

Brief Embassy Report on Bilateral Relations – ITJ Division, DGCI&S, Kolkata.

Dated : 06/03/2024

India-France Bilateral Relations

A. Introduction

1. India and France have traditionally enjoyed close and friendly relations and share deep and enduring Strategic Partnership (SP) covering all aspects of bilateral cooperation. Launched on 26 January 1998, India’s first-ever Strategic Partnership, embodied the core vision of both the countries to enhance their respective strategic independence by drawing upon a strong and enhanced bilateral cooperation. Defence & security, civil nuclear matters and space constitute the principal pillars of this strategic cooperation and now includes a strong Indo-Pacific component. In the recent years the partnership has broadened to include maritime security, digitalisation, cyber security and advanced computing, counter terrorism, climate change, renewable and sustainable growth and development among others.
2. The mainland France has an estimated 1,19,000 Indian community (including NRIs) largely originating from erstwhile French colonies of Puducherry, Karaikal, Yanam, Mahe and Chandernagore and the States of Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Punjab. As regard French Overseas Territories the estimated Indian origin population is - Reunion Island (3,00,159), Guadeloupe (57,180), Martinique (8,090) and Saint Martin (1950). There are over 50 Indian community organizations active in France.
3. The core of the India-France long-standing partnership is underpinned by our shared democratic values, belief in multilateralism as a means to tackle global challenges, respect for international law, strong economic, cultural academic, and people-to-people ties.

B. Commercial Relations (Trade and Foreign Investment) – Recent facts & figures

4. As per latest compiled and available statistics with DGCI&S, India’s Exports to France from April’23-Jan’24 stands at USD 5.87 billion and India’s imports from France stands at USD 5.31 billion with a resultant trade balance surplus for India of 0.56 billion US Dollars.
5. There has been growth in economic and commercial relations between India and France in recent years, especially in areas such as Textiles and apparel, Machinery and appliances, Vehicle and Transport materials etc. An account of Bilateral commodities trade in goods from 2019-20 to 2023-24 is as under:

Export-Import statistics as per India’s Ministry of Commerce data bank from 2019-20 to 2023-24 are as follows :

Export-Import statistics from 2019-20 to 2023-24

(US Dollar Billion)						
S.No		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24

1.	Export	5.10	4.79	6.64	7.61	5.87
2.	Import	6.17	4.34	5.78	6.20	5.31
3.	Total Trade	11.27	9.13	12.42	13.81	11.18

(Source: Doc, Ministry of Commerce & Industry)

6. India's main exports to France includes engineering goods, electrical machinery and boilers, petroleum products, pharmaceutical products, electronic equipment and readymade garment and main imports from France are aviation products, machine equipment, electrical equipment and chemical products.

7. France is one of the largest investors in India with FDI inflow of \$659.77 million for FY 2022-23 (as of June 2023) and a cumulative FDI stock of \$10.76 billion from April 2000 to September 2023. There are over 70 Indian companies employing over 8000 employees in France and over 750 French companies invested in India employing over 450,000 people.

C. Other Major Areas of Cooperation :

- On 20 May 2023 in Hiroshima, PM held a bilateral meeting with President Macron on the margins of G7 Summit in Hiroshima and discussed a broad range of issues, including cooperation in trade and economic spheres, co-production and manufacturing in the defence sector, and civil nuclear cooperation.
- India and France have a strong and robust defence partnership with an increasing 'Atmanirbharata' element in it. The defence cooperation between the two sides is reviewed under Annual Defence Dialogue (Defence Minister level) and High Committee on Defence Cooperation (Secretary level) on major ongoing defence-related project which include the purchase of Rafale aircrafts and the P-75 Scorpene Project. Other potential new areas of collaboration being pursued are co-development of next generation engines for fighter planes.
- ISRO and CNES concluded a joint declaration for cooperation in future launch vehicle technologies and agreement for Cooperation in joint Earth Observation mission TRISHNA, Maritime Domain Awareness (Short-Term plan) and Space Situational Awareness.
- India and France have Cyber Dialogue mechanism to discuss cyber cooperation and related matters.
- The first International Energy Agency (IEA) Critical Minerals and Clean Energy Summit was held at the IEA Headquarter on 28 September 2023 in Paris. The Summit focused on measures to promote the secure, sustainable and responsible supply of raw materials that have a central role in the global clean energy transition.

Source: [Prepared based on MEA's January, 2024 Report.](#)