

India Mauritius Bilateral Relationship

Why in News?

Indian Prime Minister is visiting Mauritius on March 11-12, 2025 to be the guest of honour at its Independence Day celebrations on March 12.

What is the historical connection between India and Mauritius?

- **India - Mauritius** - India has close and longstanding relations with Mauritius, an island nation in the Western Indian Ocean, anchored in shared history, demography and culture.

Mauritius is a former British and French colony that gained independence from British rule in 1968.



- **Indian origins** - Nearly 70% of the population of Mauritius is of Indian origin, being the descendants of Indian indentured labour who were brought by the colonial rulers to work on sugar plantations.

Under the nearly century-long French rule (in the year 1729), the first Indians were brought to Mauritius from the Puducherry region, to work as artisans and masons.

- **Colonial ties** - Under British rule, about half a million Indian indentured workers were brought to Mauritius between 1834 and the early 1900's.
- **Aapravasi Diwas** - It is the day on which the first batch of these workers, comprising 36 persons, arrived in Mauritius on November 2, 1834 onboard the ship 'Atlas'.
- **Gandhi in Mauritius** - On his way to India from South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi briefly stopped over in Mauritius from October 29-November 15, 1901 and steered the destiny of Indian labourers.
- **National Day of Mauritius** - The date of Gandhiji's Dandi Salt March is celebrated on March 12 as the national day of Mauritius.
- **Bose & Ramgoolam** - Sir Seewosagur worked closely with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose during Bose's stay in Britain between 1919-21.

Sir Seewosagur Ramgoolam, had led the struggle for his country's independence and was its first Prime Minister.

- They were part of the Indian students' movement in London working for Indian independence.
- Ramgoolam did the proof-reading for Bose's famous work, The Indian Struggle.
- **Bilateral relationship** - Independent India established diplomatic relations in 1948, even before the independence of Mauritius.
- **First responder** - India has traditionally been the 'first responder' for Mauritius in times of crisis, including during the recent Covid-19 and Wakashio oil-spill crises.

What is the trade relationship between India and Mauritius?

- **Largest trading partner** - Since 2005, India has been among the largest trading partners of Mauritius.
- **Bilateral trade** - India-Mauritius bilateral trade has expanded rapidly over the past few years, reaching \$554 million in 2022-23.

For the FY 2022-2023, Indian exports to Mauritius was USD 462.69 mn, Mauritian exports to India was USD 91.50 mn and Total trade was USD 554.19 mn.

Mauritius is a part of the African Union and has preferential trade agreements with African countries.

- **Trade growth** - Trade has grown by 132% in the last 17 years, from USD 206.76 million in 2005-06 to USD 554.19 million in 2022-23.
 - **Major exports to Mauritius** - Pharmaceuticals, cereals, cotton, shrimps, prawns and bovine meat.
 - **Major import from Mauritius** - Vanilla, medical devices, needles, aluminium alloys, scrap paper, refined copper, men's cotton shirts

- **Foreign investment** - Due to the favourable Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with India, Mauritius is the second largest source of FDI into India for the FY 2023-24, after Singapore.

Cumulative FDI worth USD 177 billion has come from Mauritius to India since 2000 (25% of total FDI inflows into India).

- **Investment in Mauritius** - In Mauritius, Indian companies have invested over USD 200 mn in the last five years.
- **CECPA** - Mauritius and India signed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) in 2021.
- **International financial center** - Mauritius has emerged as a successful international financial centre, mainly on the back of the DTAA.
- **Indian PSUs in Mauritius** - At present, there are 11 Indian PSUs in Mauritius.

Bank of Baroda, State Bank of India (Mauritius), Life Insurance Corporation, New India Assurance Corporation, Telecommunications Consultant India Ltd, Indian Oil (Mauritius) Limited etc.

What are the maritime security cooperation?

- **Western Indian Ocean security** - Mauritius is the sentinel of the western Indian Ocean and maritime security cooperation between our two countries is critical to enhancing India's maritime security.
- **Colombo Security Conclave** - It brings together India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Mauritius and Bangladesh to work together to make this ocean space safe and secure.
- **Maritime surveillance** - India has set up a chain of coastal radar stations, redeveloped the Mauritian island of Agaléga to serve as a joint surveillance facility.
- **Information cooperation** - India has given Mauritius access to the Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) in Gurugram, India.
- **Marine survey** - India's oceanographic survey ship, INS Sarvekshak, has just completed the survey of 25,000 sq.km of Mauritius' ocean territory.

What is the cultural relations and people-to-people ties?

- **Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture (IGCIC)** - In 1987, India established IT, which is India's largest cultural centre abroad.
- **Mahatma Gandhi Institute** - In 1976, it was inaugurated as a premier institution for promoting Indian languages and culture.
- **World Hindi Secretariat** - The island hosts the World Hindi Secretariat that is supported by India.

- **Know India Programme (KIP)** - Since 2004, youngsters from Mauritius have participated in the Know India Programme (KIP) of the Ministry of External Affairs.
- **ITEC** - Mauritius is one of the largest beneficiaries of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme
- **e-Vidya Bharti Arogya Bharti (e-VBAB)** - Since 2020, India has also been offering scholarships to Mauritians under this distance learning project.

References

[The Hindu | India, Mauritius and a visit to deepen long-standing ties](#)

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