



Global India Dialogue Series

**INDIA-NIGERIA ENGAGEMENT:
HISTORY, DIASPORA AND EMERGING DIMENSIONS**

Lecture discussion

by:

Prof. Olutayo C. Adesina

University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Organised by:

Organisation for Diaspora Initiatives (ODI), New Delhi
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HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG
INDIA



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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

In global India, Diaspora is a major visible Indian entity. When India is reorganizing its global engagement as an emergent power, its dialogue with Indian Diaspora is its major foreign policy strategy. However, since its Diaspora is diverse- old (which went as indentured workers and traders), new (as in the west), high skilled (as in Europe and North America) and low skilled (as in the Persian Gulf), the potential role of its Diaspora as a partner in engagement of India is diverse. Indian Diaspora in East Africa is largely a business community and is an old Diaspora in the region.

The political, social, economic and cultural ramifications of India-Nigeria engagement constitute a fascinating part of a relationship that started well before both countries' political independence from Britain. Nigeria's oil is important to India, which wishes to sustain strong economic growth. Since Nigeria and India established bilateral relations in 1958, India had risen to become one of the country's largest trading partners. The bilateral economic, cultural, commercial, technical and military relations between Nigeria and India had since then defined both countries' fruitful relationships. The talk would highlight this Diasporic engagement from various dimensions.

The Organisation for Diaspora Initiatives is a non-governmental resource and organizes itself as a civil society. This programme intends to engage Indian think tanks and civil society to make them aware of these emerging engagements and understand its impact on India and the host societies.

Prof. Olutayo C. Adesina has a strong record of working with others in the understanding of the African experience in its interlocking dimensions. I have contributed to the expansion of the history of sub-Saharan Africa through curriculum development. I have worked in executive capacities in the NNH, including serving as the Business manager of the Historical Society of Nigeria. It will be my privilege to contribute to the development of the study of the History of sub-Saharan Africa at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels from an emic perspective.

This interaction is a part of the series of international dialogue which Organization of Diaspora Initiatives (www.odi.in) is organizing to interact, analyze and understand the determinants, dimensions and impact of India's global engagement on foreign policies and domestic developmental issues and role of Diaspora in that. The programme is being supported by Heinrich Boll Foundation.

Prof. Ajay Dubey

School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)

President, ODI &

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ABOUT ODI

Organization for Diaspora Initiatives (ODI) is working to understand the status and role of Diasporic communities across the globe– both in domestic and international context. It maps the emerging roles, networks and operations of different Diasporic communities as a resource in the international civil society space as well as in the host and the home countries. ODI interacts and links various Diasporic communities to ensure a voice and place for large number of communities who feel disempowered under a water tight state based international system. ODI attempts to understand Diasporas by comparing and contrasting their experiences. In this comparative framework, Indian Diasporas, which developed its networks and organizations in the last two decades, is a prime focus of study, both in historical and contemporary perspectives. The head office of ODI is located in New Delhi, India. It has several sister organizations registered in many countries. It includes people and organizations of Indian and non-Indian origin. It has a biannual refereed research journal *Diasporas Studies* published by Routledge, U.K. It organizes and participates in conferences, seminars and other interactive activities of Indian and other Diasporas which lead to the developments in terms of Diaspora policy, role of Diaspora in the development of India and role of Diaspora in global linkages of India. It is actively engaged in researching and publishing books, journal and occasional papers on Indian and other Diasporas. It takes up comparative research projects on different aspects of Diasporas, including on Diaspora policies of different countries, utilization of Diasporas as resource by the host countries, the role of Diasporas in development and nation building and the impacts of globalisation on Diasporic networks, organisations and movements. ODI was started by a group of academics, policy makers, media and business professionals which is a non-profit, non-political, educational and cultural organization. ODI also has an MOU with Ministry of Overseas Indians, Government of India, as a research, publication, conference and knowledge partner on Indian Diaspora issues.

INDIA-NIGERIA ENGAGEMENT: HISTORY, DIASPORA AND EMERGING DIMENSIONS

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Abstract

The political, social, economic and cultural ramifications of India-Nigeria engagement is a fascinating part of a relationship that started well before both country's political independence from Britain. This paper, focusing initially on the ways in which the peoples of both countries constructed a mutually reinforcing relationship, proceeds to offer a fuller understanding of the extensive relationships and structure that came to define their relations well into the twenty first century. The people of both countries, in near-identical ways envisioned an international critical order that revolved around and incorporated anti-imperialism, human security and sustainable development.

By placing the relationship in a broader historical context, the work assesses the changing priorities, complexities and styles of interactions between both countries and their peoples from the colonial period to the second decade of the twenty-first century. This is done in relation to an evaluation of the long- and short-term interests of both countries. The presence since the colonial times of a small but vibrant population of Indians in Nigeria provides the main perspective not only for discussions on the development of an Indian Diaspora in sub-Saharan Africa's most populous country, but also a broad discussion on structural change in the country's Political Economy. By 1953, statistics showed there were actually only 50 Indians in Nigeria. By 2013, this figure had risen to about 35,000.

In the political terrain, the highly valourised ideals of Indian nationalism during its encounter with the colonialism were also significant for the Nigerian nationalist class. Since Nigeria and India established bilateral relations in 1958, India had risen to become one of the country's largest trading partners. The bilateral economic, cultural, commercial, technical and military relations between Nigeria and India, had since then defined both countries' fruitful relationships. Beyond that, Indian material culture associated with films, as well as Indian physician and spiritual elements appear almost important social and cultural existence of the Nigerian peoples. India has also in the contemporary period become a destination of choice for Nigerians in search of medical solutions. The stunted growth of medical facilities, absence of world class hospitals, poor health value chain, and the generally poor health care system in Nigeria have been responsible for the large scale attempt to benefit from sound health care in India. The work concludes with a critique of the distinct prisms through which India and Nigeria should view the world in an age of great flux.

Introduction

India-Nigeria engagement has a long history. The territory that came to be known in 1914 as Nigeria and India have experienced centuries of relations that antedates British colonialism. Three clear and distinct phases have therefore emerged in the history of this engagement: the pre-colonial phase; the colonial phase; and, the post-colonial phase. The pre-colonial phase, although low-keyed, was rooted more in the aspect of People - to - People relations based on religious and entrepreneurial lines.ⁱ However, by the early twentieth century, the dimensions and determinants of India-Nigeria engagements became more diverse, complex and fascinating. During the second phase, British colonialism played a distinctive and pivotal role in the development of a more vibrant relationship. This phase created administrative and legal structures that resulted from time to time in lateral interactions. In addition, the phase was a period when Indians travelled to colonial Nigeria and settled there in small numbers.

Thus, the presence since the colonial times of a small but vibrant population of Indians from the Indian sub-continent in Nigeria provides the main perspective not only for discussions on the development of an Indian Diaspora in sub-Saharan Africa's most populous country, but also a broad discussion on inter-group relations, international relations, structural changes in the economy, economic development and social change in a Third World milieu. One common thing that Indians shared with other well-known diasporas was that like the Jews and the Chinese, the Indians made their home where they have made their living.ⁱⁱ

The Indian Diaspora in Nigeria and the Indian sub-continent have played significant parts in Nigeria's measured steps towards self-definition and progress. Both countries shared a couple of things in common and these include membership of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Commonwealth. Both countries are also multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic. Analysts have also pointed to the similarity of problems which faced the two countries as developing nations.ⁱⁱⁱ In the light of the foregoing, Nigerian scholars have for these reasons been interested in the concepts of consciousness, community and agency where India and the Indian Diaspora in Nigeria were concerned. In 2007, a Roundtable was organised by the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria with the theme, *Nigeria-India Relations in the 21st Century*. The roundtable took the opportunity to discuss the various dimensions of Nigeria-India relations pertaining to the history and background of the relationship between the people of both countries.^{iv} Since then, the activities of Indians in Nigeria have remained a continuing source of debate within Nigeria's contemporary history and the public domain.

How are Indians seen, considered and understood in contemporary Nigerian historical understanding and public consciousness? What should be the new dimensions that the relationship between both countries take in the light of emerging realities? By placing the relationship in a broader historical context, this work assesses the relationship, changing priorities, complexities and styles of interactions between both groups from the colonial period to the second decade of the twenty-first century. Even after political independence, the peoples of both countries recognised the need to continue the relationship that had been constructed over the centuries.

In 1958 during the visit of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana to India as the first Prime Minister of independent Ghana and the first African statesman of an independent West African country to visit India, Jawaharlal Nehru stressed the importance of an Afro-Asian Understanding. India and Africa, he stressed, "had a common background of colonial rule, 'so inevitably they come closer to each other, to learn from each other and, where possible, to help each other.'"^v This is the central theme guiding this paper.

The Indian Diaspora in Nigeria: Origins and Development

Colonial impulses in the growth and development of the Nigerian economy and society induced several changes in the demography of several countries after forcefully taking over their affairs. The British Navy bombarded Lagos in 1851. Ten years later, the territory was annexed to the British Crown. Lagos, the coastal city had become one of the enclave economies of the British along the West Coast. It became the first territory in Nigeria to experience the direct influence and impact of industrial capitalism. The cession of Lagos to the British in 1861 established formal colonial rule in that territory. Immediately the British gained control of Lagos, new political and economic structures began to emerge.

By the 1880s, legislation was put in place in the Lagos colony to demonetize certain coins and ensure that the British gold and silver coins and a few foreign gold coins became the recognized legal tenders.^{vi} A corollary to this development was the introduction of European capitalist business methods into that West African territory to obtain the special advantages craved for by the British.^{vii} By 1860, trading outposts of foreign merchants had developed along the Marina and the Lagoon.^{viii} The massive growth of the enclave, however, depended on the cooperation of the indigenous commercial class. By 1900 when British colonialism had been formally inaugurated in the area that became known as Nigeria, new political and administrative structures supported by socio-economic structures and processes that brought about massive shifts in the economy and society also evolved. The growth of population, coupled with a thriving import and export trade, booming secondary commercial activities enhanced the enhanced status of Lagos as the capital-cum-port city of Nigeria. It turned the city into the largest single concentration of traders, workers and purchasing power.

