

PM on 2-day Visit to France, Defence Ties to get a Boost

July 13, 2023 • vajiramandravi.com



What's in today's article?

- **Why in News?**
- **India-France Bilateral Relationship**
- **Economic Cooperation**
- **Defence Cooperation**
- **Indian Diaspora in France**
- **News Summary**

Why in News?

- Expansion of bilateral defence ties is expected to be a key focus of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to France, beginning July 13.

India-France Bilateral Relationship

- India and France have traditionally close and friendly relations.
- The current golden period in India-France ties can be traced to the **1998 nuclear tests**, when France was the first major power to open talks with India, which evolved into a strategic dialogue.
 - France had also opposed imposing sanctions on India.
- In 1998, the two countries entered into **Strategic Partnership**.
 - The areas of defence cooperation, space cooperation and civil nuclear cooperation constitute the three principal pillars of our Strategic Partnership
- Apart from these traditional fields of cooperation, India and France are increasingly engaged in new areas of cooperation like climate change, sustainable growth and development, the International Solar Alliance etc.
- France supports India's bid for permanent membership of the **United Nations Security Council** as well as its entry into the **Nuclear Suppliers Group**.

Economic Cooperation

- From January to December 2021, the India-France bilateral trade in goods (excluding military equipment) stood at **USD 14 billion**.
 - India's exports to France were valued at USD 7.47 billion and India's imports from France were valued at USD 6.55 billion.
 - Hence, India has a trade surplus relationship with France.
- France is the **11th largest foreign investor in India** with a total FDI stock of USD 10.3 billion from April 2000 to September 2022.

Defence Cooperation

- During President Emmanuel Macron's visit to India, the two countries decided to create an annual defence dialogue at the Ministerial level.
- The three services have regular defence exercises –
 - **Exercise Varuna** (Navy),
 - **Exercise Garuda** (Air Force),
 - **Exercise Shakti** (Army)
- As per the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), between 2018 and 2022, **France was India's second largest arms supplier**, accounting for 29% of the country's imports.
 - Russia accounted for nearly half (45%) of India's arms imports during the same period.
- The SIPRI report also observed that French defence exports to India, which have included **62 aircraft and four submarines**, have increased by 489% between 2013-17 and 2018-22.
- In 2016, both the governments signed an agreement for **purchase of 36 Rafale jets by India**.
- A contract for six **Scorpene submarines** from France was signed in October 2006.
 - All six vessels are to be built under technology transfer at the Mazagaon Docks Ltd. Project implementation is underway.

- The first submarine **INS Kalvari** was commissioned in October 2017.

Indian Diaspora in France

- France hosts the **4th largest Indian community in Europe** after the UK, Italy and Germany.
- Major communities constituting the Indian origin population originate from Puducherry and Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Punjab.
- A bilateral agreement on migration and mobility cooperation is already in place between two nations which aims to facilitate circular migration on the basis of mobility and return of skills to the home country.

News Summary

- PM **Narendra Modi** has departed India for an official visit to France and UAE.
- The Prime Minister will visit France on July 13-14 at the official invitation of French President **Emmanuel Macron**.
- The Prime Minister will attend the French National Day, or Bastille Day celebrations, in Paris as the Guest of Honour.
- An Indian tri-services contingent will be part of the Bastille Day Parade, while Indian Air Force aircraft will perform a fly-past on the occasion.
- PM Modi is also expected to **sign a deal for the acquisition of 26 Rafale-Marine fighters for the INS Vikrant aircraft carrier**.
- Additionally, a repeat order for the construction of three more **Scorpene (Kalveri) class submarines** at Mazagon Dockyards Limited through the “Make in India” initiative is also anticipated.
- From France, PM Modi will travel to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on July 15.
- He will hold talks with the UAE President and ruler of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

Q1) How is a Free Trade Agreement?

A free-trade agreement or treaty is an agreement according to international law to form a free-trade area between the cooperating states. There are two types of trade agreements: bilateral and multilateral.

Q2) What is the climate type of France?

Overall, mainland France enjoys a temperate climate. However, regions experience climates that vary according to their latitude, altitude and their proximity to the sea and to the three major mountain ranges (**Pyrenees, Massif Central, Alps**).

Source: [Big-ticket defence deals likely during PM Modi's Paris visit](#) | [Indian Express](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/pm-on-2-day-visit-to-france-defence-ties-to-get-a-boost/>

© Vajiram & Ravi. For personal use only.