

# YOJANA SUMMARY

## EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

JANUARY 2024

## THE JAN VISHWAS (AMENDMENT OF PROVISIONS) ACT, 2023 CONCEPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

### Factors That Led To The Initiation Of The Jan Vishwas Act

- A systematic exercise across Central Ministries and States/UTs has been ongoing to reduce the compliance burden on businesses and citizens.
- Decriminalisation of minor offences is one of the crucial pillars to reducing compliance burden on businesses.
- Need was felt for a common amendment bill that could unify the decriminalisation efforts across diverse sectors and save time for the judiciary and the legislative department.
- This marked the inception of the Jan Vishwas Act.

### Foundational Principles Of This Legislation

- The overarching goal of the Jan Vishwas Act is:
  - simplifying legal processes,
  - reducing compliance burden, and fostering a more business-friendly environment.
- Its foundational principles prioritised a balanced legal framework that replaces minor criminal punishments with civil penalties or administrative actions for non-harmful offences.

### Major Challenges Faced

- Involvement of 19 Union Ministries for the Jan Vishwas Act, 2023, required regular and seamless inter-ministerial coordination.
  - Specific concerns of certain ministries were addressed through informal modes of communication when time was short to skip bureaucratic routes.
- Aligning diverse approaches proved challenging during the development of the Jan Vishwas Act.
- One of the significant challenges was reconciling varying perspectives and priorities across different ministries.
- India did not have exact legislative precedents in this regard. It was an untravelled drafting journey involving multiple subjects ranging from agriculture to transportation, finance, economics, intellectual property, environment, defence, and so on.

### Steps Taken To Overcome The Challenges

- A committee was formed, consisting of CEO NITI Aayog, the Department of Legal Affairs (DoLA), the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), and the respective ministries and departments.
- This committee played a crucial role in establishing principles that guided the decriminalisation process.
- The strategy also involved identifying serious contraventions for separate criminalisation, while minor provisions were earmarked for decriminalisation.
- This nuanced approach aimed to maintain deterrence for significant offences while streamlining and simplifying minor provisions.
  - For instance, the general provision under the Environment Protection Act (Section 15) prescribed punishment for all contraventions under the Act with imprisonment up to five years.
  - It has been amended under the Jan Vishwas Act, 2023 to be replaced with specified ranges of penalty according to the gravity of offences.
- **Inter-ministerial consultations** also played a vital role in the process, fostering communication and collaboration among the 19 ministries and various departments involved.

### Benefits

- The Jan Vishwas Bill had direct implications on ease of doing business and industries.
  - The enactment of this legislation is a landmark in the journey of rationalising laws, eliminating barriers, and bolstering growth of businesses.

- Consolidated amendments in various laws with a common objective will save time and cost for industries.
- The main objective of the Act is to **decriminalise minor offences that do not involve any harm** to the public interest or national security and replace them with civil penalties or administrative actions.
- Minor, technical, and procedural defaults no longer attract severe criminal consequences, **reducing the burden on the justice system** and putting adjudication of serious offences on the priority.
  - Implementation of the Jan Vishwas Act essentially means that majority cases originating from 183 provisions across 42 Acts would no longer be adjudged by the courts.
- **Suitable adjudication mechanisms were also introduced** in some of the legislatures, wherever applicable and feasible, for dealing with minor offences.
  - An adjudication mechanism is one whereby an administrative or quasi-judicial authority impose a monetary penalty.
- Further, **an appellate mechanism is also introduced** to provide a forum for any person to get their grievances addressed if they are not satisfied with the decision of the adjudicating officer.
  - By introducing administrative adjudication mechanisms along with appellate mechanisms, the Act reduces pressure on the justice system.
  - It helps in reducing case pendency, and facilitates a more efficient and effective justice dispensation.