Indians had by the late nineteenth century begun to conduct foreign trade with every continent and most countries of the world even though this was carried on in unequal proportions. After 1890, the new pattern of migrations based on commercial exploration became noticeable and recognized. Thus, by 1900, the African continent had become an important part of the modern Indian trading network.

Members of the Indian Sindhi Community were the first to arrive Nigeria in the early part of the 20th century. They were engaged in commercial activity, mostly in commodity trade and consumer goods. They also began to settle in Lagos in small numbers. This began in 1919 when a representative of the J.T. Chanrai Group (named after brothers Jhmatmal&Thakurdas, the founders of the group) reached Lagos from Sierra Leone to open the first shop in colonial Lagos.^{ix} One significant thing to note here is that the Indian population in Nigeria, unlike the experiences in East and Southern Africa began as a trading community rather than as indentured labourers on plantations. By the early 1920s, Indians had become a distinct feature of the colonial landscape. In the second decade of the twentieth century Indian concerns was gradually becoming prominent. In 1923, a management team constituted by the founder of the Chellaram Group, Shri KishinchandChellaram arrived in Nigeria to set up the company as a subsidiary of the company founded as a textile concern in Chennai (Madras) in 1916. The Nigerian outlet took off as one dedicated to wholesale operation in textiles. Years later, the enterprise moved into manufacturing.^x

J.T.Chanrai and K.C. Chellaram became the forerunners of many Indian groups that followed later. Most of these early Indians also marketed textiles and handloom products imported from Madras via Liverpool, England. Other brands from Europe and the Far East were later added to their stocks.^{xi} By 1953 statistics showed there were actually only 50 Indians in Nigeria.^{xii} With economic changes, when mass production and consumption became accessible to Nigerians, Indians established supermarkets and departmental stores to

cater for Nigerian needs. The Nigerian economy began to undergo a process of refinement through the activities of Indian entrepreneurs aiming to cater to new tastes. The shops designed for retails and wholesales for imported wares such as garments, jewellery, handicrafts, stainless steel items, handloom jute products, kitchen-wares and a lot of other products had become a feature of colonial Nigeria.

The situation of backwardness and exploitation that had for years dominated the discourse of global political economy began to change in the 1950s when Indian partnership in anti-imperial struggles and economics began to redefine Nigeria's Political Economy.

The Indian Spirit in Nigeria's Consciousness

Colonial experiences and policies had the effect of seemingly moving places closer to each other than the colonial administrators realised. It was through these that India and Nigeria became connected in more ways than one. Even then, the continuous dependence of Africa and the countries of the developing world and their peripheral status had been more proclaimed than anything else.^{xiii} The Forestry Policy that began to flower in Nigeria during the period of British Colonialism benefited from the Indian experience. In this development it is appropriate to note that the initial success of the Indian Forest Service had drawn attention to the importance of tropical forests in other spheres with the result that in 1874, the Secretary of State for the Colonies- Earl of Carnarvon - issued a circular on the subject to the then West African colonies. This circular pointed distinctive attention to the value of forestry and concluded with a very comprehensive directive on the subject. The Forestry Department of the Lagos Colony was thereafter established on 5th October 1897.^{xiv}

The Second World War also projected Nigeria as a strategic link in the Allied Defence of their territories. As the staging post for troops and supplies and the main producer of primary products that were essential for the prosecution of the war, Nigeria's size and population transformed her into a provider of indispensable troops for the campaign in the Indian sub-continent.^{xv} Many of the soldiers who participated in the war in the Indian sub-continent came back home more conscious of their human personality and provided the necessary stimulus for burgeoning anti-colonial struggles in Nigeria.

By the late 1940s things began to change considerably. The age became identified with the nationalist ferment. The highly valourized ideals of Indian nationalism during its encounter with the colonial regime became significant for the Indian Diaspora. The position of Indians gave an impressive demonstration of the emerging doctrine of standing up for your rights against the forces of colonialism. Decolonization in India as a result of nationalist agitations and peaceful mass resistance began to serve as an inspiration to nationalists in Africa.^{xvi} India was blessed with a Gandhi but also with a Jawaharlal Nehru. Both were complementary to each other and both significantly advanced the cause of India's freedom in different ways.^{xvii} They also inevitably did the same for Africa.

Gandhian principles and values played a crucial role in the strategies that directed political action towards the objectives and consciousness of self-determination.^{xviii} Chief Obafemi Awolowo, nationalist, politician and statesman had stated clearly as early as 1947 that "India is the hero of the subject countries. Her struggles for self-government are keenly and sympathetically watched by the colonial peoples; the more so because they are marked by untold sufferings..."^{xix} His protégé, Chief Bola Ige, Nigeria's one-time Minister of Power and later, Attorney-General of the Federation, in his autobiography, *Kaduna boy* was proud to announce that that the first country he visited outside Nigeria was India. He profoundly stated

that when Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister in 1947, he was deliriously happy as if he were an Indian. In another breath, he revealed that when Gandhi was assassinated in 1948, he went through three days of excruciating mental agony and moodiness.^{xx} So much was the affinity of Nigerians with Indians that they could be regarded as blood brothers. India established bilateral relations with Nigeria in 1958.^{xxi} Before then and after, Nehru stood at the forefront of the promotion of racial equality and the organisation of anti-apartheid struggles in Africa.^{xxii}

But as India and Indians provided important precepts in political matters, other spheres of Indian lives and existence became similarly very productive. For instance, In India, the cottage industry was known to have contributed a large sum to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Obviously, Nigeria, with a large and vibrant Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) also needed to learn from India about how to make the sector more viable and contribute more appreciably to the GDP.

A salient question, however, remains, what dreams and visions propelled the expansion of the Indian enterprise in Nigeria and other places? Indian emigration and enterprise, which had started on a small scale in the early twentieth century would further be propelled and influenced by several philosophies back home in India. Such philosophies would propel the Indian citizenry towards a global citizenship. The clearest exposition of the Indian doctrine of the world as “one economic and cultural unit” in the twentieth century was perhaps the one provided by MeghnadSaha (1893-1956). Saha, an influential astrophysicist and social thinker was one of those who helped to construct the social bases and philosophy for the Indian engagement with the economic world. In his presidential address to the Indian Science Congress in 1934 at Bombay, he clearly espoused the philosophy of the entire world serving as a terrain for economic adventures. He began with an exhortation to the rulers of the world to allow for a globalized vision of development:

At present, the fact is only slowly dawning on the public that the world is fast becoming one great economic unit...The rulers of countries cannot therefore persist in their Olympian attitude towards other nations- they must become earth-wide in their outlook.^{xxiii}

He further adumbrated his position when he said:

But economic and scientific studies show that the world has resources enough for her whole population, and if there be a rational programme of production, and a programme of judicious and equitable distribution, nobody should suffer from hunger, privation, and can even afford to have much better amenities of life. But for this purpose, rivalry amongst nations and communities should give way to cooperative construction ... The joy of life for grown-up men will be provided not in designing means for the plunder or exploitation of our fellow-men in the various ways but in administering to their needs, and in free development and display of the finer faculties of the mind.^{xxiv}

By the second decade of the twentieth century Indian concerns in Nigeria had become very prominent. Unfortunately, the Indian Diaspora, just like their Nigerian hosts, also had to contend with the British colonial government and the enterprises and cartels that dominated the business and entrepreneurial world in Nigeria.

Indian Prosperity and Social Complexity

The existence of sizeable Lebanese, Syrian and Indian businesses in several Nigerian cities was boosted by the colonial economy. They engaged in retail businesses, produce trade, and sundry services. In Western Nigeria, Lagos, Ibadan and Abeokuta among others became big commercial centres that attracted the settlement of these traders. A major attraction for these entrepreneurs and business people was the synergic effect of trade brought by the railway.^{xxv}

As the Indians understood their hosts and their terrain better, they and their Nigerian hosts were increasingly drawn together in complex commercial relationships and political expectations. This dimension would further draw both groups together in unintended but essential ways. Perhaps, a major factor in this new rapprochement was the British policy of placing impediments on the path of the Indian entrepreneur. The emerging awareness of the radical potentials of the Indians had driven them into antagonism with the British overlords. A conscious policy of discrimination then began. It is by now commonplace to present the early twentieth century as a watershed in the history of the Indians in Nigeria. Even though Indians had been a constant, if laid back feature of the Nigerian society since the early 20th century, it was the mid-twentieth century that defined and highlighted considerable transformations among the Indian community in Lagos, Nigeria's capital city.

However, the Indian experience in early colonial Lagos formed the context in which several non-British and non-European nationals and groups would discover the obstacles placed on their paths by British colonialism. This marked the beginning of a social crusade to fight fascism and segregation. The role of the Indians as the arrowhead of the anti-segregation movement in Nigeria has not received the desired attention in popular discourse. It has conveniently remained tucked away in archival documents and fat unreadable history books that have continued to be inaccessible to the general public. The broader cultural, social and political significance of the Indian experience in Lagos is represented by the Chellaram story.

K. Chellaram and British Racism

In British colonial Nigeria, racism was ingrained in official policy. The Indians in Nigeria suffered from colonial intrusion, just like the local subjects. They too were socially marginalized. One way by which they suffered marginalisation was through the residential segregation in colonial cities as the most scientific way to prevent malaria among Europeans was “to segregate Europeans from natives.”^{xxvi} In Lagos, that was responsible for the decision to keep non-Europeans out of Ikoyi till the end of colonial period.^{xxvii} Indians were denied entry into what was then considered a choice area. Indian entrepreneurship had been propagated by a small but vibrant Indian population in Nigeria. By the third decade of the 20th century Indian enterprise had become phenomenal and vibrant. One of the Indian companies that would help project and propagate the Indian spirit of industry and hard work was K. Chellaram & Sons founded in 1923 by Mr. Kishinchand Chellaram. The founder of the company has been variously described as kind, benevolent, capable and progressive. He also became well known for his charities in India, Nigeria and in every place he had a subsidiary of his business. British colonialism in Nigeria would ultimately draw this Indian enterprise into identity politics and struggle for civil and human rights. The Chellaram business enterprise revealed the selfish desire of the British to create an enclave in Lagos that would remain white and European.

