

India – Vietnam Relations

India and Vietnam, with historical roots in their national struggle for independence, share traditionally close and cordial bilateral relations. Mahatma Gandhi and President Ho Chi Minh, regarded as the Father of Nation in India and Vietnam respectively, led people in their heroic struggle against colonialism in their respective countries. India was the Chairman of the International Commission for Supervision and Control formed pursuant to the Geneva Accord of 1954 to facilitate the peace process in Vietnam. India initially maintained Consulate-level relations with the then North Vietnam and South Vietnam and later established full diplomatic relations with unified Vietnam on 7 January 1972.

2. Bilateral relations between the two countries were elevated to the level of 'Strategic Partnership' during the visit of Vietnam's Prime Minister Mr. Nguyen Tan Dung to India in July 2007. In 2016, during Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi's visit to Vietnam, bilateral relations were further elevated to "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership". The current development of India-Vietnam relations are guided by a historic "*Joint Vision for Peace, Prosperity and People*" adopted by Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc during the Virtual Summit held on 21 December 2020. On the sidelines of the Virtual Summit, the Foreign Ministers of the two countries also signed a Plan of Action for the period 2021-23 to implement the Joint Vision. Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi and General Secretary of Communist Party of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong had telephonic conversation on 15 April 2022. In 2022-23, the two countries are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations that also coincides with the 75th anniversary of India's independence "*Aazadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*".

I. POLITICAL EXCHANGES

Recent Meetings:

3. Amid Covid-19 related restrictions, the India-Vietnam Summit was held in virtually and co-chaired by Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Vietnam, Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc on 21 December 2020. The 17th Joint Commission Meeting between External Affairs Minister of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar and Deputy PM and Foreign Minister of Vietnam, Mr. Pham Binh Minh was held on 25 August 2020 in virtual format. The incumbent Speaker of Lok Sabha Shri Om

Birla paid an official visit to Vietnam from 19-21 April 2022 as part of the activities to celebrate the 50th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh visited Vietnam from 8-10 June 2022. Minister of State for External Affairs Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh attended the Horasis India Meeting-2022 held in Binh Duong province (Vietnam) on 25-26 September 2022.

4. Earlier, the Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi paid an Official Visit to Vietnam on 2-3 September 2016. The then President of India Mr. Ram Nath Kovind paid a State Visit to Vietnam from 18-20 November 2018. The then Vice President of India Mr. M. Venkaiah Naidu visited Vietnam from 09-12 May 2019 to deliver a keynote address at the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak celebration. External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj visited Vietnam for the 16th Joint Commission Meeting and 3rd Indian Ocean Conference from 26-28 August 2018.

Visits from Vietnam

5. General Secretary of Communist Party of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong paid a State Visit to India from 19-22 November 2013. President of Vietnam Mr. Tran Dai Quang paid a State Visit to India from 02-04 March 2018. Prime Minister of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc visited New Delhi from 24-26 January 2018 to attend ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit-2018 where he was also one of the Chief Guests for India's Republic Day Celebrations. Vice President of Vietnam Mme. Dang Thi Ngoc Thinh paid an Official Visit to India from 11-13 February 2020. Chairman of National Assembly of Vietnam Mr. Vuong Dinh Hue paid an official visit to India from 15-19 December 2021. Foreign Minister of Vietnam Mr. Bui Thanh Son attended the Special ASEAN-India Foreign Minister's Meeting held in New Delhi on 16-17 June 2022 to mark the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations.

Institutional mechanisms

6. The Joint Commission Meeting at the Foreign Ministers' level and the Foreign Office Consultations and Strategic Dialogue at Secretary-level provide key framework for bilateral dialogue encompassing all areas of mutual interest. The 16th Joint Commission Meeting was held in Hanoi in August 2018 while the 17th round of Joint Commission Meeting was held in virtual format on 25 August 2020 that was led by External Affairs Minister of India and the Deputy PM and Foreign

Minister of Vietnam. The Vice-Ministerial level 12th Foreign Office Consultations and the 9th Strategic Dialogue were held in Hanoi in May 2022.

