

India and SA forge ahead

Strengthening bilateral relations is beneficial to both countries and Prime Minister Modi's visit will enhance this



THE upcoming official visit to South Africa by Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India will serve to cement and strengthen the excellent bilateral relations which exist between South Africa and India.

South Africa and India share common values and objectives which were forged during the struggle against colonialism and for liberation and democracy in South Africa.

India played a leading role in isolating the apartheid regime, resulting in a shared history of friendship and solidarity.

India also provided consistent support to the liberation movement during South Africa's struggle for democracy and was at the forefront within multilateral forums such as the UN and the Non-Aligned Movement, in promoting international efforts towards South Africa's liberation.

The great Mahatma Gandhi's stay in South Africa not only had an impact on resistance to the apartheid regime but was also the beginning of the evolution of his own philosophy of Satyagraha and Ahimsa (pressure for social and political reform through passive resistance), which influenced the political path of India towards independence.

Gandhi's philosophy and teachings also impacted on the liberation struggle in South Africa and were an inspiration for millions of South Africans, as witnessed by the mobilisation during the 1952 defiance campaign.

Full diplomatic relations were established in November 1993.

In 1997, the first visit by a South African head of state to India took place when President Nelson Mandela laid the foundation of a strategic partnership between the two countries, with the signing of the Red Fort Declaration.

This visit was followed by several high level visits and President Jacob Zuma also recently attended the India-Africa Forum Summit, held in New Delhi in October last year. It was during this summit that he extended an invitation to Prime Minister Modi to pay an official visit to South Africa.

Prime Minister Modi's visit and engagements in South Africa will serve to further strengthen bilateral relations within the framework of South Africa's strategic partnership with India.

One of the key objectives of the visit will also be to enhance commercial and business relations with India and to promote private sector to private sector contact.

In this regard a chief executive officers' (CEOs) Forum and a South Africa-India Business Forum are planned to be held during the visit in order to facilitate business opportunities.

South Africa will also be exploring ways in which to increase and diversify our exports to India by identifying new areas of market



STRENGTH IN UNITY: South Africa's President Jacob Zuma shakes hands with India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi during their meeting at the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi on October 28, last year. PICTURE:AFP

access in areas including the defence sector, deep mining, renewable energy and the health sector. The business meetings will also serve to promote investment by Indian companies in South Africa through the identification of areas of investment and by investigating ways in which to simplify procedures for companies investing in South Africa.

Trade with India exceeded the R94bn mark last year, with South Africa exporting R41bn worth of goods and importing R53.7bn.

Although bilateral trade has increased steadily over the past few years, considerable scope exists to grow trade figures and this will be a major objective of the visit and the business forum meetings.

There are more than 100 Indian companies that have invested in South Africa, including Tata (vehicles and hotels), Mahindra (vehicles), Sahara Computers (ICT), Cipla (pharmaceuticals) and the Bank of India.

Some major South African companies have also invested in India, including Sasol, FirstRand, Old Mutual, Acsa, Shoprite, South African Breweries and Nandos.

South Africa also benefits from training and scholarship opportunities provided by the Indian government in terms of the Indian technical and economic cooperation programme, as well as by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations.

Given the legacy of apartheid and skills requirements that exist in specific fields, especially in the technical professions and in the areas of medicine and mathematics,

KEY POINTS

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there are specific areas of skills development and training opportunities in India from which South Africa can benefit. It is of course important that our skills requirements are aligned to the skills training on offer.

South Africa and India enjoy a strong partnership in the field of science and technology and 2016 is the 20th year celebration of collaboration in this field.

This has been a very fruitful collaboration. Relations in this field were formalised through the signing of a bilateral agreement

on scientific and technology cooperation in July 1995 and the bilateral agreement is implemented through a programme of cooperation, which is renewed every three years.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) in the area of grassroot innovations is also close to finalisation and will lead to joint technology development and transfer for societal benefit.

