

World Suicide Prevention Day

Every year on September 10th, we mark *World Suicide Prevention Day*. This day shines a spotlight on a critical issue, aiming to reduce the stigma around talking about suicide and to increase awareness about how we can prevent it. It's a day when organizations, governments, and people across the globe come together to send a clear message: actions can create hope, and it's possible to prevent suicide. The importance of World Suicide Prevention Day lies in its goal to save lives. More than 703,000 people die by suicide annually, worldwide.



#TRENDING

Upcoming Concerts in India worth travelling for

These performances are worth the cross-country trip



Festival season is upon us and India's music scene is brimming with exciting events. As the weather takes a turn for the better, these upcoming music events promise a unique experience worth travelling for.

October : Jodhpur RIFF

What you can expect: Set against the backdrop of the 15th-century Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur RIFF takes place on *Sharad Purnima*, under the brightest full moon of the year. This open-air festival offers an enchanting atmosphere, with performances spread across multiple venues within the fort, such as the *Jaswant Thada* and the ancient *chhatris*. This year's line-up promises a playful

blend of global and Indian music, featuring French musician, Eric Mouquet and India's *Sona Mohapatra*. Don't miss the rising Rajasthan roots group 'SAZ', adding to the festival's rich showcase of folk music, all set in the magical ambience of the blue city.

When: 16-20 October, 2024
Where: Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur
Cost: Rs. 5,310 onwards

November : Dua Lipa

What you can expect: Dua Lipa is returning to India, headlining the second edition of the Feeding India concert in Mumbai, a charity event supporting hunger relief efforts. After her debut in 2019, you can look forward to dancing along to hits like *Levitating* and *Don't Start Now*. The night

will also feature performances from supporting acts of *Jonita Gandhi* and *Talwinder*, ensuring a full line-up of unforgettable music.

When: 30 November, 2024
Where: MMRDA Grounds, Mumbai
Cost: Rs. 3,500 onwards

November : Bandland

What you can expect: Bandland is back in Bengaluru, and this year promises to be bigger than before. Headlined by rock giants, *Avenged Sevenfold* and *Extreme*, the two-day festival will feature two stages and performances by 12 heavyweight artists. Expect electrifying sets from *Sutej Singh*

and *Thaikkudam Bridge*, *Zero* and *Bloodwood*. From punk to metal and classic rock, this outdoor festival is a must for those seeking a window into India's live rock music scene.

When: 23-24 November, 2024
Where: NICE Grounds, BIEC, Bengaluru
Cost: Rs. 3,999 onwards

December : Echoes of Earth

What you can expect: The 7th edition of 'India's greenest music festival' is set to take place this year amidst lush greenery. This year's theme, 'Symphony of Seasons,' is reflected in the striking design and installations like the *Jungle Stage*, the *Kraken-Giant Pacific Octopus*, the *Big Beak Great Indian Hornbill*, and the *Ghost-Horned Ghost Crab*. Known for its sustainability initiatives, the festival incor-

porates upcycled materials, solar-powered stages, and zero-waste practices. Expect a vibrant atmosphere as you enjoy performances from *Mount Kimbie*, *Cobblestone Jazz*, *Shubh Saran*, and many more across genres. Plus, it's one of the few festivals where pets are welcome.

When: 7-8 December, 2024
Where: Bengaluru
Cost: Rs. 5,999 onwards

December : Magnetic Fields

What you can expect: Magnetic Fields is set to mark its 10th anniversary with the theme 'Unified Field', offering a unique boutique festival experience in the village of *Alsisar* in Rajasthan. The festival blends contemporary music with a deep commitment to the local community, supporting various local ini-

tiatives and fostering a spirit of unity. Though, the full line-up is not out yet, expect a celebration of eclectic sounds, artistic expression and cultural immersion.

When: 6-8 December, 2024
Where: Alsisar Mahal, Rajasthan, India
Cost: Rs. 18,250 onwards



India moving in with Considerate but Tiny Steps

The four major focus areas for the India-Africa partnership are military exchanges in the context of security of the Indian Ocean, physical and digital infrastructure, healthcare, pharma and vaccines and start-up ecosystem. The African nations have benefited from *India's Duty Free Tariff Preference scheme*, which provides duty-free access to 98.2 per cent of India's total tariff lines. The trade between India and African countries has been balanced with exports of trade and services of about \$40 billion and imports of \$49 billion.