7. The 4th meeting of the India-Vietnam Joint Sub-Commission on Trade at Commerce Secretary-Level was held in Hanoi in January 2019. The 13th Defence Secretary-level Annual Defence Policy Dialogue was held virtually on 12 January 2021. Among other key institutional dialogues, the 2nd India-Vietnam Maritime Security Dialogue was held in April 2021 in virtual format following the first round held in Hanoi in March 2019. The 1st Policy Planning Dialogue between the two Foreign Ministries was held in September 2020.

8. Parliamentary exchanges are important element of the comprehensive strategic partnership for which the Cooperation Agreement signed between the Lok Sabha and Vietnam's National Assembly in December 2016 provide the institutional framework. The last exchanges were the visit of the Chairman of National Assembly of Vietnam, Mr. Voung Dinh Hue to India from 15-19 December 2021 and the return visit of the Speaker of Lok Sabha of India Mr. Om Birla to Vietnam from 19-21 April 2022. Parliamentary Friendship Group for India in the National Assembly of Vietnam is led by Chairman Mr. Duong Thanh Binh who is also the member of the National Assembly Standing Committee and Chairman of the National Ombudsman Committee.

II. TRADE, ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Bilateral Trade

9. A Joint Sub-Commission on Trade and working level exchanges in specific sectors seek to promote trade, investment and economic between the two countries. Bilateral trade between India and Vietnam has seen steady growth over the years. According to Indian data for the financial year April 2021-March 2022, bilateral trade posted a growth of 27% and reached US\$ 14.14 billion. Indian exports to Vietnam amounted to US\$ 6.70 billion (increase of 34%) while Indian imports from Vietnam amounted to US\$ 7.44 billion (increase of 21%). Regular exchange of business delegations, participation in exhibition and economic seminars also support economic ties.

10. Main Indian export basket to Vietnam include iron and steel, cotton, cereals, meat and fishery products, electrical machinery and equipment, auto

parts, articles of stone, cement, plaster, paper and paper articles, inputs for leather articles, organic and inorganic chemicals, pharmaceuticals as well as animal feed. During the same period, India's import baskets from Vietnam mainly included electrical and electronic equipment, inorganic chemicals, machinery and mechanical appliances, articles of plastic, copper and rubber, coffee and tea, spices, iron and steel and their articles, footwear, fertilizers, metals, silk, optical, medical and surgical equipment.

Investments in Vietnam

11. India's investments in Vietnam are estimated at around US\$ 1.9 billion including investments routed through third countries. According to Vietnam's Foreign Investment Agency, as of December 2021, India has 342 projects with total invested capital of over US\$ 1 billion in Vietnam. Major sectors of Indian investment are energy, mineral exploration, agro-processing, sugar, tea, coffee manufacturing, agro-chemicals, IT and auto components. Indian Chambers of Commerce provides a platform for Indian businesses in Vietnam through its presence in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

12. As of 2021, Vietnam has six investment projects in India with total estimated investment of US\$ 28.55 million, primarily in the areas of pharmaceuticals, information technology, chemicals and building materials.

Development Partnership

13. India has a long-standing development partnership with Vietnam that has made positive contributions towards capacity building, sustainable development goals and socioeconomic development. Vietnam is also a partner county within the ASEAN framework and Mekong Ganga framework.

Quick Impact Projects

14. Under the Mekong Ganga Cooperation framework, India has been undertaking Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in different provinces of Vietnam to develop community infrastructure at the grassroots level. During the Virtual Summit between the Prime Ministers of India and Vietnam on 21 December 2020, it was decided to raise the number of QIP projects from 05 to 10 per year to be implemented annually in Vietnam. So far, since 2017, 27 QIPs have been

completed in 23 provinces of Vietnam and another 10 projects are under implementation in 10 provinces.