This MoU will promote innovation, inclusive of indigenous knowledge and entrepreneurship at the grass roots level in both the countries.

On the political front, the countries remain ever-friendly and many of the foreign policy objectives, which both countries share are pursued both bilaterally and multilaterally, especially through South-South initiatives.

South Africa and India are both committed to the India-Brazil-South Africa mechanism (Ibsa), the Indian Ocean Rim Association (Iora), the Basic group of countries with regard to climate change, the G-77 and China, the NAM and Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

A number of agreements and memoranda of understanding MoUs are close to being finalised between India and South Africa and will be concluded within the next few months.

These agreements and MoUs include cooperation in a variety of fields including ICT, sport, culture audiovisual co-production, tourism and renewable energy.

Maite Nkoana-Mashabane is Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

Ensuring excellence in education up to us all



AS WE were commemorating the bravery of June 1976 youth, one could not help, but muse over the words of Karl Marx that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness". This assertion rings true because it is the social existence of the young people of 1976 which determined their consciousness.

The kind of consciousness that led to the events of June 16, 1976 and the ultimate result, which was the political liberation of all the people of South Africa, including the liberation of those who were beneficiaries of that oppressive system which dehumanised African people.

The month of June is particularly important for the education sector because it was education and dissatisfaction in the manner in which it was presented to black people, which triggered the Soweto uprising.

The issue of education and bolstering the consciousness of young people is now much more relevant as we mark 40 years of the June 16, 1976 student revolt. The lingering and pertinent questions are just how conscientiousness are the youth today? Is education a central feature in contemporary South African society or better still, is education fashionable?

I find answers to these question particularly disturbing. The jaw dropping stories of communities including young people burning schools, university facilities and other community institutions in places like Vhuvani, are the disturbing features of our modern society. The same disturbing incidents of vandalism were witnessed in Soweto (Orlando East), where pupils set fire to classrooms over minor disagreements.

Even though these are isolated incidents, but they are too drastic and too dangerous for us to keep quiet. In KwaZulu-Natal, during Youth Month, we had an equally disturbing



DISTURBING SCENE: Authorities should act more decisively to ensure that the torching and vandalising of education and other public facilities are discouraged. PICTURE:GODFREYMANDIWA

incident where members of the community (including young people) torched some parts of Mvaba High School amid disagreement over the issue pertaining to the conduct or alleged misconduct levelled against the school principal.

As the government and as responsible communities, we need to act decisively to ensure that these kinds of acts are not only discouraged, but they are frowned upon. Such barbaric acts are an antithesis to what young people of 1976 (from whom there were martyrs) fought and died for.

These acts are an affront to the ideals and aspirations of our developmental state. We need to fight them – we need to stop them. John Dewey insisted that "education is not preparation for life, but it is life itself". This means that burning a school is tantamount to taking life. It is akin to murder, it is treasonous.

Given our recent performance in KwaZulu-Natal, we need a new kind of activism. We need education activists in all sectors of our society. Soon after my appointment, I met with the officials of the department where we

KEY POINTS

- » The issue of education and bolstering the conscientiousness of young people is now much more relevant as we commemorate 40 years of June 16, 1976
- » This then begs few pertinent questions
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all agreed that it is going to be all hands on deck in our collective pursuit for excellence in educating our children. I have also met with teacher unions (who are our very important stakeholder) and together with them we agreed that we are going to do all it takes to improve the performance and positive output of our education system.

We owe this to the sacrifices made by the generation of Anton Lembede, Hector Piet-

erson, Tsietsi Mashinini, Mbuyisa Makhubu, Solomon Mahlangu and many others for the kind of education that liberates.

When all is said and done, education is a societal responsibility – it is a duty of all for us to ensure that our education system works. General communities, school governing bodies, representative councils of pupils, business fraternity, civil society and even religious communities need to ensure that ours becomes the society that excels in education. We need to make our education work for us and our economic fortunes. Anomalies where school governing bodies become involved in the disruption of day to day schooling must be the thing of the past.

