DNA

India to improve connectivity with Africa and Pacific nations

S Jaishankar S Jaishankar

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India plans to put in more effort in the maritime space to its south towards the Indian Ocean to increase connectivity with East Africa as well as with the Pacific islands. Speaking at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar said growth and connectivity are now central to India's foreign policy thinking. "The approach of 'sabka saath, sabka vikas' (collective action, inclusive growth) is as much a belief in international relations as it is in domestic development," he said.

Jaishankar said the growth and connectivity initiatives were truly global and that there was need to make these initiatives people-centric to ensure the interests of all stakeholders are reflected. "It is particularly necessary if we are to ensure that such initiatives are demand-driven and locally owned. Today's gathering is one step in that direction. I am confident that it would contribute to the emergence of a broad consensus on this set of issues," he said.

He further said there was need to come up with initiatives based on universally recognised international norms, good governance, rule of law, openness, transparency and equality. "There must be a strong sense of local ownership which can only happen with consultative project designing, transfer of technology and encouragement of skills," he added. He also said there is need to ensure financial responsibility so that there is no encouragement of unsustainable debts. He called for activities that must fully conform to balanced ecological and environmental protection and preservation standards.

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- Since Narendra Modi took over as the Prime Minister, India has significantly improved its position in the international political arena.
- Now, with steps like this, India is not only emerging as a global political entity, but as an able global leader.

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