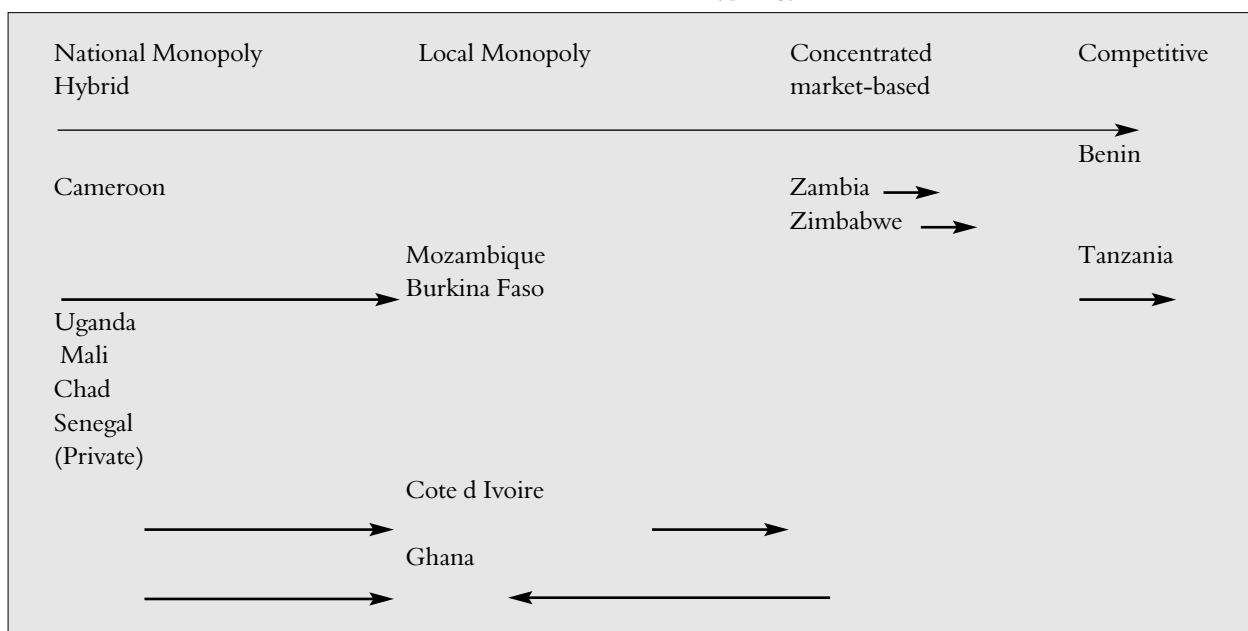
The finished product was sent back to India at European shipping rates, once again on British ships. The captains, officers, and sailors of these ships, who were also paid reasonably, were English. The cloth would eventually be sold to the kings and landlords of India who had the money to buy expensive cloth. The only Indians who 'profited' were a few lascars who worked on these liners for a few cents a day. (Fisher 1932: pp 154-156)

Cut back to the present. Aspects of global trade often assume neo-colonial characteristics. If the largely illiterate and poor African farmers were to use machines to pick cotton to help avoid contamination, expect a vicious circle to kick in, with the additional costs thus incurred risking subsistence and food security.

The right to food is protected by a number of international and regional human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). A detailed guide as to what the right to food requires of states, non-state actors and the international community is discussed in the General Comment on the Right to Food, adopted by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in 1999.

Criticising it, the Delhi Declaration 2008 of Indo-Africa Summit said, "Agriculture remains the key to the conclusion of this round. We are convinced that any acceptable agreement must adequately protect the livelihood, food security and rural development concerns of developing countries. Any outcome must also bring about significant and effective reductions in trade-distorting domestic support and subsidies provided by the developed countries. There are equally important issues also to be addressed on Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) services and rules. We are convinced that the process to be adopted to reach convergence in the WTO negotiations requires focus on

Table 1: Location of Cotton Sectors within African Cotton Sector Typology



Source: David Tschirley & Others. Comparative Analysis of Organisation and Performance of African Cotton Sectors: Learning from Experience of Cotton Sector Reform in Africa. wb_comp_anal_cotton_sector_africa-05nov2007.pdf

Table 2: Trading Off: Strengths and Weaknesses of Different Sectoral Types

	National Monopoly market-based	Local Monopoly	Competitive	Concentrated
Nature of Competition between Ginners	None	Concession rules may create competition; Some emulation across zones on costs, prices, and services	High - tends to focus on seed cotton pricing	Moderate – as much on service provision as on pricing; price leadership often observed
Potential Strengths	Conditions may be conducive for provision of input credit, quality control and extension	Conditions may be conducive for provision of input credit, quality control, and extension	Seed cotton pricing;	Conditions may be conducive for provision of input credit, quality control, and extension
Potential Weaknesses and Major Challenges	Cost control; maintaining attractive producer prices; political interference	In presence of a weak state, requires strong farmer organisations to ensure setting and implementation of transparent rules for concession allocation and performance evaluation	Pre-harvest service delivery; quality control; accountability of government agencies responsible for these functions	Seed cotton pricing heavily dependent on internal objectives of dominant companies; instability of market structure

Source: David Tschirley & Others. Comparative Analysis of Organisation and Performance of African Cotton Sectors: Learning from Experience of Cotton Sector Reform in Africa. wb_comp_anal_cotton_sector_africa-05nov2007.pdf

content and not artificial timelines. The promise of a development round must be fully realised. There is also the need for a closer look at the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regime to ensure cost-effective transfer of appropriate and advanced clean technologies to developing countries.” (Delhi Declaration, 2008)

The Delhi Declaration affirms that cooperation between Africa and India has been, from its inception, a useful example of South-South cooperation. It has been the endeavour of the summit to devise ways and means of enhancing this South-South partnership, taking into account the new capabilities that have emerged in Africa and India. Bearing this in mind, a Framework for Cooperation was drawn and adopted, which provides an avenue for further and dynamic development of the Africa-India partnership.

The Delhi Declaration also agreed that Africa and India would bolster not only their bilateral linkages, but also that India would progressively strengthen its partnership with the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities of Africa. The Indo-African Chamber of Commerce & Industries’ (IACCI) initiative of exploiting opportunities in the cotton and textiles sector is likely to give more bargaining power to Africa. This ‘cotton partnership’ will help India deepen its commitment towards Africa, in turn insulating the continent from what has been often described by critics as the ‘obnoxious’ policies of the World Bank and multinational textile companies.

This paper will also highlight the efforts of India and African countries in implementing their international human right commitments, which are often undermined by these policies. It will recommend that human rights be exercised more proactively by developing countries as part of advocacy and reform strategies.

This initiative of India and Africa as part of South-South cooperation will highlight the discriminatory policies followed by the U.S. and the EU — supported by China’s policymakers — and their impact on livelihoods and human rights in the cotton producing countries of WCA.

Historical exploitation of cotton crop

The exploitation of cotton as a cash crop began with the European industrial revolution in 1738, which, in turn, instituted the slavery system in Africa. The revolution dramatically changed the means of production in the 18th and early 19th centuries in England. Consequently, ‘slaves’ were recruited in Africa and were frequently engaged in cultivating cotton for the weaving industries. Women were used as spinners. The colonial era also brought about several agricultural innovations, especially involving industrial crops, primarily oil crops like cotton.

During the American Civil War, American cotton exports slumped following the Union blockade of the Southern ports. The decision by the Confederate government to carry out a blockade was a strategic one, with the intent of forcing Britain to recognise the Confederacy or enter the war. One

immediate consequence was that it prompted Britain and France, the main purchasers of cotton, to turn to Egyptian cotton instead.

British and French traders invested heavily in cotton plantations and the Egyptian government of Viceroy Isma’il Pasha took substantial loans from European bankers and stock exchanges. After the American Civil War ended in 1865, British and French traders abandoned Egyptian cotton and returned to cheap American exports, sending Egypt into a deficit spiral that led to the country declaring bankruptcy in 1876, a key factor behind Egypt’s annexation by the British Empire in 1882.

With technology improving significantly and with world markets being increasingly controlled by the big powers, British traders managed to develop a commercial chain, wherein raw cotton fibres, sourced from colonial plantations, were processed into cotton in the mills of Lancashire and re-exported to captive colonial markets in West Africa, India and China (via Shanghai and Hong Kong). By the 1840s, India was no longer capable of supplying the vast quantities of cotton fibres needed by mechanised British factories, because shipping was bulky, time-consuming, and expensive.

During the years of post-colonial Africa (1950-1990), cultivation and trading of cotton came to be governed by the World Bank’s Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) under multinational companies. It integrated all critical services (extension, input supply, credit and, to some extent, infrastructure) that helped further exploit cotton farming to the advantage of the big companies.