Neelopal Mishra

Historical ties with Africa started in 1955 when the governments of Burma, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka co-sponsored the Bandung Conference and they brought together an additional twenty-four nations from Asia, Africa and the Middle East. The delegates built upon *Panchsheel* (the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence) as they sought to build solidarity among the recently independent nations. India has always believed in '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', the World is One Family. Therefore, India engages with each country as an equal, and focuses on common aspirations.

President Trump at the 2017 APEC Summit in Vietnam envisioned of Indo-Pacific partnership to check the rise of China. The Indo-Pacific partnership has put India into centre stage. This has led to strategic convergence with the US that would help to contain China's hegemony.

India's geopolitical interests includes the South-South cooperation, UNSC reforms, Competition with China. Cooperation in global issues such as climate change and WTO reforms. The Geo-economic interest of energy security, rare earth minerals, the supply of Uranium, other mineral resources and a growing population of Africa provides for new opportunities for goods and services exports from India. Geostategic interest entails the Maritime security especially on the East coast of Africa. These countries are important for peace and prosperity of the Indian Ocean region, trade relations across and beyond Africa, and also the interests of

Indian diaspora in Africa. For India to progress and secure its geostrategic interests, India has embarked on an 'African Safari' as Africa is no longer a 'Hopeless Continent' but 'A Hopeful Continent' due to its resources, market and aspirations. To offset China's influence in Africa, India has been acutely responsive to the changing priorities and requirements of African countries. India's main aim is to help with human resource development in Africa contrary to what China is doing i.e., imposing their culture and exploiting the natural resources with no benefit to the citizens of those countries. There has been unprecedented outreach of India to Africa in the last five years with many important visits to Africa.

Economic Measures

India has increased its credit flow to Africa, making Africa the second-largest beneficiary of Indian credit. Forty-two African nations received about \$12 billion or 38% of all credit extended by India in the last decade. India has established over 185 project-based lines of credit throughout Africa. Africa has made good use of credit lines, with projects that include healthcare, infrastructure, agriculture, irrigation, energy, transportation, social housing, water and defence. India is seeing a steady increase in demand as these projects bring a lot of benefits to the economy.

This is in contrast to China as India lets the African governments decide what they need and doesn't burden them with the sort of projects that Beijing is often criticized for. Training decision makers from African countries on the dual problems of centralized decision-making and poor regulation of Chinese investment can be a possible start that could enable the African countries to avoid extravagant and exploitative

#WORLD VIEW



Prime Minister, Narendra Modi with South African President, Jacob Zuma.

interactions, pushing back on such schemes by China. China's loans to Africa may have dipped, but they are still 11 times higher.

India's *CI-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership* is a regular feature since 2005. These editions now focus on infrastructure development, trade finance, education and training, agriculture and food processing, consultancy services and healthcare, investments, exchange of knowledge and expertise, creating shared value for business and industry, in addition to other areas where Indian companies have steadily increased their presence over the years in Africa.

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India's Ties with Africa

India has also always stood by its friends in times of need, by extending support in the form of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, often as a first responder. India elevated the engagement with Africa by hosting a summit in Delhi for all the African leaders, unveiling sustained high-level political contact, expanding India's diplomatic footprint, strengthening economic

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getting into Trilateral Cooperation with three countries for taking up projects in Africa.

There is a changing face of security and defence in the African continent as Africa is more acutely aware now than ever before. There is a need to combat violence, radicalization and terrorism if development has to become sustainable. Indian peacekeepers have been deployed in over a dozen UN peacekeeping missions in Africa, since our first mission in Congo in 1960. Today, over 5,000 Indians serve in five peacekeeping operations in Africa. Indian women established a landmark with the first *all female Police Unit* of the United Nations in Liberia. The defence and security cooperation is growing with nations in Africa, for counter-terrorism and piracy and keeping our seas secure. Indian Military Training Teams are being deputed to their National Defence Academies of many African countries, starting with Uganda a few years back. Nigeria has signed a USD 1 billion deal with India to boost defence industry.

On 9 September 2023, members of G-20 unanimously accepted India's proposal of converting the African Union's permanent guest status to permanent membership. This lends India huge diplomatic clout in Africa. Gains for India from African Union's entry in G-20 are immense as it solidifies India's status as a key player in global governance, a nation championing inclusivity and diversity on the international stage and also highlights debt challenges faced by developing economies. This also helps India in gaining a unique opportunity to create a more diverse and representative platform, aligning perfectly with

India's own global aspirations to foster a multipolar world. As countries in the Global South continue to rise in prominence, it would be imperative for the institutions like G-20 to become more reflective of today's diverse global landscape and the membership in the G-20 would give African nations a *direct say* in tackling major global challenges, including economic growth, climate change, and sustainable development.

