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## Portuguese President's Visit to India

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### Why in News

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The **Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa** visited India from 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> February, 2020.

The last visit by a Portuguese President to India was in 2007.

### Highlights of the Visit

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- **14 agreements and understandings** were signed between India and Portugal in the fields of maritime heritage, maritime transport and port development, migration and mobility, start-ups, Intellectual Property Rights, aerospace, nano-biotechnology, audio visual co-production, yoga, diplomatic training, scientific research and public-policy.

One of the agreements included cooperation in setting up a **national maritime museum heritage complex in Lothal, Gujarat**.

- **Permanent Seat at UNSC:** Portugal provided its support to India to become a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations.
- **India-Portugal Joint Economic Committee:** It has been decided to hold the next session of the India-Portugal Joint Economic Committee in India soon to review the gamut of the bilateral trade and economic relations.
- Portugal also extended its support for the **commemoration of Mahatma Gandhi's 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary**.

- **Visit to Goa**

- Portuguese president visited churches in Old Goa, including the Basilica of Bom Jesus where relics of St. Francis Xavier are preserved. He also paid a visit to Institute Mater Dei Santa Monica, a church in the Old Goa heritage complex, and the Christian Art Museum located on the premises.
- All these structures at Old Goa, located about nine km from Panaji, are part of the complex certified as **world heritage monuments by UNESCO**.
- Santa Monica Church is over 450 years old, having been one of the first churches the Portuguese built in Goa in 1525.

- **Upcoming Collaborations**

- Portugal could join the **International Solar Alliance** in the near future.
- India as an Associate Observer of the **Community of Portuguese Language Countries**, so that both the countries can amplify their developmental partnerships in Africa and elsewhere.
- India's deepening engagement with the European Union (EU), especially when Portugal assumes the Presidency of the EU in 2021.

## Note

- **St. Francis Xavier** was the greatest Roman Catholic missionary of modern times who was instrumental in the establishment of Christianity in India, the Malay Archipelago, and Japan.
- **Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)** is a multilateral forum whose objective is to deepen the mutual friendship and cooperation among its members.
  - It was created on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 1996.
  - It has eight member states which have Portuguese as their official language: Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe.



- Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1949.

- Bilateral relations, however, went into decline after 1950 over Portugal's refusal to surrender its enclaves of Goa, Daman Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli on India's west coast.

By 1955, the two nations had cut off diplomatic relations which were followed by Indian military forces liberating Goa in 1961 through **Operation Vijay**, ending over 450 years of Portuguese rule in India.

- In **1974**, India and Portugal signed a treaty recognising India's sovereignty over Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and related matters. With the signing of this treaty, diplomatic relations were re-established.
- **Bilateral S&T cooperation** is being actively fostered between the two countries under the Agreement for Cooperation in Science and Technology signed on 3rd December, 1998.
- The Centre for Indian Studies at the University of Lisbon was inaugurated in April 2016 by the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs Augusto Santos Silva. It is the first centre in any university in Portugal dedicated to the study of India.

**Source: PIB**