



India-Australia Meeting

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Recently, India and Australia reviewed **cooperation in the sectors of agriculture and defence.**

Key Points

- **In the field of Agriculture:**
 - The **India-Australia Grains Partnership** aims to use Australia's expertise in post harvest management to strengthen rural grain storage and supply chains so as to reduce losses and wastage.
 - **National Institute of Agricultural Marketing** will be the nodal organisation from India.
 - The flagship program of **National Innovation for Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA)** was mentioned and collaboration could be set up with the research organisations of Australia.
 - **NICRA is a network project of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** launched in February 2011.
 - The project aims to enhance the resilience of Indian agriculture to climate change and climate vulnerability through strategic research and technology demonstration.
 - The research on adaptation and mitigation covers crops, livestock, fisheries, and natural resource management.

- **On Defence Cooperation:**

- Participation of Australia in **Exercise Malabar**.
After the **Ladakh confrontation**, India extended the invitation to **Australia** and an Australian contingent participated in the **2020 Malabar exercises**.
- Various bilateral defence cooperation initiatives like **AUSINDEX**, **Mutual Logistic Support Arrangement (MLSA)** and **Defence Science & Technology Implementing Arrangement (DSTIA)** were reviewed.
- Expressed an intent to convene the **2+2 Ministerial Dialogue** at the earliest.
2+2 Ministerial Dialogue is a format of dialogue where the **defense and foreign ministers meet with their counterparts** from another country. It is the **highest-level institutional mechanism** between the two countries.

- **India-Australia Ties:**

- **On the Covid-19 front**, Australia has sent oxygen, ventilators and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits to India as part of an immediate support package.
- The trade Ministers of **India, Japan and Australia** have formally launched the **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI)**.
- Recently, **India-Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE)** was organised.
- Both countries upgraded their relationship to a **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** and signed **multiple defence agreements in 2020**.
- India and Australia co-operate in various **multilateral fora**.
 - Australia supports India's candidature in an expanded **UN Security Council**.
 - Both India and Australia are members of the **Quad**, **Commonwealth**, **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**, **ASEAN Regional Forum**, **Asia Pacific Partnership on Climate and Clean Development**, and have participated in the **East Asia Summits**.
 - Both countries have also been cooperating as members of the **Five Interested Parties (FIP)** in the **World Trade Organization** context.
 - Australia is an important player in **Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)** and supports India's membership of the organisation.
- A **Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement** between the two countries was signed in September 2014.
- The **Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT)** and the **Extradition Treaty** between India and Australia, which were signed in June 2008, have been ratified by both the Governments.
- Both sides are also likely to **explore other options** such as a **closer intelligence relationship**, and in other areas such as **high technology and outer space**.