

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.468
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.03.2018

FRENCH PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO INDIA

*468. SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA:
SHRI GAJANAN KIRTIKAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the French President visited India recently and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether both countries have reviewed their bilateral relations and if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether both countries have identified areas for co-operation and discussion during the said visit including maritime security, counter terrorism and Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant and if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (d) the Agreements/MoUs signed and the advantages likely to accrue to the country as a result thereof along with the steps taken/being taken by the Government to boost the bilateral relations with other countries; and
- (e) whether India organised the founding conference of International Solar Alliance with France and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ)

- (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 468 REGARDING “FRENCH PRESIDENT’S VISIT TO INDIA” FOR ANSWER ON 28.03.2018

(a) Yes, the President of the French Republic, H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, accompanied by his wife – Brigitte Macron, visited India on a State visit from 9-12 March 2018. President Macron arrived in New Delhi on 9th March 2018 and was received by Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The working day of the visit was 10th March 2018. Apart from the Forecourt Ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, other components of the French President’s program included paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhiji at Rajghat, a call on by the External Affairs Minister, delegation-level talks at Hyderabad House, and a meeting with Rashtrapatiji. Hon’ble Rashtrapatiji also hosted a banquet for the French President and his delegation. On 11th March 2018, Prime Minister Modi and the President Macron co-hosted the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre. On 12th March 2018, President Macron and Prime Minister Modi inaugurated a 75MW solar power project in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh. The project was built under the National Solar Mission by the French company – M/s Elgie. President Macron accompanied by Prime Minister Modi also visited Varanasi. In Varanasi, President Macron visited the Deendayal Hastkala Sankul – a trade facilitation centre for handicrafts and also took a boat ride from Assi Ghat to Dasaswamedh Ghat. President Macron was accompanied by a large delegation which included academia, business leaders and media persons. President Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron also paid a personal visit to the Taj Mahal.

(b) 2018 marks the 20th anniversary of establishment of India-France Strategic Partnership. The visit offered both sides the opportunity to carry out a full review of the growing maturity in our strategic bilateral relations, which is rooted in our abiding faith in the shared values of democracy, liberty, justice and equality. The Agenda covered a wide range of issues including the current international situation, the fight against terrorism, our ongoing cooperation in the defence, space and civil nuclear sectors, bilateral trade and investment cooperation and people to people contacts. A number of outcomes were achieved during this visit including 14 agreements, one Joint Statement, and two separate vision statements on India-France cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region and Space cooperation respectively.

(c) Apart from the traditional areas of cooperation, both sides identified new areas of cooperation including climate change, maritime security and logistics support, education, energy, and railways.

- i. In the area of *Maritime Security*, the two countries adopted a *Joint Strategic Vision in the Indian Ocean Region* to address the emerging challenges in the Indian Ocean Region that include, maritime traffic security in the face of the threats of terrorism and piracy; respect of international law by all States, in particular freedom of navigation and over-flight; fight against organized crime, trafficking, including in weapons of mass destruction, smuggling and illegal fishing; combating climate change and its consequences on security, particularly in terms of natural disasters; protection of the environment and natural resources, including tackling oil spills; and aid to victims of disasters. In addition, ISRO and the French CNES concluded an *Implementing Arrangement for Pre-formulation Studies of a Maritime Awareness Mission* with the objective of using satellites to provide relevant data and services to both nations to help monitor the maritime traffic and to identify the non-complaint ships. The monitoring system would provide end to end solutions for detection, identification, monitoring of vessels in the regions of interest for India and France.
- ii. In the area of *Counter-Terrorism*, the two countries have agreed to enhance operational cooperation between the respective counter terrorism agencies and launch a new cooperative effort to prevent and fight radicalization, in particular online-radicalization. Both countries have also agreed to strengthen counter-terrorism in Multilateral Fora such as United Nations, Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GATF), Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and G20. The two countries called upon all UN member countries to implement the UNSC Resolution No. 1267 and other relevant resolutions designating terrorist entities and committed for an early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) in the UN. The two countries also formalized an arrangement to engage in effective institutional interaction and cooperation to curb transnational narcotics trafficking including disruption of terrorist financing.

iii. On the *Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant*, Nuclear Power Cooperation of India Ltd. (NPCIL) and French EDF signed an 'Industrial Way Forward Agreement' (IWFA). The IWFA contains a set of milestones that are essential to be fulfilled prior to finalizing the 'General Framework Agreement' (GFA). Once installed, the Jaitapur project will be the largest nuclear power plant in the world, with a total capacity of 9.6 GW. It is expected to contribute towards achievement of India's goal of 40% share of non-fossil energy by 2030.

