

BONDING WITH AFRICA, IN PARTNERSHIP

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: BRICS

Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Forum On China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing on September 4. | Photo Credit: [LINTAO ZHANG](#)

Chinese President Xi Jinping grabbed headlines last month after announcing a hefty \$60 billion package for Africa. African leaders have been naturally ecstatic after Mr. Xi's announcement in Beijing at the inaugural of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). At the FOCAC, a triennial assemblage of African and Chinese leaders, the 50-plus African leaders and their Chinese hosts charted big plans to build roads, power plants, and railways and much more in Africa.

Mr. Xi's mega announcement should trigger celebrations not only in Africa, but also among heads of the emerging economies, especially those of other nations in the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) grouping. That is, if they reject the media-hyped argument that China, eyeing Africa's natural resources, is seeking to ensnare the continent into another round of political serfdom through carefully laden "debt traps". In this narrative, the Chinese Goliath, inching towards global domination, must be stopped in its tracks, before it is too late.

Like China, India also hosts its own triennial conclave with African leaders, which was last held in 2015. Though headline numbers show that in dollar throughput, it is distant from China, India's contribution to Africa's development is nonetheless significant.

If China and India are serious about the rise of Africa, the key is to co-link their development strategies on a continental scale. The good news is that both countries seem to have done some spadework, in finding an imaginative coordinating mechanism that could benefit them, as well as Africa.

Ahead of the BRICS summit in Johannesburg in July, when Mr. Xi and Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Rwanda almost at the same time, Chinese Foreign Ministry put out the message that New Delhi and Beijing should vigorously pursue the 'China-India Plus One' or 'China-India Plus X' model in engaging with Africa.

The mandarins in Beijing were referring to the mechanism yielded by the Wuhan informal summit in April between Mr. Xi and Mr. Modi, where it was decided that China and India would coordinate their approaches for engaging a third country or set of countries in South Asia and beyond. The Chinese also described Beijing and New Delhi as "like-minded partners" in Africa.

Meanwhile Russia has already launched an initiative to bond with Africa. South Africa, the host of the recent BRICS summit and co-chair of FOCAC in Beijing, will always remain the natural gateway for a vibrant emerging economy engagement with Africa. But someone, preferably a post-Wuhan India, must pick up the threads and weave a potent emerging economy narrative for bonding with Africa, triggering a structural shift of global significance.

The writer is the China correspondent of The Hindu

Sign up to receive our newsletter in your inbox every day!

Please enter a valid email address.

Last week Ram Kadam, a BJP MLA from Maharashtra, told the men in an audience that if they were interested in women who didn't reciprocate the feeling,

Our existing notification subscribers need to choose this option to keep getting the alerts.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com