Contemporary World Bank model and cotton crop

The World Bank proposes a typology for cotton sectors in SSA (See: Table 1 & 2) based on the structure of the market for seed cotton and the regulatory framework in which the multinational firms operate. This proposal favours the open-market concept, ignoring the human rights values that are intrinsic to WTO guidelines. This model has been criticised by cotton producing African countries and, not surprisingly, has rarely found favour with medium-scale cotton farmers.

Current Challenges before Cotton

The story of cotton in Africa often has contradictory strands. The performance of SSA exporters was remarkable during the time of globalisation, with cotton trade expanding by over 30 percent. However, a number of cotton sectors in WCA are now facing a severe financial crisis and their survival is in question. Stagnating productivity and rising costs have led to recurring financial crises for many cotton companies. Often, farmers would borrow money from their fertiliser suppliers and use it to help enhance production. Consequently, in order to compensate for any shortfall in expected cotton production, they brought in additional and often marginal lands under cultivation. Such

practices not only deepened the susceptibility of the already marginal lands to erosion, but also reduced the effectiveness of the fertiliser used on cotton.

The World Bank model became a victim of its own success, as the sector's size led to political corruption. Cotton companies failed to put in place the management tools required for such large enterprises, while governments failed to carry out their responsibilities as the main shareholders.

The following are some of the major challenges with the arrival of the market economy:

1) In order to bring about flexibility and reduce financial risks, most WCA countries reformed their pricing mechanisms with a two-tier payment system, linked to world prices: a base price negotiated at the beginning of the cropping season and a price complement calculated on the actual value of lint sales to be paid at the end of the season. However, the issue of subsidisation in Western countries and the United States, coupled with the regulations of WTO, created discrimination in the determination of prices.

2) The liberal market reform structures led to the collapse of input and extension systems (particularly in Tanzania and Uganda). African countries eliminated competition in the output market to facilitate input supply and extend ginner assistance. They have maintained a competitive output market and used innovative approaches (such as the passbook system) to provide some minimal level of inputs to farmers. Along with it, Africa has performed much better on input provision and cotton quality (in Zambia and Zimbabwe). However, both countries have faced substantial structural instability that in turn has threatened input credit supply. It became most pronounced for Zimbabwe since 2003, with the dramatic increase in the number of seed cotton buyers. A similar phenomenon occurred in Zambia in the late 1990s, which has continued to trouble the country since.

3) Two new technologies may address the needs of resource constrained cotton growers in Africa: (i) genetically modified (Bt) cotton; and, (ii) low-volume herbicides. Bt cotton has arguably been the major source of yield and cost reductions in rain-fed cotton in India and China, during the last five years. However, the introduction of Bt cotton into a country's agricultural system calls for national consensus. Equally, the technical, organisational and public policy challenges are also significant.

4) A higher proportion of cotton producing households is found in WCA than in ESA. Value addition is calculated using two different definitions of non-labour production costs. In the first case, input costs are deducted from the gross value of seed cotton production. In the second, costs of animal traction and motorised services are also deducted, although the latter is extremely rare. The most appropriate definition can, however, be debated.

5) The argument for deducting animal traction costs from the value add is that they include rental or amortisation of equipment, in addition to veterinary and feeding costs for



oxen. These intermediate inputs account for around 80 percent of the estimated animal traction costs in WCA. The argument for not deducting animal traction costs is that oxen are assets that farm households have accumulated through their involvement in cotton production. Deducting animal traction costs would have the perverse effect of lowering the estimates of the value add generated by WCA, because the latter would have proceeded further with animal traction than ESA. This difference reflects in the investments made over the years, promoting animal traction and use of fertiliser. The greater the use of animal traction for both ploughing and weeding, the lower the use of labour in WCA than in ESA. Meanwhile, the average returns of both family labour and other labour is higher in WCA than in ESA. This finding holds true even if we use "break-even" prices in place of the unsustainable producer prices paid in the WCA region in recent years. Zimbabwe is the best performer in ESA from a farmer's perspective. Although competitive sectors within ESA have outperformed more coordinated ones in seed cotton pricing, from a farmer's perspective they have not done much, so as to outweigh their disadvantages in terms of service provision.

6) Ginning costs are lower in market-based systems (Zambia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania) than in monopoly or hybrid systems (WCA, Mozambique, and Uganda). Notably, ginning costs in Mozambique and Uganda are comparable to those in WCA only because those two countries operate at about 20 percent of their capacity. Total net cost from farm gate to Free on Truck (FOT) are also lower in market-based systems, owing to lower ginning costs, overheads and financial costs, and higher sales value of seeds. Therefore, monopolies in WCA perform poorly in terms of company efficiency. Value add at the ginnery stage can be estimated by subtracting all non-labour and non-tax costs for purchase and collection of seed cotton, and for processing and marketing of lint cotton from the total FOT value of lint and seeds. The two value-added figures are added and the result is converted to per capita figures by multiplying by production and dividing by total country population.

7) Owing to high costs and average delivery in terms of quality, WCA sectors are also the least competitive, either barely breaking even (Cameroon) or generating large deficits (Mali and Burkina Faso). However, all ESA sectors are highly competitive in world markets. In Mozambique, however, the reason is the exceptionally low price paid to farmers.

Cotton is a major source of foreign exchange earnings in more than 15 countries across the continent and is a crucial source of income for millions of rural people. Despite that, the issue of food security has become critical. As a result, farmers have transferred some of the technologies involved in cotton growing to cereal growing. These developments have worked simultaneously to expand the area under cultivation and eliminate fallowing. This, in turn, has put pressure on spontaneous vegetation. In fact, continuous use of fertilisers on the fields increases soil acidity and depletes it of organic matter. This is the principal reason why yields continue to stagnate and in some cases decline throughout WCA. In addition, the ample availability of fertiliser engenders further environmental degradation that has been acknowledged only by those working at the grassroots.

The following suggestions need to be introduced to deal with these challenges:

- ❖ Achieving greater value through improved quality, marketing, and valorisation of by-products.
- ❖ Bridging performance and competitiveness through farm-level productivity and ginning efficiency.
- ❖ Improving the sector's sustainability through institutional development and capacity building of stakeholders, as well as strengthening of governance structures and management systems.

The small countries have only one cotton company and one farmer organisation (such as Cameroon). Therefore, there is a need to create an inter-professional committee, involving common farmers in the decision-making process. It is necessary to put in place a supply chain and forge a high degree of cooperation in the decision-making process on all sector issues. The case of Zambia where the kwacha (Zambian currency) appreciated rapidly (but temporarily) prior to the 2006 election, limiting the prices that companies could pay for seed cotton. This, however, occurred at a time when farmers were already dissatisfied with prices, and this compounded their discontent and made them willing to switch their allegiance to new players.

There was intermittent debate about a new regulatory framework for the cotton sector in 1997 (in Zambia). The

major points of contention were the enforcement of contracts and prompt resolution of disputes. There were suggestions for establishing fast-track courts for the purpose and the amendment of the Agricultural Credits Act. However, the main focus was on getting a revised Cotton Act passed, in line with market liberalisation.

Cotton ginning is not by nature a heavy industry. Therefore, there are numerous examples of farmers' groupings as well as farm-based agribusinesses engaged in cotton production and ginning in Africa, such as SICOSA in Cote d'Ivoire, the ginning company established by a cotton farmers union (URECOS-CI) at the end of the 1990s. In other cases, ginning is a service provided for a fee (toll ginning) to farmers, who retain ownership of the final products (lint and seeds).

The organisation of cotton sectors in Africa faces specific challenges owing to a combination of factors: 1) The high input intensity of cotton production, and, 2) The input weakness, given the lack of capital and the vagaries of seasonal finance. As long as seasonal finance is a constraint, the issue of organising the cotton sector in Africa will continue to be a complicated one even as convergence with forms of cotton sector organisations, such as those in other parts of the world, will remain

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Poulton et.al. (2004) identified four main challenges facing the smallholder-based African cotton sectors: 1) Provision of input credit to producers, 2) Maintenance of quality control, 3) Maintenance of a high-quality research system and effective extension of research knowledge and products, and, 4) Offering an attractive seed cotton price.

These suggestions will work for SSA governments and stakeholders in helping to settle the euro/dollar exchange rate discrepancies and the slow progress seen in reducing market distortions due to OECD subsidies.

WTO debate and India-Africa South-South Cooperation

In recent years, world cotton prices have declined significantly. Small-scale cotton farmers in WCA, whose livelihoods depend on cotton, have borne the brunt of this decline. As discussed earlier, the key factor that has precipitated the drop in prices is the cotton production and export policy the U.S. and the EU follow. It is also less known that these policies contradict the letter and spirit of international human rights law. This Policy Brief provides an overview of the impact of the U.S. and EU cotton production and export policies on the lives of farmers in WCA countries.