### **TRUSTING CITIZENS DRICRIMNALISATION WAY**

#### **Jan Vishwas-Trusting The People**

- The bill is part of the Prime Minister's vision to implement various measures to trust the people, rather than the Government just securing people's trust.
- The bill was one of the series of programmes intended to ease the living and doing business in the country.
  - This includes encouraging self-attestation of documents, the creation of a national judicial data grid, the senior citizen's welfare fund, and other electronic portals, etc.
- A number of colonial enactments were either repealed or amended.
- In this context, the Jan Vishwas law is part of the endeavour to do away with criminal punishments and convert them to monetary penalties.
- This is the first time ever laws are amended in bulk to remove jail sentences and convert to monetary penalties as part of trust-based governance.
- The Government needs to trust its own people and institutions in democratic governance.
  - This consolidated amendment exercise aims at removing trust deficits between the government and the governed.
- The conversion of imprisonment to a monetary penalty eases the burden on both the litigants and criminal courts, enabling parties to settle minor violations and contraventions through administrative, adjudicatory, and appellate mechanisms.

#### **Periodical Revision of Fines and Penalties**

- The objective of the new law is to convert imprisonment for minor offences to a monetary penalty wherever possible and to rationalise the penalties depending on the gravity of the offences.
- Rationalisation of penalties also contemplates heavy monetary penalties for certain major offences, depending on the nature and gravity of contraventions.
- The novel idea was to incorporate provisions for **increasing ten per cent of the minimum fines and penalties every five years once the Act becomes operational**.

- This avoids amending the act again and again, facilitating a small increase in fines and penalties to match inflation and the devaluation of money.
- This also ensures fairness in awarding punishment depending on the gravity of the offence, based on the principle of proportionality.
- Removing imprisonment as a punishment for less serious offences would ease the burden on criminal courts.

#### Jan Vishwas Law - To Last For Ever

- Although the Jan Vishwas Act is an amending legislation, it cannot be repealed under any routine repealing and amending law for removing it from the statute book.
- It permanently converts certain imprisonments into monetary penalties, rationalises certain penal provisions, and provides for alternative resolution of contraventions.
- Even after the amendments become part of the parent Acts, this Act will remain in effect as long as the parent Act exists in the statute book.
  - This is because the penalties and fines are required to be reviewed every five years according to Section 3 of the Act.
- Probably, there could be more Jan Vishwas Acts in the future.

### **GOVERNMENT E-MARKETPLACE: LEADING THE DIGITAL WAVE**

- Set up in August 2016, Government e-Marketplace is a digital portal that facilitates end-to-end procurement of goods and services by various Central and State Government departments, organisations, and allied public sector undertakings (PSUs).
- It provides a paperless, cashless, and contactless ecosystem for government buyers to directly purchase products and services from pan- India sellers and service providers through a unified online infrastructure.

#### Need for a Digital Solution for Public Procurement

- Government procurement used to be opaque, time-consuming, cumbersome, and prone to corruption and cartelisation.
- Buyers were forced to purchase sub-standard goods at high, non- negotiable rates from unscrupulous suppliers.
- Potential sellers had to run from pillar to post, completely at the mercy of the facilitating agency, to get empanelled and then to get timely payments.
- In this context, there was a pressing need to a digital e-commerce portal that could facilitate the Ease of Doing Business **without any barriers to entry** and **establish a competitive marketplace to enable the procurement of quality goods** and services at reasonable rates.

#### Impact

- Through digitalisation of processes, GeM has led to higher process efficiencies, information sharing, improved transparency, reduced process cycle times, and a higher level of trust among bidders.
- This, in turn, has resulted in greater competition and higher savings.
- These innovations in GeM have also brought down waiting times and prices for buyers significantly, and ensured timely payments to sellers.
- It provides a **level playing field** to startups, MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, artisans, and craftsmen.
  - Now they are allowed to participate in government tenders without any barriers, thus ensuring the Ease of Doing Business with the government.

### Growth Trajectory

- In FY 22-23, GeM registered an 88% growth, surpassing a historic milestone of INR 2 lakh crore worth of GMV. In the current FY 23-24, GeM is aspiring to breach the 3 lakh crore GMV mark.
- GeM rapidly expanded its portfolio to include a vast array of service offerings as well.
- GeM is a category-driven e-marketplace that has a robust listing of more than 11,600 product categories and 300+ service categories.

