

## **INDIA – REPUBLIC OF KOREA BILATERAL RELATIONS**

India-Republic of Korea (ROK) established diplomatic relations on 10 December 1973. Consular relations were established in 1962. Both countries formed a "Strategic Partnership" in year 2010, which was elevated to "Special Strategic Partnership" in year 2015 during the State Visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Seoul. Both countries commemorated 50 years of diplomatic ties in 2023.

### **Historical Connect:**

2. According to the 13th century Korean historical text "SamgukYusa" or "Heritage History of the Three Kingdoms", Princess Suriratna from Ayodhya, India came to Korea in the year 48 AD, married King Kim-Suro of the erstwhile Gaya Confederacy in ancient Korea and became Queen Heo Hwang-ok. Many Koreans trace their ancestry to this lineage. Some scholars believe that Buddhism reached Korea via the maritime route with the arrival of Princess Suriratna and her brother Monk Jangyu.
3. Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore composed a short but evocative poem titled, "Lamp of the East" in 1929 about Korea's glorious past and its promising bright future, which is fondly remembered by the Koreans and finds mention in Korean school textbooks. As a result of this connection, a bust of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore was unveiled in Seoul in May 2011.

### **India's Role in Korean War:**

4. India played an important role in the Korean peninsula after Korea's independence in 1945. Former Indian diplomat Shri K P S Menon was the Chairman of the 9-member UN Commission set up in 1947 to hold elections in Korea. India sent an Army medical unit - the 60th Parachute Field Ambulance comprising of 627 medical personnel, commanded by Lt. Col. A.G. Rangaraj during the Korean War as part of the UN Command, and treated about 220,000 patients. During the Korean War (1950-53), both the warring sides accepted a UN resolution sponsored by India, and the ceasefire was declared on 27 July 1953. Lt. General K.S. Thimayya of India, served as the Chairman of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission [NNRC] after the armistice and contributed to resolving the humanitarian issues arising out of the War. India dispatched one Brigade Group designated as Custodian Forces -India (CFI) comprising 5230 personnel to Korea, under Major General SSP Thorat which was instrumental in resolving the Prisoners of War issue.

### **High-Level Exchanges:**

5. PM Narendra Modi paid a State Visit to ROK from 18-19 May 2015, during which bilateral relationship was upgraded to 'Special Strategic Partnership'. On the occasion of the State Visit of President Moon Jae-in to India on 08-11 July 2018, both countries issued a

statement outlining a "Vision for People, Prosperity, Peace and our Future". First Lady of ROK Ms. Kim Jung-sook visited India from November 04-07, 2018 as Guest of Honour for the "Deepotsav Festival" and participated in the ground breaking ceremony for construction of a memorial for Queen Heo at Ayodhya.

6. PM Narendra Modi paid a State Visit to ROK from 21-22 February 2019 and unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi at Yonsei University. PM Modi also gifted a Bodhi sapling to Gimhae City. He received the Seoul Peace Prize for his contribution to international cooperation and fostering global economic growth.

7. PM Narendra Modi and President Yoon Suk Yeol had their first in-person bilateral talks on the sidelines of G7 Summit in Hiroshima, Japan on 20 May 2023 later President Yoon visited India on 9-10 September 2023 to attend G20 Summit in New Delhi. On the sidelines of G20 Summit, PM Modi and President Yoon had a bilateral meeting on 10 September 2023. President Yoon and PM Narendra Modi also met on the sidelines of ASEAN Summit in Lao PDR in October 2024.

8. PM Narendra Modi and President Lee Jae Myung met on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada on June 17, 2025 and agreed to work together in sectors like commerce, investment, technology, green hydrogen, shipbuilding and more. On July 17, 2025 delegation of Special Envoys led by former Prime Minister of the ROK, Kim Boo-kyum held productive meeting with PM Narendra Modi. Later, on the sidelines of the G20 Summit on November 22, 2025 in South Africa, PM Narendra Modi met President Lee Jae Myung, and the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to deepen the India-ROK Special Strategic Partnership and expand cooperation across trade, investment and advanced technologies.

### **Ministerial level Exchanges:**

9. EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Seoul on March 05-06, 2024 for the 10th India-ROK Joint Commission Meeting (JCM), which he co-chaired with Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul. They undertook a comprehensive review of bilateral cooperation in areas of trade, investments, development cooperation, defence and security, science and technology, culture and people-to-people exchange. The two ministers met on the sidelines of ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in July 2024, at UNGA in September 2024, at G20 Summit meeting in November 2024, at G7 Foreign Ministers outreach meeting in Italy in November 2024 and at G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa in February 2025.