Cotton production in WCA can enable farmers to earn a livelihood, including access to food and health. However, low cotton prices in recent years have deepened poverty levels in WCA, making it difficult for WCA governments to fulfill their human rights obligations, which, in turn, makes it difficult for the hundreds of thousands of African farmers to enjoy its benefits. The elimination of the distortionary effects of U.S. and EU subsidies alone can create a level-playing field in the cotton sector. This will also help strengthen the South-South voice, benefiting both India and WCA producers.

However, India and Africa recognise that they alone cannot guarantee lasting changes because the issues of over-production and dumping would continue to plague the sector. The India-Africa Delhi Declaration put caution to the fact that elimination of subsidies need to be accompanied by long-term policy changes that manage supply-side problems in cotton producing countries worldwide and mechanisms that guarantee fair and stable prices.

The United States, in particular, should implement policies and prohibit negative practices, such as export dumping, by large agri-businesses that dominate the cotton markets. Enforcing anti-trust laws would be one such step. In addition, governments as well as development and human rights advocates must pay more attention towards addressing the inconsistencies between the current U.S. and EU cotton policies, on one hand, and international commitments to development cooperation and respect for human rights, on the other.

India and Africa use international human rights obligations in defense of their development interests. In fact, they should test the value of such arguments, both within the framework of reporting to the UN human rights treaty monitoring bodies and to the WTO. The U.S. and EU must

also bear in mind their own responsibility for the human rights of their own people. Some small farmers in the U.S. and EU presently benefit from subsidies, while other taxpayers lose out on account of the generous subsidies directed to the already-rich agribusinesses. Any reforms in the U.S. and EU cotton sectors should not discriminate against the poorest sections of society. In fact, those affected will need to find other productive livelihoods.

Importance of South-South Cooperation between India and Africa

India started its Africa Focus Programme in 2002 with seven countries (South Africa, Nigeria, Mauritius, Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia) and later extended to all the other Sub-Saharan countries, such as Angola, Botswana, Ivory-Coast, Madagascar, Mozambique, Senegal, Seychelles, Uganda, Zambia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Sudan, Morocco and Algeria. Under this programme, India helped exporters and export promotion councils visit these countries, organise trade fairs, and invite African trade delegations to visit India.

In order to boost trade, India decided to take the following measures: (1) Preferential Trade Agreement/Free Trade Agreement, (2) Enhanced interaction with important trading partners (3) Institutional mechanisms, such as joint trade committees (joint trade committees already exist with Senegal, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Uganda, Ivory Coast, Namibia, Ethiopia and Tanzania, while Joint Economic Commissions exist with Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia).

Along with this, the Africa-India Forum Summit is held each year, which started from 2005, to discuss projects such as agriculture (food security, eradicating poverty and improve people's livelihood), rural development, a pilot project on establishment of micro, small and medium enterprises, science and information, communication, and technology for development, among others. The research and development part of the agriculture sector is also linked to the Pan-African Network, which, in turn, seeks to help strengthen India-Africa development goals.

Cotton production and ginning activities are seldom integrated with downstream industries, such as spinning, weaving and textile manufacturing, except in India. India offers this expertise to cotton producing African countries that will create non-farm employment opportunities for Africans. One of the best features of African cotton is that it is relatively homogeneous in its fibre characteristics. As Indian investors appreciate this feature in assessing the seed cotton quality and grade of lint that will be produced after ginning, they

typically offer good prices. In addition, Indian cotton investors are also not particularly concerned about the contamination issue. Alternately, they suggest a little care (by using hand gloves) to procure reasonably clean cotton in the process. On the issue of contamination, African cotton is penalised on the world market by World Bank sponsors. Indian buyers do not discriminate this fine produce of the continent on this account.

India offers fewer varieties, which makes it easier to maintain homogeneity of quality, though proper controls and good classification can ensure good performance for Indian textile industries.

Investment opportunities for African and Indian investors

Trade agreements between certain African countries and India typically extend over many years. However, the competition is strong as other developed and developing countries seek to get into the African markets, which, though, is not as easy as it may seem. Various trade agreements exist between certain African countries and India and largely due to these fruitful relationships, India has been keen to invest in cotton and textiles by extending its expertise. Indian investors seek opportunities in this sector based on the following factors:

- ❖ Achieving greater value through improved quality, marketing and valorisation of by-products.
- ❖ Bridging performance and competitiveness gaps through farm-level productivity and ginning efficiency.
- ❖ Improving the sector's sustainability through institutional development and capacity building of stakeholders as well as strengthening governance structures and management systems.

African cotton has two advantages in the world market — the intrinsic quality of its fibre and the fact that it is handpicked. Indian investors are particularly attracted towards this. Greater awareness and general mobilisation are required to re-establish Africa's main advantage, that stems from manual harvesting of seed cotton.

India's R&D institutions have initiated concerted efforts to improve fibre characteristics through better production practices, reduction in variability of lint quality through more rigorous seed cotton grading and lint classification, control of contamination through capacity-building, and pricing incentives in Africa that will help optimise quality management in ginning.

Indian R&D efforts must also be geared towards generalising the use of cotton cloth wrappers for bales, develop container loading at the gins, and optimise export logistics.

Alongside, Indian investors should coordinate with independent ginners in SSA to help improve marketing performance. The investors should adopt features like forward sales, which is the most common marketing method in the cotton business and is the easiest and most effective marketing strategy to cover risks. Indian investors should initiate direct sales from ginners to spinners that can help improve the quantity and quality of market knowledge available to ginners.

Indian investors can start with farmer organisations and work to the advantage of the sector, by getting into more systematic contractual trade relationships between them. It will, in turn, help strengthen the farmers' bargaining capacity. On the other side, considerable institutional strengthening and training will be required to reinforce producer organisations.

Indian cotton and textile specialists in Africa can also share knowledge and experience relating to effective and timely management of pests found on both food and cotton crops, soil fertility management, and the procedure to detect the capability of soil for cotton production. Improved cotton production technology, therefore, needs to be embedded in sustainable cropping systems, so that it becomes socially and economically viable in the long run.

Conclusion

The improvement in all of the above will depend on strengthening internal and external linkages between research and extension. Internal linkages are those that help articulate demands from the users of improved cotton technology (farmers on the production side and spinners on the consumption side), establishing relationships with common farmers, and delivering technologies to users (ginning companies, extension workers).

India and Africa can also contribute to these changes by promoting new investments and by establishing cooperative societies (as it works in the rural areas of India) for farmers. Such changes could help improve the mindsets of the farmers and strengthen their production in the long run.

Overall, the Indian investor should also help educate African farmers on the impact of agrochemicals on human and environmental health. According to a global study, cotton uses 22 percent of all insecticides and 11 percent of all pesticides used in agriculture. Because of these economic pressures, many African smallholders are being driven to the margins of economic viability or out of cotton farming altogether, with few alternative cash crops to turn to. There is a need to introduce bio-environment friendly fertilisers that can be supplied on credit (deducted from a farmer's earnings after harvest), and institute crop insurance in the sector. The small-holder farming should be strengthened through cooperative farming like the way it is practised in India. Finally, Indian investors should promote handpicking of cotton-balls while encouraging African farmers to wear gloves to help stave off contamination.

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- 3) Fisher. F.B. 1932. *That Strange Little Brown Man Gandhi*. New York. Ray Long & Richard Smith, Inc.
- 4) ICAC. www.cesr.org/ESCR/gencomment12.htm: accessed on 23 November 2010.

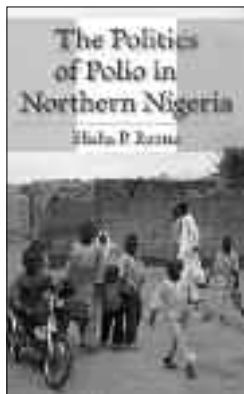
A selection of new books on Africa and by African writers
from www.africabookcentre.com

■ People and Politics

THE POLITICS OF POLIO IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

By **Renne, Elisha P**; 192pp; USA; Indiana University Press; Paperback; £16.99

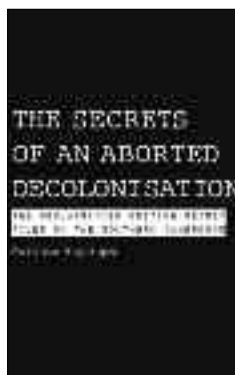
IN 2008, Northern Nigeria had the greatest number of confirmed cases of polio in the world, which was the source of outbreaks in several West African countries. Elisha P. Renne explores the politics and social dynamics of the Northern Nigerian response to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which has been met with extreme scepticism, subversion, and the refusal of some parents to immunise their children. Renne explains this resistance by attributing the eradication effort within the social, political, cultural, and historical context of the experience of polio in northern Nigeria.