Historians have referred to the 1940s as a period of economic prosperity for the Indians in Nigeria. The Indian groups and individuals, even though numerically small had

become upwardly mobile. Such tangible advances were also accompanied by new radical assertiveness and progressive change. Unfortunately, Indians would confront the ideology of European racial superiority constructed by British colonialism. From the beginning of colonial rule, people of colour were consigned to the lowest rung of the social ladder.^{xxviii} The agendas and action of the Indian groups and individuals would, however, draw the ire of the British colonial masters. The story began with the application for a land lease in Ikoyi, the high-brow part of Lagos, by the K. Chellaram group in January 1944.^{xxix} The Chellaram application was the first to be submitted by a non-European for a plot at Ikoyi after the law guiding the issuance of license to own land in Ikoyi was relaxed a little in 1938.^{xxx} The law had clearly and imperiously affirmed “not to permit any person other than Europeans or domestic servants of Europeans occupying the same premises or part thereof to reside within the boundaries of the said land.”^{xxxi} But in spite of the existing law and the near-impossibility of the application being granted, Messrs K. Chellaram and Sons went ahead to submit an application for a lease for a plot of land in the residential area at Ikoyi. This opened a flurry of activities and a load of paper trail, which indicated the extent of the confusion that came into the British camp with the application by the Indian firm.

When a terse response to the application came from the government rejecting the application without any cogent reason, the Manager in charge of K. Chellaram and Sons, wrote a letter dated March 1, 1944 to the Commissioner for Lands frontally asking “why the plot of land we have applied for is not available for leasing. No one else to our knowledge has applied for it.” The application submitted by Chellaram was subsequently brought before the Executive Council of government, which went ahead to reject it because the plot in question was “required by Government.” It then requested Chellaram to re-apply when more plots become available. The company went ahead to re-apply for the lease when more plots became available but the Executive Council of the colonial government in December 1944 again rejected the application on the grounds that the applicants would not maintain a “standard of living which would be up to the level of their neighbours, though this was not explicitly stated in the correspondence to Chellarams.”^{xxxii} It was obvious that the Indians were treated that way as a deliberate attempt not to create a precedent which, if allowed, may encourage other groups to apply for land in the European areas.

The Indian story is one pre-occupied with issues of self-perception and the layers of identity that constituted the colonial society in 20th century Nigeria. There is no doubt that history will ultimately record the Chellaram face-off with the British as an attempt to reject or question segregation. It is probably right to suggest that the struggle for civil and human rights had been apparent in the Chellaram struggle from the start even if this did not form part of its own mandate and mission.

The relative impact of the Indians on the consciousness of both the colonial administration and Nigerians in proportion to their size had been remarkable. By 1953 statistics showed there were actually only 50 Indians in Nigeria.^{xxxiii} The population would grow in leaps and bounds in the next three decades owing to the massive involvement of Indians in Nigeria’s programme of economic development and as the Nigerian economy expanded.

Indian Popular Culture

The period between the 1950s and 1970s witnessed a flourishing Indian business culture in profitable entertainment business. Newspapers were replete with advertisements on Indian

films and talisman. Indian businessmen saw an advantage in the increasingly profitable cinema industry. These films had become a commercially guaranteed commodity. The growth of the cinema and the consumption of Indian films became one of the most defining influences of the period. The Bollywood films which traversed the length and breadth of the country gave a great boost to the entertainment industry. Every keen observer of the social stage of development would remember the sector's contributions to socio-economic growth in terms of employment generation and social development.

At the social level, Indian culture and films began to give way to indigenous films. In the north, the most notable consumer of Indian films, the rise of Hausa films in the 1990s led to the gradual decline of the Indian, Chinese and American films and this swung consumption in favour of the local films. The Indian film nevertheless left a lasting legacy. The creativity and styles of some of the Indian films ultimately influenced many of the local films. According to Abdulrahman Alfa, "There is an aspect of Hausa films that critics are always citing as perhaps the worst thing that happened to Hausa film- musical entertainment or interlude. But we have a different view about this, because even the Indians that have such interlude don't do that in real life. We should also appreciate the fact that such Indian films' musical interlude endeared such films in the minds of our people especially the Hausas. In that case, one may ask what is wrong in adopting an amoral act like that just for the purposes of entertainment and colourful attraction of the Hausa film industry."^{xxxiv}

Indians and Nigeria's Growth Opportunities: Strategic Interests and Partnerships

By the early 1960s Indians had had started to engage in manufacturing related activities particularly in textiles production. For instance, Afprint, manufacturers of textile products and yarn based in Lagos was founded in 1964. Several other Indian companies in agro-allied products and consumer goods became of strategic importance to the Nigerian economy.

Nigeria's macro-economy owed much to Indians. After the 1960 annual conference of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which held in Tangier, Morocco, it became obvious that the Federal Government needed an Economic Adviser. While the Nigerians in Government wanted Dr. Pius N.C. Okigbo, an Oxford-educated economist in the service of Eastern Region of Nigeria, the British under the direction of Messrs. Stallard and Thompson pre-empted the group by obtaining the Prime Minister's approval for the World Bank to send them an expert on economic affairs. The nominee also happened to be British. But Chief Okotie-Eboh persuaded the World Bank to substitute the British nominee with an Indian Adviser, Dr. P.S. Narayan Prasad. The country's plans to have an indigenous Economic Adviser had to wait until Dr. Prasad's term expired. He was then succeeded by Dr. Okigbo.^{xxxv}

Right from independence, Indians were rated highly in Nigeria's scheme of development. In May 1962, AlhajiShehu Shagari, the Minister of Establishment and Training travelled with a party of civil servants to study civil service training in India and Pakistan. The country then arranged for its Administrative officers to be trained in both countries. It would be recalled that even the success of the Indian Imperial Civil Service contributed very considerably to the nineteenth century reforms of the British Civil Service.^{xxxvi} However, it was only to the Indian Staff College that the country decided to send Nigerian Army Officers. "Pakistan's President, Ayub Khan, protested; but Nigeria's tough Minister of Defence, Muhammadu Ribadu, replied that there had been no military coup in India."^{xxxvii} Many of

Nigeria's post-independence leaders, notably Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Muhammadu Buhari, turned out to have trained as military officers in India. Similarly, Indians had participated actively in Nigeria's railway programme. In 1962, Mr. C. D. Dharker, an Indian was appointed the Nigerian Railways Corporation Financial adviser.^{xxxviii}

While Indians were domiciled in the northern and in the eastern parts of the country, it was in Lagos and Ibadan in the Western part of the country that they were numerous and very active. The existence of a vibrant entrepreneurial class predates government support and initiative in indigenous economic elite class formation. Apart from individual private capital mobilized by the indigenous entrepreneurs, active members of the Indian economic elites significantly contributed to the existence and the development of a consciousness that keenly encouraged the development of a vibrant entrepreneurial class.

Western Nigeria's economic policy sought to strike a balance between promoting domestic production, countering the effects of massive importation of finished goods and achieving a favourable balance of trade regime. The Western Nigeria Development corporation became the tool for the industrialization process. However, in subsequent years after certain political developments, the corporation became the Western State Industrial Investment and Credit Corporation (WSIICC). This was charged with the management of the industries owned by the defunct Western Region. Among the joint ventures started by the region were the West African Portland Cement, Asbestos Nigeria Limited and Tower Aluminium. These companies were operated with foreign technical partners. This was the case with the Tower Aluminium Smelting Company (TASC) which was operated with Indian foreign technical partners. The Indians had 60% of the shares in the Aluminium Company.^{xxxix}

By the 1960s the country had embraced the import substitution strategy. The implications of this was the control of cotton prices and high tariffs among many measures used on imported textiles. From the 1960s up till the late 1970s, policies that ensured an outright ban on imported textiles were in place. The policies ensured that indigenous production was put on a sound footing vis-à-vis imported textiles. By 1977 government had envisaged what it deemed a self-sufficient clothing and textile industry. Nevertheless, the sector had a diversified base. According to UduokUduak:

...during the import substitution era of the 1970s Nigeria had tried to make most of its textile plants Nigeria owned, the fact remained that foreigners had the major market share. In 1986, for instance, according to extensive research concluded by Swedish researchers on the union power in Nigeria's textile industry, Nigeria's textile Manufacturers Association reported 75 members. Of these 75, 30 were Indian owned firms with the rest being Chinese and Lebanese. Only 4 of these 75 were reported as indigenous Nigerian-owned firms...^{xl}

For the Indians, the logic of investment based on the basic economic philosophy of private investment as enunciated by Adam Smith could not be ruled out. As Adam Smith submitted:

Every individual is continually exerting himself to find out the most advantageous employment for whatever capital he can command...every individual...endeavours so (to employ his capital) ... that its produce may be of the greatest possible value...By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.^{xli}

OtunbaJobiFele, an industrialist typified this unintended consequences of the Indian enterprise. The granting of import licences became a major issue in the 1980s. Business became quite tricky. Nevertheless, the manufacturing field continued to thrive and Indians played a key role in this. According to OtunbaJobiFele

My first business was selling sardines. I was a big importer of sardines. Then, I said to myself that there would be a day that the exchange rate would be too high to sustain this business. That was in 1980 when the exchange rate was about 60 kobo to one dollar. So I decided to go into producing sardines. At that time, three of us were producing sardines in this country, the other two were Indians. I have the ability to identify where there is opportunity. And where there is an opportunity, I always grab it.^{xlii}

The rapprochement with India and Indians became a major possibility in shaping the social and economic future of Nigeria from the north to the south. The reason lies in the deepening admiration for India as a nation as well as the desire of Nigerians to benefit from the Indian experience. Indians developed sizeable investments in chemicals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, electrical equipment, plastics, fishing etc. This contributed to the transfer of technology, consultancy services, and expertise in the form of joint ventures.

The ideas for boosting adult education and community development in the north became a major trajectory of development in the region. In the Northern Region, four Nigerians had by 1955 risen to the upper cadre positions in the educational sector. These were Dr. Dikko, MallamUmaruGwandu, Mr. Olajide and MallamAhmaduCoomassie.^{xliii} After his promotion on December 23, 1955 to the post of substantive Chief Adult Education Officer, Group 7, MallamAhmaduCoomassie began a sustained programme of engagement not only with the United Kingdom but also with India in order to be exposed to new ideas and trends in adult education. Between 1956 and 1958, MallamCoomassie went on several trips to India and its neighbouring countries and led the Federal Government of Nigeria delegation to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) conference in Paris.^{xliv} In the aftermath of the experiences he garnered from several conferences, MallamCoomassie was awarded a UNESCO Fellowship in 1956 to enable him study in India, Burma (now Myanmar), Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and Pakistan. The study visit was, however, reduced to four months because of the tension between Pakistan and India over Kashmir.

