

Global South Matters

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IN FOCUS



India-Maldives: Strengthening Development Partnership

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Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is visiting the Maldives from July 25 to 26, 2025. During this visit, the Prime Minister will attend the 60th-anniversary celebrations of the Maldives' independence as the Guest of Honour. This presence underscores the robust and expanding relationship between India and the Maldives.

The Maldives holds a pivotal position, as India considers it an essential partner under its Neighbourhood First policy and Vision SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), which aims to enhance maritime security and cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region. The development partnership has been further deepened by the launch of MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions), which extends India's development vision across the Global South.

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Key Developments across the Global South



India's UPI Surpasses Visa To Become World's Top Real-Time Payment System: International Monetary Fund

India has emerged as the global leader in fast payments, according to a recent note by the International Monetary Fund titled Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability. At the heart of this transformation is the Unified Payments Interface,

better known as UPI. Launched in 2016 by the National Payments Corporation of India, UPI has changed how people send and receive money in the country. This shift has taken India away from cash and card-based payments and pushed it towards a digital-first economy. Millions of individuals and small businesses now rely on UPI for safe and low-cost transactions. By making payments quick and accessible, UPI has become a powerful tool for financial inclusion.

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South Asia Achieves Record Immunisation Coverage

South Asia has achieved its highest-ever immunisation coverage for children, with notable progress in India and Nepal, according to new data released by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF for 2024. India reduced its number of zero-dose children — those who have not received a single vaccine - by 43 percent, from 1.6 million in 2023 to 0.9 million in 2024. Nepal achieved a 52 percent reduction, from 23,000 to 11,000, a WHO statement said. The progress marks a milestone in the region's efforts to protect every child from vaccine-preventable diseases. In 2024, 92 percent of infants in South Asia received the third dose of the DTP vaccine — a crucial global indicator - up two percentage points from 2023.

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International Finance Corporation Seeks to Empower Women in South and Southeast Asia

Marking a milestone in efforts to mobilize capital through blended finance to empower women and underserved communities in emerging markets and developing economies, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group and the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets, is investing in Impact Investment Exchange's (IIX) Women's Livelihood Bond™ 7 (WLB7). IFC is investing \$10 million in this bond series for the first time, as well as \$4.5 million in subordinated debt in the IIX Women's Catalyst Fund, a de-risking facility that catalyses women's access to capital markets.

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International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre for South-South Cooperation and South Africa's National Research Foundation Sign MoUs

The International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre for South-South Cooperation under the auspices of UNESCO (ISTIC) and South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF) have officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to deepen collaboration in science, technology, and innovation (STI), marking a significant milestone in South-South cooperation. This strategic partnership aims to facilitate collaborative research, enhance capacity-building for early- and mid-career researchers in the Global South, and promote the exchange of knowledge, scientific expertise, and innovation in sectors such as water, health, climate change, artificial intelligence, and other mutually beneficial fields.

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India and Argentina Deepen Bilateral Agricultural Cooperation

The 2nd Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting on Agriculture between India and Argentina witnessed the Indian Co-chair, Shri Devesh Chaturvedi, Secretary, Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, joining the session virtually. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Sergio Iraeta, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, from the Argentine side. Both sides underscored the significance of the meeting as a key milestone in deepening bilateral cooperation in the fields of agriculture and allied sectors. Both sides discussed key issues related to cooperation in Horticulture, Value chain of Oilseed and Pulses cultivation, Mechanisation, Precision Agriculture, Carbon Credit for Farmers, Biopesticide, Locust Control & Management, New breeding Technologies and market access among other issues.

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African Development Bank Approves Fund for Agricultural Programme in Morocco

The African Development Bank (AfDB) Board of Directors has approved €100 million in financing for Morocco to launch a comprehensive agriculture support program targeting women and young entrepreneurs. The initiative called the Program for Supporting Inclusive Solidarity Agriculture for Women and Youth (PAASIFEJ), aims to create lasting opportunities for women and young people while strengthening food security and preparing Morocco's small-scale farmers for climate change challenges. The program will stimulate entrepreneurship among women and youth in rural areas by establishing tailored financing and incentive mechanisms.

