

# India and South Africa relations

February 7, 2019

## Manifest Pedagogy

India's relations with Africa is generally neglected by students as the focus of many books and newspapers is mostly on the great powers. Africa as continent has been focused in many times by UPSC as it believes that in focusing on marginal on tangential things more. In this context South Africa as a country is relevant more importantly it was the guest for our our Republic Day.

## **In news**

India and South Africa signed the strategic partnership

## **Placing it in the syllabus**

Bilateral relations of India

## **Static dimensions**

India-South Africa relations since Independence

## **Current dimensions**

India-South Africa Strategic partnership

## **Content**

### **History of relations**

- India's relations with South Africa go back centuries and have a powerful emotional component. It is here that Mahatma Gandhi began his political career, and over the

decades of the 20th century, India stood solidly behind the ANC's struggle against apartheid.

- India was at the forefront of the international community in its support to the anti-apartheid movement; it was the first country to sever trade relations with the apartheid Government (in 1946) and subsequently imposed a complete – diplomatic, commercial, cultural and sports – embargo on South Africa. For history of apartheid refer to article on Gandhi- Marx- Mandela.
- India worked consistently to put the issue of apartheid on the agenda of the UN, NAM, and other multilateral organizations and for the imposition of comprehensive international sanctions against South Africa.
- The ANC maintained a representative office in New Delhi from the 1960s onwards.
- India actively worked for the AFRICA Fund to help sustain the struggle through support to the frontline states.
- India's relations with South Africa were restored after a gap of over four decades with the opening of a Cultural Centre in Johannesburg in May 1993. Diplomatic and consular relations with South Africa were restored in November 1993 during the visit of the then South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha to India. A Consulate General was thereafter established in Johannesburg.
- The Indian High Commission in Pretoria was opened in May 1994, followed by the opening of the Consulate General in Durban the same month. Since Parliament in South Africa meets in Cape Town, a permanent office of the High Commission was opened there in 1996, which has been re-designated as Consulate General of India with effect from January 2011. In addition to its High Commission in Delhi, South Africa has a Consulate General in Mumbai.
- **The Strategic Partnership between India and South Africa called the Red Fort Declaration** was signed in March 1997 by the then South African President Nelson Mandela and former PM H.D. Deve Gowda.

## Relation under new government

### Political relations

- The year 2017 marks the 20 years of signing of the Red Fort Declaration for Strategic Partnership between India and South Africa.
- The Declaration was signed in March 1997 by the Prime Minister of India Shri Deva Gowda and President of South Africa Nelson Mandela in New Delhi.
- To commemorate the **20th Anniversary of the signing of the Red Fort Declaration of Strategic Partnership between India and South Africa** an India-South Africa Cultural Extravaganza comprising of a music and dance show, a curtain raiser event was organized by High Commission of India, Pretoria in Pretoria on April 9, 2017.

### IBSA & BRICS Initiative

- 16 Sectoral Working Groups have been established in areas such as health, agriculture, education, human settlements, S&T and defence.
- More recently, the 8th Trilateral Commission Meeting was held in Durban on 17 October 2017. Minister of State for External Affairs General (Dr.) V.K. Singh (Retd) attended the meeting.

### Commercial & Economic Relations

- Commercial relations have flourished since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1993.
- There is substantial potential for trade growth between the two countries. Exports from India to South Africa include vehicles and components thereof, transport equipment, drugs and pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, footwear, dyes and intermediates, chemicals, textiles, rice, gems and jewellery, etc. Import from South Africa to India include gold, steam coal, copper ores &

concentrates, phosphoric acid, manganese ore, aluminum ingots & other minerals.