The study centred “on two key areas: the organization of adult education, with particular reference to adult literacy work for new literates, and follow-up literature, including suitable materials for community development.”^{xlv} To accomplish the mission of the trip, MallamCoomassie spent one month in India (December 15, 1956-January 15, 1957) and later went to Burma and Ceylon. All the countries had in common an adult education system that emphasized community development instead of solely adult literacy. MallamAhmadu felt that the Indian method was best suited for the people of Northern Nigeria to improve the lot of the people in several respects. He postulated a far-reaching connection between the Indian approaches and the drive for development in Northern Nigeria because in India,

...Greater emphasis was placed, for example, on rural improvement. The programme was also given a nationalistic flavour, the citizens were encouraged to engage in self-help through innovation and already high literacy levels (India 40%, Burma 60% and Ceylon 80%) compared to Northern Nigeria’s 15%. In Northern Nigeria, the rural population had very little experience in self-development activities because of the high level of illiteracy. They therefore, depended totally on the

government to innovate social welfare projects. In India, a village-level community development worker could be put in charge of between five to seven villages, and through him, development projects in areas such as agriculture, animal husbandry, sanitation and health, primary and social education would be carried out in the rural areas...In addition, in India through social education, they designed a comprehensive programme to achieve community enlightenment through collective action. The literacy campaign enabled the beneficiary to integrate his education with his physical environment, as well as make the best of it...^{xlvi}

The detailed report and proposal submitted by MallamCoomassie in 1957 after his trip to India became the template on which the northern programme on adult literacy was constructed. This much was affirmed by AlhajiSule Gaya, the then regional minister for local government: “at the time he (MallamCoomassie) went to India and studied adult education, he brought a report which the northern government adopted and this formed the basis for adult education here.”^{xlvii}

Thus, the Indian approach became the tool through which the mass literacy campaign in northern Nigeria was organized and accomplished. The ‘Yaki da Jahilci’ (War against Ignorance) campaign was an outstanding success. Nearly 100,000 classes of 20-25 adults were run on a six-monthly basis. This increased the adult literacy levels in the northern Region.^{xlviii}

Nigeria’s steel industry benefited very much from Indian expertise. The Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT) in collaboration with the Federal Government of Nigeria set up the Nigerian Machine Tools, the first of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa designed to lead to the growth of other industries in Nigeria. Indians also provided technical assistance for the Delta Steel Plant, Aladja, Nigeria. The agreement to this effect was signed in January 1978. Between the 1970s and mid-1980s “a large number of Indian professionals were deputed to various projects in such sectors as railways, academics, medicine, engineering, management etc.”^{xlix} The relationship was, however, not one-sided. Over time, Nigeria also exported diverse commodities and goods to India. These included cocoa beans, cocoa butter, powder and paste, rubber, Gum Arabic, cotton lint, Groundnuts, cashew nuts and other oil seeds, tin ores and metals, hides and skins, crude oil etc. Nigeria on the other hand imported rice, jute manufactures and capital goods useful in engineering industries, fabrication, chemical plant manufacture, electrical machinery and switchgear machine tools and light engineering industries. The trade agreement between the governments of India and Nigeria allowed for the exchange of other sundry items. This high profile relationship was to thrive until the downturn of the Nigerian economy in the mid-1980s.

In the 1980s, a lull was witnessed in the Nigerian economy that seriously affected Indian enterprises in Nigeria. The Indian manufacturing process was the nerve of the Nigerian economy. But as OkwudibaNnoli pointed out, as long as industrialization emphasises import-substitution, even in the short term, it will remain viable only when the number of foreign consumer items to be produced locally is large.ⁱ By 1980, Nigeria was ranked the third largest textile industry in Africa after Egypt and South Africa. Gradually, the oil boom of the 1970s began to overshadow the growth envisaged from agricultural development and this had implications for industrial development. By the 1980s the production of cotton by Nigeria had fallen drastically by fifty percent below its capacity.ⁱⁱ To make matters worse, the country began to import simple basic items like food. Many of the textile manufacturers in the country began to suffer from government’s economic policies. Nigeria, in spite of her oil

wealth, was forced into the imperialist "debt trap."^{lii} With the adoption of the IMF/World Bank-induced Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 and throughout the period 1986-1990, the country witnessed a massive devaluation of the Naira.^{liii} The textile industries all over the country, which had been struggling to survive in the face of high cost of production, high water rates, increasing power bills, poor power supply and dwindling share of the domestic market, due to smuggling and dumping of foreign textile products, began to close down.

In the aftermath of the liberalization of the economy, representatives of the organized private sector and the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) had lamented the decline of industrial capacity utilization, low consumer demand due to the high level of poverty in the country and the financial difficulties experienced by entrepreneurs. Much has also been made of the country's excessive dependence on imported raw materials and machinery.^{liv} The textile and garment industry, which had also been the forte of the Indian textile aristocracy suffered significantly from counterfeiting from China. These were smuggled into the Nigerian market ceaselessly.^{lv} Implicit in the foregoing was the lack of the enabling environment in which industrial production would flourish. Although there were no written rules on moral obligations to the operating environment, several of the Indian firms found it hard to adjust during the economic downturn. In spite of this, the structural adjustment also had its own pay-offs.

Technical Partnerships, the ICT Revolution and Nigeria's Telecommunications Industry

The development of industrial concerns relying on foreign technical partnerships came alive once again with the liberalized economy. The choice of Indian technical partners became very strong and viable. The core of the management and engineering cadres of all the industrial ventures embarked upon by Chief OlatundeAbudu, a multi-billionaire industrialist were Indian. Chief OlatundeAbudu's industrial ventures in Ogun state remained an example of continued strategic Indian influence and partnership in the development of Nigeria's industrial sector. The Midland Galvanizing Products (MGP) Ltd., established in 1978 is one of those industries that have defined this kind of partnership. It has remained one of the largest producers of galvanized iron sheets on the African continent.^{lvi} The Indian partnership stimulated the firm to greater efficiency. With an installed capacity of 72,000 tons of galvanized iron products per annum, it was producing 70, 000 tonnes of galvanized iron sheets yearly. By 2007, the company had a total turnover of about eight billion Naira (N8,000,000,000) paid total taxes in the neighbourhood of two hundred million naira and had a total workforce of two hundred Nigerian and expatriate workers.^{lvii} Several other companies developed on the heels of this partnership.

The modernisation of the economy became of over-riding importance to Nigeria. The country, in the 1990s developed an ambitious programme for growing its digital platforms. Indian involvement in the Nigerian telecommunications industry through innovation and competitiveness became pronounced. By the first decade of the 21st century, increased activity and investment on critical information technology infrastructure became extremely vital. The sector spurred Indian investments into Nigeria to over \$10 billion.^{lviii} There was the Indian initiative to use Indian enterprise in information technology in healthcare and education. In 2007, Nigeria entered into agreement with the

Telecommunication Consultants India Limited to implement the Pan-African e-Network Project.

In June 2010, an Indian-owned company, Bharti Airtel successfully closed a deal for its \$9 billion purchase of African operations of Kuwait's Zain Telecom, and thereafter began to move swiftly and aggressively to expand its newly acquired turf. With the conclusion of the purchase of Zain's African assets by Bharti Airtel and the appointment of Mr. Oba Otudeko as the Chairman of Nigeria's unit, the Indian telecommunications company began a systematic inroad into Nigeria's economy. In a statement credited to Sunil Bharti Mittal, the chief executive officer of Bharti Airtel, he affirmed: "In line with Bharti's philosophy of forging long term, strategic partnerships, we are pleased to have joined hands with our local partner in Nigeria, Oba Otudeko and his family. I have no doubt that this partnership will ensure leadership for Bharti in Nigeria for the benefit of all stakeholders." It appointed its top management from India, which included Bharti Airtel's Executive director for Enterprise Services, RajanSwaroop as the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director for its Nigerian operations, while its CEO for West Bengal and Orissa, Deepak Srivatava was appointed the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Executive Director in Nigeria. The company, reputed to be India's largest cellphone company aimed for a two-fold increase within three years in the number of users in Africa to 100 million, while it pursued the low-cost outsourced business model of operations that had served it well in India.^{lix}

The 'Dirty Indians': Indian Interests and Power Politics

Migration and or shutting down of factories remained very important ranges of coping mechanisms developed by Indians in response to economic shifts.^{lx} But there developed a more insidious way. Some Indian-owned companies adopted predatory practices. Unfortunately, the activities of such individuals or groups were appropriated as symbols of the Indian group- and held as proof of the 'dirty Indians.' These of course led to unjust presumptions about the Indian community that undermines logic or reason. The cost of these to community and social relations were very high. Aside from this particular instance, however, there is the 'notion that in any country you find them, Indians (and their ilk) are the most corruption-influencing people.'^{lxi}

The classic example of this strategy was perhaps that of Intermatch Nigeria Limited (INL), a match producing company in Lagos. Intermatch was bought from the West African Household and Utilities Manufacturing Company, WAHUM, 25 years earlier as a subsidiary of Inmaco Technical, London. In January 2001 it was alleged that the Indian owners of the firm, P.M Khimasia and Rashmi D. Chandaria, as well as Nagarajan and Sunder, the company's general manager and financial controller respectively, absconded leaving the firm in serious mess. The Indians had in 1996 sought for and got a loan from Nigerian banks under the pretext that they were going to use the loan to expand and modernize the company. The loan was approved and disbursed. By the time the Indians left in 2001, it was alleged that they left without repaying the N65 million loan taken from the Afribank Nigeria PLC and Union Bank of Nigeria PLC. They also left behind many months of workers' salary arrears and gratuity.^{lxii} The company then went into receivership.

