

India-France Bilateral

India and France have traditionally close and friendly relations. In 1998, the two countries entered into Strategic Partnership which is emblematic of their convergence of views on a range of International issues apart from a close and growing bilateral relationship.

2. The areas of Defence & Security cooperation, Space cooperation and Civil nuclear cooperation constitute the principal pillars of our Strategic Partnership with France. India and France are increasingly engaged in new areas of cooperation like security in the Indian Ocean region, climate change including the International Solar Alliance, and sustainable growth and development among others.

3. India and France share a close degree of convergence on a range of regional and global issues. In the economic domain, while there exists vast potential, French economic capacities, its business and industry, its capital and technologies have forged linkages with Indian economy and India's developmental goals. There exist vibrant bilateral cultural and educational linkages as also growing people-to-people contacts. Indian diaspora also has a sizable presence in France and in its overseas territories.

High level Exchanges

4. India and France have had regular exchange of visits at the highest level. Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi visited France in August 2019 at the special invitation of President Macron for the G-7 Summit where India was one of the "Goodwill" partners. The visit comprised two segments: bilateral component (*August 22-23*) and the G-7 related visit to Biarritz (*August 25-26*). The two leaders met for bilateral meeting in the historic chateau in Chantilly which was followed by a Joint Press Conference. The outcomes of the visit included a Joint Statement, India-France Roadmap on Cybersecurity and Digital Technologies and 4 Agreements/MoUs.

5. President Macron and Mrs. Brigitte Macron paid a State Visit to India from 10-12 March 2018 during which they visited New Delhi, Agra, Mirzapur and Varanasi. After the ceremonial welcome in New Delhi, President Macron and PM held restricted and delegation-level talks. 14 Agreements were signed following the talks including one for the provision of reciprocal logistics support between the respective Armed Forces. In addition to the visit Joint Statement, a "Joint Strategic Vision of India-France Cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region" and the "India-France Joint Vision for Space Cooperation" were also issued. The President of India hosted a banquet in

honour of President Macron as also delegations of other countries which had assembled in New Delhi for the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance.

6. The Founding Conference of ISA was held in New Delhi on 11 March co-chaired by PM and President Macron. On 12 March, President Macron and PM visited Mirzapur to inaugurate a 100 MW solar power park built by the French firm Engie. During the visit, the India-France CEOs' Forum also met which presented its report to the two leaders. 14 B2B agreements were also signed. A Knowledge Summit was also held bringing together higher educational institutions from both sides to boost cooperation in the field of education, research and student mobility.

Space Cooperation

7. India and France have a rich history of cooperation in the field of space for over 50 years with ISRO and the French Space Agency (CNES) carrying on various joint research programmes and launch of satellites. A joint stamp was released to commemorate 50 years of bilateral space cooperation during the visit of PM Modi to France in April 2015.

8. Building on the historical linkages in the arena of civilian space, both India and France issued a "Joint Vision for Space Cooperation" during the visit of President Macron to India (*March 2018*). The Joint Vision spells out the concrete areas of future cooperation in this field. ISRO and CNES will realize their third joint satellite mission – TRISHNA which is meant for eco-system stress and water use monitoring as also accommodation of a French instrument of India's OCEANSAT – 3 satellite. The jointly developed Megha-Tropiques satellite which observes clouds and water vapours over the tropical region continues to be in good health and providing valuable scientific data. A joint Ka-band propagation experiment is also under implementation. As part of ongoing bilateral cooperation between ISRO and Arianespace, GSAT-11 was launched from Kourou (*French Guyana*) in December 2018. France continues to be a major supplier of components and equipment for the Indian space programme.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation

9. An agreement on civil nuclear cooperation was signed between India and France on 30 September 2008 during the visit of then PM to France. Subsequently, during the visit of then French President Nicolas Sarkozy to India in December 2010, the General Framework Agreement and the Early Works Agreement between NPCIL and M/s AREVA for the implementation of EPR for the Jaitapur Nuclear

Power Project (*JNPP*) were signed. Following M/s AREVA's restructuring, French utility EDF has now been designated as the lead agency from the French side for negotiations and implementation of the JNPP. EDF and NPCIL signed a revised MoU on 22 March 2016 for the construction of six EPR units at Jaitapur of 1650 MWe each.

