

International Seminar
on
India and Africa – An Emerging Partnership
March 4 – 5, 2010, New Delhi

Venue – Nehru Memorial Museum & Library – Teen Murti House

Report

International Seminar on “India and Africa: An Emerging Partnership” was organized by Society of Indian Ocean Studies (SIOS) in collaboration with Teen Murti Bhavan and African Studies Association of India (ASA India) on 4-5 March 2010. The seminar aimed at charting out India’s new paths of growth and partnerships with South and East Africa – countries abutting on the Western Indian Ocean.

The world economic meltdown has affected Africa as much as many of the developed countries. South Africa and many countries on the east coast of Africa had shown robust economic growth of about 6 percent. However, declining foreign exports and foreign investments have had a deleterious effect. These countries have also to withstand the effect of climate change which has a serious impact on agricultural growth, health, etc. As compared to the developed West, Asian countries especially China and India have withstood the effects of the worldwide recession much better. In this situation, greater south – south co-operation is the need of the hour.

India has had historic relations with African countries specially Ethiopia, and the countries on the Horn (Somalia, Ethiopia) and the east coast. India attaches great importance to Africa, not only for historic reasons, but also for its potential for growth. Unlike some of the former colonial powers which were more interested in extractive industries, India emphasizes capacity building, strengthening indigenous entrepreneurship, and local institutions with which India has rich experience. There is rapid growth of urbanization in Africa, with 30 percent people living in towns. This is expected to grow to 50 percent by 2020, and will need growing demand for energy including new sources. In this field also, India has rich experience.

The international seminar indeed addressed several vital issues concerning India’s partnerships with South and East Africa: business prospects and challenges, role of Indian settlers in Africa, Pan African communication linkages, health care development, energy security, non-traditional dimensions of threat perception, interface between technology and national security, international cooperation, and India’s role in Africa. The conference was graced with the presence of academicians, industry experts as well as diplomats from both India and Africa.

Ambassador Shashank, who happens to be the former Foreign Secretary of Government of India as well as the current Chairman of the ASA India, spoke about the historical bonding which exists between India and Africa, and highlighted several governmental initiatives so far undertaken for carrying forward the India-Africa partnership. Shashank in greater detail informed the gathering about the constant academic pursuit that the ASA is meaningfully engaged in terms of scholarly publications towards understanding the emerging nuances of African Affairs and India-Africa linkages.

Prof. Ajay Dubey, Director of Area Studies on Africa/ School of International Studies (SIS)/ Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), discussed the historicity, struggle, contribution and challenges of the Indian Diaspora in Africa, which constitutes eight percent of global Indian Diaspora. He also spoke about their place in the overall Indian Diaspora policy. According to Prof. Dubey, Indian Diaspora is spread across all regions of Africa – Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone, Arab Africa and Oceania. People of Indian Origin (PIO) went from different parts of India – Gujarat, Southern India, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. They migrated in different capacities – as free passengers, traders, indentured workers, construction workers, professionals and businessmen. But bulk of them were indentured and construction workers who went during colonial period. They played an important role and made significant contributions in all walks of life in their home. What is more crucial, explained Prof. Dubey, is the significant role played by the Indian Diaspora in concretizing and augmenting the India-Africa partnership that has gained momentum under the impact of globalization.

PROGRAMME

Day 1: Thursday, 4th March 2010 - Auditorium, Teen Murti House

Registration - (0900 - 1000) - Tea

Session 1 - **India –Africa Partnership**
(1000 – 1300)

Welcome Address - Shri T.N. Chaturvedi, Chairman, SIOS

Address - H.E. Mr. S.K. Walubita, High Commissioner, Zambia

Inaugural Address - Mr. Shashank, Chairman, African Studies Association of India

- **“Business Development & Partnership”**

Chair – V. Adm. Mihir Roy

Speakers:

- Mr. V. K. Jain – Executive Director Exports, RITES
- Mr. Jehangir Engineer – Asstt. Economic Advisor, Tatas
- Dr. Ahuja - ONGC Videsh Ltd.

- Mr. S.A. Bhardwaj, Director (Technical), NPCIL – Namibia Project Uranium

- Dr. Aparajita Biswas, University of Mumbai – Trade & Investment, Opportunities

- Mr. J.S. Chhabra, Exec. Director (Tech), TCIL

(1300-1415) - Lunch

Session 2: - **“Culture, Indian Settlers, Education, Health, Agriculture”**
(1415-1600)

Chair – Prof. K.R. Singh

Speakers:

- Prof. Ajay Dubey, JNU – Role of Settlers
- Dr. R.K. Srivastava, DG, Health Services
- Mr. V.C. Sharma, CMD, HSCC – Health Care Development

- Dr. S. Uttam Kumar, University of Madras - Convergence of Security Issues.

Day 2: Friday, 5th March 2010 - Seminar Room, Teen Murti House

(0930-1000) - Tea

Session 3: - **“Historic Relations with Horn & East Africa”**
(1000-1230)

Chair – Prof. S. Bhattacharya, Chairman, ICHR

Speakers:

- Dr. Suresh Kumar – Sidis and Habshis of the Horn of Africa and Ethiopia – Delhi University
- Prof. V. S. Sheth – Trade & Development – Tanzania & Kenya
- Dr. Bijay Pratihari, Jamia Millia –Mauritius and Mozambique
- Dr. N. Chandra Mohan – Economic Aspects – South Africa
- Dr. Kamini Krishna – India-Africa Partnership.

(1230 – 1345) - Lunch

Session 4: - **“Technology Impact on National Security”**
(1345-1530)

Chair – Hon’ble Shri Prithviraj Chavan, MoS, Science & Technology

Speakers:

- V. Adm. Raman Puri – Technology, Impact on National Security
- Dr. K. Santhanam – Technology Impact on Energy Security
- Dr. G. Balachandran (NMF) – Technology and International Cooperation.
- Dr. Ruchita Beri, IDSA, IBSA - Opportunities And Challenges
- Prof. P.V. Rao, Osmania University – Non-traditional Threats & India’s Role.

Valedictory address
(1545)

- Hon’ble Dr. Shashi Tharoor – Minister of State External Affairs.

Vote of Thanks

- Vice Admiral Mihir Roy, SIOS

Concept Note

The world economic meltdown has affected Africa as much as many of the developed countries. South Africa and many countries on the east coast of Africa had shown robust economic growth of about 6%. However, declining foreign exports and foreign investments have had a deleterious effect. These countries have also to withstand the effect of climate change which has a serious impact on agricultural growth, health, etc.,. As compared to the developed West, Asian countries especially China and India have withstood the effects of the worldwide recession much better. In this situation, greater south – south co-operation is the need of the hour.

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In order to chart out new paths of growth and partnerships with South and East Africa – countries abutting on the Western Indian Ocean, the Society for Indian Ocean Studies is planning the above seminar in association with Nehru Memorial Museum & Library and the African Studies Association of India (ASA) located in Jawaharlal Nehru University.