Also, in 2014, the Ondo State Chapter of the Trade Union Congress on June 12, 2014 shut down an Indian firm, Tower Roofing Systems Limited located along the Ilesha-Owo Road, Akure, for the breach of Nigeria's labour laws. The company's workers claimed they had been working since 2006 without appointment letters. The workers protested by carry placards on of which read: "Indians must not enslave us in our fatherland.". The law

had prescribed that every worker should have his letter of appointment within three months of employment. The management of the company had refused to issue letters of employment to its workforce in nine years. When it eventually did so, the letters were dated April 1, 2014 “instead of backdating it to the first day of employment of the respective workers.”^{lxiii}

By 2003 it was possible to locate for the first time in years, overt discussions of Indians in the political process. Serious discussion in the period became heavily charged with political connotations and its handmaiden, corruption in high places. This change in Indian orientation is best captured within the perspective of the politics of Nigeria’s fourth republic. This became inextricably tied to concepts of interest, structure and power. Since immigrant communities cannot live in isolation of their host societies, they are involved not only in self-definition and redefinition, but in defining themselves in relations to their hosts and host society.^{lxiv} The role and relevance of the Diaspora began overtly to take a different form. Political identification has made Indian economic elite’s role *suigeneris* in the contemporary Nigerian state. An important development in the 21st century was the interface of the Indian economic elite and the political structure. How did the Indian economic elite combine the reality of being at the core of economic life and political exclusion? How did they build social and political allegiances? How were the boundaries of politics and economics ultimately determined? The issues of justice, equity, and rights came into the realm of a contested terrain and one characterized by an overwhelmingly hierarchical state and political structure. The 21st century would provoke many complex combinations between economic pursuits and political contexts that produced contradictions of a rupturable character for a section of the Indian economic elite- those who move in the corridors of power. This development has to be placed within a deep political context. This will enhance our understanding of the ideological and political developments that coloured the Indian perspectives.

The second term agenda of President Olusegun Obasanjo (from 2003) became a central issue in the Indians/Nigerian State problem. President Obasanjo’s first term lasted from 1999-2003. There were those who, however, felt that he must make way for younger elements with his political party. He was therefore not expected to contest for a second term beginning from 2003. His Vice President was alleged to be the arrowhead of this group. For the role allegedly played by the Vice President (VP), Alhaji Abubakar Atiku in mobilizing political opponents against the president, the presidency purportedly moved against all known friends and associates of the VP. Manipulation and intimidation became the name of the game. The Vaswani brothers, Indian businessmen with British Passports, were identified as business partners of the VP.

The Vaswani brothers (Sunil and Suril) became involved in the crisis sometimes in 2003. In May 2003, they were specifically accused of “defrauding the Nigerian government of N40 billion through the evasion of taxes and custom duties; importation of substandard and untropicalised vehicles and sale of sub-standard spare parts; importation of banned items like chicken and turkey and bad and expired frozen fish; importation of cargoes without declaring the correct value for import duty purposes, and money laundering through importation of books, among others.”^{lxv} The image of the Indian created by the Vaswani saga described above elicited diverse responses from the Nigerian public. An article written by Steve Nwosu, a popular columnist in *The Sun* newspaper published in Lagos painted a graphic picture of this development:

I got an idea of how much Nigerians hate the Vaswani brothers last week when RayPower 100.5 F.M threw open its lines during the daily Factfile morning programme. The crux of the matter was that the deported Indian businessmen had

appealed to the Federal Government requesting for a fair hearing. They said they were unfairly bundled out of Nigeria on trumped up charges sponsored by their competitors...For a few of their misdeeds, they provided written evidence in defence of the other allegations they said were fake. But while the Indians were fighting to return to face the law in Nigeria, their competitors were also fighting a media war to ensure that the Indians remain as they are: deported.^{lxvi}

He then offered a succinct account of what transpired on radio:

RayPower then went on air to ask one innocent question: should they be allowed back and given a fair hearing? Caller after caller phoned in to condemn the Indians, saying they must not be allowed back into the country. Even in these times when a state government beats its chest for providing a few hundred jobs, one caller said that the over 7,500 Nigerian workers employed by the Indians should go to look for jobs elsewhere.^{lxvii}

The columnist then went on to deliver his own view of the Government's approach to the business entrepreneurs' tribulations. This is quoted *in extenso*:

The truth is that in another two years, the empire the Vaswanis built in Nigeria would have disappeared. There would be no Nigerian-built empires that would rise in their stead, even as the businesses have been taken over by Nigerians. The over 7,000 workers will join the army of the unemployed and the economy, which we accuse them of sabotaging, would be the worse for it. I think the Vaswanis, if the charges are true, deserve to be in jail. But in a Nigerian jail. I think we also have to look at the allegations of blackmail that some persons in position of authority with whom they have done business want to push them out of Nigeria and take over their businesses. We can give them fair hearing and still deport them at the end of it. But we would have appeared to be fair...^{lxviii}

A well-known pro-government lawyer, Chief AfeBabalola, however, delivered a stinging indictment of the government on the style of punishment adopted by the country's democratic rulers. He averred: "It is wrong for the liberties of individuals to be tampered with at will either through deportation, detention or any other means and I think it is high time that signatories to both African and UN charters on human rights began to honour their obligations under them."^{lxix}

Following immediately in the wake of the deportation of the Vaswani brothers was the disingenuous and dramatic manner in which AshvinSamthani, billionaire owner of very expansive business interests in Nigeria that included the SeaFood Products Limited and the Jupiter Group of Companies was also tracked down and deported from Nigeria in 2003. Also deported along with Samthani was Praven K. Sha who was described as the billionaire's in-house financial whiz kid. It was he who was purportedly said to have perfected the numerous ways to siphon money out of the country. It was also alleged that he was so central to the crimes that the authorities insisted on his deportation along with his boss. The two men were unceremoniously checked in on an Asia-bound Ethiopia Airways flight.^{lxx} There was no recourse to the law courts.

Among the accusations levied against Samthani was the importation of rotten sea foods into the country, payment of undervalued custom duties, foreign exchange abuses and

other sundry allegations. A Nigerian magazine recounted the rise and fall of the Indian entrepreneur thus: “Ashvini Samthani, who left Nigeria a few days ago a disgraced billionaire was said to have come to Nigeria over twenty years ago... Samthani is said to be very enterprising like many Indians who left their homeland for the goose that was Nigeria. He also learnt quite early that he had limitless chances of making money if he could get round the raft of agencies that regulate business. He began by registering a raft of companies but by 1994 he began mounting an assault on the sea foods business that has come to define the business so far”.^{lxxi}

However, owners of fishing trawlers in Nigeria began to complain of the undercutting tactics of Samthani and his team. The alarm this generated in the business sector was further captured by a national news magazine: “Owners of fishing trawlers appalled by the undercutting tactics of Samthani whined endlessly. But as Samthani became richer, many sank into huge debts and abandoned their trawlers. An operator who spoke on the condition of anonymity told *The New* that there had to be a crime somewhere in the tangled reaches of the Samthani business mind for him to be able to undercut just every competitor (emphasis mine). “Samthani is bad news to any economy. Only a criminal could match the man in business”.^{lxxii} Implicit in the foregoing is the development of business sense incapable of competition or countenancing the sustenance of a business empire without a fraudulent base. Not only was Samthani already convicted in the court of public opinion but also by the government that unceremoniously deported him without a judicial process.

By 2009, the Vaswani case once again had taken another dimension. Sunil, Mahesh and Haresh had become embroiled in a different struggle for their business life in Nigeria. In February 2009, the EFCC had declared the multi-billionaire brothers wanted, accusing them and their companies operating under the Stallion Group, of criminal conspiracy, tax evasion, economic sabotage and money laundering. A similar allegation had constituted enough grounds for their deportation by the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo on May 27, 2003. The EFCC had alleged that after investigation, it was discovered that Popular Foods Nigeria Limited, one of the Vaswani Brothers’ companies, had evaded duty payment amounting to about N2.4 billion in respect of rice it imported into Nigeria towards the end of 2008. On 1 May 2008, the Federal Government had suspended import duties and other taxes on imported rice for six months (May-October 2008) so as to curb rising prices and as an interim measure “to cushion the impact of global food crisis on vulnerable Nigeria”.^{lxxiii} This was the opportunity needed by businesses to make quick profit. That precisely was what caused the new problem for the Stallion Group. However, before the rice scandal broke out, late in 2008 one of their subsidiaries, The Honda Place, was sealed up in Lagos, Kano and Abuja. It took the intervention of Michael Aondoakaa, minister of justice and attorney general for EFCC officials to vacate the premises of the company and reopen them.

On Monday, April 20, 2009, the FG announced the deportation of the Vaswani brothers from the country the second time in six years. The chairperson of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Farida Waziri, a retired assistant inspector-general of police, in company of the Comptroller General of the Nigerian Immigration Service, Chukwurah Udeh announced the deportation order at a press conference in Abuja, Nigeria’s Federal capital city. The deportation order dated April 9 2009 and signed by the interior minister, Godwin Abbe treated each of the Vaswani Brothers separately. Each of the brothers, identified as British citizens in the deportation order was “classified as a prohibited immigrant” who should be deported “by first available means.” The deportation was carried out by the minister based on the powers conferred on him by Section 18 (1) (d) and (2) and section 19 (2) of the Immigration Act, chapter II, the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria,

2004.^{lxxiv} Other Indian nationals and officials of the Vaswani-owned Stallion Group: Bhaskar Sinha, the operating officer of Popular Foods Limited; Pius Francis, operations manager, Stallion Group Lagos and Port Harcourt; Chandrase Karan, Stallion Group warehouse manager and, Vinay Tuteja, officer in charge of the company's rice farms, were picked up and detained by the EFCC. They were detained along with other officials of Premium Foods Limited, Apapa, Lagos, another company owned by the Vaswanis. Two high profile Nigerians were also arrested along with the Indians. These were Tajudeen Olalere, general manager administration, Stallion Group of Companies, and a director of Popular Foods Limited, and Iheanacho Nathaniel, assistant comptroller-general of Customs and Excise in charge of the tariff and trade department of the Nigeria Customs Service.^{lxxv}

On Saturday, April 18, 2009, the arrested Indian officials were summarily deported from the country. However, the Vaswanis, apparently aware of the moves to deport them once again had left the country. But before they left the country they instituted a suit for an injunction to restrain the EFCC from further probing their activities and arresting their employees.

