

India-Egypt Defence Cooperation, Outcomes, Significance

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India and Egypt convened the 11th Joint Defence Committee meeting in Cairo to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation and outline a roadmap for future engagement.

India-Egypt 11th Joint Defence Committee (JDC)

The India-Egypt Joint Defence Committee (JDC) serves as the principal institutional mechanism for reviewing ongoing cooperation and setting the direction for future engagement between the two countries.

- During the 11th JDC meeting, both sides reviewed the progress made since the previous round and emphasised the need to deepen military cooperation through sustained and structured interactions.
- A forward-looking defence cooperation roadmap for 2026-27 was agreed upon, focusing on expanding military engagements, joint training, and maritime security cooperation.
- The meeting witnessed the inaugural Navy-to-Navy staff talks, marking a new phase in maritime cooperation.
- Both sides explored avenues for defence industry collaboration, including co-development and co-production of defence systems.

- Greater emphasis was placed on enhancing joint military exercises and operational coordination across services.

India-Egypt Defence Cooperation Roadmap (2026-27)

The two sides agreed on a forward-looking defence cooperation plan for 2026-27 aimed at deepening institutional and operational engagement.

- The roadmap focuses on expanding structured military interactions, intensifying joint training programmes, enhancing maritime security cooperation, and increasing the scope and complexity of bilateral military exercises.
- The emphasis is on building sustained interoperability and long-term strategic coordination between the armed forces of both countries.

Defence Industry Collaboration and Capability Building

A key highlight of the discussions was the growing emphasis on defence industrial cooperation.

- India showcased its expanding defence manufacturing ecosystem, with production exceeding 20 billion US dollars and exports reaching approximately 4 billion US dollars to more than 100 countries.
- Both sides explored avenues for co-development and co-production in defence platforms and systems.
- This reflects a broader shift towards technology-driven cooperation, with defence industry collaboration emerging as a critical pillar of bilateral relations.

Maritime and Air Force Cooperation

The meeting witnessed the inaugural Navy-to-Navy staff talks, marking an important milestone in naval engagement.

- India highlighted the role of the Indian Navy in ensuring freedom of navigation in the **Indian Ocean** Region and reiterated the significance of the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region in strengthening maritime domain awareness and regional maritime security cooperation.
- The Indian delegation also held discussions with the leadership of the Egyptian Air Force to further enhance cooperation in training, operational exchanges, and capacity building, thereby broadening the scope of tri-service engagement.

Expanding Military Engagement and Joint Exercises

Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to expanding bilateral military exercises and training engagements.

- The focus areas include counter-terrorism, desert warfare, special operations, and emerging domains such as drone warfare and hybrid threats.
- These engagements are aimed at improving operational interoperability, enhancing tactical coordination, and strengthening preparedness for evolving security challenges.

Some of the key exercises between India and Egypt include:

- **Exercise Cyclone**, a Special Forces exercise focusing on counter-terrorism operations and desert warfare.
- **Exercise Desert Warrior**, a joint air exercise aimed at enhancing coordination between the two air forces.
- Egypt's participation in multinational exercises such as **Bright Star**, along with its involvement in India's naval exercise **MILAN-2024**, reflects a gradual broadening of defence cooperation beyond bilateral formats to wider regional and multilateral security engagements.

Significance of India-Egypt Defence Ties

The growing defence partnership has wider strategic implications.

- **Geostrategic Importance:** Egypt's location near the Suez Canal and India's role in the Indian Ocean make cooperation crucial for global trade and security.
- **Counter-terrorism and Stability:** Both countries share concerns over terrorism and regional instability.
- **Defence Industrial Growth:** Collaboration supports India's goal of self-reliance in defence manufacturing.
- **Multipolar World Order:** Strengthens South-South cooperation and diversifies strategic partnerships.

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