



India-Vietnam Talks

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Why in News

Recently, **Defence Ministers of India and Vietnam** have discussed collaboration in defence industry capability building, training and cooperation in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations, etc.



Key Points

- **Defence Cooperation:** Both countries reaffirmed the strong India-Vietnam Defence cooperation which is a key pillar of **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** (2016).
 - Underlining the vision of **“Atmanirbhar Bharat”** for enhancing self-reliance including defence industries, India **urged closer defence industry cooperation** by concluding an **institutionalised framework agreement in the near future**.
 - **Vietnam thanked India for the assistance** by Indian Armed Forces in capacity building of Vietnamese Defence Forces especially in the field of Human Resource development.
 - **India** conveyed its willingness to **enhance the scope and level of training for all three services** of Vietnam Defence forces in Indian Defence Institutes.
 - It needs to be noted that the two countries **have built ties** on the procurement of weaponry and military hardware, capacity building, collaboration in the area of warship building and repair.
- **UN Peacekeeping:** Discussed cooperation in **UN peacekeeping** operations, which help countries navigate the difficult path from conflict to peace.
- **Cooperation in the field of Hydrography:** This will enable sharing of Hydrographic data and assist in production of navigational charts by both sides.

Hydrography is the science that **measures and describes the physical features of the navigable portion of the Earth's surface** and adjoining coastal areas.
- **ADMM Plus Meeting:** Vietnam invited India for **ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus** (ADMM Plus) being hosted by Vietnam in December 2020.
 - The **ADMM-Plus is a platform for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations** (ASEAN) and its eight Dialogue Partners Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the USA (collectively referred to as the “Plus Countries”), to strengthen security and defence cooperation for peace, stability, and development in the region.
 - **Vietnam is a member of ASEAN.**

ASEAN is a regional grouping that promotes economic, political and security cooperation among its **ten members**.

India-Vietnam Relations

- India and Vietnam have agreed to enhance their **bilateral cooperation** in line with **India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative** (IPOI) and the ASEAN's Outlook on Indo-Pacific.

This came in the backdrop of China's aggression in the Indo-Pacific region including **South China Sea region** and its actions along the **Line of Actual Control** (LAC) with India.

- **Cooperation at Multiple Fora:**
 - At the **UN Security Council**, both India and Vietnam will serve concurrently as **non-permanent members in 2021**.
 - India and Vietnam closely cooperate in various **regional forums** such as **East Asia Summit, Mekong Ganga Cooperation, Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM)**.
- **Economic Relations:**
 - India has on many occasions explained that it will **continue to maintain its oil and gas exploration tie-ups** with Vietnam in Vietnamese waters.
 - Vietnam is also the **second largest export destination for India after Singapore in the ASEAN region**.
 - **Bilateral trade** for the period **April-November 2019** reached **USD 9.01 billion**.
- **India's Assistance:**

India has **reaffirmed its development and capacity building assistance** to Vietnam through initiatives such as **Quick Impact Projects (QIP), Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)** and e-ITEC initiatives, PhD fellowships, as well as projects in **water resource management** in Vietnam's Mekong Delta region, **SDGs, digital connectivity** and **heritage conservation**.
- **Tourism and People-to-People Contacts:**
 - The **year 2019 was celebrated as the ASEAN-India Year of Tourism**. Both countries have facilitated a **simplified visa regime** to promote bilateral tourism.
 - The **Embassy of India organized various events to celebrate ** in 2018-19. These include Jaipur artificial limb fitment camps, which were organized in four provinces of Vietnam, benefitting 1000 people, under **'India for Humanity'** initiative of the Government of India.

Way Forward

- As India and Vietnam geographically lie at the heart of the emerging Indo-Pacific construct, both would play a major role in this strategic space which is becoming a core theatre for competition for power and influence amongst the major powers.
- The strategic partnership under the broad India-Vietnam cooperation framework would be critical towards building the vision laid out under **India's 'Act East' Policy**, which looks to expand engagement that is mutually positive and which ensures an inclusive growth for all in the region.

Source: TH