THE SECRETS OF AN ABORTED DECOLONISATION: The Declassified British Secret Files on the Southern Cameroons

By **Anyangwe, Carlson**; 806pp; Cameroon; Langa RPCIG; Paperback; £44.95

AMONG THE material are treaties concluded by Britain with Southern Cameroons coastal Kings and Chiefs; and the boundary treaties of the Southern Cameroons, treaties defining the frontiers with Nigeria to the west and the frontier with Cameroon Republic to the east. The book contains documents that attest to the Southern Cameroons as a fully self-governing country, ready for sovereign statehood. These include debates in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly and the various Constitutions of the Southern Cameroons.



DARFUR AND THE CRISIS OF GOVERNANCE IN SUDAN:

A Critical Reader

By **Hassan, Salah M. & Ray, Carina (Eds.)**; 524pp; USA; Cornell University Press; Paperback; £26.50

BRINGS TOGETHER a diverse group of contributors from Sudan and beyond: scholars, activists, NGO and aid workers, members of government and the Darfurian rebel movements, and artists who share a deep knowledge of the situation in Darfur and Sudan. Together, they provide the most comprehensive, balanced, and nuanced account yet published of the conflicts roots and the contemporary realities that shape the experiences of those living in the region.

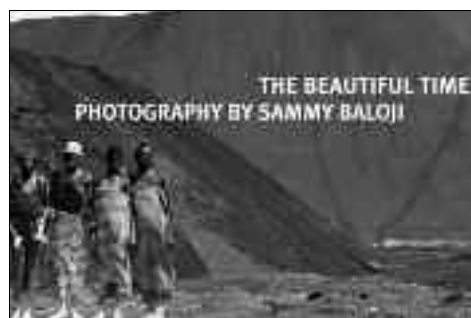


■ Pictography

THE BEAUTIFUL TIME: Photography by Sammy Baloji

By **Jewsiewicki, Bogumil**; 48pp; USA; Museum for African Art; Paperback; £14.99

IMAGES BY the Congolese photographer and video artist Sammy Baloji exploring colonial architecture and copper mines in the city of Lubumbashi and the South-Eastern Katanga province of the Democratic Republic of Congo. For Baloji and others of his generation, who were born after the country's independence in 1960, the colonial period was a time when hard work transformed a sparsely inhabited area into a modern city. In contrast, Baloji's images portray an industrial environment, haunted by the physical absence of humanity: no one is inside the buildings, machines are rusting and tracks lay idle without trains. Like many people in the Congo today, Baloji aims to understand and reconnect these two strikingly different eras.



■ Development Discourse



DECONSTRUCTING DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE: Buzzwords and Fuzzwords
By Cornwall, Andrea (Ed.); 320pp; U.K.; Practical Action Publishing; Paperback; £18.95

WHY SHOULD language matter to those who are doing development? Surely, there are more urgent things to do than sit around mulling over semantics? But language does matter. Whether emptied of their original meaning, essentially vacuous, or hotly contested, the language of development not only shapes our imagined worlds, but also justifies interventions in real people's lives. If development buzzwords conceal ideological differences or sloppy thinking, then the process of constructive deconstruction makes it possible to re-examine what have become catch — all terms like civil society and poverty reduction, or bland aid-agency terms such as partnership or empowerment. Such engagement is far more than a matter of playing word games. The reflections included here raise major questions about how we think about development itself. The 30 contributors to this volume include Cassandra Balchin, Srilatha Batliwala, Robert Chambers, Neera Chandhoke, Ben Fine, Shalmali Guttal, Pablo Alejandro Leal, Islah Jad, Thandika Mkandawire, John Samuel, John Toye and Peter Uvin.

GLOBAL AFRICA PROJECT
By Sims, Lowery Stokes & King-Hammond, Leslie; 264pp; Germany; Prestel; Hardback; £30

ARTISTS AND designers of African ancestry — many in Africa and others throughout Europe, the Americas and the Far East — are working in a wide array of media: fashion, architecture, non-traditional crafts, design, fine art and photography. Authors Lowery Stokes Sims and Leslie King-Hammond, together with six contributors, challenge presumptions of what constitutes an 'African' style or aesthetic, and demonstrate the power and expressive potential of materials, textures and forms. Work by well-known artists such as Yinka Shonibare, MBE and architects including David Adjaye appear alongside those of lesser-known but equally exciting designers whose garments, carpets, baskets, ceramics, furniture, body arts, wall painting, photographs and sculpture blur the distinction between art and craft.



THE ENOUGH MOMENT: Fighting to End Africa's Worst Human Rights Crimes
By Prendergast, John & Cheadle, Don; 304pp; USA; Three Rivers Press; Paperback; £11.99

HUMAN RIGHTS activist John Prendergast and Oscar-nominated actor Don Cheadle reveal the steps being taken by engaged citizens — Upstanders — famous and unknown, to combat genocide, rape, and child soldiering in Africa.

CIRCULAR MIGRATION IN ZIMBABWE AND CONTEMPORARY SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

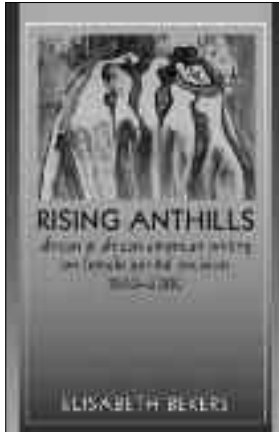
By Potts, Deborah; 312pp; U.K.; James Currey Publishers; Hardback; £50

CIRCULAR MIGRATION, whereby rural migrants do not remain permanently in town, has particular significance in the academic literature on development and urbanisation in Africa, often having negative connotations in southern Africa studies, due to its links with an iniquitous migrant labour system.



Literature on other African regions often view circular migration more positively. This book reviews the current evidence about circular migration and urbanisation in sub-Saharan Africa. The author challenges the dominant view that rural-urban migration continues unabated and shows that circular migration has continued and has adapted, with faster out-migration in the face of declining urban economic opportunities. The empirical core of the book illustrates these trends through a detailed examination of the case of Zimbabwe, based on the author's longstanding research on Harare. The political and economic changes in Zimbabwe since the 1980s transformed Harare from one of the best African cities to live in over this period to one of the worst. Harare citizens' livelihoods exemplify, in microcosm, the central theme of the book: the re-invention of circulation and rural-urban links in response to economic change.

■ Generational Perspectives



RISING ANTHILLS: African and African American Writing on Female Genital Excision, 1960-2000

By Bekers, Elisabeth; 360pp; USA; University of Wisconsin Press; Paperback; £32.99

SHOWS HOW the debate on female genital excision has evolved over the last four decades of the twentieth century, in response to changing attitudes about ethnicity, nationalism, colonialism, feminism, and human rights. The author discerns a gradual evolution from the 1960s, when writers carefully wrote around the physical operation, to the late 1990s, when they situated their denunciations of female genital excision in a much broader, international context of women's oppression and the struggle for women's rights.

GENERATIONS PAST: Youth in East African History

By Burton, Andrew & Charon-Bigot, Helene (Eds.); 432pp; USA; Ohio UP; Paperback; £27.99

A WIDE-RANGING selection of essays that covers an array of youth-related themes in historical perspective. Thirteen chapters explore the historical dimensions of youth in nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first century Ugandan, Tanzanian, and Kenyan societies. Key themes running through the book include the analytical utility of youth as a social category; inter-generational relations and the passage of time; youth as a social and political problem; sex and gender roles among east African youth; and youth as historical agents of change.



SELF AND COMMUNITY IN A CHANGING WORLD

By Masolo, D.A.; 260pp; USA; Indiana University Press; Paperback; £16.99

REVISITING AFRICAN philosophy's classic questions, D.A. Masolo advances understandings of what it means to be human, whether of African or other origin. Masolo reframes indigenous knowledge as diversity: How are we to understand the place and structure of consciousness? How does the everyday, colour the world we know? Where are the boundaries between self and other, universal and particular, and individual and community? From here, he takes a dramatic turn toward Africa's current political situation and considers why individual rights and freedoms have not been recognised, respected, demanded, or enforced.



