

# India in Africa

## India Enhances Ties across Africa

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Indian President Ram Nath Kovind travelled to energy-rich Equatorial Guinea, Swaziland and copper-rich Zambia from 07-13 April, 2018, as part of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA's) Government's efforts to refashion and consolidate ties with Africa as it looks to counter strategic rival China's growing influence in the continent.

This is Kovind's third trip abroad since taking office in July and also his third visit to Africa. In October 2017, Kovind travelled to Djibouti and Ethiopia and in March 2018, he visited Mauritius and Madagascar.

"It is not by coincidence that all three visits have been to Africa. This reflects the importance in Indian foreign policy given to Africa by this Government and the country. It also reflects President Kovind's personal commitment to that relationship and the countries of Africa", said Ashok Malik, Press Secretary to Kovind.

The outcomes of Kovind's visits included a US\$100mn line of credit for defence procurement by Mauritius and greater cooperation in the marine resource management and marine connectivity in Madagascar.

In Equatorial Guinea – where Kovind's arrival marked the first-ever visit by an Indian Head of State – India announced its decision to open an independent diplomatic mission in the capital of Malabo.

The announcement came on the heels of a Government statement to the effect that 18 new embassies will be opened in Africa, increasing the number of resident Indian missions from 29 to 47.

In yet another first, India will be constructing convention centres across 21 African countries, beginning with Niger in Western Africa. The goal here is to enable Niger to host the African Union Summit in 2019.

Convention centres will also be set up on priority basis in eight other African nations – Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, Burkina Faso, Togo, Gabon, and Liberia – and on a more phased basis in the remaining 12 countries. This is the first time that India has expanded cooperation with Africa in the realms of this kind of infrastructure.

In the past, India helped to build the Presidential Palace and the Parliament in Ghana. Today, it is currently



helping to construct the Parliament building in Swaziland, in the aftermath of Kovind's April 2018 visit.

Besides, Indian investment in Africa is also being ramped up, with over 140 Indian enterprises (from Wipro to Mahindra and Mahindra) investing over US\$4bn in South Africa alone.

Sub-Saharan African countries have also reached out to India to undertake rural electrification – from financing and technology transfer, to detailed project reports and execution. This comes on the heels of the recent announcement that, as of April 28, 2018 electricity had finally reached all of India's 597,464 villages – one step closer to universal household electrification.

That India is diversifying the ways in which it can enhance economic cooperation – and promote its diplomatic profile – in Africa is significant.

Recent figures are impressive: India has extended 152 lines of credit to the tune of almost US\$8bn to 44 African countries, for developing agriculture, infrastructure, clean energy and manufacturing.

Vice President of India Venkaiah Naidu is scheduled to visit Botswana, Malawi, and Equatorial Guinea in October. Moreover, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit Egypt sometime later this year.

This kind of attention is long overdue. While India might not have the financial clout of its larger neighbour, these steps are welcome ones, in that they allow for a greater strategic and economic flexibility in bilateral ties. How New Delhi chooses to capitalise on this is a question which only time can answer.

*With so much potential on the continent, India has no desire to be left out of the African picture*

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## Rwanda-India BEAs Signed

Over ten Indian and Rwandan companies have finally signed Business Engagement Agreements (BEAs) for the first year of India-Rwanda Innovation Growth programme focussing on agriculture, IT, health, leather and energy.

This occasioned during a Business Acceleration and Capacity Building Workshop in Kigali. The Workshop brought together delegates from India to have first-hand interactions with their respective Rwandan partners under the guidance of experts from both India and Rwanda as well as senior level delegates from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Rwanda Development Board and other key institutions.

(<http://www.newtimes.co.rw>, 12.06.18)

## Bawumia Courts Indian Investors

The Vice President of Ghana, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia has called on investors, particularly those from India to take advantage of Ghana's increasing business-friendly environment to set up businesses in the country.

He said the Ghanaian government was willing to engage with investors who had genuine proposal and gave assurance of its commitment to provide adequate protection and market for their investments.

He made the call when a 16-member business delegation from India led by Ghana's High Commissioner to India, Michael A N N Oquaye called on him at the Jubilee House in Accra.

(<https://www.myjoyonline.com>, 06.05.18)

## Indian Doctor Sought in Kenya

Due to inadequate number of medical specialists County Government of Nairobi plans to import 10 doctors from India to help in health services delivery. County Health Executive Hitan Majejvia stated that City Hall had initiated talks with the Indian Government to import medical experts.

He indicated that both parties had reached an agreement but it was yet to be signed. "The Indian Government

## India-Zambia True Development Partners

President of India, Ram Nath Kovind's visit on April 10, 2018 in Zambia warmly welcomed the highlights the cordial bilateral relations that the two countries have enjoyed for many years. Zambians and Indians have peacefully co-existed in various spheres working together as a community since Zambia's independence in 1964.

India's huge, valuable role and contribution towards Zambia's socio-economic progress is evident in all sectors. Indian community members own different businesses throughout the country, including in central business districts of their cities and towns, shows that they are true partners in development. (<https://www.daily-mail.co.zm>, 11.04.18)



has already agreed to the deal although verbally. Once it is put down on paper, it will greatly and positively impact health services in Nairobi", mentioned Majejvia.

(<https://www.standardmedia.co.ke>, 25.05.18)

## India-Eritrea Sign MoU

India aiming to facilitate a structured dialogue for strengthening bilateral corporation among India and Eritrea will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Foreign Office Consultations. India and Eritrea enjoy warm and cordial relations in political, commercial, education and other areas.

Over the years, India has provided Eritrea with capacity building assistance in several fields, such as legislative drafting and technical scholarships (agriculture, education, health and food aid) said the Ministry of External Affairs. Secretary (ER) T S Tirumurti from India and Ambassador of Eritrea, Alem Tsehaye Woldemariam will sign the MoU in the national capital.

(<http://www.uniindia.com>, 19.04.18)

## Zambia gets US\$289mn

Zambian President Edgar Lungu and visiting President of India Kovind launched works to decongest Lusaka roads at a cost of US\$289mn. President Lungu said the people of Zambia did not misplace their

confidence in the Patriotic Front (PF) as it has proven hard work.

The Head of State said that the PF Government has shown commitment towards decongesting Lusaka through other road projects, such as the L400.

Zambia is positioning itself well to become a transport hub for the Southern African Development Community region, especially through the expansion of roads and creation of ring roads.

(<https://www.lusakatimes.com>, 12.04.18)

## India, Zambia Ink Agreements

India and Zambia signed four agreements after the delegation-level talks held in the capital city of Lusaka in Zambia, which is known for being one of the oldest democracies, with an uninterrupted and peaceful transition of power.

The four agreements are signed in the areas of avoidance of double taxation; visa exemption on diplomatic and official passports; judicial cooperation, which seeks collaboration in training and expedition of judicial matters affecting the two countries and their citizens; and for the establishment of an Entrepreneurship Development Institute in Zambia.

(<https://www.business-standard.com>, 11.04.18)