It is of course crucial to ask how the case against the Vaswani had been articulated and presented by the state. The case against the Vaswanis had provided an illuminating picture of international business transactions in the Third World. The company owned by the brothers had ordered the importation of rice to coincide with the period of waiver on import duties on the commodity by the Federal Government from May to October 2009. The EFCC claimed that a total of nine vessels were used in carrying out the rice scam. These were MV Golden, MV Luckyfield, MV Goldemar, MV Tolmi, MVSanye, MV Thor Alliance, MV Almasi, MV Rama and MV Gora. According to the report, MV Golden, MV Luckyfield and MV Goldemar were involved in duty evasion "through the manipulation of documents," while the six other vessels had their customs duties wrongly evaluated. The three vessels- MV Golden, MV Luckyfield and MV Goldemar, with 21,000, 23,000 and 20,500 tonnes of rice respectively were made to evade duty on the consignment of rice they were carrying. According to the EFCC, what happened was a classic case of "front loading" as the necessary papers- cargo manifest, ships' inward report, cargo stowage plan, bill of lading, crew list, port of call list, and so on, were processed at the Port Harcourt port, days before the estimated time of departure from Thailand or the estimated time of arrival of the vessels in the country. The other vessels, MV Tolmi and MV Sanyo, alleged the EFCC, also arrived in Nigeria with imported rice for Popular Foods Limited after the concession of duty on rice. But the dispute involving these had to do with the price of rice in the international market with which the import duty was calculated by the Customs. While the importers claimed that it was expected to be \$450 per tonne of parboiled rice, the customs service insisted on \$850 per tonne.^{lxxvi}

While seemingly wanting to benefit from the government's policy, the Vaswani brothers had been unmindful of the fact that they were a business outfit under the scrutiny of government and their competitors. The court of public opinion had also been arrayed against them. Nevertheless, they seized every opportunity to contest allegations of fraudulent practices against them. In the rice scandal case, they challenged the government and their competitors in the courts claiming that the EFCC was being used by their adversaries to destroy their business. They insisted that all the shipments "entered Nigerian waters before the stipulated duty-free deadline of October 2008, and were also discharged in the Lagos port before proceeding to Port Harcourt."

However, playing on the sentiment of the president's mantra of the rule of law being the pivot of his administration, one of the conglomerate's directors, Tajudeen Olalere appealed

to President Umaru Yar’dua to intervene with a view to stopping the planned deportation of the Vaswanis. As he put it, the “unlawful sealing off or deportation” of the Vaswani “will hurt not only the credibility of government but the prospect of foreign direct investment in Nigeria.”^{lxvii}

The approach of deporting the Vaswani brothers before their case came up in court no doubt left the EFCC in control of the rice war case. The EFCC chairman had alluded to the penchant and capacity of the brothers for securing *ex parte* “motions restraining government agencies from taking certain measures against them.”^{lxviii} However, while in 2003 there had been substantial debates about the political undertone of the deportations, this did not occur in the 2009 case when put against the background of the fact that the administration that deported them was in fact the one that brought them back into the country in 2007. They had been brought back into the country by the Yar’dua administration which revoked an earlier deportation order on the grounds that it did not follow due process. The EFCC thereafter went on the offensive, drawing the attention of the public to the desire of the Vaswani to sponsor a well-orchestrated campaign against the EFCC and its leadership. In a statement released by its spokesperson, Femi Babafemi, the EFCC proclaimed: “In the next few days, Nigerians should not be surprised to see various sponsored libelous publications and materials being circulated through the mass media to discredit and disparage the EFCC and its Chairman. The only reason for this is the nation’s anti-graft agency has dared to touch the rich and powerful Vaswani brothers by asking them to pay legitimate revenues totaling N6.5billion belonging to the Federal Government of Nigeria, a request they rebuffed with disdain and impunity in a manner that portrayed them as if they are above the laws of Nigeria.”^{lxix}

In the 2009 episode, a major contradiction, however, surfaced in the decision to ensure that the Vaswani companies paid the sum claimed by the EFCC. The anti-graft agency, which said it was in touch with the Corporate Affairs Commission further claimed: “We will decide on what to do with the companies when we are done. If they do not have enough money in their accounts, then we may have to dispose of their assets to recover all the money (about N6.5billion), after due process has been followed, of course.”^{lxxx} The Vaswani case drew unnecessary attention to the Indian Diaspora in Nigeria.

Indians at Heart and Global in Spirit

The relationship between the two nations remained on a cordial level with the exchange of ambassadors, bilateral talks and an open and avowed commitment to mutual economic development. In 2006, India agreed to invest six billion U.S. dollars in power plants and other projects in Nigeria. This indeed was strategic. The power sector had by the late 1990s become a national embarrassment. The Nigerian power sector had remained comatose for a long time and was responsible for the withdrawal of several of the Indian companies from Nigeria. The Indian Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria Anil Trigunayat revealed that a high powered Indian delegation had met with President Olusegun Obasanjo to reach an agreement on this strategic partnership. He described Nigeria as one of India’s strategic partners and that as the most populous countries in Africa and Asia respectively, both Nigeria and India had a lot to learn and gain from each other.

The desire to collaborate with Nigeria in other sectors also reflected the peculiar relationship between both countries. The optimism displayed by Amb. Ghanashyam in this regard was quite instructive: “We can work together and cooperate in several sectors. The most important sectors are power, industry, education, Information Technology and Health. In these sectors, we are having standing models where Nigeria can borrow from. This is the

only country where you have Indian companies run by Nigerians and Nigerian companies run by Indians. You will not find this kind of relationship with any other country. This is peculiar and characteristic of Nigeria/India relationship.”^{lxxxii} From October 17-16, 2007, the Honourable Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh paid an official visit to Nigeria. During the visit, (the first after Pandit Nehru’s visit to Nigeria in 1962), “the two sides elevated their relationship to a strategic partnership level through the ‘Abuja Declaration’ that laid down a roadmap for future intensive and extensive cooperation.”^{lxxxiii}

Nigeria’s appreciation of India continued to grow and has been used to define or redefine Nigeria’s national interest. Both countries continued to maintain a healthy diplomatic relationship and continued to partner in different spheres of national life. Nigeria has remained India’s largest trading partner in Africa, while India is the second largest trading partner for Nigeria, with bilateral trade standing at \$17 billion in 2011-12.^{lxxxiv} This relationship became firmer when a Nigerian delegation arrived on tour of India in June 2013, to understand how the world’s largest democracy had maintained the unity of a very diverse society. Speaking at a roundtable on “Revitalizing India-Nigeria Relations” organized by the Indian Council of World Affairs on Tuesday, June 4, 2013. Prof. Olu Obafemi, the head of the delegation, designed as part of the training programme for Nigeria’s National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), affirmed: “We want to see how your economy grew, while Indian democracy has made its fruits available to the people...We are here to study how you maintain peace in the country, and the kind of legal framework utilized to strengthen institutions in the country.”^{lxxxv} Speaking in the same vein, Rear Admiral Amin Koida in an apparent display of admiration for India, and possibly speaking the mind of the country in anticipation of a post-crude oil economy said: “We are keen to see how India has been able to accomplish so much without having oil, how you have managed to diversify the economy and how you have won partners for development.”^{lxxxvi}

By the second decade of the 21st century, Nigeria had fallen on difficult times. What roles should India play in the alleviation of Nigeria’s problems? The national predicament of low economic output and severe underdevelopment has become a major problem. The country therefore needs right policies consistent with the modern state of the world, technologically. This was recently adumbrated by Ayo Opadokun, the Convener of the Movement for Value Restoration:

We need to stop the policy of sending our produce to Europe. We need to expand the base of our manufacturing capacity making it possible to provide more jobs, have enough to eat, export and earn revenues in foreign exchange...^{lxxxvii}

Nigerians also spend approximately N180 billion annually on foreign medical trips. Most of such expenses and resources find their way to India, Germany, Saudi Arabia and the United States.^{lxxxviii} In recent times, however, India has in the contemporary period become a destination of choice for Nigerians. The stunted growth of medical facilities, absence of world class hospitals, poor health value chain, and the generally poor health care system in Nigeria have been responsible for the large scale attempt to benefit from sound health care in India. The questions of obsolete equipment, reliability, availability, timeliness, accessibility and quality are some of the problems bedevilling Nigeria’s health sector.

The trend of referring patients from health institutions in Nigeria to medical institutions in India became one of the greatest developments of the twenty first century. This trend arose mostly due to the lack of adequate healthcare facilities in Nigeria. The health

sector had remained comatose for a long time. This became so pronounced that by 2012, forty-seven percent of Nigerians visiting India did so for medical attention. Mike Chukwu, the CEO of Assetwise capital, speaking at the 2013 annual general conference of the Nigerian Medical association, (NMA), Lagos State, identified part of the problems as the lack of enabling environment for a vibrant medical sector in Nigeria that culminated in the need for medical tourism:

Ambulatory services are often not available or affordable. There is an absence of internationally recognized certifications, a weak regulatory and supervisory framework, and weak framework for legal indemnities...^{lxxxviii}

He further stressed the imperatives of a holistic development of the private sector healthcare

There is need to improve access to capital, develop and enforce quality standards, mobilize public and donor money to the private sector, modify local policies and regulations to foster the role of the private sector and foster Risk Pooling Programmes (Health Insurance).^{lxxxix}

The Indian Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria, Suresh Makhijani confirmed that in 2012, 38,000 visas were issued by the High Commission to Nigerians, out of which 18,000 were for medical treatment. The 47 percent of Nigerians who visited India for medical purposes expended N41.6billion (\$260 million) in foreign exchange in that process. The Deputy High Commissioner's statement is both a commentary on Nigeria's state of health facilities, and a restatement of the good relations between both countries:

Out of this number, we discovered that 18,000 of them travelled for medical treatment in different Indian public and private hospitals. What this goes to show is that many more Nigerians are today turning to India's good quality and cost effective healthcare services...Nigeria and India have come a long way in their diplomatic relations. So, we will continue to welcome Nigerians to India's affordable and good quality healthcare delivery system, especially now that there is an increasing demand by Nigerians to visit India for medical attention.^{xc}

In spite of the gains made by Indians in the medical field, there have been calls on Indians to help Nigeria to conserve scarce foreign exchange.