### GeM - Benefits

- **GeM as a Facilitator:** The GeM portal connects buyers, sellers, and service providers on a unified platform.
- **Transformation through Cost Reduction and Efficiency**
- **Inclusive empowerment of sellers:** GeM empowers sellers of diverse backgrounds, including Women Entrepreneurs, Artisans, Self- Help Groups, Cooperatives, MSEs, and Startups.
- **Seamless registration process** - GeM's registration process prioritises ease, convenience, and minimal data entry.
- **Dynamic Goods and Services Platform:** GeM continuously updates its platform by adding new categories of goods and services based on the feedback received from various stakeholders.
- **Diverse buying modes:** GeM facilitates procurement through various modes, including direct purchase, L1 procurement, bidding, etc.
- **Contract Management:** GeM auto-generates a contract between buyers and sellers on the basis of specified technical parameters and the details chosen by the buyer, such as delivery period and delivery terms.
- **Cashless payments and timely transactions**
- **Information Visibility:** GeM ensures visibility for MSEs, local sellers, and startups, allowing sellers to indicate the percentage of domestic content of the goods uploaded on the portal, aligning with the 'Make in India' initiative.
- **Trust-based Rating System:** GeM provides a rating system that continuously evaluates performance based on weighted and defined parameters.
- **Establishing Price Reasonability:** GeM provides buyers with multiple tools to help them ascertain price reasonability.
- **Responsive Contact Centre:** GeM's well- equipped contact centre, accessible in multiple languages, addresses user queries across various communication channels. The integrated chatbot, Ask Gemmy, route user concerns to the appropriate team.
- **Dispute resolution features:** GeM introduced the Vivad se Vishwas-II (Contractual Dispute) functionality, a valuable feature for resolving disputes between buyers and sellers.
- **AI-ML-Based Decision Support:** GeM is in the process of implementing AI/ML-based advanced analytics on GeM, which will help GeM reduce anomalies and frauds.
- **GeM Sahay:** GeM has rolled out GeM Sahay, a mobile application that provides frictionless financing for MSEs and startups, allowing them to obtain a loan at the point of order acceptance on the GeM platform.

### Roadmap for the Future

- GeM's strategic focus is on expanding its reach by integrating government buyers across all tiers into its robust e-procurement infrastructure.
- The upgraded platform intends to use advanced Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning technologies to identify potential frauds, provide improved data analytics to forecast more accurate projections, and improve supply chain management.

- To be more future-ready, GeM is also looking at utilising the augmented and virtual reality to enable its buyers to have a more immersive procurement experience.
- GeM is also expanding its catalogue of 'Green' products and services to help the country achieve its net zero carbon emissions commitment.

### Conclusion

- In a short span, GeM's buyer-seller ecosystem and its operations are twice as large as Amazon India and Flipkart combined.
- GeM has successfully established an infrastructure that not only captures data and facilitates end-to-end activities of public procurement processes but also allows government buyers to source from multiple vendors at competitive rates.

## **EASE OF FILMING IN INDIA**

The Ease of Filming in India is an exercise to provide a supportive and friendly ecosystem to filmmakers to shoot and complete their projects.

### Steps Taken By GoI To Promote Ease Of Filming In India

#### • Establishment of Film Facilitation Office (FFO)

- To promote and facilitate film shootings by foreign filmmakers in India, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) set up a **Film Facilitation Office (FFO) in 2015.**

- It has been established under the aegis of the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), a Public Sector Undertaking in the Ministry.

- It assists them in obtaining requisite permissions from various agencies, disseminating information on shooting locales as well as the facilities available with the Indian film industry for production/post-production.



#### • Direct Facilitation By The State Govts

- In addition to the facilitation provided by the FFO, direct facilitation is also done by the State Governments, many of whom have their own independent portals and they entertain applications directly.
- Efforts are being made to integrate the portals of all States with the National Single Window System in the revamped portal of FFO for further Ease of Doing Business.

#### • National Ranking system

- A National Ranking system of the most film-friendly States in the country is brought out annually by the Ministry on basis of the ease of filming parameters in the States.

#### • Promoting Federalism and Working with State Governments

- With films made in more than 40 languages and the major film production centres are spread out in various States of the country.
- Hence, the govt of India is promoting the implementation of the ease of filming framework by bringing all State/UT governments on board.
  - Nodal officers have been appointed in all the State and Union Territories of the country.

