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Q9

"If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's." In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · GS II · 10 marks · India and its Neighbourhood

India and its neighborhood - relations.

Core demand of the question

- "If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's." In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years
- Honour the official stem. Use **IAFS** and Lines of Credit as anchors
- Keep the explanation within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Africa's demography and resources make it a plausible next continental growth story after Asia.

India's recent influence runs through **IAFS** diplomacy, **EXIM Lines of Credit**, **ITEC**, pharma and peacekeeping.

LoCs build visible assets but often disburse slowly.

China still leads on infrastructure scale; Indian firms add a private layer in pharma, auto and telecom.

Faster credit, local jobs and a digital-maritime offer would deepen influence without copying BRI.

Introduction

Africa's demographic and resource weight is the next long growth story after East and South Asia. India's influence there has grown through the India-Africa Forum Summit, concessional Lines of Credit, peacekeeping, and medicines - a partnership pitch against a much larger Chinese balance sheet.

Body**The light of the statement**

- Asia's decades were manufacturing, infrastructure and poverty reduction at continental scale; Africa is now the young labour and urbanising market that investors expect to repeat parts of that arc.
- Influence in that story will belong to partners who bring credit, skills, digital public goods and political respect, not only extraction.

India's recent instruments

- India-Africa Forum Summits created a regular political frame, with invitations that signalled continent-wide, not only Anglophone, diplomacy.
- EXIM Bank Lines of Credit have financed railways, power, irrigation and parliament buildings in partner States, which is influence you can photograph, though disbursement has often lagged announcements.
- **ITEC** training, scholarships, tele-medicine, and vaccine and pharma supply (including COVID-era outreach) build human-capital ties cheaper than mega ports.
- Indian peacekeepers and a long anti-colonial political memory still distinguish New Delhi from purely commercial players in several African debates.

Extent and the China comparison

- China's Belt and Road volumes, commodities-for-infrastructure deals, and diplomatic density still outweigh India in many capitals; influence is real but second-tier on hard infrastructure.
- Private Indian firms in telecom, pharma, automobiles and mining add a non-state layer that summits do not fully own.
- **Recommendation:** faster LoC disbursement, more local-job conditions, and a maritime-digital offer from the western Indian Ocean would match Africa's next decades better than a speech surplus.

Flow diagram

Africa growth story -> India influence
India Africa Forum Summit -> India influence
EXIM Lines of Credit -> India influence
ITEC pharma peacekeeping -> India influence
China BRI scale -> Africa growth story

Conclusion

If Africa is the next growth story, India's influence has risen through **IAFS**, Lines of Credit, training and health, which is a distinct partnership brand. It remains smaller than China's infrastructure footprint. Influence will hold only if credit actually arrives and African agency stays at the centre of the pitch.

Facts & figures

India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)

Periodic leaders' summit that frames India's continent-wide Africa policy.

EXIM Lines of Credit

Concessional credit for African public projects in power, rail, water and buildings.

ITEC

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation; training slots that create alumni networks in African administrations.

UN peacekeeping

Long Indian troop and police presence in several African missions, a political asset beyond trade.

Belt and Road in Africa

China's larger infrastructure-and-credit presence against which India's partnership is compared.

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