DrShabihul Hassan, the CMD of Dr. Hassan's Clinic and Diagnostic Centre, Maitama, Abuja was described as an Indian with a mission to turn Nigeria into a "medical Mecca."^{xc} Born to a Professor of Mathematics who arrived Nigeria in 1972, Dr Hassan has become one of the most significant respecer of the rapprochement between Indians and their Nigerian hosts. Like his father who trained several generations of Nigerian students when he arrived in Nigeria in 1972 and the time he retired from active service in 2008, Hassan has identified so much with the land of his sojourn and its people: "I came here as a child with my Dad. You know when you stay in a place and spend all your childhood and all your days there, it becomes your home. My friends and everybody that I know, everybody that I care for, everybody that cares for me, are all here. I have been travelling to India every year and I have gone to many other countries in the world, but that basic quality of friendliness and

tolerance of the Nigerian people, is something that appeals not just to me only but to many foreigners.”^{xcii}

Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria reiterated its readiness to partner with Indian medical expatriates in the running of its 20th Anniversary hospital. Governor Godswill Akpabio pointedly stated this in his office while receiving an Indian medical team led by Dr. Kofo Oganyankin and Mr. John Viyaru. He affirmed: “We want a strong partnership that can create a niche in the health sector... we want to minimize the number of people that die while trying to travel to Europe and India for medical check-up and to minimize the turn-out of Nigerians that leave the country. We would be glad to work with you where you will offer excellent services and you would be amazed by the number of patients that will patronize the hospital because they would be drawn to good services, best care and first-class treatment in a first-class hospital.”^{xciii}

Borno State, the home of the rampaging Islamic insurgency also looked towards India for succour. In May 2014, the Borno State government selected 50 youths from the 27 local government areas of the state to undergo a three-week-train-the-trainers course on irrigation equipment installation, effective utilization and maintenance in India. The Governor, Kashim Shettima affirmed that the training in India became necessary because his government discovered that “in addition to misguided beliefs, insurgency thrives because of joblessness, hopelessness and extreme poverty.”^{xciv}

By 2016, India continued to remain high in Nigeria’s search for a path to development. By the first quarter of 2016, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in Nigeria’s foreign trade statistics valued at N2.72 trillion, India had become one of the country’s largest import partners (behind China but ahead of the USA), while on the largest export table, India, Spain, and Netherlands contributed the highest. According to Odittah (2016:5):

Total import from China, which is the highest in the period under review, is 23.8%, representing 6.7% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and -12.2% year-on-year import volumes. This is followed by India with a total of 6.5% volume of trade, with 7.30% contribution to the GDP, and -7.5% year-on-years. This was then followed by United States of America (USA) which has 8.70% in total volume, 0.80% in GDP rate, and -7.1% in year-on-year import volume. Whereas on the largest export destinations, Nigeria exported total of 12% of goods to India within the period under review, representing 7.30% of the GDP, and -12.8% year-on-year export volume.

However, unlike India, trade relations between Nigeria and Pakistan have remained at very low ebb. In 2013, the Nigerian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ambassador Dauda Danladi had remarked during a visit to the Nigerian Minister of the Federal Capital Territory by the Pakistani Trade delegation to Nigeria that the two nation’s trade potentials have not been well established.^{xcv}

The successes and ingenuities recorded by India in Information Technology (IT) became a significant role model for Nigeria. Engineer Vincent I. Maduka, OFR, a major player in Nigeria’s telecommunication industry verbalized how India turned around in full circle from being a country whose educational institutions Nigeria scoffed at to become a model. Just as India emerged into an IT hub, he hoped that Nigeria’s IT path will take the same route^{xcvi}:

India paid serious attention to IT education, but it was not too long ago that Nigerians were taught to scoff at Indian university education, just as they did with American degrees, also, several years earlier. The “mushrooming” of universities in Nigeria should be saluted, therefore, for just as the Indian high tech schools emerged from the myriad of their higher – education institutions, so, hopefully, will the Nigerian elite schools and graduates grow out of the very large number of differentiated universities that are coming on stream. We also speak a kind of English which is good enough for computers, and apparently, better than Chinese, Korean, and Japanese.

There were those who thought that India should serve as the benchmark for Nigeria’s development. India also became the roadmap that Nigeria should have followed rather than priding itself as the giant of Africa.

Nevertheless, the optimism displayed by Ambassador RangaiahGhanashyam, the Indian High Commissioner to Nigeria in 2014 summarised the beauty of the present and future India-Nigeria engagement most succinctly: “We can work together and cooperate in several sectors. The most important sectors are power, industry, education, Information Technology and Health. In these sectors, we are having standing models where Nigeria can borrow from. This is the only country where you have Indian companies run by Nigerians and Nigerian companies run by Indians. You will not find this kind of relationship with any other country. This is peculiar and characteristic of Nigeria/India relationship.”^{xvii}

Conclusion

We must now once again return to two enduring visions- that provided by MeghnadSaha (1893-1956) who in 1934 had in his exhortation to the rulers of the world pleaded with them to allow for a globalized vision of development; and Nehru’s pronouncement in 1958 during the visit of Kwame Nkrumah to India where he stressed that India and Africa should come closer to each other, to learn from each other and, where possible, to help each other. These two visions have remained very profound despite the changes that the world had experienced.

India and Indians have become many things to Nigeria and Nigerians. The Indian Diaspora in Nigeria, in spite of its small population, has remained a great phenomenon in the history of the country. But it has equally remained an enigma. Its history is simultaneously a story of progressive economic changes, adaptability, and opportunities. The uncanny capacity of the Diaspora in Nigeria to establish a framework for its existence and for its engagement with the people and government has remained quite interesting. The operating environment for investors and manufacturers has remained difficult but for the average Indian entrepreneur, it has nevertheless provided opportunities for resilience, ingenuity, resourcefulness and doggedness. Their exceptional business and investment profiles have remained consistent and profound. But while the image of the ‘Dirty Indian’ has been the mode of appropriation for the Indian community by some section of the Nigerian community, their personal, professional and group triumphs are viewed by several generations of Nigerians as the product of hard work and determination. They have created a visible system and relationship that have endured for decades. The group has in several ways contributed to the development and protection of the economy and society of their host.

Nigeria’s mono-cultural economy has continued to derive about 80% of its earnings from crude oil.^{xviii} There is now a desire to diversify Nigeria’s economic base. India and

Indians must help Nigeria and Nigerians in the new strategic economic decision. Despite the realisation of this need, however, obnoxious practices have also continued to emerge. In recent days, attempts had been made to import into Nigeria, local Nigerian food items prepared in India and sent to Nigeria. This proved very alarming for Nigerian officials. (See Appendix I).

For years now, the U.S. has been seen as hindering efforts to fight global poverty, protect the environment, and maintain peace.^{xcix} The fundamental issues here are that, new and emerging powers should begin to learn from the mistakes of the U.S, and de-emphasise the use of military and strategic weapons in preference for soft power. The socio-political, economic and strategic desires of state have manifested in the antagonisms between Pakistan and India.^c There may be need for new international concessions and approaches designed to tackle the new problems confronting the globe. In spite of that, the position of Morgenthau remains unassailable: “Military power can create the necessary political preconditions for an economy to prosper, but cannot substitute for the industry of a people or for a sound trading and monetary policy.”^{ci} India and Israel have now jointly developed the Indo-Israel medium-range surface- to-air missile designed for neutralising rockets, missiles and jets.^{cii} A product that was jointly developed by India’s Defence research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries, this move no doubt advances India further in its quest for world power status. For Nigeria, that is not the way to go. The country and its people would rather go with Saha:

...rivalry amongst nations and communities should give way to cooperative construction ... The joy of life for grown-up men will be provided not in designing means for the plunder or exploitation of our fellow-men in the various ways but in administering to their needs, and in free development and display of the finer faculties of the mind.^{ciii}

For centuries, Nigerians and Indians have created juncture-points where their desires and needs were negotiated and realised. But as Saha suggested and we accept, a wide adoption of the doctrine of ‘cooperative construction’ should dominate the India-Nigeria engagement far into the twenty first century and beyond.

LECTURE EVENT: The lecture discussion programme was organized at India International Centre (IIC) on 5th of December 2016 and at Mumbai University of 7th of December 2016. At IIC the programme was chaired by Prof Kavita Sharma, President, South Asian University, Delhi. Amb. Virendra Gupta introduced the Indian perspective on Indo-African Relations and Indian diaspora in Africa. Prof Ajay Dubey, President, ODI, introduced the dialogue series and contextualised India-Nigeria Relations in larger context of South-South relations including under recent diaspora policy of Indian government. Dr. Axel Harneit-Sievers, country director of the HBF foundation, contextualize the HBF supports to its global dialogue series in India. The presentation evoked large number of observations and questions which were discussed at length. Some of the prominent observations, questions and discussion points were as follows: -

DISCUSSION REPORT AT INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE ON 5TH DECEMBER 2016

Amb HHS Viswanathan: He agreed with Prof. Adesina's view on India- Nigeria Engagement and focused on the fact that Nigeria is biggest trading partner of India in Africa and second biggest investment destination as well. One of the lacunas within these two countries is that the visit of high level visits from both the side as the difference in the first and the second visit to Nigeria was of almost 40 years. Although government of India is trying to take several initiatives in this regard this also requires return visit from Nigeria to strengthen the relationship. Apart from cultural, economic and political relationship between the two there is a natural affinity with people of India and Nigeria in the way of thinking, attitude and how we do things. Nigerians are very creative in finding solutions. Teachers during the oil boom were the real building blocks between the two countries. It is important to leverage the Diaspora without an Olympian attitude. The positive as well as negative aspect of Indian Diaspora was discussed by Prof. Adesina which was appreciated by him.

Amb Mahesh Sachdev : The India Diaspora comes out to be 0.2% of the total populations of Nigeria yet are the largest of Non African population in totality. The activities have varied overtime. The contacts with average Nigerian were limited in the earlier times. The second phase was the interaction of professionals like doctors, teachers and engineers. The third phase started in late 1990s where there was arrival of Indian companies as a source of investment. According to AmbSachdev, people to people engagement have increased manifold where he highlighted the importance of medical tourism in Nigeria by Indians and engagement of Indians in Nigerian companies that has maintained symbiosis. However Indians are called "dirty Indians" because of professional jealousy and as they say patriotism is the greatest refuse and Indians are the easy targets.

