25 years of India-France Strategic Partnership

Why in news?

The joint statement 25th Anniversary of the Strategic Partnership between France and India: towards a Century of Indo-French Relations, sets the course for the France-India bilateral relationship in all areas till 2047.

What is the history of the Indo-France bilateral relations?

- India and France are long-standing strategic partners in the Indo-Pacific.
- The two countries established their diplomatic relations in 1947 and upgraded it to the strategic level in 1998.
- **Trade -** France has emerged as a key trading partner with annual trade of $12.42 billion and the 11th largest foreign investor in India.
- **Defence -** France has been a key supplier of defence hardware, especially combat jets, to India since the 1950s.
- Scorpene class submarines and Rafael fighter jets are classic examples of France's defence supplies to India.
- The two countries regularly hold joint exercises in all three forces - Varuna (navy); Garuda (air force); Shakti (army).
- **International efforts -** As part of their joint efforts on climate change, India and France launched ***'International Solar Alliance'*** in 2015.
- **Nuclear energy -** France has offered to build 6 nuclear power reactors in Jaitapur in Maharashtra which would be the *world's most powerful nuclear power plant*.
- **Technology -** The Indo-French Road map on Cyber security and Digital Technology was adopted in 2019.
- **Blue Economy -** A roadmap on Blue Economy and Ocean Governance was adopted by France and India in 2022.
- **Green hydrogen -** Indo-French roadmap for decarbonised hydrogen was adopted in 2022.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the bilateral relations between India and France as ***'strong, trusted and consistent'.***

What are the highlights of the 'Horizon 2047'?

- **The year 2047** will mark 100 years of India's Independence, 100 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, and 50 years of the Indo-French strategic partnership.
- **3 pillar -** The roadmap for bilateral relations has three pillars focusing on '***security, planet and people***' guiding the bilateral ties for the next 25 years.

- It establishes a strong mechanism to strengthen cooperation in the areas of defence, space, civil nuclear, digital technology, counter-terrorism and the blue economy.

What are the security partnerships between the two countries?

- **Civil nuclear energy -** The two countries established a partnership on Small Modular Reactors (SMR) and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMR)
- **Defence -** Both countries are also working towards adopting a Roadmap on Defence Industrial Cooperation.
- For this India is setting up a Technical Office of the DRDO at its Embassy in Paris.
- **Space -** Scientific and commercial partnership is being enhanced between France's CNES and India's ISRO.
- NSIL (India) and Arianespace (France) also plan to collaborate in commercial launch services.
- India and France will strengthen their synergies in terms of sovereign access to space, finalize the joint Earth observation satellite, *TRISHNA and the Space Climate Observatory (SCO)*.
- **Counter-terrorism -** Strengthening of cooperation between France's GIGN and India's National Security Guard.
- **Civil aviation -** Signing of technical and safety agreements in the field of civil aviation, for the expansion of routes between France and India
- **Critical technology -** Strengthening of cooperation on cutting-edge digital technologies such as AI, supercomputing and quantum computing.
- **Indo-Pacific -** Adoption of a roadmap for joint actions in the Indo-Pacific, covering all aspects of our comprehensive strategy for the region.

Initiatives such as Indo-Pacific Parks Partnership, International Solar Alliance and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) to protect marine and terrestrial biodiversity are carried out to fight climate change.

What are the partnerships for the planet?

- **Plastic pollution -** Commitment to eliminate single-use plastic pollution through a new international instrument to end the problem.
- **Blue economy -** A partnership between French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea (IFREMER) and India's National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) on ocean research.
- **Health -** Both the countries agreed to intensify their cooperation in the field of health and medicine and signed a Letter of Intent for Cooperation for the same.

French Development Agency is financing the second phase of India's flagship sustainable cities programme "CITIIS 2.0".

What are the Partnerships for the people?

- **Consular network -** A new Indian Consulate to be opened in Marseille and a Bureau de France in Hyderabad.
- **Education -** Signing of 2 MoUs between the Institut Polytechnique de Paris (IPP), and IIT Delhi and IIT Madras.
- Issuance of a 5-year short-stay Schengen visa for Indian students with a Master's degree from a French university.
- **Culture -** Announcement of France's selection as India's partner for the establishment of a major new National Museum in New Delhi.
- **Research -** France and India will increase funding of the Indo-French Centre for the Promotion of Advanced Research (IFCPAR/CEFIPRA) for new projects.

References

1. IE - India and France outline road ahead till 2047
2. MEA - Horizon 2047

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