(d) The details of the 2 vision statements and 14 agreements exchanged during the visit and the advantages likely to accrue to the country are as follows:

- i. *Joint Strategic Vision of India-France cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region* – Recognises the crucial role of India-France Strategic Partnership for ensuring peace, security and stability and in bringing robust economic growth and prosperity to the Indian Ocean Region and seeks to harness the opportunities and meet the challenges together through bilateral and international coordination.
- ii. *India-France Joint Vision for Space cooperation* –Recognises the unique and historical partnership between India and France in the peaceful uses of outer space and seeks to guide the future direction of this bilateral strategic partnership by jointly harnessing the benefits of space technology.
- iii. *Agreement between India and France on the Prevention of Illicit Consumption and Reduction of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Chemical Precursors and Related Offences* - To facilitate in combating illicit traffic and consumption of drugs and impact terror financing.
- iv. *India-France Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement* - To encourage legal and orderly migration of students, professional and skilled workers to each others' country, depending on opportunity available, and to assure the return to their country of illegal migrants who have been properly identified as their national and to combat irregular migration.

- v. *Agreement between India and France to facilitate Mutual Recognition of Academic Qualifications* – To facilitate the mutual recognition of educational qualifications.
- vi. *Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Railways and SNCF France on technical cooperation in the field of Railways* – To deepen mutual cooperation and focus on priority areas of high speed and semi-high speed rail; station renovation; and suburban trains.
- vii. *Letter of Intent between India and France for creation of a permanent Indo-French Railways Forum* - Enhance existing cooperation by creating a Indo-French Permanent Railway Forum.
- viii. *Agreement between India and France regarding the provision of reciprocal logistics support between their Armed Forces* - To facilitate the reciprocal provision of Logistic Support, Supplies and Services between the Armed Forces of the two countries during authorised port visits, joint exercises, joint training, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts etc.
- ix. *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and France on cooperation in the field of Environment* – Will enable exchange of information between the Governments and technical experts of the two countries in the field of environment and climate change.
- x. *Agreement between India and France on cooperation in the field of Sustainable Urban Development* – Will allow exchange of information on smart city development, development of urban mass transportation systems, urban settlements and utilities etc.
- xi. *Agreement between India and France regarding the exchange and reciprocal protection of classified or protected information* – Puts in place an agreed security protocol for exchange of classified and protected information.
- xii. *Implementing Arrangement between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and CNES, France for pre-formulation studies of a Maritime Awareness Mission* -

Will provide satellite-based end-to-end solution for detection, identification and monitoring of vessels in the regions of interest for France and India.

- xiii. *Industrial Way Forward Agreement between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd, and EDF, France* - This agreement prescribes a way forward for the implementation of the Jaitapur nuclear power project.
- xiv. *Bilateral Arrangement between India and France on cooperation in the matter of Hydrography and Maritime Cartography* - Will encourage cooperation between the two countries in the field of hydrography, nautical documentation and maritime safety information.
- xv. *Credit Facility Agreement between India and France of Euros 100 million for funding of the Smart City Projects through a Challenge Process* – To bridge the funding gap between the funds provided by the Central and State Governments under the Smart City Mission programme.
- xvi. *Memorandum of Understanding between National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Ministry of New & Renewable Energy and the National Solar Energy Institute (INES), France* – Will enable the two agencies to work on projects in International Solar Alliance member countries in the areas of solar energy (solar photovoltaic, storage technologies, etc.) through transfer of technology and collaborative activities.

(e) Yes, the Founding Conference of the International Solar Alliance was co-hosted by India along with France on 11th March, 2018 at Rashtrapati Bhawan Convention Centre.

The ISA initiative was the brainchild of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The idea received full support of the French government and the initiative was jointly launched in Paris on 30th November 2015 at the COP 21 conference. The Framework Agreement for the Establishment of the ISA was finalized at the 4th International Steering Committee Meeting of the ISA that took place in New Delhi on 4th October 2016. The Framework Agreement of the ISA was opened for signature in Marrakech, Morocco on 15th November 2016. On 6th November 2017 the 15th ratification instrument of the ISA Framework

Agreement was deposited by Republic of Guinea. Thirty days after this deposit, the ISA became a legal entity on 6th December 2017.

The ISA includes 121 prospective member countries that fall within the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. To date, 61 countries have signed the Framework Agreement and 33 countries have ratified it. All 33 countries that ratified the ISA Framework Agreement by 11th March 2018 have become the “Founding Members” of the ISA.

The day-long Founding Conference saw the participation by 47 Heads of Delegations, including 21 Heads of State/Heads of Government, 2 Vice Presidents, 4 Deputy Prime Ministers and 19 Ministers. In addition, there was representation by 10 Multilateral Development Banks and senior representation from the United Nations, energy-related think tanks, representatives from the corporate sector and civil society. The Founding Conference included a Plenary Session in the forenoon and Technical Sessions in the afternoon.

Participating countries at the Founding Conference adopted the “Delhi Solar Agenda” wherein ISA member countries committed to a clean and healthy world for this generation and beyond, rooted in sustainable lifestyles. Member countries expressed their confidence that solar energy offered a clean, climate friendly and inexhaustible energy resource with an unprecedented opportunity to bring energy security to our peoples and improve their lives. They agreed to pursue an increased share of solar energy, facilitate affordable finance, explore innovative financing mechanisms and facilitate joint “research and development” efforts to this end.

Government of India also announced 27 solar-related projects worth US\$ 1.39 billion under the GOI Line of Credit programme in 15 African countries.