As the KwaZulu-Natal education department we are going to soldier on during the winter holidays and to be engaged through our winter school programme which includes boot camps and clustered school programme. Our Educators have sacrificed their holidays to ensure that our pupils are sharpened and are ready to excel. We thank our educators for this kind of sacrifice. This is the kind of sacrifice, selflessness and patriotism that our country requires.

During this winter programme, parents are going to be key. We ask all parents to release their children for this very important initiative and as far as possible assist pupils where they can. We owe this kind of collective effort to the class of 1976 and all those who fought and died for the freedom that we now enjoy.

It is our strong conviction that nothing can stop us – no matter the difficulties, we must pull out all stops to ensure that we succeed and excel against all odds.

To our pupils this is your time, make good and profitable use of it. To our matriculants, the class of 2016, we need to adopt the motto that says My Matric, My Life, My Future.

Let us all make education happen.

If we can together get this right, many of our social ills, including the infamous blesser phenomenon, drug abuse through pens down festival will automatically become the thing of the past.

Mthandeni Dlungwane is MEC for education in KwaZulu-Natal



THE NEW AGE

Online COMMENTS

LETTER online@tnameia.co.za

Vote for the future you want to see

THE youth of South Africa are well aware of what's happening around them, especially on the political surface. Most enjoy watching Parliament, some watch it for entertainment while some are concerned about the behaviour of our leaders and are wondering if our country is in good hands.

If they want to see change taking place, they must exercise it by doing the right thing and voting on August 3 so that they don't come back and complain when certain leaders are put into power and resort to unnecessary protests.

The population of South Africa are mainly young people, hence political parties when they campaign, their main focus is on the youth, with many promises given to them, which at the end, they don't deliver, making it hard for the young people to go put an X on the ballot paper because they see no use of voting while they are unemployed, living in poverty and experiencing everyday inequality.

The youth might be young people today, but let's bear in mind that in the future they will be the upcoming future leaders.

So I urge every young person to vote for the future they want to see and a better South Africa they want to live in, because the future belongs to them.

Living in a democratic country we have rights and as young people we must start exercising them, like the right to vote and freedom of speech. As young people it's our duty to be active and do the right thing. Bertolt Brecht once said: "The worst illiterate is the political illiterate. He hears nothing, sees nothing, takes no part in political life. He doesn't seem to know that the cost of living, the price of beans, of flour, of rent, of medicines, all depend on political decisions."

"He even prides himself on his political ignorance, sticks out his chest and says he hates politics. He even doesn't know, the imbecile, that from his political non-participation comes the prostitute, the abandoned child and the robber and, worst of all, corrupt officials, the lackeys of exploitative multinational corporations."

So the youth of South Africa must stop being naive by not taking part in politics.

They must go in numbers to vote in the next local elections.

Lebogang Pule Daveyton

TWEETS @The_New_Age

#Zuma behaves like a blesser with taxpayers money: #Maimane #Job-sNotJets

Johann Brits @Johanbrits840: The ANC government is as corrupt as Zanu-PF, but with this election there's trouble heading the ANC's way!

Thapelo @AmAncfied: That R4bn is an exaggerated amount as no confirmations has been made but if it's worth it let it be bought Patrick

@PatPhaahla: I also would like to hear what is it's (DA's) stance on racism, we had enough of Zuma bashing every day!

Patrick @PatPhaahla: It's sad of DA and manifesto to me it look like their energies are all directed at bashing Zuma and Hlaudi!

MusiQFanOpinion @MusiQWorks: He's (Maimane) is behaving like a spoilt brat, complaining about everything!

Thangiboni E Mtshali @thangiboni: Please, the jet is a must and it's not for Zuma, but even for the next president, DA want votes out if nothing.

26August?skhovarh™ @makhoba_76512: Maimane you are boring now you don't campaign and leave our president please!

Mantasha urges communities to remain loyal to ANC Anthony Magampa @MagampaAnthony: They must first be loyal to communities!