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Africa Launches Continental Strategy to Decentralise Health Services

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) convened public health leaders from ten African countries in Yaoundé to co-develop a continental framework for decentralising laboratory services. The four-day workshop, which began on 14 July, placed equitable access to diagnostics at the core of Africa's epidemic preparedness and response strategy. Together, they produced the Continental Guidance for the Decentralization of Laboratory Services—a practical, action-oriented tool to help Member States design national diagnostic strategies that bring testing closer to communities and improve outbreak detection and response.

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Pan American Health Organization and the Caribbean Community Sign Joint Subregional Cooperation Strategy

The Joint Subregional Cooperation Strategy will provide a coordinated framework for technical cooperation to address common public health challenges in the Caribbean. It was signed by the Director of the Pan American Health Organization, Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, and Dr. Carla N. Barnett, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The strategy will cover the 15 CARICOM Member States: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as its five associate members: Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

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India and Nepal Sign Agreements

India and Nepal signed an agreement to implement five "high-impact" development projects related to education and health in the Himalayan nation under the grant assistance of the Government of India. The five "High Impact Community Development Projects" include the construction of various school buildings in the Madhesh and Sudurpashchim provinces. It also includes the construction of a five-bed hospital building in the Gandaki province. Since 2003, India has undertaken 579 High-Impact Development Projects in Nepal, including these five projects.

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Algeria and Zimbabwe Cement Strategic Partnership

In a move to bolster South-South cooperation and deepen bilateral ties, Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune and his Zimbabwean counterpart, Emmerson Mnangagwa, presided over a formal signing ceremony in Algiers, sealing a series of strategic agreements and memoranda of understanding between the two nations. The high-level event took place during President Mnangagwa's two-day official visit to Algeria. The ceremony marked a milestone in the Algeria-Zimbabwe partnership, with the conclusion

of several key agreements aimed at enhancing cooperation in economic development, education, investment, and cultural exchange.

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Bolivia Thanks India for Timely Support

Bolivian President Luis Alberto Arce Catacora has extended heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Government for donating 3,00,000 doses of the Measles and Rubella (MR) vaccine. In a message, President Arce described the gesture as one of solidarity and timely support amid a growing health emergency in the country. He said the vaccines will significantly boost Bolivia's mass immunisation campaign for children aged 1 to 14, helping protect them amid the ongoing outbreak. Bolivia declared a National Health Emergency on June 23 due to a sudden spike in measles cases across several departments.

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Tanzania Strives Towards Digitalising Agriculture

In an innovative move to modernise its agricultural sector, Tanzania officially launched e-Kilimo, a digital platform aimed at transforming the way farmers access technical advice, agricultural inputs, and accountability mechanisms. The initiative, unveiled by Agriculture Minister Hussein Bashe signals a strategic push toward digitalisation in a sector that contributes nearly 23% to the nation's GDP and supports two-thirds of the population. e-Kilimo also entails a digital registry of input suppliers, designed to enhance traceability and combat the proliferation of counterfeit seeds and agrochemicals—a persistent challenge in Tanzania's agricultural landscape.

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UAE-Tunisia Agriculture and Food Forum Explores Novel Growing Methods

On the sidelines of the International Food Show Africa (IFSA Africa), the Ministry of Economy and Tourism, in coordination with the UAE Embassy in Tunisia, organized the UAE-Tunisia Agriculture and Food Forum to strengthen the economic partnership between the UAE and Tunisia in the areas of food, supply chains, and technologies related to the food value chain. The Forum was attended by H.E. Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy and Tourism; Dr. Iman Ahmed Al Salami, UAE Ambassador to the Republic of Tunisia; and officials from public and private entities in both countries, as well as representatives of international organizations and startups in the agriculture and food security sectors, including Al Islami Foods, Iveco, and Emirates Bio Farm.

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Economic Community of West African States Fund Launches Climate-Smart Agriculture Training

In a significant step toward building a climate-resilient agricultural sector in West Africa, the ECOWAS Regional Fund for Agriculture and Food (RFAF), under the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID), has launched a five-day training program for financial institutions as part of the pilot phase of the West African Initiative for Climate-Smart Agriculture (WAICSA). The training, held at the Legend Hotel Airport in Ikeja, Lagos, aims to strengthen the capacity of banks and microfinance institutions to provide tailored credit to agricultural small and medium-sized enterprises (Agri-SMEs) working within the climate-smart agriculture (CSA) value chain.