- These officers are responsible for filming permissions and there is constant interaction between the FFO and the nodal officers.
- States are also encouraged to have official policies for film shoots and productions, including incentive schemes to attract filming projects.
- States participate in various international film festivals in India and abroad to promote their film locations and film policies.
  - India's participation in the **Cannes International Film Festival, France** in 2022 as the Country of Honour in Marche du Film was leveraged to promote Indian filming locations.
  - **Film Bazaar**, the film market component of the International Film Festival of India, Goa held during November 20-24 every year, is another opportunity for States to showcase their facilities, infrastructure, film locations, and incentive policies to the filmmakers.
- **Film Incentives**
  - The audio-visual sector in India has been listed under the '**Champion Services Sector**', an umbrella scheme of the Government to support sectoral initiatives.
  - Under this scheme, the Ministry has announced an incentive scheme for foreign filmmakers who wish to produce their films in India.
  - Under the plan, foreign film productions, whether live shoots, official collaborations, or post-production work like animation and visual effects services done in India, can receive a reimbursement of up to 40% of the eligible production expenses incurred in India, with a maximum limit of Rs 30 crore.
- **Promotion of Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) sector**
  - The Government of India set up a **Promotion Task Force** under the chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of I&B in April 2022 to suggest ways to promote the AVGC sector.
  - Based on their recommendations, the incentives' scheme has been liberalized for animation, visual effects, and post-production services undertaken in India by foreign productions.
    - An additional bonus of 5% of cost incurred in India would be provided for projects having **Significant Indian Content (SIC)**, as reimbursement.
- **FDI Through Automatic Route**
  - Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 100% has been enabled in the film and television projects through the automatic route.

#### Ease of Filming Regime Of A Country

The Ease of Filming regime in the country works through the following measures:

- Issuance of Film (F) Visa to foreign filmmakers for film shooting and recce;
- Appointment of Nodal Officers in Indian Missions abroad;
- Appointment of Nodal Officers in State/UT governments and Central Government Departments/agencies;
- Integration with the National Single Window System for facilitating permissions for film shooting;
- Facilitating entry of film equipment by foreign filmmakers into India
- Providing financial incentives to:
  - Foreign filmmakers shooting in India
  - Filmmakers officially co-producing films with an Indian partner
- FDI through automatic route

#### Benefits Of Promoting Ease Of Filming

- Film shooting has a **multiplier effect on the economy**.



- As per an industry study, a medium-large budget movie with box office collections of INR 80 cr could spur an 80% additional revenue from tourism, and generate tourism related employment of 37 times the size of the production crew.
- The ease of filming through a series of incentives and facilitation thus brings in more foreign projects into the country.
- This creates benefits such as:
  - **boost to the economy** in increased spending on goods and services such as hospitality and tourism;
  - **creation of local jobs** of various skill-sets involved in film making; promotion of tourism indirectly through featuring of tourist locations;
  - **cultural promotion** of local stories, talents;
  - promotion of Indian post-production services such as visual effects, sound designing, virtual reality, and
  - **furthering of soft power** of the country.

### **CABLE TELEVISION NETWORKS (REGULATION) ACT, 1995 DECRIMINALISED**

- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has notified amendments to the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994.
- The amendments provide the operational mechanism for the implementation of the decriminalised provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.
- Section 16 of the original act dealt with the **punishment for contraventions under any of its provisions.**
  - This section had provisions for imprisonment, which might extend up to 2 years in the case of the first instance and 5 years for every subsequent offence.
- Punishments specified under Section 16 were re-examined and decriminalised through the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provision) Act, 2023.
  - The imprisonment provisions have now been replaced with a monetary penalty and other non-monetary measures like advisory, warning, and censure.
- Currently, there are over 1400 multi-system operators registered with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- Decriminalisation of contraventions of provisions of the Act and replacement with civil penalties shall boost stakeholders' confidence and promote the ease of doing business.

### **GST AND EASE OF DOING BUSINESS**

- The Goods and Services Tax (GST) is the biggest indirect tax reform since independence to promote 'One Nation, One Tax, One Market.
- The GST has subsumed numerous Central and State levies such as Central Excise duty, Service tax, VAT, Purchase tax, etc.
- It has brought down the economic barriers and paved the way for an integrated economy at the national level.
- By **mitigating the cascading effect of taxes**, GST has improved the overall business environment and competitiveness in the markets with ease of doing business.