10. Following Presidential election in ROK, Foreign Minister Cho Hyun, visited India in August 2025 and had a bilateral meeting with EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar and reviewed the special strategic partnership. On the sidelines of ASEAN related meetings in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar had another meeting with the ROK Foreign Minister Cho Hyun on October 26, 2025.

11. Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman led the Indian delegation to attend the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Board of Directors of Asian Development Bank (ADB) in RoK from 02-05 May 2023. On the sidelines, she also held bilateral talks with her Korean counterpart Mr. Choo Kyung-ho later the two Ministers also met in Bengaluru on the sidelines of G20 Finance Ministers' meeting in Feb 2023.

12. Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas visited RoK in November 2025 to discuss possibilities of collaboration with RoK companies in the shipbuilding sector.

13. CIM Shri Piyush Goyal met his Korean counterpart, Mr. Inkyo Cheong during the 12<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit Economic Ministers' Meeting in Vientiane, Laos on 21 September 2024 and reviewed the India-Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and explored opportunities for greater bilateral trade and investment.

14. MOS for External Affairs and Education, Mr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh participated in the Third Summit for Democracy-Ministerial Conference on the theme: 'AI/Digital Technology and Democracy' hosted by RoK Foreign Minister in Seoul on 18 March 2024. MoS Singh also met ROK Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul.

15. MOS for Information & Broadcasting, Dr. L. Murugan lead first ever ministerial delegation from India to BIFF in September 2025. Bharat Pavilion was setup at BIFF & Asian Contents & Film Market (ACFM which highlighted WAVES Bazaar initiative of the Government. "Bharat Parv" was also hosted by Ministry of I&B which served as a platform for deeper people-to-people and cultural connect between India and Korea.

#### **Vice Minister and Senior level Official exchanges:**

16. Deputy National Security Advisor (NSA) Vikram Misri and 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Director of National Security Kim Tae-hyo co-chaired the 4<sup>th</sup> India-ROK Deputy NSA-level Strategic Dialogue in August 2023 in Seoul; Secretary (East) Saurabh Kumar and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Foreign Minister Cho Hyundong co-chaired the 5<sup>th</sup> Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD) in January 2023 (Seoul). Bilateral Civil Nuclear Cooperation Talks were held between Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE) in July 2023 in Seoul. 4<sup>th</sup> India-ROK Consultations on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation was held in Seoul on 26 April'24. The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of bilateral Cyber Dialogue was held on 28 May 2024 in Seoul. The inaugural India-ROK-US Trilateral Dialogue on Critical & Emerging Technologies was held on 12 March 2024 in Seoul. MeitY participated in the AI Global Forum and the AI Seoul Summit Ministerial Meeting was held on 22 May 2024 in Seoul.

17. There is a rich agenda of engagement between thinktanks of India and the ROK. 2<sup>nd</sup> 2+2 ICWA/RIS-KNDA/KIEP Policy Dialogue focusing on India-ROK ties in the Indo-Pacific context was held on 20 March 2024 in Seoul; 5<sup>th</sup> ICWA – KNDA policy dialogue was also held on 19 March 2024 in Seoul. Indian defence industry experts also attended the Seoul Defence Dialogue held in September 2024. The inaugural India-ROK-Japan Trilateral Policy Planning was held at Seoul on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024 and India-ROK Bilateral Policy Planning Dialogue also took place in Seoul on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024.

18. A conference on 'Bridging the Future: Exploring New Horizons in Korea-India Relations' was organized by the Embassy of India in collaboration with Sejong Institute and Asia Foundation on 27 February 2025 in Seoul and in March 2025 another conference on 'Korea-India Economic Partnership Forum: Shaping the future of the Indo-Pacific' was organized by the Embassy in collaboration with Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP) in Seoul. The 24<sup>th</sup> India-Korea Strategic Dialogue was held from 17- 19 December 2025 in Seoul, convened by the Ananta Centre in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the Korea Foundation, and the Seoul Forum for International Affairs in which ROK Foreign Minister Cho Hyun delivered the keynote address.

19. Ministerial-level delegations from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana and Rajasthan visited ROK in 2023 and 2024 to explore business tie-ups. In 2025, Chief Ministers of Assam, Chhattisgarh and Punjab visited Seoul in January, August and December respectively, to promote investment in their respective states.