10. During the visit of President Macron to India (*March 2018*), NPCIL and EDF concluded an Industrial Way Forward Agreement. Discussions between EDF and NPCIL have been ongoing with the objective of expeditious realization of the project.

Economic Cooperation

11. Both India and France have important bilateral investments & trade and commercial cooperation. France has emerged as a major source of FDI for India with more than 1,000 French establishments already present in India with a total turnover of US \$ 20 billion and employing around 300,000 persons. France is the 9th largest foreign investor in India with a cumulative investment of USD 6.59 billion from April 2000 to December 2018. There are more than 150 Indian companies operating in France (*including sub-subsidiaries*), employing more than 7,000 persons.

12. Almost all the major French companies are present in India including Renault, Saint Gobain, Veolia, Michelin, Capgemini, Sanofi, EDF, Airbus, Lactalis, Sodexo, Total and others. India's Reliance, Tata, Mahindra, L&T and other big companies have tied up joint cooperation with major French companies like Dassault, SAFRAN, Thales, Schneider Electric and others in the defence and electronics sector. French infrastructure companies are looking forward to major opportunities in Indian projects including in smart cities and renewable energy.

13. AFD, the French Agency for Development has extended a loan of Euro 100 million to the Government of India for its Smart Cities Mission. French side has been actively cooperating with various programmes in especially three Smart Cities, viz. Chandigarh, Nagpur and Puducherry. SNCF, the French railways and the Indian Railways have established a Permanent Indo-French Railway Forum. They have been cooperating in the studies for the feasibility of semi-high speed upgrade of Delhi-Chandigarh section and station development study of Ambala and Ludhiana.

Cultural Cooperation

14. Indian culture enjoys wide following amongst the people of France. An Indian Cultural Centre, named Vivekananda Cultural Centre, is being opened in Paris. The International Day of Yoga has been organized by the Embassy of India in Paris and other cities of France since 2016 and have received wide acclaim and press coverage. Year long celebrations have also been organized to commemorate 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Gurunanak Devji and the 70th Year of the Constitution of India.

15. A Cultural Exchange Programme, initially for the period 2016 to 2018, continues and is under implementation. GoI has also offered five scholarships for study of Sanskrit in India to French nationals. Various other bilateral programmes of cultural cooperation are under implementation.

S&T and Education

16. In the field of S&T, the Indo-French Centre for the Promotion of Advance Research (CEFIPRA) based in New Delhi established in 1987 is playing a major role by funding joint proposals for research in sciences and evaluation existing research projects. Several other bilateral cooperation programmes exist including an Indo-French Ministerial-level Joint Committee on Science and Technology, established in 2016, whose first meeting was held in New Delhi in June 2018.

17. It is estimated that there are about 10000 Indian students in France. Encouraged by offer of courses in English medium in the French institutes of higher education, especially in the field of business management, about 3,000 new Indian students come to France every year.

18. During the visit of Hon'ble PM to Chantilly (*Aug 2019*), the two sides encouraged their respective Universities and academic institutes to increase the number and quality of student exchanges with the aim of reaching the number of 25,000 students by 2025. During this visit, an Administrative Arrangement was also signed for Cooperation in skill Development and Vocational Training.

Indian community in France

19. It is estimated that the Indian community, including NRIs in mainland France number around 109,000, largely originating from French enclaves of Puducherry, Karaikal, Yanam, Mahe and Chandernagore. Sizeable number of Indian origin population lives in the French Overseas Territories of the Reunion Island (*280,000*), Guadeloupe (*60,000*), Martinique (*6,000*) and Saint Martin (*300*). There are more than 50 Indian community organizations active in France. Major communities

constituting the Indian origin population originate from Puducherry and Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Punjab.

20. The two sides signed a Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement which aims to facilitate temporary circular migration based on mobility and the encouragement for a return of skills to the home country.

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