#### **GST: The Crucial Piece in India's Development strategy**

- ❖ Creating one Economic India
- ❖ Fillip to 'Make in India' initiative
- ❖ Unfettered flow of goods & services
- ❖ Increased economic activity to boost employment

#### **Performance of GST**

- In the last six and a half years, the GST tax base has almost doubled from 67.8 lakh to around 1.4 crore and **witnessed the highest GST revenue collection of Rs 1,87,035 crore in April 2023.**



- GST focuses on reducing compliance, ensuring the free flow of goods across states, harmonising laws, procedures, rates of tax, common definitions, and interfaces through the Goods and Service Tax Network (GSTN), resulting in efficiencies and synergies across the board.
- It has helped reduce compliance costs and alleviate the need for multiple records for different tax authorities, leading to a lesser deployment of resources and manpower by the tax payer.
- The stupendous success of GST could be attributed to automation and standardisation.
- Multiple grievance redressal forums are available for tax payers in every State and UTs consisting of members from both the Center and the corresponding State.

### Taxation System and Ease of Doing Business

- The taxation system of a country is one of the key criteria used to assess countries in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index.
- Due to myriad economic and tax reforms, **India steadily climbed up this index ladder from 142 in 2014 to 77 in 2018 and further to the 63rd position in 2019.**
  - The consulting firm Deloitte's recent survey shows the incrementally positive response of 70% business leaders to GST.

### Conclusion

- Despite initial hiccups while adopting the new tax structure, GST is widely regarded as a paradigm shift and an enabler for ease of doing business and improved supply-chain efficiency.
- The sincere efforts of the GST Council make it more equitable and effective, has made this reform a roaring success.

#### E-Way Bill

- It is a document required for the movement of goods, having details such as the name of the consignor, consignee, transporter, point of origin of the movement of goods, and its destination.
- It is a consistent and universal way of ensuring compliance throughout the country.
- Through a digital platform, the person responsible for moving goods (excluding certain goods) uploads necessary information before starting the movement of goods and creates an E-Way bill on the GST portal.
- It facilitates faster movement of goods, improves the turnaround time of trucks, increases the average distance travelled, and reduces the cost.
- It resulted in the elimination of state boundary check posts prevailing in the erstwhile tax regime.

### **DECRIMINALISATION: INDIA'S CONTINUED MARCH TOWARDS EASE OF DOING BUSINESS**

- The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023 (JV Act) rationalises criminal punishment for 183 minor offences across 42 Central Acts overseen by 19 ministries and departments.
  - The decriminalisation journey, which started with amendments to the Companies Act, 2013, has gained momentum with the JV Act.
- The key objective of the JV Act is to decriminalise and rationalise offences to enhance trust-based governance for ease of doing business and living.
- While doing so, it also helps to **de-clog the Indian judicial system** so that it can focus on more burning matters.
- The JV Act strives to strike a balance between the severity of the violation and the gravity of the prescribed punishment.
  - Many offences, which were either minor or technical or procedural in nature and for which the punishment prescribed was disproportionate, have been decriminalised under the JV Act.

- This endeavour to free up judicial time and resources could be even better served if the benefit of the JV Act is extended to existing offences as well.
- In the past, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has also taken the view in *T. Barai v. Henry Ah Hoe* that the benefit of reduced punishment for an offence should be extended to past contraventions, as it helps mitigate the rigour of law.

<b>Indian Manufacture Sector: Ease of Doing Business in Manufacturing</b> <b>Highlights</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Simplifying setting up business</li> <li>✚ Single window for various permits</li> <li>✚ Ease in accessing utilities</li> <li>✚ Reduction in compliance requirements</li> <li>✚ Digital platform for taxation filing</li> </ul>	<b>Ease of Doing Business: Policy Reforms Boosting India's Business Landscape</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ SPICe+ Form – A simplified web form for business incorporation</li> <li>❖ Insolvency &amp; Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016</li> <li>❖ Introduction of Jan Vishwas Bill for reduction of compliance burden</li> </ul>
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## INDO-AFRICAN RELATIONSHIP AMIDST SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

### Global South

#### • About

- The Global South has progressively claimed space in international multilateralism as a unique voice.
- As a term, it signifies the self-identification of developing countries to aspire for power status and recognition of their special concerns.

#### • Challenges Faced

- Issues ranging from adverse global terms of trade, a lack of investment and financing opportunities, the possibility of sovereign debt defaults, **political instability**, and the exploitation of mineral reserves have compounded centuries of exploitative structures.
- Off late, the **4 Cs** of Climate, Covid, Conflict, and Cost of living crisis have further intensified stresses and pressures on their political economies.