■ Myth and Reality



ZIMBABWE'S LAND REFORM: Myths and Realities

By Scoones, Ian; 272pp; U.K.; James Currey Publishers; Paperback; £16.99

TEN YEARS after the land invasions of 2000, this book provides the first full account of the consequences of these dramatic events. This land reform overturned a century-old pattern of land use, one dominated by a small group of large-scale commercial farmers, many of whom were white. But what replaced it? This book challenges five myths through the examination of the field data from Masvingo province: Zimbabwean land reform has been a total failure; the beneficiaries of reform have been largely political 'cronies'; there is no investment in the new resettlements; agriculture is in complete ruins creating chronic food insecurity; the rural economy has collapsed. By challenging these myths, and suggesting alternative policy narratives, this book presents the story as it has been observed on the ground: warts and all. What comes through very strongly is the complexity, the differences, almost farm by farm: there is no single, simple story of the Zimbabwe land reform as sometimes assumed by press reports, political commentators, or indeed much academic study.

■ Contemporary

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY IN EMERGING AFRICAN DEMOCRACIES

By **Nwokefor, Cosmas U.**; 292pp; USA; University Press of America; Paperback; £31.95

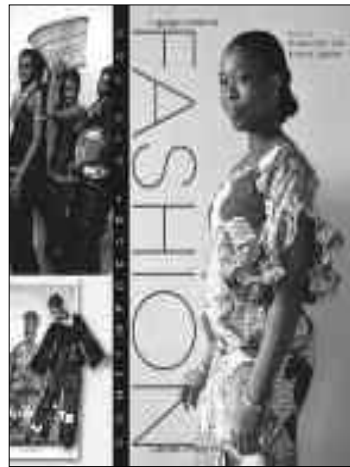
THIS TEXTBOOK is a collection of essays that may be used as primary reading for courses on mass media technology, and information communication technology (ICT). It is also suitable as supplementary reading in media and politics, political science and courses that focus on political communication, and business communication. The book serves as a reference guide to mass media scholars, development communication experts, government leaders, and diplomats interested in media review, most importantly as it pertains to African democratic dispensations.



CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN FASHION

By **Gott, Suzanne & Loughran, Kristyne (Eds.)**; 248pp; USA; Indiana University Press; Paperback; £18.99

AFRICAN FASHION is as diverse and dynamic as the continent and the people who live there. While experts have long recognised the importance of clothing as a marker of ethnic identity, life stages, political affiliation, and social class, they have only just begun to discover African fashion. This book puts Africa at the intersection of world cultures and globalised identities, displaying the powerful creative force and impact of newly emerging styles.



AFRICA'S BIG FIVE AND OTHER WILDLIFE FILMMAKERS: A Centenary of Wildlife Filming in Kenya

By **Hartley, Jean**; 174pp; Kenya; Twaweza Communications; Paperback; £18.95

JEAN HARTLEY, born in Kenya, is acknowledged as being the first to legitimise fixing for wildlife film crews. Over the last 25 years, she has worked on over a thousand films, the vast majority being about wildlife and nature. She features five of the great film makers who all started their careers in Kenya in the 1950s, legends whom she is proud to call personal friends. Watching all of their films, and many more, she became fascinated by the history of film making in Kenya and determined to find out when it all started. In this insightful book, she traces the roots of wildlife film, back a hundred years, drawing on accounts of the original filmmakers and the professional hunters who guided those early safaris. She tracks the changes from those grainy, speeded up, silent films to the technologically perfect High Definition and 3D films that are being produced today.



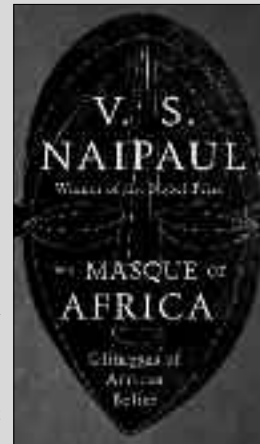
■ Glimpses

THE MASQUE OF AFRICA: Glimpses of African Belief

By **Naipaul, V.S.** 256pp; U.K.; Picador; Hardback; £20

I BEGIN
in

Uganda,
at the centre of the continent,
do Ghana and
Nigeria,
the Ivory Coast and
Gabon,
and end at the bot-



tom of the continent, in South Africa. My theme is belief, not political or economical life; and yet at the bottom of the continent, the political realities are so overwhelming that they have to be taken into account. Perhaps an unspoken aspect of my inquiry was the possibility of the subversion of old Africa by the ways of the outside world. The theme held until I got to the South, when the clash of the two ways of thinking and believing became far too one-sided. The skyscrapers of Johannesburg didn't rest on sand. The older world of magic felt fragile, but at the same time had an enduring quality. You felt that it would survive any calamity. I had expected that over the great size of Africa the practices of magic would significantly vary. But they didn't. The diviners everywhere wanted to throw the bones to read the future and the idea of energy remained a constant, to be tapped into by the ritual sacrifice of body parts. In South Africa body parts, mainly of animals, but also of men and women, made a mixture of battle medicine. To witness this, to be given some idea of its power, was to be taken far back to the beginning of things. To reach that beginning was the purpose of my book.

■ Fiction



A DURABLE FIRE

By Keating, Barbara & Stephanie; 512pp; U.K.; Vintage; Paperback; £8.99

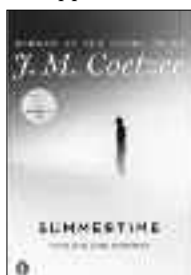
IN THE first years of Kenyan independence, three young women return to the East African highlands where they shared a carefree childhood. Hannah is struggling to preserve her heritage at Langani Farm, where a series of unexplained and violent attacks threaten her security and recent marriage. Sarah is studying elephant behaviour in an area made dangerous by armed poachers, using her work as a salve for the death of her childhood sweetheart. Camilla, the international fashion

icon, abandons her career in London and is drawn back to Kenya by her love for a charismatic hunter and safari guide. But there is a secret that hangs over Langani, overshadowing their efforts to establish themselves in the volatile circumstances of a new African nation. With the help of an ambitious Indian journalist, the three girls gradually uncover the truth about the murder of Sarah's fiance, and the continuing attacks on the farm and on their lives. This sequel to *Blood Sisters* confronts catastrophic loss and delirious happiness, savagery and degradation, limitless beauty, soaring hope and redemption.

SUMMERTIME

By Coetzee, J.M.; 272pp; U.K.; Vintage; Paperback; £7.99

COETZEE, IN his thirties, is sharing a cottage in the suburbs of Cape Town with his widowed father. This, the biographer senses, is the period when he was 'finding his feet as a writer'. Never having met Coetzee, he embarks on a series of interviews with people who were important to him — a married woman with whom he had an affair, his favourite cousin Margot, a Brazilian dancer whose daughter had English lessons with him, former friends and colleagues. From their testimony, emerges a portrait of the young Coetzee as an awkward, bookish individual with little talent for opening himself to others.

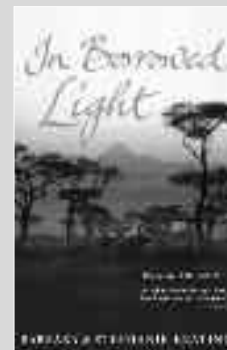


IN BORROWED LIGHT

By Keating, Barbara & Stephanie; 512pp; U.K.; Harvill Secker; Paperback; £12.99

FOURTEEN YEARS after independence, the enduring childhood friendship of three women has carried them through times of violence and loss in Kenya, their chosen homeland.

Hannah Olsen and her husband Lars own Langani Farm and Safari Lodge where they struggle to protect their land from corrupt officials. But the developing relationship between their daughter and a young African boy with a terrifying legacy tests the strength of their family. Sarah Singh, wildlife researcher and photographer, is married to an Indian journalist. However, their inability to have children puts Sarah's relationship with her husband and his family under increasing pressure. Camilla Broughton Smith, international model and fashion designer, has given up a dazzling career to work with the charismatic safari guide Anthony Chapman, who has been disabled in a tragic accident.



■ Cuisine



70 TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RECIPES

By Grant, Rosamund; 96pp; U.K.; Southwater Publishing; Paperback; £4.99

70 EVOCATIVE and authentic recipes showcasing the best of Africa's unique cuisine. Enticing fish, poultry and meat dishes include Fish and Okra Soup, Duck with Sherry and Pumpkin, Tanzanian Fish Curry, and Spiced Fried Lamb. It features traditional specialities, adapted for modern kitchens and contemporary tastes. All recipes are shown step-by-step, illustrated with over 300 colour photographs. Helpful and informative chef's hints and tips, throughout, give a special insight into the culinary background.

