

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Visited Namibia

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's July 2025 visit to Namibia was the first by an Indian Prime Minister in nearly three decades and the final leg of a five-nation outreach to the Global South. The key takeaways relate to deepening bilateral relations, strengthening India's "South-South cooperation," expanding India's strategic footprint in Africa, and promoting India's position as a leader of the Global South.

Key outcomes and agreements

- **Highest civilian honour:** PM Modi was conferred the "Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis" by Namibian President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, the highest civilian award in Namibia.
- **Digital public infrastructure (DPI):** Namibia became the first country to sign a licensing agreement to adopt India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) technology. This advances India's "tech diplomacy" and expands its DPI globally.
- **Multilateral initiatives:** Namibia officially joined two key India-led global initiatives: the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the Global Biofuels Alliance.
- **Bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs):** Key agreements were signed in healthcare and entrepreneurship, alongside discussions on broader cooperation in:
 - Defence and maritime security
 - Agriculture
 - Energy and critical minerals
 - Skill development and capacity building

Strategic significance for India

- **Reinforcing historical ties:** India has a long history of supporting Namibia's liberation struggle. India raised the issue of Namibia's independence at the UN in 1946, and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) established its first overseas diplomatic office in New Delhi in 1986. The visit reinforced this shared anti-colonial heritage.
- **Countering strategic competition:** By offering a model of partnership based on dialogue, capacity building, and mutual respect, India provides an alternative to the "hard infrastructure model" of other global powers, namely China.

- **Access to critical resources:** As a resource-rich nation, Namibia is a source of strategic minerals like uranium, which is crucial for India's energy security. The visit aims to explore and secure these resources in a new phase of pragmatic cooperation.
- **Boosting "South-South cooperation":** The visit underscored India's commitment to strengthening ties with the Global South. It showcased India's model of "development partnership," which prioritizes local needs and avoids a donor-recipient dynamic.
- **Gateway to Southern Africa:** Namibia's stable political environment and strategic location provide India with a vital entry point into the broader Southern African region and access to the Atlantic coast.
- **Cheetah conservation diplomacy:** The visit built on the 2022 agreement for the first intercontinental translocation of cheetahs from Namibia to India's Kuno National Park, which attracted global attention to India's conservation efforts.

Broader Global South outreach (five-nation tour)

The visit to Namibia concluded PM Modi's five-nation tour, which also included Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, and Brazil. This broader diplomatic push sought to achieve several objectives:

- **Showcasing leadership:** The tour demonstrated India's commitment to championing the concerns and priorities of the Global South on the world stage.
- **Diversifying partnerships:** By engaging with nations across Africa and Latin America, India is diversifying its strategic and economic partnerships beyond traditional diplomatic circuits.
- **Strategic balancing:** India is navigating a multipolar world by building closer ties with emerging economies and reforming global institutions to better reflect the aspirations of the Global South.

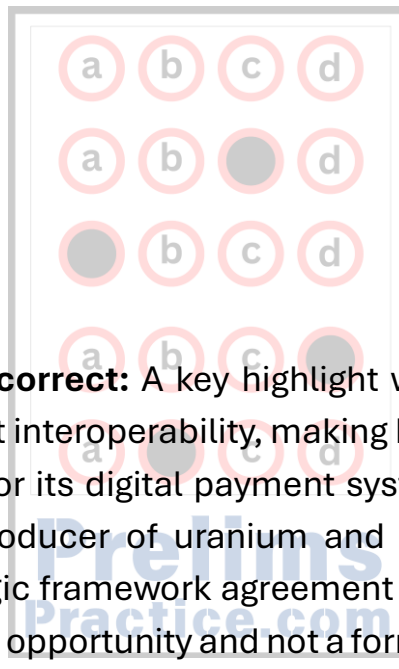
Practice Questions:

1. Consider the following statements regarding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Namibia in July 2025 and the broader India-Africa relationship:

- I. During the visit, India and Namibia signed an agreement enabling a technology transfer for the implementation of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) system in Namibia
- II. Namibia is a leading global producer of uranium, and a strategic framework agreement on mineral resources, including uranium access, was a major outcome of the visit

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) I only
- b) II only
- c) Both I and II
- d) Neither I nor II



Answer: a

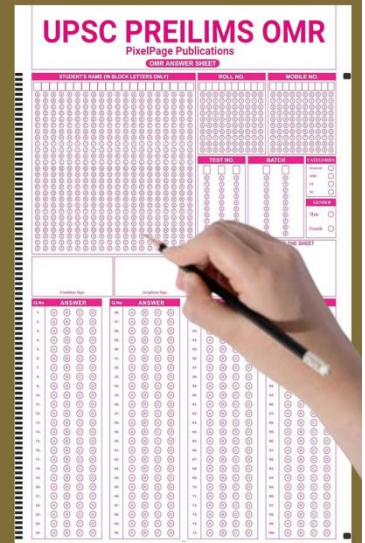
Explanation: Statement I is correct: A key highlight was the signing of a technology agreement for unified payment interoperability, making Namibia the first African country to adopt the UPI technology for its digital payment system. **Statement II is incorrect:** While Namibia is a major producer of uranium and other critical minerals, reports indicate that a specific strategic framework agreement on mineral resources, including uranium access, was a missed opportunity and not a formal outcome of the visit, despite being a key area of interest. Discussions on energy and critical minerals occurred, but a formal agreement on resource access was not concluded.

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