

Foreign minister of France visit to India

January 17, 2019

Manifest Pedagogy

Indo – France relations has become relevant for the exam due to 20 years of Strategic Partnership which was signed in 1998 and most importantly the Rafale controversy. Aspirants tend to neglect Indo-France as it is not generally covered in current affairs. Questions may get complex if historical aspects of the questions are linked.

In news

Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of France visited India

Placing it in syllabus

Bilateral relations of India

Static dimensions

1. India French historical relations
2. India French Strategic Partnership

Current dimensions

1. Relations under the new government from 2014
2. Defence relations between the two countries
3. Areas of conflicts between the two

Content

Indo-France historical relations and important milestones

- 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.
- The **areas of defence cooperation, space cooperation and civil nuclear cooperation constitute the three principal pillars of both countries Strategic Partnership**. Apart from these traditional fields of cooperation, India and France are increasingly engaged in **new areas of cooperation like climate change, sustainable growth and development, the International Solar Alliance** etc.
- **India and France support a multi-polar world order.**
- France has continued to support India's claim for permanent membership of the Security Council and the reforms of the United Nations.
- France has provided consistent support to India's candidature for the membership of Multilateral Export Control regimes, viz. NSG and MTCR. France's support was vital in India's accession to MTCR in June 2016.
- India and France have consistently condemned terrorism and have resolved to work together for adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) in the UN. During the visit of then President Hollande in January 2016, India and France also issued a Joint Statement on Counter Terrorism in which the two countries resolved to step up their bilateral cooperation in this field
- President Hollande visited India from 24-26 January 2016 as the chief guest of the Republic Day celebration. In a historic first, a French military contingent also marched on Rajpath on the **Republic Day** and thus **France became the first ever foreign country to have been invited to participate in the march**. President Hollande

also visited Chandigarh where the two Leaders addressed the India-France CEOs' Forum. The two Leaders also jointly inaugurated the temporary **headquarters of the International Solar Alliance in Gurugram**. A joint declaration was issued on the conclusion of the visit and a number of important agreements were signed.

Major on-going defence-related projects are the following:

- **Rafale deal:** The Inter-governmental agreement for purchase of 36 Rafale jets by India in flyaway condition was signed in New Delhi in September 2016 by defence ministers of both the countries.
- **P-75 Scorpene Project:** The contract for six Scorpene submarines from M/s DCNS was signed in October 2006. All six vessels will be built under technology transfer at the Mazagaon Docks Ltd. The first two submarines **Kalvari and Khanderi** have been built.

Space Cooperation—

- India and France have a rich history of cooperation in the field of space going back to fifty 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 fifty years of bilateral space cooperation during the visit of PM Modi to France in April 2015.
- During the Asia Pacific Remote Sensing Symposium held in New Delhi, CNES and ISRO jointly organized a reception of heads of space agencies in April 2016. The meeting attended by 60 countries came up with a "**New Delhi Declaration**" which identifies various international satellites contributing as space segment for monitoring climate change

Economic Cooperation—

- Both India and France have important bilateral

investments and trade and commercial cooperation. France is the ninth largest foreign investor in India. Seven bilateral joint working groups in various fields exist which are: (i) IT & Telecommunications; (ii) Roads; (iii) Sustainable Urban Development; (iv) Agriculture and Food Processing; (v) Mineral Exploration and Development; (vi) Energy; and (vii) Post.

Cultural Cooperation–

- Indian culture enjoys wide admiration among the people of France. ICCR regularly sends Indian cultural troupes to France. An Indian Cultural Centre is proposed to be opened in Paris. The building for the Cultural Centre which was acquired for the purpose is to undergo renovation for which the tenders have been floated.

Cooperation in the fields of S&T and Education-

- **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. Joint Indo-French research projects funded by CEFIPRA have led to several patents. CEFIPRA also awards Raman-Charpak scholarships since 2013 to Indian and French scholars.**

Relation under new government

- Regular meetings between Indian and French authorities fuel an in-depth, long-term political dialogue. The French President thus made a State visit to India from 9 to 12 March 2018, emphasizing the strengthening of strategic partnership, both countries commitments to combating climate change, and common desire to develop human exchanges and encourage mobility between France and India.
- As far as outcomes go, French President Emmanuel

Macron's visit to India stands out for its strategic content, with understandings reached and agreements signed that have a long-term strategic significance.

Following are the strategic documents signed between India and France which reflect the growing strategic trust between the two countries;

- **Emulating a similar India-US move, India and France have agreed on a "Joint Strategic Vision of India-France Cooperation in the Indian Ocean region"**
1. The India-France Joint Vision for Space – another major strategic document emerging from the visit – envisages the pursuit of the **study of a constellation of satellites for maritime surveillance.**
 2. Exchange and reciprocal protection of classified or protected information
 - In the international context, India and France can benefit from a shared understanding of the challenges that the world is facing today with the global uncertainties produced by Trump's disruptive foreign policy and the lurch towards dictatorship in China that can only make the handling of its geopolitical ambitions more difficult. India and France are working together to implement the Paris Agreement on Climate Change which Trump has repudiated.
 - During the visit of France foreign minister India and France held discussions on deepening bilateral strategic partnership through cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, defence, space and civil nuclear energy sectors. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and French minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean Yves Le Drian discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral cooperation.

Problems in relations

- Not being allies, there are, of course, limits on India and France forging a joint front against security threats with different geopolitical roots that each country faces.
- Our defence procurement process is unable to accommodate “strategic” decision making, which is why French participation in our defence sector has been uneven, with some striking successes such as the Scorpene and Rafale contracts; but notable setbacks in bagging contracts for refueling aircrafts, helicopters and short range surface to air missiles even when tenders were won and joint projects approved.
- However delays and controversies around Rafael deal are affecting mutual trust between the two countries
- While the translation of the undefined concept of a “strategic partnership” into decision making at the governmental level in different areas will remain a fluid proposition, India and France have taken decisions during Macron’s visit that are manifestly strategic in intent and substance

Test Yourself : Mould your Thoughts

(From now on question’s will posted in our free [MANIFEST VLOG](#) initiative)

Prelims Question

1. Consider the following statements

1. France was the 1st country with which India signed a Strategic Partnership
2. It was also the 1st country with which India signed a Free Trade agreement

Which of the above statements is/are correct

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

2. Which of the following is/are correct about French Political System?

- 1. It has a semi – Presidential system
- 2. The President is elected by Proportional Representation by means of single transferable vote

Select the correct answer using codes below

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2