Bestsellers in India

Indian journalist M.J. Akbar's "Tinderbox: The Past and Future of Pakistan" leads the non-fiction section of the bestseller list while "Tender Hooks" by Moni Mohsin dominates the fiction set

TOP 10: NON-FICTION

1. **Tinderbox: The Past and Future of Pakistan**

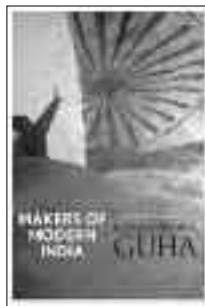
Author: M.J. Akbar
 Publisher: Harper Collins
 Price: ₹499

2. **India: A Portrait**

Author: Patrick French
 Publisher: Penguin Books
 Price: ₹699

3. **Makers of Modern India**

Author: Ramachandra Guha
 Publisher: Penguin/Viking
 Price: ₹799



4. **Mumbai Fables**

Author: Gyan Prakash
 Publisher: Harper Collins
 Price: ₹599

5. **Life**

Author: Keith Richards
 Publisher: Weidenfeld & Nicolson
 Price: ₹995



6. **Civil Disobedience**

Author: L.C. Jain
 Publisher: The Book Review Literary Trust
 Price: ₹395

7. **India-China Boundary Problem 1846-1947**

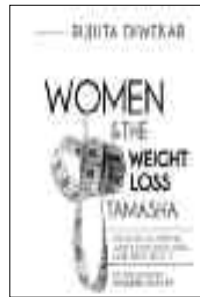
Author: A.G. Noorani
 Publisher: Oxford Press
 Price: ₹795

8. **India and The United States in the 21st Century**

Author: Teresita C. Schaffer
 Publisher: India Research Press
 Price: ₹595

9. **Women & The Weight Loss Tamasha**

Author: Rujuta Diwekar
 Publisher: Westland
 Price: ₹200



10. **India Cookbook**

Author: Pushpesh Pant
 Publisher: Phaidon
 Price: ₹1,995



TOP 10: FICTION

1. **Tender Hooks**

Author: Moni Mohsin
 Publisher: Random House
 Price: ₹199



2. **The Silent Monument**

Author: Shobha Nihalani
 Publisher: Tara Press
 Price: ₹250

3. **The Garden of Solitude**

Author: Siddhartha Gigoo
 Publisher: Rupa & Co
 Price: ₹195

4. **The Diary of a Social Butterfly**

Author: Moni Mohsin

Publisher: Random House
 Price: ₹199



5. **The Palace of Illusions**

Author: Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
 Publisher: Picador India
 Price: ₹395

6. **The Sunset Club**

Author: Khushwant Singh
 Publisher: Penguin Viking
 Price: ₹399

7. **The Finkler Question**

Author: Howard Jacobson
 Publisher: Bloomsbury
 Price: ₹499

8. **Heroes of Olympus: The Lost Hero**

Author: Rick Riordan
 Publisher: Puffin
 Price: ₹399

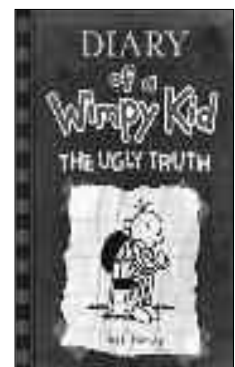


9. **The Immortals of Meluha**

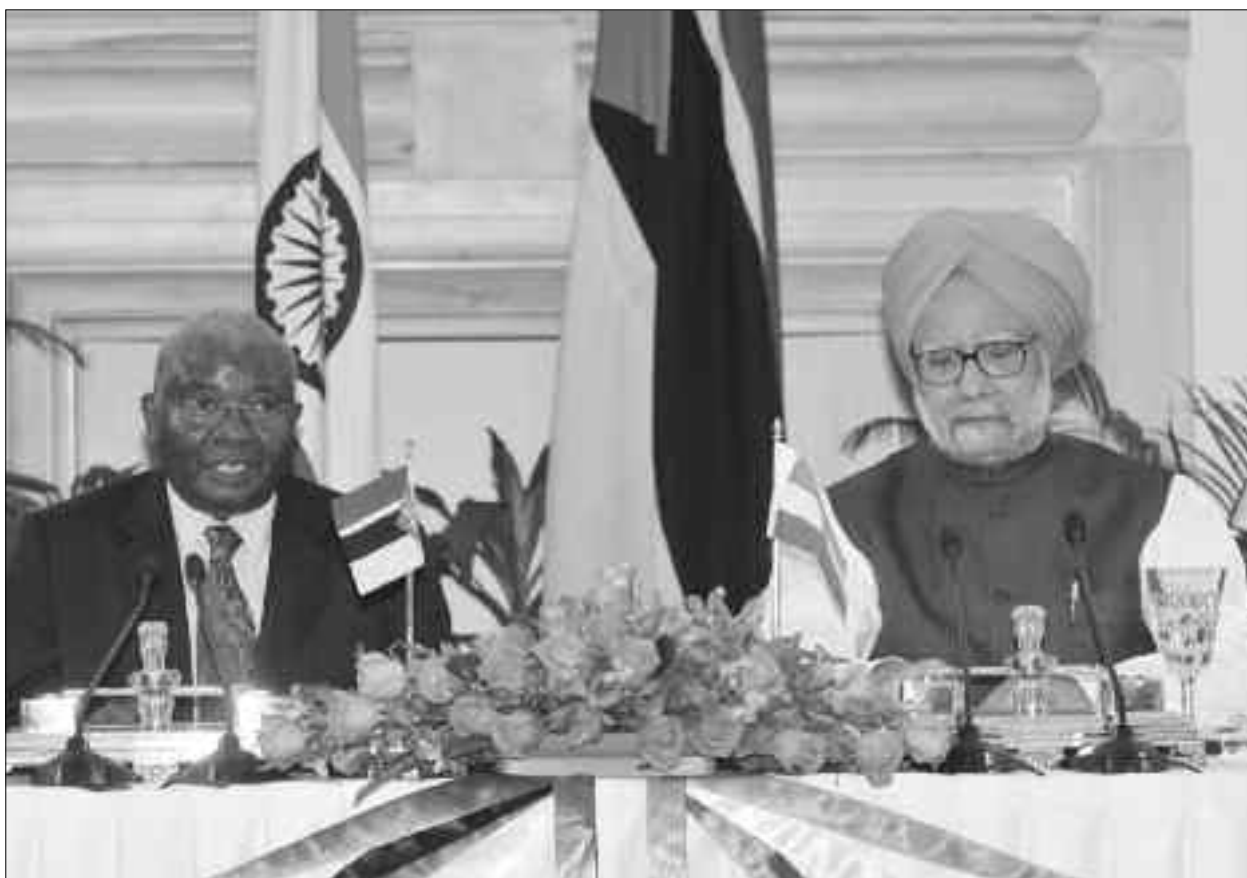
Author: Amish
 Publisher: Westland/Tranquebar
 Price: ₹295

10. **Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Ugly Truth**

Author: Jeff Kinney
 Publisher: Puffin Books
 Price: ₹250



(Source: Bahri Sons, New Delhi, www.booksatbahri.com. All the books listed above are available online)



India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President of Mozambique Armando Emilio Guebuza at a joint press conference in New Delhi on September 30.

Prime Minister's remarks to the media during the visit of President of Mozambique

30/09/2010

It is a great honour for me to welcome His Excellency President Armando Guebuza. He has shown great leadership in taking Mozambique on the path of economic development within the framework of a democratic polity. India's relations with Mozambique go back in time to the pre-colonial period. India extended its full support to Mozambique in its struggle for independence and emergence as an independent, sovereign nation.

We both belong to the same Indian Ocean community and share common concerns. It is in our mutual interest to ensure the safety and security of sea lanes of communication in the Indian Ocean. Our relations are therefore cooperative and marked by deep mutual understanding and friendship. President Guebuza and I have decided to build upon the solid foundations of the past, and create a partnership based on the following four pillars:

- Greater political engagement
- Deepening economic cooperation
- Strengthening defence and security cooperation and,
- Cooperation in capacity building and human resource development.

We have agreed to exploit our mutual complementarities in areas of trade and economic cooperation, transportation, railways, mining, coal, agriculture, small and medium enterprises and science and technology.

I conveyed India's readiness to be a partner in Mozambique's development efforts. India will provide a line of credit of \$500 million for infrastructure projects, agriculture and energy. India will support the establishment of training and planning institutions in Mozambique to support capacity building in the coal industry. India will also support capacity building for the defence and police forces of Mozambique.

The Agreements that have been signed today on avoidance of double taxation, cooperation in mineral resources and between middle and small enterprises will strengthen our partnership. We have decided to set a target of bilateral trade of \$1 billion by the year 2013.

