



## India France cooperation

### Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 3
- ✓ A brief history of India France cooperation
- ✓ Recent developments

### Recently:

- ❖ French President Emmanuel Macron visited India.
- ❖ The India-France Strategic Partnership launched in 1998 seems finally to have come of age.

### A brief history of India France cooperation:

- France has always been sympathetic to similar Indian claims based on its ancient civilization which is why both countries were quick to voice support for global multi-polarity once the Cold War ended.
- Defence cooperation with France began in the 1950s.
- Joint naval exercise, Varuna, dates back to 1983.
- Cooperation in the space sector has continued since the 1960s when France helped India set up the Sriharikota launch site.
- After the nuclear tests in May 1998 when India declared itself a nuclear weapon state, France was the first major power to open dialogue and displayed a far greater understanding of India's security compulsions compared to other countries.
- It was the first P-5 country to support India's claim for a permanent seat in an expanded and reformed UN Security Council.

### What are the recent developments?

#### B2B and P2P relations:

- In recent years, it was clear that for a wider partnership, strengthening business-to-business and people-to-people relationships was essential.
- Climate change and renewable energy resources, particularly solar, soon emerged as a new plank, reflected in the multilateral initiative of the International Solar Alliance.
- Another area identified was urban planning and management of services like housing, transport, water, sanitation, etc using the public private partnership model which the French have employed successfully.

#### Maritime cooperation:

- Like India, France has expressed concern about China's growing presence in the Indian Ocean Region.
- French overseas territories in the Indian and the Pacific Oceans provide it with the second largest exclusive economic zone globally.
- It has long maintained bases in Reunion Islands and Djibouti and established one in Abu Dhabi in 2009.
- The signing of MoUs regarding the provision of reciprocal logistics support to each other's armed forces provide the basis to strengthen joint naval exercises.
- Strengthening cooperation with France, particularly in the western Indian Ocean Region makes eminent strategic sense even as India develops its presence in Oman (Duqm) and Seychelles (Assumption Island).

#### Trade:

- Nearly \$16 billion worth of agreements was signed at the business summit.
- There are nearly 1,000 French companies present in India while over a hundred Indian businesses have established a presence in France.

#### Educational links:

- Potentially, the most significant was the focus on youth and student exchanges.
- Currently about 2,500 Indians go to France annually to pursue higher education. A target has been set to raise it to 10,000 by 2020.
- The agreement on mutual recognition of academic degrees and the follow-on Knowledge Summit, where 14 MoUs between educational and scientific institutions were signed.



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**Tourism:**

A target of a million Indian tourists and 335,000 French tourists has been set for 2020.

**Other developments:**

Francophonie! The flagship programme of Smart Cities in which France is focussing on Chandigarh, Nagpur and Puducherry is taking shape.



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## India Needs To Shore Up Public Sector Capacity For Making Medicines

### Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 2
- ✓ Need of essential drugs and vaccines and the role of Public sector
- ✓ Types of drugs and about Compulsory licensing

### Recently:

- ❖ There is decline and near disappearance of public sector capacity for manufacture of drugs and vaccines.

### Why public sector should manufacture essential drugs and vaccines?

- To ensure that the population is not denied access to drugs that the Indian private sector is unable to produce or supply at affordable cost.
- Active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), which are needed for drug manufacture (formulation), are now mostly imported from China.
- This makes India highly vulnerable to disruptions in supply and cost escalations in import.
- National security demands that we develop both public and private sector capacity within the country, with suitable government support and incentives, to ensure uninterrupted and inexpensive availability of APIs.
- The use of Public Sector Units (PSUs) will offer an opportunity to produce drug volumes for use in primary and secondary care facilities as well as help in 'benchmarking' drug costs.
- The existence of PSUs would also provide an opportunity to utilise the provision of Compulsory Licensing under TRIPS.
- Effective implementation of the Ayushman Bharat initiative calls for investment in expanding public sector capacity for producing essential drugs and APIs which also embodies the spirit of Make in India.

### What kind of drugs are we talking about?

These include drugs where compulsory licences may need to be issued by the government for patent protected drugs or even off-patent drugs which are commercially unattractive to private manufacturers.

### What is Compulsory licensing?

- Compulsory licensing (CL) is a mechanism permitted by the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement to enable countries to issue licences to domestic drug manufacturers to produce and market affordable generic versions of life-saving drugs needed for meeting serious public health challenges that are of extreme urgency.
- This allows countries to overcome patent restrictions to assure availability of such drugs when the situation demands.
- Drugs effective against multi-drug resistant tuberculosis and anti-cancer drugs are clear examples of such a need, which should be addressed through compulsory licensing.

### Has India utilized the compulsory licensing provision earlier?

- India has utilized the CL route previously to permit two Indian companies, Natco and Cipla, to produce a potent anti-cancer drug Nexavar manufactured & patented by Bayer.
- This enabled a 32-fold reduction in the cost of the drug.

### Why private companies are hesitant to manufacture generic versions of the new anti-tubercular drugs?

- The expensive litigation that followed the Nexavar case due to action initiated by Bayer has made the private firms reluctant to manufacture generic drugs.
- India should take the lead in ensuring universal access to affordable drugs through such measures.
- Investment in public sector capacity is essential to ensure that the country can exercise that leadership even on occasions when the private pharmaceutical sector is hesitant to assume a leading role.

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## What Makes Maharashtra Kisan Rally A Model Protest?

### Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 2
- ✓ About Maharashtra Kisan Rally
- ✓ Outcomes of the march
- ✓ Reforms for agricultural markets and farmers condition in the country

### Recently:

- ❖ Thousands of farmers took out a gruelling six-day march of nearly 200 km from Nashik to Mumbai.
- ❖ The farmers aimed to gherao the Maharashtra Assembly and sensitise the government to their problems.

### How was this rally different?

- The Maharashtra farmers adopted a smooth, reasonable, and mature approach unlike what we witnessed during the Jat andolan last year.
- The rally did not disrupt the lives of other citizens and refrained itself from aggressive sloganeering contrary to how India's myriad protesters typically behave.
- Many Mumbaikars backed the protestors defying the popular belief that urban India usually has little patience for agrarian problems.

### What are the outcomes of the march?

- A six-month deadline has been set for changes and a written assurance that some of the demands will be pushed through immediately.
- Tribal protestors with no land titles are promised that the 2006 Forest Rights Act will be implemented in letter and spirit.
- The demand that the State's loan waiver scheme be dropped so that genuine small farmers are not excluded is also being considered.

### What should be done to improve agriculture markets and farmer' condition in the country?

- Institutional reforms should be undertaken to free constricted agricultural markets.



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