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The Path forward

India lacks diplomatic presence in Africa as India has an embassy only in 29 out of 54 African countries, therefore, India must boost its presence in all African countries. A lot of African countries are suffering from political instability. Thus, pan-African strategies will not work as Africa is not homogenous. India could have ties with multiple regional associations of Africa and individual countries can mutually be benefited.

Developing countries are already looking to partner African countries in their developmental path. In Africa's pursuit of 'Africa-owned' and 'Africa-led' development, India's endeavour to base the partnership on the principles of equality, mutual respect, solidarity and mutual benefit would

go a long way. Sustained connection with the people of Indian origin, who have played a key role in socio-economic development of their adopted countries in Africa, is vital as they will continue to be a living bridge.

India could help Africa to leapfrog into Industry 4.0, as Africa searches for modern technology that will positively impact the lives of its citizens. India has made this Journey and development partnership should be a versatile, technology intensive and a vehicle for sharing cutting edge technology, especially digital technology and artificial intelligence. The first pilot e-ITEC course was conducted for two countries in Africa on Big Data Analytics with Indian Institute of Technology Madras. Going forward, India should work with Africa to address the challenge of the knowledge, technology and digital divides so that the 4th industrial revolution is an inclusive one.

India hosts a multinational military exercise *'AFINDEX'* with militaries of African countries. In addition to this, India also hosted the first Army Chiefs conference. This could become a regular feature with more permanent joint training teams like the one in Uganda stationed across Africa. Alumni relations with personnel trained in India and personnel trained by Indians in Africa should be developed for increased cooperation.

ITEC scheme should be enhanced to more African countries and unused vacancies could be allocated to other countries. Yoga institutes, Ayurvedic institutes and increase in cultural programmes should help a great deal in establishing people-to-people contact. Scholarships to more students on exchange programmes should help in creating a bond amongst the future leaders.

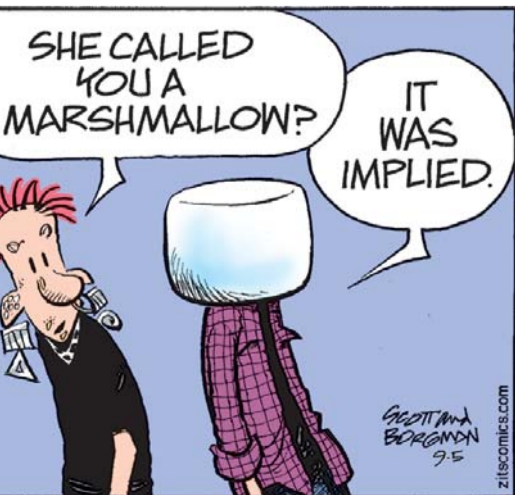
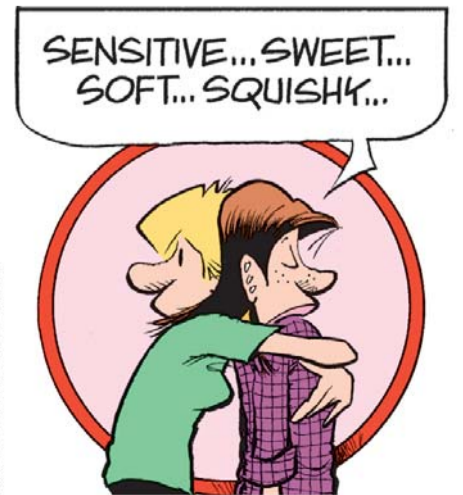
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By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



#ANTARCTICA

When was the last time Antarctica was ice-free?

Antarctica is covered by a miles-thick ice sheet, but was that always the case? And when was the coldest continent ice-free?

Antarctica, which is nearly four times the size of the United States, is almost entirely covered by a miles-thick layer of ice. But the South Pole hasn't always been frozen. So, when was the last time that Antarctica was ice-free?

This ice cap formed relatively recently in geological terms, experts say. "I think most people would say 34 million years ago when the ice sheet first formed in Antarctica," said Eric Wolff, a Paleoclimatologist at the University of Cambridge. "(Previously) most of it would have been like northern Canada today, tundra and coniferous forest."