As one of Africa's foremost leaders, President Guebuza's leadership and guidance will play an important role in shaping India's partnership with Africa. We will work closely with Mozambique on regional and other issues, as well as in preparations for the next India-Africa Summit in Africa in 2011. Based on our discussions, and the bilateral agreements that have been concluded today, I can say with confidence that President Guebuza's visit to India has opened a new chapter in our bilateral relations. ■

India's External Affairs Minister S.M Krishna's remarks at the inauguration of the second-phase of India's Pan African e-Network project

16/08/2010

It is my proud privilege to inaugurate the second phase of the Pan-African e-Network Project today in respect of 12 African countries — Botswana, Burundi, Cote D'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, Uganda and Zambia — along with senior Ministers of these countries.

I had useful interactions with all the Ministers during which we not only exchanged views on the issues relating to the implementation of the Project, but also on other aspects of our bilateral relations.

The Pan-African e-Network Project is one of the finest examples of the growing partnership between India and Africa. I understand that this is the biggest project of distance education and tele-medicine ever undertaken in Africa.

It is a matter of great pride for India to be the driving force for such an ambitious project, which is fully financed by the Government of India and has an approved budget allocation of ₹540 crores (\$ 125 million).

Conceptualised on the vision of India's former President Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam of connecting India with all the fifty three (53) countries of the African Union with a satellite and fibre optic network for sharing India's expertise in education and health care, the project is being implemented in 47 African countries, of which actual commissioning has been completed in 34 countries.

Under this Project we have made available the facilities and expertise of some of the best universities and super specialty hospitals in India to the people of Africa. The project is also equipped to support e-governance, e-commerce, infotainment, resource mapping and meteorological and other services in the African countries, besides providing VVIP connectivity among the Heads of State of the African countries through a highly secure closed satellite network.

I am happy to learn that more than 1700 students from several African countries have already registered with the Indian universities for the various courses being offered by them under the tele-education component of the Project.

Regular tele-medical consultations have also started between the African doctors and the Indian specialists through this network. Likewise, nearly 700 CME lectures have been held delivered by our doctors from the Indian Super Specialty hospitals.

Taking into account the enthusiastic and encouraging response from our African partners, we have decided to offer training at the regional level by conducting workshops in the tele-medicine and tele-education modules for the benefit of African participants. I am confident that at the end, both sides would find themselves enriched through mutual exchanges and interactions.



External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna addressing delegates during the inauguration of the Pan African e-Network project.

It is a matter of deep satisfaction that the Pan-African e-Network Project has been conferred with 'The Hermes Prize for Innovation 2010' by the European Institute for Creative Studies and Innovation for its contribution in the field of sustainable development. I would like to congratulate all the participating countries on this shared achievement. I would also like to congratulate all the 47 countries which have joined this Project and especially the 12 countries represented by Your Excellencies, where the second phase of the Project was formally inaugurated.

I commend officials of the Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) for the sincerity and dedication shown by them while implementing this gigantic project. ■

External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna's statement at NAM coordinating bureau ministerial meeting in New York

27/09/2010

As we celebrate half a century of the founding of our Movement next year, the theme of today's debate is significant and timely.

The Non-Aligned Movement, as it stands today, owes a great deal to the inspiration and foresight of its founding fathers like Prime Minister Pandit Nehru, President Nasser, President Tito, and President Sukarno. They shared the vision of the Non-Aligned Movement as an assertion of freedom of judgement and freedom of action, in international relations built upon the basic principles of solidarity, peace, justice and equity.

As early as in 1946, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, stated, "We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another, which have led in the past two world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale. But we do claim equal and honourable treatment for our people wherever they may go, and we cannot accept any discrimination against them. We believe that peace and freedom are indivisible and the denial of freedom anywhere must endanger freedom elsewhere and lead to conflict and war".

As a force representing the newly-independent former colonies emerging from a variety of national liberation struggles, our Movement helped close a long and painful chapter of colonialism, imperialism and institutionalised racism — an achievement for which we can be justifiably proud and draw inspiration.

The central challenges of our times relate to management of global economy and finance, securing stable food and energy supplies, poverty alleviation, eradicating hunger and deprivation, tackling pandemics, raising literacy levels and coping up with climate change. Equally serious challenges are posed by terrorism, drug-traffickers and organised crime syndicates, and other challenges to international peace and security.

These challenges are heightened by persistent structural infirmities and democracy deficit in the architecture of international institutions of global governance. The apparent failings of our global political, economic and fiscal institutions limit our collective ability to respond to these challenges.

Our Movement remains well positioned to address such challenges. We need to discover the strengths of our past and there must be sharper focus on issues that unite rather than divide the members. Without solidarity of purpose and commitment, without a measured, result-oriented approach, we cannot address systemic challenges that transcend individual national capacities.

We need to reinvigorate our efforts towards a more democratic, equitable, and legitimised international architecture that reflects contemporary realities. The world's international institutions, in particular, the UN and its Security Council and the Bretton Woods Institutions require fundamental changes, which only developing countries can promote. The continuing democracy deficit in the UN, the parliament of nations, is unsustainable. Genuine reform is essential, in particular of the Security Council. It must encompass expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership.

Terrorism is one of the greatest scourges of our times. The Movement cannot afford to equivocate on this vital issue and must be at the forefront of combating this menace. The fight against terrorism must be directed not only against the terrorists, but also against those who sponsor, abet or support them. We need to enhance international cooperation against terrorism and plug gaps in the legal framework. This requires that the negotiations on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) in the UN, which have been going on for over a decade, are finalised and the convention is concluded at the earliest.

India attaches the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament, which is also enshrined in the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan of 1988. During the 63rd UNGA session, our Prime Minister reiterated the proposal for a Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and providing for their complete elimination within a specified time frame. The Movement needs to play a more active and advocating role in

efforts towards achieving universal and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and a world free of all nuclear weapons.

Members of the Non-Aligned Movement are the largest troop providers to the UN peacekeeping operations. They are also host to most of the UN peacekeeping operations and peace building efforts. It is therefore critical that the Movement must spearhead efforts towards ensuring a meaningful engagement in the substantive discussions on these issues. As we have just undertaken a comprehensive review of the progress towards the realisation of MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), we are reminded of the long and arduous journey that lies ahead in realisation of these goals. The developing and the developed countries need to work together to tackle the challenges of food security, energy security, health, education and climate change.

African countries form the largest single grouping in NAM. Nowhere are the challenges humankind faces more pressing, than in the African continent. The Movement must continue to work towards ensuring Africa's pre-eminence in the global development agenda.

Our overall approach while addressing the overarching challenges that we face must be guided by a new, forward-looking and focused Agenda for our Movement, which brings conviction to our positions. We must strive to build unity and solidarity, recognising that amongst 118 members, there will be diversity. ■

Remarks by S.M. Krishna at the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) ministerial meeting

25/09/2010

I am delighted to be here among friends once again. Let me begin by thanking our host, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, Minister of International Relations and Co-operation of South Africa and the South African delegation for the excellent arrangements made for this meeting. IBSA is a unique forum in that it brings together three dynamic democracies from three continents, bound together by shared values and a common commitment to democracy, pluralism, human rights and the rule of law. These attributes make IBSA an exemplary body for global cooperation.

I am particularly happy that we have this opportunity to meet on the eve of the elections for the UN Security Council non-permanent seats (for the period 2011-2012) at which India and South Africa are the sole candidates from their respective Groups. In a unique and fortuitous development, all three of our countries may have the opportunity to serve together in the Security Council from January 1, 2011. We hope to join Brazil in the Council from next year. It is no coincidence that all three of our countries are key drivers behind the demand for greater democratisation and reform of the UN system. I think we all agree that our collaboration should focus foremost on

reform of the UN Security Council to make the organisation representative of contemporary global realities.

UN Security Council reforms

Our meeting assumes added significance as it is being held following the renewed momentum imparted to the reform process by the start of text-based negotiations from July this year. This was made possible by the demand from more than 140 countries for the launch of text-based negotiations. Our missions here in New York played a commendable leadership role in mobilising support for this demand.

India, Brazil and South Africa are important constituents of the L.69 Group on Council reform, besides being part of the G4 and African Groups, which have been extremely critical to the reform process and will remain so.

We are aware of the sensitivities within the African Group on the matter. We are willing to go by South Africa's advice, both in respect of strategy and tactics, to progress the reform process. As my South African counterpart is aware, the G4 Foreign Ministers met yesterday and had very useful and substantive discussions. We also issued a press statement, which supports the central role of Africa and the need for African representation in the permanent membership in an enlarged Council.

I would like to reiterate the need for us to remain steadfast in our demand for expansion of the Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. Any dilution in our principled position would weaken the movement for UN reform and strengthen the hands of those who favour the status quo.

It is my delegation's sincere hope that reform of the Security Council will be achieved by the end of the 65th session of the UN General Assembly so that IBSA countries could convert their short-term presence in the Council into a more permanent one.