## **Cultural Relations**

- A Festival of India in South Africa was jointly organized by High Commission in Pretoria and Department of Arts and Culture of South Africa during July-August 2014 commemorating 20 years of our diplomatic relations and also 100 years of Gandhiji's return to India from South Africa.
- With the help of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), an intensive programme of cultural exchanges is organised throughout South Africa including scholarships for South African nationals. In addition to such cultural programming, a 'Shared Histories' Festival organized as a public-private partnership is also held, which held its 10th edition in 2016.
- The Department of Arts and Culture sent cultural troupe to India to participate in the International Dance and Music Festival held January 2016.
- International Yoga Day is celebrated on 21 June by the Mission/Posts in collaboration/association with local organisations in cities across South Africa. The 3rd International Day of Yoga (IDY) was celebrated across South Africa in various cities from 14 June to 25 June 2017 by the Mission and three Consulates in collaboration/assistance with local associations and organisations.
- Yoga performance was organised on board INS Tarkash by the crew in Cape Town on 21 June 2017.

## **Visit of South African president recently and important agreements signed including strategic partnership**

- PM Narendra Modi and President Ramaphosa discussed a wide range of issues about cooperation in defense and security, Trade and investment, Skill development, S&T,

Education, and technical cooperation and multilateral forums.

- President Ramaphosa is the second President of South Africa after President Nelson Mandela to be the Chief Guest at the Republic Day.
- During the visit delegation level talks were held between the Prime Minister of India and President of South Africa. The delegation level talks highlighted enhanced engagement with South Africa and the African Continent.
- It was also mentioned that India and South Africa have agreed to take the relationship to a newer level.
- During the visit, South African President said, "India is a strategic partner for South Africa. South Africa attaches the highest importance to its relations with India and considerable scope exists to deepen bilateral relations at an economic level."
- The 3-Year Strategic Programme of Cooperation:
- South Africa and India 2019-2022, a comprehensive document was signed during the visit. This document is an outline of a roadmap for cooperation between both the countries.
- The strategic programme will facilitate expansion of ties in several key areas such as defence, maritime security and trade and investment.
- The 'strategic programme of cooperation' is aimed at deepening the bilateral engagement and ensuring that a "result-oriented" partnership benefits people of both the countries.
- The two leaders emphasised on concerted global action to deal with terrorism and called for adoption of the UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism as well as the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a balanced and integrated manner.
- President Ramaphosa delivered the Gandhi-Mandela Freedom Lecture organized by Indian Council of World Affairs under IBSA framework as a part of the celebrations of

the 15th Anniversary of IBSA.

- In their talks, the two sides also agreed to conclude an agreement on simplification of visa requirements and expressed intent to explore avenues to resume direct air connectivity between South Africa and India.
- The two leaders reiterated their commitment to working together on strengthening cooperation to address fugitive economic offenders, including through international organisations and institutions such as G20, Financial Action Task Force and others.
- Both sides also emphasised on the need for keeping the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean secure against illegal actors, holding that it was key to ensure prosperity of the region.
- During the visit The South African president listed agro-processing, defence procurement and mining equipment and technology as the future areas of cooperation and said the two countries wanted to work together in these sectors.
- **Both the leaders underlined the need for jointly working towards reform in the global governance architecture such as WTO, international financial systems etc. in order to promote inclusive growth.**
- The two sides also agreed to enhance cooperation in the field of the ocean economy.

### **Indian diaspora in South Africa**

- The major part of the Indian origin community came to South Africa from 1860 onwards as farm labour to serve as field hands and mill operatives in the sugar and other agricultural plantations of Natal (which was then a British colony). Most of these initial migrants were from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh with some from eastern UP and Bihar.
- A second wave of Indians came after 1880. These were the “passenger Indians” – so-called because they paid their

fares as passengers on board a steamship bound for South Africa. This was the community of traders who mainly hailed from Gujarat.

- The South African Indian origin community numbers around 1.5 million and constitutes about 3% of South Africa's total population. About 80% of the Indian community lives in the province of KwaZulu Natal, about 15% in the Gauteng (previously Transvaal) area and the remaining 5% in Cape Town.
- South Africans of Indian origin are well-represented in Government, business, media, legal and other professions. The year 2010 marked the 150th anniversary of the first arrival of Indians in South Africa. 2014 marked 100 years of Gandhi ji's final departure to India from South Africa; he reached India on 9th Jan 1915; this date is now commemorated annually as Pravasi Bhartiya Divas.