

India in the recently concluded G20 Foreign Affairs and Development Ministers touched upon various agendas ranging from Multilateralism to devising a cohesive action plan against fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. EAM Jaishankar concluded the three-day meet in Matera, Italy with a positive note for India's participation in the G20 and a commitment to provide more for the humanitarian crisis which has plagued the civilization. The biggest highlight of this G20 summit cumulated to the adoption of the Matera Declaration on Food Security which had stated out several points to provide joint action into addressing the insecurity of food crisis which cuts across several social cleavages. The severity of the pandemic has resulted in a massive disruption of both domestic and international food chains and trade channels, exaggerating the already problematic dimension of poverty and hunger. The declaration calls upon all member states of the G20 to implement and regulate the state and non-state actors into manipulating food chains that ultimately serve the beneficiaries. Given the ecological dilemma for food production, a clause dedicated to producing sustainable food chains and demand was added in the declaration. The Indian edge to this declaration lies in addressing the rural-urban divide which has increased disparity between different social groups as well as other social indicators such as poverty, gender divide and malnutrition.

Another significant point touched upon by the EAM and the rest of the minister was discussing the fate of Africa. As an extension of the discussion on food security and hunger, the ministers gave their word to help the continent with it. The closing remarks made by the G20 leaders for the session on Africa mentioned, "The G-20 has the duty to sustain Africa in emerging from a difficult period." The Foreign Minister of Italy, Luigi Di Maio further added that Italy's plan to host a conference in Africa is underway. He stated, "We must do it in a way so that in Africa, people aren't forced any more to abandon their country and their territory, and I don't think anyone can carry out this battle alone." Indian Minister of External Affairs too added India's vision for Africa. Jaishankar committed that India will continue to assist the continent by setting up capacity building, digital cooperation and respond to the continent's need in fighting the pandemic. The hunger and poverty issue has aggravated in Africa with the onset of the pandemic and global attention towards addressing it is much needed. The tweets gathered from EAM Jaishankar also pointed towards the friendly cooperation between India and the World Food Programme.



Image source: DNA India

With vaccine diplomacy on stride, India has catered to be one of the leading pharmaceutical countries in these terms. However, given the politics around it, there's been much of a divide into its distribution. EAM Jaishankar mentioned, "Institutional multilateralism has been found wanting. Reforms have many forms but vaccine equity will be the immediate test. The real economy needs decentralized globalization, including in manufacturing food and health. Resilient supply chains must develop in parallel." It is indeed not new information, but a fact with a grim reality that even with vaccines the problem of equity has arisen, however, the onus lies on these developed and developing countries to supply out vaccines efficiently to the LEDC countries. Another round the clock discussion which is a good implication for India is its association in the framework tax deal with the other G20 members. Reports have so far mentioned that India with other OECD/G20 member nations have finally arrived at a consensus on the framework tax deal and the agreement is most likely underway. The tax deal looks into addressing the challenges produced as a direct outcome of the digitization of economies.

The G20 Summit for India ended with the EAM's meeting with 14 ministers and 5 Heads of the International Organization. The resolutions arrived at the end of the summit sends out an optimistic tone for the challenges that lie ahead in addressing the grave issues arising

out of this pandemic. However, the answer as the EAM mentioned remains within the bounds of international cooperation and assistance.

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