

India-Seychelles Relations - Strengthening the MAHASAGAR Vision in the Indian Ocean

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India-Seychelles Relations Latest News

- During the Indian PM's State Visit to Seychelles (27-29 June 2026), India and Seychelles **elevated** their **strategic partnership** by signing multiple agreements.
- The visit also marked **50 years** of diplomatic relations between the two countries and reinforced India's **MAHASAGAR** (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) vision for the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

India's Vision for the Indian Ocean

- The Indian PM reiterated India's vision of transforming the Indian Ocean into an "**Ocean of Opportunity**", founded on:
 - Maritime security and regional stability
 - Sustainable economic prosperity

- Partnership based on mutual respect and trust rather than size or power
- Shared responsibility for security, sustainability and development
- India emphasized that the Indian Ocean is a **shared strategic space**, requiring collaborative action against both traditional and non-traditional security threats.

Major Outcomes of the Visit

• Expansion of strategic partnership:

- The leaders agreed to deepen cooperation across several sectors:
 - Health and healthcare
 - Education and skill development
 - Capacity building
 - Digital transformation
 - Renewable energy
 - Sustainable development
 - Social infrastructure
 - Maritime security and defence
- Both countries also reviewed progress under India's Special Economic Package for Seychelles.

• Key agreements (MoUs) signed:

- Several agreements were concluded in the fields of:
 - Unified Payments Interface (UPI) implementation
 - Healthcare
 - Agriculture
 - Banking and Exim Bank cooperation
 - Shipping
 - Space exploration
 - Capacity building
 - Extradition
 - Line of Credit (LoC)
- These agreements aim to **modernise Seychelles' economy** while enhancing India's developmental partnership in the region.

• Development assistance:

- India announced a Special Economic Package worth USD **175 million**, comprising USD 125 million (₹1,250 crore) rupee-denominated Line of Credit, and USD 50 million Grant Assistance.
- The package will support infrastructure development, food security, healthcare, vocational training, maritime security, and defence cooperation.
- India reaffirmed that its development partnership remains demand-driven and aligned with Seychelles' national priorities.

Maritime Security - Central Pillar of Bilateral Relations

- Both countries reaffirmed maritime cooperation as the cornerstone of their partnership.

- **Areas of cooperation include:** Countering piracy, combating illegal fishing, tackling drug trafficking, addressing cross-border maritime crime, maritime surveillance, hydrography, and defence capacity building.
- India further strengthened Seychelles' maritime capabilities through the refit of PS Zoroaster, and gifting of the **Fast Attack Vessel** PS Lespwar to the Seychelles Coast Guard.
- These initiatives enhance maritime domain awareness and regional security in the Western Indian Ocean.

MAHASAGAR Vision

- Seychelles reaffirmed its special place in India's MAHASAGAR vision.
- The initiative seeks to promote collective maritime security, **blue economy**, disaster resilience, sustainable development, regional connectivity, and inclusive economic growth.
- It represents an **evolution** of India's SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine towards broader regional cooperation.

Other Highlights

- **Parliamentary and diplomatic milestones:**
 - PM Modi became the **first** Indian PM to address the National Assembly of Seychelles.
 - In his address, he highlighted shared democratic values, rule of law, people-centric governance, and the need for stronger parliamentary exchanges.
- **Regional and global significance:**
 - The leaders exchanged views on major challenges facing the IOR, including piracy; illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, drug trafficking, maritime crime, and regional stability.
 - The visit reinforced India's role as a preferred security and development partner for Small Island Developing States (**SIDS**) in the Indian Ocean.
- **Other developments:**
 - He received Seychelles' highest honour for environmental leadership—"Guardian of the Blue Horizon"—recognising India's contribution to environmental conservation and sustainable development.
 - Seychelles announced its decision to join the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (**CDRI**), strengthening cooperation on climate resilience and disaster risk reduction.

India-Seychelles Relations

- **Overview:**
 - **Multifaceted, time-tested partnership:** Rooted in maritime security, historic kinship, and shared strategic interests in the Western Indian Ocean.
- **People-to-people ties:**
 - Indians have a long history in the archipelago, with the first group arriving as early as **1770**.
 - Today, the vibrant Indian diaspora plays a vital role in the country's socio-economic and professional landscape.
- **Joint exercises:** The two nations hold the biennial joint military exercise **LAMITYE**, which has been continuously running since 2001.

- **Historical support:** India has a history of stepping in to protect Seychelles' sovereignty, notably deploying naval assets during a coup attempt in 1986 (Operation Flowers are Blooming).
- **Why Seychelles matters for India:**
 - **Strategic location** in the Western Indian Ocean along key Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs).
 - Critical partner in India's maritime security architecture.
 - Supports India's Blue Economy and Indo-Pacific strategy.
 - Important for **monitoring maritime threats** (seaborne terrorism and piracy), ensuring regional stability and countering China's expanding influence in the Indian Ocean.
 - Serves as a key partner in India's development diplomacy towards **SIDS**.

Conclusion

The visit reaffirmed India's commitment to a secure, inclusive, prosperous and rules-based Indian Ocean Region, while strengthening its position as a trusted partner for island nations in the Indo-Pacific.

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