#### • India and Global South

- India has positioned itself as a legitimate voice of the Global South as the founding father of NAM and an active participant in G77 deliberations.

### Indo-African Relationship: Ties As Old As Time

#### • Ancient, medieval and colonial phase

- Trade between the Indus Valley and contemporary African civilisations have been documented.
- Later in medieval period, several Africans, like Abyssinians, served in regional Indian kingdoms.
- The colonial phase saw the forceful migration of indentured labourers, or girmitiyas, to British colonies in Africa; more cultural ties developed.

#### • Gandhi as a common link

- It is worthwhile to remember that Gandhiji had his moral and political epiphany in South Africa.

#### • Relationship in decolonised world

- These historic and ideological ties found new currency in a decolonised world as Indian and African leaders pledged opposition to neo-colonialism.

#### Global South as a rule maker

- A country is defined as North or South not by location but depending on certain economic factors and the quality of life of its population.
- The consensus among LDCs and EMDCs about ***becoming equal partners in agenda setting has positioned the Global South as a rule-maker instead of a rule-follower.***

- India has been at the forefront of UN activism by taking a keen interest in the stability and well-being of newly independent African states.
- It is a foremost troop contributor in peacekeeping missions, including the very first mission of the **UN on African soil (ONUC) in the Congo** between 1960 and 1964.
- **Bandung Conference: a milestone in relationship**
  - The Bandung Conference has been a "milestone in the formation of SSC (South South Cooperation) as a global political movement.

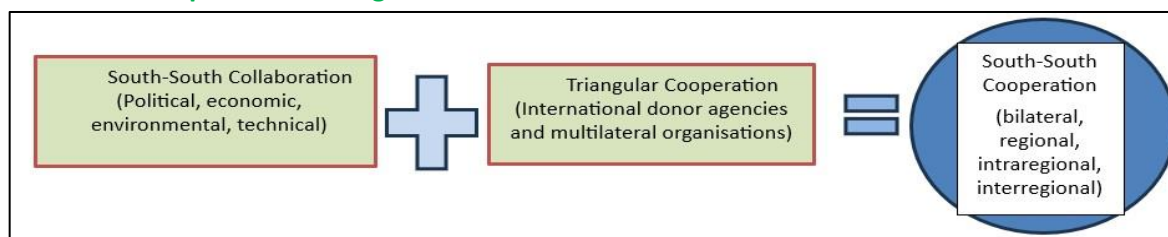
### Relationship In Current Geopolitical Scenario

- Reglobalisation and reorientation of global governance norms in the 21st century have produced many strong institutional and developmental responses, like AFGC, B3W, Blue Dot Network, ADB.
- Newer avenues for cooperation, conflict, and competition began to be envisaged.
- Against this backdrop, Indo- African cooperation has reached new heights with proactive bilateral and plurilateral engagements.
- The broad focal points have been UNSC reforms and India's support for the Ezulwini consensus, demand for global health equity and climate justice, and securing energy security (access to oil, gas, mineral ores, and critical minerals).
- Apart from the UN mechanism, engagement has been stepped up in regional organisations like ECOWAS, African Continental Free Trade Agreement, BRICS, OIC, ADB, etc.
- The establishment of both the ISA and CDRI is an example of India's progressive and cooperative climate engagement to shape and strengthen bilateral ties with other countries.
- Supporting and partnering with African governments through these organisations presents avenues for New Delhi to exercise its soft power towards influencing international and national agendas.

### Trade and Developmental Cooperation

- A consistent developmental approach has been steered by **EXIM Bank's Focus Africa Programme and India-Africa Partnership Project**, 17 India-Africa conclaves till 2022, India-Africa Forums.
- Trade volume has recorded a fourteen-fold increase between 2001 and 2013 with African exports to India growing at a rate of 23% annually.
- India is one of the top 5 investors by pivoting on a hybrid nature of engagement.
  - Indian PSUs like ONGC have invested in North and Western Africa.
  - Reliance Ltd. has procured oil exploration blocks in Nigeria and Madagascar.
  - Several Indian companies have made major investments in South Africa, Egypt, Sudan, Mozambique; the natural resources of Ghana, and Nigeria.
- **Overall trade between India and Africa touched \$100 billion in 2022-23.**
- The IMF estimated that 22.5% of Indian foreign direct investments' outward flow is towards Africa, with the current stock of Indian investments in Africa being \$32 billion.
- There have been reciprocal investments by Mauritius, South Africa, and Morocco ranging in millions of dollars. **Africa's FDI stock in India is \$73 billion.**

