



India and Senegal

For Prelims: Non-Aligned Movement, Ezulwini Consensus, Sirte Declaration, Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism

For Mains: India Senegal recent Developments, Bilateral Relations and Significance

Why in News?

Recently, the **Indian Vice President visited Senegal** and three **MoUs** (Memorandums of Understanding) **for cultural exchange, cooperation in youth matters and visa free regime** were signed.

- Both countries are celebrating **60 years of their diplomatic relations**.



What are the Highlights of the Recent Visit?

- **Visa-Free Regime:**
 - The first MoU pertains to visa-free regime for diplomatic and official passport holders which would strengthen cooperation between the two countries through seamless travel of officials/diplomats.
- **Cultural Exchange Programme:**
 - MoU for Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for the period 2022-26 was renewed.
 - With the renewal of the CEP, **there will be more cultural exchanges, thereby strengthening people-to-people contacts.**
- **Bilateral Cooperation in Youth Matters:**
 - Recognizing that both India and Senegal have a relatively young population, this MoU will be **mutually beneficial to both the countries through sharing of information, knowledge and good practices**, and youth exchanges.

- **Diversification of Trade Basket:**
 - Indo-Senegalese trade saw a 37% increase to USD 1.5 billion during last one year despite Covid-19 pandemic. India called for diversifying trade basket, particularly in the sectors of Agriculture, Oil & Gas, Health, Railways, Mining, Defence, green energy etc.
 - In view of the **large number of phosphates imported by India from Senegal**, Indian companies, especially those producing heavy earth moving equipment, can offer their expertise in this area.
- **Upgradation of Entrepreneurial Training & Development Centre:**
 - Phase II of the upgradation of Entrepreneurial Training & Development Centre (CEDT) at Dakar was approved.
 - The CEDT was set up in Dakar in 2002 under Indian grant assistance and every year around 1000 youth, though mainly from Senegal, but many also from 19 other African countries, **get trained in six different disciplines at the Centre.**
- **ITEC Course:**
 - Noting that Senegal, being a French speaking country, is **not able to avail various training/capacity building programmes under ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation)** which are in English language, India offered a Special ITEC Course on the English training for Senegalese public servants for 20 persons at a time.
- **E-Vidya Bharati and E-Aarogya Bharati initiative:**
 - Recognizing that many African students come to India for higher studies, India called for enhanced cooperation with Senegal in implementing the E-Vidya Bharati and E-Aarogya Bharati (E-VBAB) initiative (tele-education and tele-medicine) for the larger benefit of Senegalese students.
- **Issue of Indian Nationals Detained:**
 - India took up the issue of **four Indian nationals, crew members of ship M.V. Asso-6, who have been detained in Senegal since June 2021** on alleged drug trafficking charges and **requested the Senegalese government to expedite their trial** so that if released, they could return to their anxious families.
- **India's permanent UNSC membership:**
 - Appreciating Senegal's support for India's permanent UNSC membership, India reiterated **India's unwavering support to the Common African Position, enshrined in the [Ezulwini Consensus](#) and the [Sirte Declaration](#)** and underscored the need to rectify the historical injustice done to the African continent.
 - The Ezulwini Consensus (2005) is a position on international relations and reform of the United Nations, agreed by the African Union.
- **Non-Aligned Movement:**
 - India called for **re-energizing and re-invigorating [Non-Aligned Movement \(NAM\)](#)** and making it more responsive to contemporary issues of relevance to the developing world.
 - India sought **Senegalese support for early adoption of the [Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism \(CCIT\)](#)** under the UN umbrella, terming it vital to combat the menace of **[cross-border terrorism](#)**.
- **Presidency of African Union:**
 - India congratulated Senegal on its assumption of the Presidency of African Union.

What are the Key Points of India-Senegal Relations?

- **Political Relations:**
 - Diplomatic relations between the two countries **were established at Ambassadorial level in 1962**, with a resident Indian Mission in Dakar.
 - Both countries enjoy warm and friendly bilateral relations **sharing common values of democracy, development and secularism.**
 - They are **both members of the [Non-Aligned Movement](#) and G-15** and that of **[International Solar Alliance](#)**.
 - G-15 was essentially conceived as an economic forum designed to foster South-South cooperation.
- **Commercial Relations:**
 - Major items of export from India include textiles, food items, automobiles and pharmaceuticals. Major items of import from Senegal are phosphoric acid and raw cashew.
- **Development Assistance Programmes:**

- India has extended Lines of Credit to Senegal in such sectors as agriculture and irrigation, transport, rural electrification, fisheries, women poverty alleviation, IT training and equipment, medical, railways etc.
- India supplied **250 e-Rickshaws with lithium-ion batteries to Senegal.**
- **Cultural Cooperation:**
 - Some of the Indian cultural events organized in 2019 Senegal included TIRANGA 3.0 - the 3rd edition of Festival of India in Senegal, Dakar, Tiranga Holi, [4th International Day of Yoga](#), and, and various events related to 150th Mahatma Gandhi Birth Anniversary celebrations.
 - India also offers **10 ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) Scholarships.**
- **Indian Diaspora:**
 - The Indian community numbers around 500 (five hundred). Most of them are working for Indian companies including those executing development projects under Lines of Credit extended by India. Some of them are running their own businesses.

[Source: PIB](#)

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