Global temperatures are a key factor influencing the extent of ice coverage. Around 50 million years ago, the world was about 25 degrees Fahrenheit (14 degrees Celsius) warmer than it is today, but temperatures steadily decreased over the following 16 million years. By 34 million years ago, a time period known as the Eocene-Oligocene boundary, the climate was 14.4 degrees F (8 degrees Celsius) warmer than it is today.

But what triggered this temperature drop, and was that all it took for the ice sheets to form?

"There are two factors, and probably, both were in play," Wolff told Live Science. "One of them is a change in the carbon dioxide concentration of the atmosphere, and the other is the movements of the continents and, in particular, the opening up of the Drake Passage, the strait between South America and Antarctica that connects the South Atlantic with the South Pacific."

The more carbon dioxide that's in the atmosphere, the more heat is trapped and the warmer the planet is. "From about 60 million to 50 million years ago, the carbon dioxide concentration in Earth's atmosphere was really high, somewhere around 1,000 to 2,000 parts per million, or between 2.5 to 5 times today's levels," said Tina van de Flierdt, a Geochimist at Imperial College London.

"But we know that the CO2 in the atmosphere came down around that Eocene-Oligocene boundary," she told Live Science. "This decrease in atmospheric CO2 would have been



accompanied by a cooling of the global climate," she added, "probably tipping Earth over a threshold and allowing ice sheets to form."

"However, there was also localized cooling (likely) on the Antarctic continent due to plate tectonics," Wolff said. Around this time, South America and Antarctica finally separated, opening up what's now the Drake Passage.

"This led to what we call a circumpolar current, water going right around Antarctica in a circle," Wolff said. "This isolates Antarctica from the rest of the world and makes it much harder for warm air masses to get across the Southern Ocean and, therefore, makes Antarctica colder."

"By looking at the oxygen isotopes in

the carbonate shells of small sea creatures in ocean sediments, you see a jump around 34 million years ago, which people take as being because the (lighter) oxygen isotope is going onto the continent of Antarctica," Wolff explained.

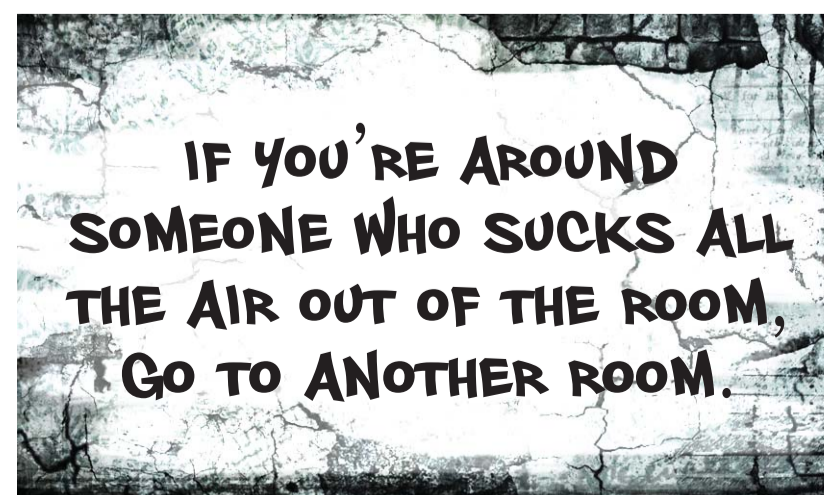
As for whether Antarctica could ever be ice-free again, "It's definitely possible," van de Flierdt said. "Planet Earth has done it before. Planet Earth could do it again." "While it's unlikely that human activity will lead to the complete melting of the ice sheet, it's important we do everything possible to limit the loss of ice from the Antarctic now," she added. "It's in our hands to avoid the worst-case scenario," van de Flierdt said.

Plate tectonics also directly influenced carbon dioxide levels. Rock weathering and volcanic activity are both part of the carbon cycle. So, over thousands of years, geological processes can shift the balance of gases in the atmosphere.

Although some uncertainty remains, researchers are fairly confident about this transition 34 million years ago, thanks to the chemical signatures in rock sediments. Oxygen atoms exist in two forms, oxygen-16 (common oxygen) and oxygen-18 (heavy oxygen). Continental ice contains a higher proportion of the lighter oxygen-16, meaning the oceans, and, therefore, the shells of small sea creatures, contain a higher percentage of oxygen-18 when ice sheets are bigger.

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

THE WALL



BABY BLUES