### Framework of Cooperation Among Global South



- Numerous frameworks like **Triangular Cooperation** have been proposed where two actors from the South and one from the North collaborate to provide technical or financial assistance.
- It produces a win- win situation as southern partners' capacity and technical know-how are enhanced within a sense of ownership of shared goals.
- For instance, G7+ is a cross-continental group of 20 states from Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Caribbean.
- Peer learning has been a central pillar of **F2F (fragile-to-fragile) cooperation** and a modality of South-South cooperation since the inception of the G7+.
- The landmark **Buenos Aires Plan of Action** (BAPA) for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries was endorsed by 138 UN member states in 1978.
- The **Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries 2022-23** is mobilising resources for a newer set of partnerships to recoup from the pandemic.
- Similarly, the **LDC5** is a UN-led initiative to catalyse the power of South-South Cooperation.
- The **India-UN Development Partnership Fund**, a \$150 million financing mechanism established in 2017 has supported 24 projects in 18 LDCs, while also prioritising projects in 29 SIDS and 10 LLDCs.
- The **India, Brazil, South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation** (IBSA Fund), established in 2004, has supported 22 projects in 20 LDCs-accounting for more than 62% of its total resources.

#### India-UN Development Partnership Fund

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund is a dedicated facility within the **United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation** established in 2017.

It is supported and led by India and **managed by UNOSSC.**

The fund places an emphasis on partnering with Small Island developing States, LDCs, landlocked developing countries, and countries affected by disaster.

In 2020, 40% of countries that participated in projects were LDCs.

#### Prescriptions To Enhance South-South Cooperation

- There is a need to **focus on building productive capacities** for agriculture, food security, and rural development.
- LDCs must **build resilience through trade and economic integration.**
  - Many African countries are dependent on a single basket of export commodities; fluctuations and volatility in global demand can make them vulnerable to economic crisis.
- They must **seek to strengthen governance standards** and improve human and social development performance through aid and investments.
- Trade issues due to frequent political instability, logistics costs, a poor business environment, and the rampant securitisation of African resources pose a serious challenge.
- India needs to enter into **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements** with African nations, develop stronger people-to-people partnerships, focus on industrial collaborations and knowledge sharing and strengthen tourism links.
- South-South Cooperation can be insulated from familiar traps by emulating Latin America's concept of "**Active Non-Alignment**," where governments build strong regional mechanisms to coordinate regional, foreign, and economic governance.
- In the future, we expect more South-South collaboration on:
  - climate technology sharing,
  - global governance rules (like the unsuccessful TRIPS waiver),
  - the achievements of developing nations,

- increased investments for changing the structure of economies,
- supporting money sent back by people from the south, and
- utilizing diaspora investments, resources, and minerals as negotiation tools for Official Development Assistance (improving the value of exported goods).

### Conclusion

- **The developmental landscapes have changed as countries from Asia, the Pacific, and Africa have become partners in global development.**
- There is a need to develop deeper strategic partnerships that are context-agnostic and demand-driven.
- It should not focus on financing alone but human resources, knowledge, technology, and sustainability.
- Future initiatives for South-South Cooperation should be result-driven and proactive in securing alignment with national systems.
- Partners must develop deep collaboration networks to achieve global targets like SDGs and MDGs.

#### Tele-Law: Reaching the Unreached

- Tele-Law means the use of communications and IT for the delivery of legal information and advice. The e-interaction between lawyers and people would be through the video-conferencing infrastructure available at the Common Service Centres.
- The concept of Tele-Law is to facilitate the delivery of legal advice through a panel of lawyers stationed at the front offices of Legal Services Authorities and CSC.
- The project aims to connect citizens with panel lawyers through video conferencing/telephone facilities by the Village Level Entrepreneurs identified in 1,00,000 gram panchayats.
- **Tele-Law 2.0 (Integration of Tele-Law and Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono) Legal Service Programme)** event was launched in August 2023.