20. In April 2025, Mr. Kim Hee-sang, Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, met with Shri Periasamy Kumaran, Secretary [East]. Both sides discussed the overall economic cooperation between the two countries including economic security, core technologies, and critical minerals.

### **Parliamentary and Judiciary Exchanges:**

21. An All-Party Parliamentary Delegation led by Hon'ble MP Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jha visited the Republic of Korea on 25-26 May 2025 for global outreach on the significance of Operation Sindoor. The delegation had interactions with Korean lawmakers, Foreign Minister and MOFA officials, Think tanks, corporate policy groups, local media, eminent Korean dignitaries and Indian Diaspora members. Rep. Gyeongjong Mo and Rep. Yongtae Kim visited India in July 2025 to study the renewable energy landscape in India and the emerging opportunities for bilateral cooperation. They met Hon'ble Chairman and other members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Energy and Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. They visited India's largest solar park (2.2 GW) at Bhadla, Rajasthan.

22. In July 17, 2025 delegation of Special Envoys of President Lee Jae Myung led by Kim Boo-kyum met Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha. In September 2025, MOS for Information &

Broadcasting, Dr. L. Murugan met the members of the culture, sports and tourism committee and the vice chairs and the members of Korea-India Parliamentary Friendship group. Indian parliamentarian, Hon'ble member Bhubhaneswar Kalita, Chairman of the committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change participated at the Asian-Pacific Parliamentarian Conference on Environment and Development (APPCED). Ms. Jaewon Kim, Member of the Culture, Sports and Tourism Committee of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea visited India (Delhi & Goa) in November 2025 to participate in the 56<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival of India, in Goa where she was invited as the "Guest of Honour" for the "Waves Film Bazaar".

23. ROK National Assembly Speaker Kim Jin-pyo visited New Delhi (11-13 October 2023) to attend the P20 Summit. He held a bilateral meeting with Hon'ble Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla.

24. Hon'ble Justice of Supreme Court Surya kant visited ROK in August 2024 and met Chief Justices of Supreme Court of ROK and Constitutional Court of ROK; In August 2025, Justice K. Vinod Chandran participated as a panelist at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Symposium of the AACC SRD.

### **Economic Relations:**

25. Trade and economic relations between India and RoK gathered momentum following the implementation of CEPA in 2010. Bilateral trade between the two countries for January to October 2025 is USD 21.5 billion. India's import volume from January to October 2025 is USD 16 billion, while the export volume is USD 5.5 billion. Bilateral trade in 2022 had reached record level of USD 27.8 billion. In 2024, the bilateral trade stood at USD 25.1 billion. Major items of India's exports to ROK are Light oils and preparations, Aluminum, Refined lead, mineral fuels/oil distillates (mainly naphtha), cereals, iron and steel. ROK's main export items are automobile parts, tele-communication equipment, hot rolled iron products, petroleum refined products, base lubricating oils, mechanical appliances, electrical machinery & parts and iron and steel products. 11<sup>th</sup> Round of CEPA upgrade negotiations were held in July 2024 in Seoul. Electronics Origin Data Exchange System [EODES] was launched by CBIC Chair and Korea Customs Commissioner on December 6, 2023 in New Delhi for expediting exchange of information related to certificate of origin, smoothening the trading process.

26. RoK is 15<sup>th</sup> largest FDI investor of India. Total investment made by ROK into India in 2024 amounted to USD 929 million. Majority of the investment has come from manufacturing. Cumulative investment since 1980 stands at USD 10 billion. India and ROK launched the initiative 'Korea Plus' to promote and facilitate Korean investments into India. There are more

than 600 large and small Korean firms operating in India. Six Korean Banks have overall 18 branches in India. These include KEB Hana, Kookmin, Shinhan, Woori, Nonghyup and IBK. KB Kookmin Bank opened its 2 new branches in Chennai and Pune in October 2025. Woori bank opened its 2 branches in India in September 2024. KB Securities opened its office in Mumbai on December 1, 2025. Korea Investment Corporation [KIC], the sovereign national fund of ROK, opened its first branch in India [Mumbai] in April 2024.

27. Investment from India to ROK are to the tune of approx. USD 5.2 billion led by Tata Daewoo and Aditya Birla Group (Novelis). Tata Motors acquired Daewoo Commercial Vehicle Company for USD 102 million in March 2004. The State Bank of India opened a branch in Seoul in January 2016 to provide wide range of services including loan services and project financing for Korean and Indian companies.

