

India's engagement with Africa



Why in news?

- Ahead of BRICS leaders' summit in South Africa, Indian PM made visits to Rwanda and Uganda.
- This is a reflection of the intensity and significance of India's engagement with Africa.

What is the significance?

- Rwanda is one of the Africa's fastest growing economies.
- After the end of its civil war, it is moving steadily on the path of recovery and national reconciliation.
- Rwanda's President Paul Kagame is chair of the African Union (an intergovernmental organization of African states).
- About 3,000 Indian nationals and PIOs live in Rwanda.
- Rwanda's only sugar refinery, only modern textile mill, and a soap and cosmetic factory are all PIO-owned.
- India-Rwanda bilateral relations have been cordial and have grown steadily over the years.
- In 1999, Rwanda officially opened its mission in New Delhi and posted a charge d'affaires.
- In 2001, it appointed its first resident ambassador in New Delhi.
- India has taken a decision to open a diplomatic mission in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda.
- Uganda – In Uganda, India established its diplomatic presence in 1965.
- But the ties dates back to the era when trade began across the Indian Ocean.
- Eventually a number of Indians settled in East Africa, and many made Uganda their home.
- There are over 30,000 Indians/PIOs in the country.
- Uganda is currently chair of the East African Community.
- India – Africa – The visit of more than 40 leaders for the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit in 2015 was a significant event in this regard.
- The present visit to African countries takes forward India's engagement with Africa.

What are the outcomes of the visit?

- India signed two loan agreements with Rwanda worth \$ 100 million each.
- It contributes for investments in agriculture and development of special economic zones.
- With both Rwanda and Uganda, India signed defense cooperation agreements.

What role does China play?

- Chinese President Xi Jinping is also making visits to some of the African States, including Rwanda.
- China gave a loan of \$126 million to build two roads.
- China began its outreach to Africa earlier than India.
- The first ministerial meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was held early in 2000.
- Africa, in many ways, has been a learning ground for China's international role.
- China first took a proactive position on an internationally significant Sudan conflict
- It was in Mali that China sent its first combatant unit under the UN peacekeeping framework in 2013
- Djibouti will be the first location of the People's Liberation Army's overseas base
- China's role in the African continent is thus noteworthy as it showcases the future of Chinese power