Prof. S.N Malakar: According to him the paper presented dealt with the role of Diaspora with the analysis of seeing the persistent historicity of the relations between the Indians and Nigerians where Indians have imbibed the ethos of Nigerian society for very long time. The cooperative construction between the two should go together, keeping in mind the past and the current situation the country of the population and should be judged on the basis of two sided or overall perspectives of Indians as well as Nigerians.

Ms. RuchitaBeri: It is very important to look into India-Nigeria relations from an academicians's view. She referred to the point that Prof. Adesina made regarding India is emerging as one of the major power in Nigeria and also the impact on globalization on the countries. If it is the case that India is becoming a century then this same goes with Nigeria too as it is the leading economic power in Africa and also is one of the major voices of power when it come to formulate policies regarding peace and security on the continent and also in terms of drafting the common agenda for post development issues. Therefore, both the countries (India and Nigeria) should look forward in finding ways and means of working together for the world order in the era of global governance with a fact that these countries have some responsibilities of shaping the new world as we are defining it. In this context we do share some areas of concern. She then focused on the way Nigerian perceived Indians and vice versa. In the context of current situation of India- Nigeria facing terrorism and Boko Haram creating problems for Nigerians, so India and Nigeria should surely join hands to face this situation in working together for terror free world. Secondly if we talk about world in terms of global commons and climate change is an issue which impacts both India and Nigeria equally and India is taking about common but differentiated approach for resolving

the environmental issues in the North and the South. The perception of Nigerians about India was of Indians mainly based on the ex parents within Nigeria which was mixed. The first instances of response towards policy of segregation was by Indians but were considered as corrupt. Similarly Nigerians are accused of having engaged in narcotics trafficking. We need to move beyond all this allegation/ treating each other as corrupt individual. The matter of concern here is how we manage such perception. One of the solutions can be by counting stories which are put forward by Prof. Adesina's presentation which denies these facts. There should be more interaction in order to fill the gap and remove misconception of criminal natures and should be left on administration to deal with it. The next focus was on the India-Nigeria economic cooperation which is reflected well in terms of trade figures during the era of globalization as the interaction is not just involved at the government level but also several private companies are part of the investments. Nigeria is also focused upon as future business country according to one of the study. India- Nigeria relations are set to acquire a fresh resonance in the coming years and we should work together for making it possible.

Prof. Ajay Dubey: His question was that why Indian Diaspora in Nigeria as presented by the speaker is seen as being engaged in shady and corrupt business to excel and why same set of people in East Africa and South Africa have excelled without such practices? And same Gujarati businesses have been most transparent and least corrupt society in developed countries of the U.S.A, Canada and Europe. Has it anything to do with Nigerian society where no one can be an achiever and successful until and unless engages in corrupt practices and shady deals as there is better space for any honest, professional and businessmen to survive / succeed.

Dr. J.M Moosa: He pointed out the challenges which were highlighted in the presentation like Diaspora is a double edged process/ issue and has to be handled carefully as has implication. In Nigeria, Diaspora actions were not translated as the action of the country as said in the presentation by Prof. Olutayo C. Adesina so this presents a dichotomy and its role in the negative sense that it has been translated overtime. India also faces similar challenges that are reflected through various instances. These challenges will have to be addressed by the government and policy makers.

Dr. Nivedita Ray: The new perspective of perceiving Indians from Nigerians view was appreciated by her. She also focused on "Cooperative construction" and said that issue of enclave is not that exclusive and to Nigeria and even for whole Africa if it is considered. This insularity is always there in East and Southern Africa and so it is a problem. The interrogation by Dr. Ray regarding this was that is it a minority community there or a migrant community which is affluent and yet culturally aloof that makes it problematic for Indians? And how does state reciprocate to that accommodate Indians within their own community. According to her the cooperative construction is important in today's mobile world. It should be noted that how Indian Diaspora engages itself with Nigeria for its own development as a whole. So it is Diaspora that helps in strengthening bilateral relationship, which is important.

Dr. Bashabi Gupta: She started with a remark that India and Nigeria have shared many platforms and has benefitted each other, especially the economic engagement which is very much prevalent now also as Nigeria is our largest trading partner in Africa. She clearly pointed that what is that Nigeria wants from India as Prof. Adesina said that they did not want India to have Olympian attitude because connection cannot be just at the government level but there should be other tracks of engagements throughout. There has been a lot of Industrial development that has happened in Nigeria by the Indians. The path towards constructive cooperation should be highlighted for successful engagements within India and Nigeria.

Open Discussion

Despite of all the facts that have been discussed the concern was that what the mechanisms to handle the current situation are. The discussion was left at the economic and political level. So how do we trickle down this interaction? There have been many interactions between India and Nigeria but those have been restricted to a certain class. There should be government's engagement in order to strengthen the India- Nigeria relationship for a better future. There should be creation of mechanism for interaction among youths.

Dr. Axel pointed out that the debate about perceptions from both the direction should be made more concrete because it is not enough to point out about certain cultural attitudes. And on the other hand not enough to point out certain individual. There are certain structural factors in the socio-economic interactions between Diaspora groups which are the host country, influences very much the relationship. There are different roles for the Diaspora groups like Lebanese in Nigeria who used to be very much stronger but usually been grouped together in public perception. There are different individuals and traders who interact with a wider community, mostly share a productive relationship except when they get politically manipulated and therefore, may be seen as exploiters. The IT and financial professionals have different perspective and role to play. They cannot be regarded as exploiters. There is lot of potential in these groups whose interactions are valuable. These can be used as leverage for learning and development. The latest phase has several long term impacts that are overlooked. It is also important to know that how Diaspora can be strategically used for developing good relationships.

Many perceptions that one has in a country is influenced by media to some extent. So there is need of exchange of media whenever there is an African exchange programme with any country like it generally happens when there is an interaction among the western countries, where several news and articles are flooded for the display. Media can play a very important role in strengthening ties between two countries.

As far as Africa in particular is concern, we have a long way to go. The big push came in 2013 with the India-Africa Forum summit and then there were several visits by the prime minister, president and vice president etc.

In response to the questions, comments and suggestion raised Prof. Olutayo accepted the fact that many of them raised valid concerns when India-Nigeria engagement is being discussed, basically that what does Nigeria wants from India? It is not about the relation that India shares with Israel which is not Nigerian's priority. Their priority is the well being of the people. How Indians contribute to agriculture, industries and other development related areas to make people's life more meaningful. Talking about diplomatic relations he pointed out one of the problems that he faced with the embassy while coming to India. It is same as in case of Nigeria that there should be grant of visa at the entry and there should be liberalized visa process, where he praised the Indian Embassy being civilized. There should be cultural exchange among students. The perceptions on cultural attitude were well taken by him as suggested by Dr. Axel. On the exchange of media he remarked that it is very much important.

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Chair- **Dr. Shudha Mohan** highlighted five features/ themes after the presentation.

1. The post colonial Nigerian state is a plural society, which begins on the whole range of complimentary as an Indian society.
2. The role of Indian Diaspora, which is although a little in number but employment capability helped in economic growth in the spirit & consciousness of Nigeria.
3. The biases that exist about India and Nigeria which is also prevalent in India and stereotype images of both the countries and their people are reflected by media and writings. Therefore, it is important to read works by Nigeria.
4. People to people interview and contact are very much important for the understanding of two countries' engagement.
5. Not only economic relations was focused but also some tensions are the part and parcel of any society like it is for India- Nigeria Engagement

Questions and Discussions

On the issue of fighting **polio** in Nigeria especially in the time of Boko Haram referring to **terrorism**, the steps undertaken by government was in question. On this Prof. Olutayo C. Adesina replied by explaining that both the issues are linked by a line of section of the north as illiterate and suspicious. He exemplified this by an incident that five years ago, when a well known scholar came up for sterilization of polio and students were getting immunized by the government, it was considered by the people that the government is taking this step for reducing the population of Muslims by killing them. Eventually this problem might be eradicated from Nigeria but of course it will take time because the effect of Boko Haram's rule over the country.

The next concern was raised over the **presence of India and China in the neo-colonial period** in the context of infrastructure and development. What are the actions taken by Nigerian government towards India's engagement, positive presence and comparative advantage over China in Nigeria? And another related issue was the integration of Indians in Nigeria as India shares a long economic history where since 1953 it has been a trading partner. On the above issue of soft power and expectations from Nigeria he said that India and China are in a race of global competition in case of several countries. Talking especially with reference to Africa, China has been the late comer but has infrastructures for the development which has turned positive on their side. Talking about the integration Prof. Olutayo explained that Indians generally don't mix with the Nigerian population and rather find their own group for interactions. There are very to take up the Nigerian nationalism. Unlike Kenya and South Africa, Indians do not engage themselves in politics and keep themselves aloof in this regard although are very active in terms of charity and donations.

The next question was asked related to **African Union's influence in Nigeria** and effect on the continent's engagement with African countries. For this the Prof. said that African Union does not have much say as the promoter Gaddafi has been killed.

The next concern was **Indians being racist**. Few months back at a conference the African diplomats claimed that they were not respected and India and China were called racist. In this regards he said that Indians are more in question because they live secluded in

the country unlike Chinese who live among the people and they relate. This perspective helps them to get themselves recognized. Indians discriminate Nigerians on the basis of color and make offensive remarks.

Like in India there are lots of efforts made by the Indians for the promotion of Indian tourism as they are very proactive but as Prof. Adesina responded to the issue of **Nigeria being promoted as a tourist place** he said that Nigeria neither being promoted by the Nigerian government nor by the ambassadors. As could point out that there is an image problem, which is being taken care by the present government. It is going to take some time in the recognition of such status. There are many regions where Nigeria lag behind so there should be provisions in order to fill in those gaps then only it can have a prestigious position in the continent and promoted further. He basically focused on improvement of agriculture practices and industrialization that should be strengthened.

On the question of **Nigeria along with South Africa to rule the continent** as Nigeria is considered as one of the fastest and largest growing youth status in International relations as South Africa, Prof. Olutayo said that the status South Africa enjoys is at par in comparison to Nigeria as anywhere in the world to engage itself is not supported at all. For that matter even South Africa doesn't consider Nigeria nowhere in the continent. So there is no room to rule the continent.

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