Collaboration at the UNSC in 2011

With our shared values and ideologies and common priorities, the IBSA countries should be in a position to collaborate closely on major issues before the agenda of the Security Council. I would propose that our PRs remain in close contact to exchange ideas and coordinate positions.

In January 2011, the international community will have to address important developments in the Sudan. This is likely to be among the major issues that the Security Council would have to address. We need to coordinate our positions on this. South Africa has been playing an important role and we look forward to your wise counsel on the matter.

The Iran nuclear issue is another important matter that our three countries would have to deal with. We know that Brazil has been playing an active role in the Council and outside. India has substantial interests in the region and traditional friendship with Iran. This applies in large measure also to South Africa. We have built up a large reservoir of experience and tools. I would also advocate the establish-

ment of a formal mechanism for institutionalised exchanges between our Foreign Ministries on UN issues, particularly those involving the Security Council. ■

EAM's intervention at the High Level meeting on Sudan

24/09/2010

The United Nations has been at the forefront of the international community's attempts to stabilise the situation in Sudan. As one of the prime contributors to the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), India shares the principles and purposes behind the United Nations involvement in the country.

Sudan today is on the threshold of profound change. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed by the warring Sudanese parties has brought peace, after a prolonged and bitter civil war, to Sudan. The culmination of the CPA process will take place in a few months with the referendum of 9 January 2011 when the people of Southern Sudan will decide whether they favour unity of the country or opt for secession.

We are happy to note that the referendum process is on track and is expected to be concluded by the stipulated date. I would like to take this opportunity to compliment the Government of National Unity in Khartoum and the Government of Southern Sudan in Juba for their approach in resolving the difficulties at hand and in ensuring that the referendum time schedule is maintained.

We trust that the referendum will be conducted in a timely, transparent and credible manner and the outcome of the referendum will be respected by all parties in accordance with the provisions of the CPA, as also the international community. India hopes for a peaceful resolution of the issue.

As the situation in Darfur is concerned, we would like the issue to be resolved in a manner consistent with Sudan's unity and territorial integrity. We are aware that there are several sets of on-going efforts in progress at achieving peace in Sudan and we wish the efforts, including the Doha Peace Talks, to bring peace and prosperity to Sudan.

India is extensively engaged with Africa and highly values its relations with the region. The Pan-Africa E-Network Project, the 2nd phase of which was inaugurated by me recently, is one of the finest examples of the growing partnership between India and Africa. It is the biggest project of distance education and tele-medicine ever undertaken in Africa. Extension of concessional lines of credit to countries in Africa, including Sudan, has been another way of assisting our partners in the development process.

India looks forward to peaceful development of this region which will depend, irrespective of the outcome of the referendum, on maintaining close cooperation between Southern and Northern Sudan and its neighbours, and the world community. ■

MYSTIQUE JATINGA

Every year, from September to November, Jatinga, in Assam, braces itself to witness a strange phenomenon... mass bird suicides, says **Jadav Kakoti**



The tranquility of Jatinga, a scenic village nestling among the Borail Hills range, is shattered every night by a disturbing occurrence — the ‘mass suicide’ of hundreds of birds. Locals have been witnessing the eerie phenomenon from September to November. As the sun sets, hundreds of birds descend on the village and fly full speed towards buildings and trees, crashing to their deaths. The repeated episodes are confined to a 1.5 km strip of the village.

With lush greenery and plentiful freshwater, Jatinga, some eight kilometres from Haflong, the headquarters of the Dima Hasao district, is a resting place for many migratory birds. Haflong is 350 km from Guwahati, capital of Assam.

Birds that have been sighted here over the years include the kingfisher, Indian pitta, green breasted pitta, green pigeon, black drongo, racket tailed drongo, whistling ducks, spotted doves, emerald doves, and grey heron. But come September, and the locals brace for the ghastly sight. Is it really suicide, or something else?

“It is not a suicide, to be precise. But the fact remains that birds are attracted by light and fly towards any object with a light source. This phenomenon still puzzles bird specialists,” said Anwaruddin Choudhury, a well-known ornithologist in Assam, on the sidelines of the First International Jatinga Festival in Haflong.

B. Brahma, conservator of forests, Hills Circle, Haflong, also echoes the view. “From past and present observations and experiences,



it can be said that birds don't commit suicide," Brahma said.

The 'suicide', however, is just a part of the mystery. The more baffling question is why birds fly after sunset at all, as research shows that most birds are diurnal, that is, active only during the day.

The late Salim Ali, the country's preeminent ornithologist, too was struck by this oddity. "The most puzzling thing to me about this phenomenon is that so many species of diurnal resident birds should be on the move when, by definition, they should be fast asleep. The problem deserves a deeper scientific study from various angles," he had written. The 'avian harakiri', as the locals call it, has in fact shaped the region's history.

Jatinga was originally inhabited by the Zeme Nagas, who came across the bird phenomenon while guarding their paddy fields on a moonless, dark night.

Frightened, the Nagas sold the land to Jaintias and left the place way back in 1905. Jaintias, the new inhabitants of Jatinga, also witnessed the phenomenon but interpreted it as a gift from the gods.

"The phenomenon has generated tremendous interest in wildlife circles across the world and has made Jatinga world famous," Brahma said.

The earliest reference to this phenomenon was made by E.P. Gee, a British tea planter in his book *Wild Life of India* in 1957. The Zoological Survey of India had sent a team to visit the place in 1977. Later, leading ornithologists from Europe, the U.S. and Japan too studied the mystery.

However, no case of migratory birds plunging to their deaths has been recorded yet. Some bird specialists attribute the phenomenon to the electro-magnetic forces of Jatinga, which is surrounded by geographical faultlines all round.

The deaths, though perplexing, are not mourned. Locals are quick to trap the birds using bamboo sticks, which are then consumed with relish.

Those desiring a first-hand experience of the phenomenon can visit Haflong — with Silchar (110 km) and Guwahati (350 km) being the two nearest airports. If travelling by train, board a broad gauge train from Guwahati till Lumding, from where another meter-gauge train will take you to Haflong.

The route from Lumding to Haflong passes through many tunnels and it is an exciting journey somewhat resembling the Kalka-Shimla track. By road, it takes around 10-11 hours as you have to negotiate bumpy roads.

Justin, a student from Missouri, U.S., who visited Jatinga last year said, "I have been hearing about the birds committing suicide here in Jatinga. This attracted me toward this scenic place. Blue Hills and fresh air plus the small population were awesome. Justin found Jatinga tranquil and beautiful with a refreshing feel."

Sylvia Suchiang, a school teacher who also spares time for social activities, said, "Though this small village is totally literate, still the only high school is yet to be provincialised though it is 20 years old." ■



Indian pitta, spotted in the woods of Jatinga



The Bird Watch tower at a hill top in Jatinga



Locals perform a traditional Assamese dance.



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Note to Contributors

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Articles submitted to *Africa Quarterly* should be original contributions and should not be under consideration by any other publication at the same time. The Editor is responsible for the selection and acceptance of articles, but responsibility for errors of facts and opinions expressed in them rests with authors. Manuscripts submitted should be accompanied with a statement that the same has not been submitted/accepted for publication elsewhere. Copyright of articles published in the *Africa Quarterly* will be retained by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

Manuscripts submitted to *Africa Quarterly* should be typed double space on one side of the paper and two copies should be sent. A diskette (3 1/2") MS-Dos compatible, and e-mail as an attachment should be sent along with the two hard copies. Authors should clearly indicate their full name, address, e-mail, academic status and current institutional affiliation. A brief biographical note (one paragraph) about the writer may also be sent.

The length of the article should not normally exceed 7,000 to 8,000 words, or 20 to 25 (A-4 size) typed pages in manuscript. Titles should be kept as brief as possible.

Footnote numbering should be clearly marked and consecutively numbered in the text and notes placed at the end of the article and not at the bottom of the relevant page. Tables (including graphs, maps, figures) must be submitted in a form suitable for reproduction on a separate sheet of paper and not within the text. Each table should have a clear descriptive title and mention where it is to be placed in the article. Place all footnotes in a table at the end of the article. Reference numbers within the text should be placed after the punctuation mark.

Footnote style: In the case of books, the author, title of the book, place of publication, publisher, date of publication and page numbers should be given in that order, e.g. Basil Davidson, 'The Blackman's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation State', London, James Curry, 1992, pp. 15-22.

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In addition to major articles and research papers, *Africa Quarterly* also publishes short articles in the section titled News & Events. They may not exceed 2,000 words in length. Contributions of short stories and poems are also welcome.

Contributors to *Africa Quarterly* are entitled to two copies of the issue in which their article appears in addition to a modest honorarium. Contributors of major articles accepted for publication will receive up to a maximum of ₹4,000.

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