28. The Indian Chamber of Commerce in Korea [ICCK] comprising Indian and Korean companies play a constructive role in promoting trade and investments linkages between the two countries. India-Korea Fast Track Mechanism [FTM] was launched in August 2024 to expedite the resolution of issues and concerns of Korean investors and enhance their ease of doing business in India and has held two meetings so far.

29. Trade and investment promotion visits, including from state governments in India are frequent, A delegation led by Energy Minister of Karnataka Mr. K.J. George visited Seoul in August, 2025. A delegation led by Sh. Sandeep Poundrik, Secretary, Ministry of Steel visited ROK in July 2025 and met Deputy Minister for Industrial Policy, MOTIE Mr. Seung-ryul Lee. Dr. Abhilaksh Lekhi, Secretary, Department of Fisheries visited ROK in November 2025 and delivered presentation on India's Fisheries and aquaculture initiatives at the National Representatives Meeting held Incheon. He also met Deputy Minister for Fisheries Policy Mr. Choi Hyun-ho. Ministerial-level delegations from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana and Rajasthan visited ROK in 2023 and 2024 to explore business tie-ups. Chief Ministers of Assam, Chhattisgarh and Punjab visited Seoul in January, August and December 2025 respectively, to promote investment in their respective states.

### **Defence Relations:**

30. India - ROK defence relations have strengthened in recent years. Various bilateral mechanisms have been instituted to take forward engagements in armed services, defence policy and defence industry domains. Service level talks across the three arms of the military are held biennially.

31. Army staff talks were held in September 2024 in India. ROK Army Chief Park Jeong-hwan visited New Delhi in September 2023 to attend the Indo-Pacific Armies Chiefs

Conference. General Manoj Pande, Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) visited ROK in November 2023 and held meetings with Chief of Staff, ROK Army and Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff of ROK Armed Forces.

32. Air Force Staff Talks were held in November 2024 in ROK. Chief of Staff, ROK Air Force, General Lee Youngsu, undertook an official visit to India on 17-21 March 2024 and met Chief of Indian Air Force and the Defence Secretary and discussed new areas of cooperation in field of aerospace, AI and cyber technologies.

33. Navy staff talks were held in April 2023 in India. Navy and Coast Guard ships have been visiting each other's ports on a regular basis and have also been holding joint exercises. Inaugural India and ROK bilateral naval exercise was successfully conducted from 13-16 Oct 2025 in ROK. INS SAHYADRI from Indian Navy and NOJEOKBONG from ROK Navy undertook the exercise.

34. Chief of Korea Coast Guard, Commissioner General Kim Yong Jin visited India from 20-24 July 2025 and met Director General Indian Coast Guard. The two sides signed a MOU on 'Cooperation in Maritime Search & Rescue' on the sidelines of 13th High Level Meeting. A delegation from Korea Coast Guard participated in 10<sup>th</sup> NATPOLREX Exercise conducted by Indian Coast Guard in October 2025, while ICG delegation participated in Capacity Building Training in ROK in June 2025. ICG Ship SUJAY visited ROK in September 2024.

35. Contract for additional 100 K9 Vajra was signed on 04 Apr 2025 between Hanwha Aerospace and L&T, India. A Roadmap for Defence Industries Cooperation was signed between the two countries in September 2020. For the consecutive 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, India Pavilion was established at Korea Defence Expo, KADEX-2024, to represent India's defence manufacturing capabilities among the foreign defence players. Earlier, two important MOUs on defence industry joint ventures were signed between Indian & ROK defence companies during Aero-India on 10-11 February 2025 at Bengaluru.

36. A delegation from National Defence College visited ROK in June 2024 on a study tour while delegation from College of Defence Management visited ROK in October 2024 and from Army War College in November 2025.

### **Cultural Relations, Tourism and Education:**

36. Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC) has a number of MoUs with Korean universities, associations and some cities for furthering cultural collaboration. In 2021, SVCC signed an MoU with the Gimhae city and ICCR for cultural cooperation which envisages construction of the Gimhae India Cultural Exchange Centre in Gimhae. SVCC signed MoUs with the Seongdong Foundation of Arts and Culture [SDFAC] and Samsung Welstory in 2024

and with Eunpyeong Foundation of Arts and Culture [EFAC] and Busan University of Foreign Studies [BUFS] in 2025 to further foster cultural exchanges between India and ROK.