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Chad Launches \$1.5B Digital Strategy

The government of Chad has launched an ambitious \$1.5 billion programme under its “Chad Connection 2030” strategy, aimed at transforming the country into one of Africa’s leading digital economies within the next six years. At the heart of the plan is a commitment to deliver quality internet access to the majority of Chadians by 2030, empowering citizens and businesses through widespread digital connectivity. The strategy outlines a series of strategic priorities to unlock digital access across the country. Key among these is the construction of new regional connection lines to improve both the quality and availability of internet services.

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Malaysia and Singapore Deepen Ties

Malaysia is strengthening ties with Singapore by accelerating digital transformation in its public sector. The collaboration intends to improve service delivery through technology-driven reforms and demonstrates Malaysia’s commitment to modernising governance systems. During an official visit to Singapore, Malaysia’s Chief Secretary identified government technology as a top priority, citing Singapore’s good performance in digital governance. Singapore has built innovative systems to assist policy decisions, such as digital identity, e-payments, and AI-driven analytics, establishing a standard for digital efficiency and citizen engagement. Malaysia intends to draw on Singapore’s expertise to advance its govtech initiatives and improve administrative procedures while increasing openness.

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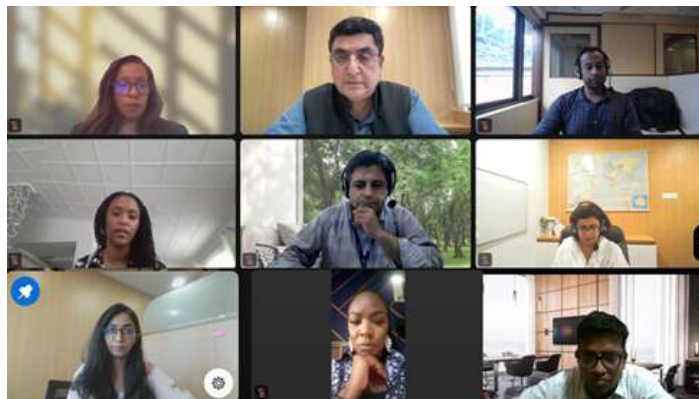


Algeria Advances on the Use of Digital Technology

Algeria moves to modernise its public works sector by adopting digital technology to boost project management. The Ministry of Public Works and Basic Infrastructure announced plans to launch a digital portal and centralised system for overseeing infrastructure projects across the country. Minister Lakhdar Rekhoukh said the system will serve as a real-time dashboard to aid quick decision-making and raise implementation efficiency. This digital move fits a broader government effort to digitalise public procurement in Algeria. The infrastructure sector faces issues like chronic delays, unexpected cost hikes, and opaque monitoring—factors that hinder public investment and strain state finances.

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DAKSHIN Network and Collaborations



DAKSHIN Meeting with the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development, Liberia

DAKSHIN had a successful virtual meeting with the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development, Liberia, on 17 July 2025. The meeting was initiated by Professor Gulshan Sachdeva, Chief Coordinator, DAKSHIN, by giving a brief description of the inception and mandate of the centre. He discussed the contemporary focus areas of the centre, such as health, agriculture and digital solutions. He also emphasised the importance of women-led development across such sectors. Further, he mentioned DAKSHIN's rich network of institutions/think tanks and its efforts to facilitate policy research, capacity building, and technology transfer among countries in the Global South. Madam Ellen O. Pratt, Executive Director, Ms. Nduta Kuria, Director (Fundraising & Partnerships) and Ms. Jenella Sirleaf, Chief Operating Officer, were present from The Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development. Madam Ellen O. Pratt outlined the strategic pillars of the institute, including women's development, designing local programmes targeted to support women-led businesses at the grassroots level, researching on a multifaceted approach to gender equality and employment and launching campaigns to build a campus that would seek to promote the development of

women. The meeting successfully concluded with both sides affirming the importance of conducting joint research & studies and organising seminars and workshops on such issues.

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