37. In March 2014, a Bodhi Tree sapling was officially presented to ROK at a ceremony in Korea National Arboretum and a bust of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled at the Hongbeop-sa temple in Busan in July 2014. Additionally, in 2014, a statue of Mahatma Gandhi was installed at the Yeonji Park in Gimhae, a section of which has been developed as India-Korea Friendship Park based on the life experiences of Mahatma Gandhi. During his State Visit to ROK in 2019, PM Modi gifted a Bodhi Tree sapling and a bust of Mahatma Gandhi, which were installed at Yonsei University, Songdo Campus, Incheon.

38. As part of the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi, a Korea-India Peace Park was unveiled on June 3, 2019 and 150 trees planted at the historic Independence Park, Seodaemun district in Seoul. In May 2021, a 3.3 feet bronze statue of Lord Buddha was gifted by ICCR to the Tongdo-sa Temple, the head temple of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism. In February-March 2023, a group of around 100 Korean Buddhist monks of Jogye order completed a 43 days walking pilgrimage to sacred Buddhist sites in India.

39. As a part of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiative of "Ek Ped Maa ke Naam", 50 plum trees were planted by the Embassy and the Indian diaspora at Boramae Park, Seoul in March 2025. The Embassy also organized the 11<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga 2025 events with support from local partners in several cities in RoK, including Jeju Island, Busan, Seoul, and Nami Island.

40. For the first time, a ministerial level delegation led by Hon'ble Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Dr. L. Murugan participated at the 30<sup>th</sup> Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) (September 17–26, 2025) and the Asian Contents & Film Market (ACFM) (September 20–23, 2025) was held in Busan. India set up a Bharat Pavilion at both BIFF and ACFM to highlight India's capabilities in film production, post-production, incentives being offered, and to promote India as a filming destination. This marked a significant milestone in India – ROK collaboration in the field of media, entertainment, culture, gaming, AVGC and emerging technologies.

41. In October 2025, as part of the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of Sarang - The Festival of India in ROK, the Embassy collaborated with a number of local partners to organise art exhibitions, Indian classical dance performances, music, films, and culinary related activities. In November 2025, the Embassy also organised the 13th Indian Film Festival across ROK including Seoul, Yangsan, Gwangju, Incheon, Miryang, Busan. Embassy also hosted the 21st edition of "Celebrating India" in collaboration with the North-East Institute of Fashion Technology (NEIFT).

42. To promote tourism, Embassy participated in major Korean travel fairs, including Seoul International Travel Fair 2025 (SITF) and organised tourism-focused seminars and roadshows

in both online and offline format in partnership with State Governments of Assam, Goa, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Embassy has also regularly engaged with eminent universities and institutions to explore student exchanges and academic and research collaborations.

## **Startups**

43. In February 2019, India and RoK signed an MoU on Startup Cooperation. On the basis of this MOU the India-Korea SME and Startups center was established in Gurugram. The MoU was signed between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and ROK Ministry of SMEs and Startups. Identified areas of collaboration are information sharing and establishment of the "India-Korea Startup Centre" which is operational and serving as a resource for Indian and Korean startups looking for information.

44. A delegation of DPIIT and Startup India led by Additional Secretary DPIIT, Arti Bhatnagar participated as a partner country in COMEUP Startup festival along with some Indian startups in December 2024. Later, a 26 member strong delegation including 11 startups led by Korea Institute of Startup & Entrepreneurship Development (KISED) and Ministry of SMEs and Startups (MSS) participated in the "Startup Mahakumbh" organized in New Delhi from 4-6 April 2025. In December 2025, at the COMEUP Startup festival in Seoul, Indian startup "Konnect" was selected as the overall winner among more than 2,500 teams from 97 countries.

## **Indian Community:**

45. The total number of Indian nationals living in ROK is estimated to be around 18,000. The majority of the Indians living in Korea are students, scholars, professionals and their families. During the past few years, many professionals, mainly in the areas of IT, shipping and automobile have come to ROK. A large number of them are working with large companies like Samsung, LG, Hyundai TATA Daewoo, TCS, Coupang etc. There are also a significant number of Indian students and academicians in Korean universities. Majority of the Indian students and scholars are pursuing post-graduate and Ph.D programs, mostly in the fields of STEM. Several Indian diaspora associations are active in the Republic of Korea.

\*\*\*

**(December 2025)**