15. In addition, 7 grant-in-aid assistance projects in Ninh Thuan province were completed in December 2020 with an outlay of around US\$ 1.54 million. India is also providing technical assistance valued at US\$ 2.25 million for conservation and restoration of the world heritage Site of 'My Son' in Quang Nam Province of Vietnam, showcasing the historical links between the two countries. This conservation work carried out by the experts from the Archaeological Survey of India is being completed in end-2022.

III. DEFENCE PARTNERSHIP

16. Defence and security cooperation between India and Vietnam is an important pillar of the comprehensive strategic partnership with periodic exchanges among defence and security establishments of the two countries. A Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Cooperation signed between the Ministries of Defence in 2009 and the Joint Vision on Defence Cooperation signed by the Defence Ministers in 2015 provided the institutional framework. The visit of India's Defence Minister Mr. Rajnath Singh to Vietnam in June 2022 progressed the defence cooperation, including by the signing of a new "Joint Vision Statement on India-Vietnam Defence Partnership towards 2030" and a "Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Logistics Support".

17. Apart from the cooperation between the Ministries of Defence of the two sides, this engagement has diversified to wider military-to-military dialogue and exchanges, training programme and bilateral exercises. Cooperation in United Nations Peace Keeping Operations is another active area of our cooperation. Defence industrial collaboration is another area in the defence relations. In June 2022, 12 High Speed Guard Boats built by Indian manufacturer M/s Larsen & Toubro were handed over to Vietnam.

18. In terms of ship visits, Indian Navy Ships INS Sahyadri and INS Kadmat paid port calls to Ho Chi Minh City from 24-26 June 2022 in continuation to past exchanges. Bilateral military exercises are held periodically, including last maritime exercises, with Vietnam People's Navy frigate VPNS Ly Thai To (HQ-012). Vietnam People's Navy Frigate 016 Quang Trung visited India in February 2022 to participate in the Multilateral Naval Exercise MILAN in Vishakhapatnam, India.

IV. CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC COOPERATION

19. The Swami Vivekananda Indian Cultural Centre (SVCC) was established in Hanoi in September 2016 to promote further understanding of India and to foster closer links between people of the two countries through cultural exchanges. The Centre organizes cultural programmes, seminars, photo exhibitions, film screenings, lectures, workshops in varied areas such as Yoga, Indian classical dance, art and philosophy, languages, traditional medicine, shared Buddhist and Cham heritage etc. SVCC has a collection of over 2,500 books, magazines, CDs and DVDs on various aspects of Indian art, culture, nature, tourism etc. SVCC also engages with universities, academia, art institutes and friendship organisations of Vietnam.

20. The two countries also have regular exchanges at the level of provinces, academic and thinktank institutions and youth delegations. Some of the recent exchanges between India and Vietnam includes the visit of a delegation from Khanh Hao Province to India (10-15 September), ICCR's cultural group visit to Vietnam (12-14 November) and visit of a youth delegation from the Central Committee of the Ho Chi Minh Youth Union in November 2022. The Vietnam Institute for Indian and South-West Asian Studies (VIISAS) under the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences and the Centre for Indian Studies at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics are among the key centres in Vietnam focused on Indian studies and academic cooperation with Indian institutions.

V. EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING EXCHANGES

21. Vietnam is an important partner under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme through short-term courses in Indian institutions to over 200 participants annually. Vietnam is also among our partner countries for e-ITEC programmes. Indian Council of Cultural Relations also offers nearly 50 scholarships to Vietnamese students and scholars every year and the offer of PhD fellowship programme for ASEAN countries has also received good response from Vietnam.

VI. TOURISM AND PEOPLE EXCHANGES

22. Following the decline of Covid-19 disruptions and the resumption of direct flights between the two countries in October 2020, two-way tourism and people-to-people exchanges are receiving a new boost. Direct flights by Indigo, Vietnam Airlines and Vietjet Air connect at least four cities on both sides (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad in India and Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang and Phu Quoc in Vietnam). A simplified visa regime offering e-Visa in both directions supports travel and tourism in both countries for leisure, business and cultural purposes.

23. Embassy of India organized various events to celebrate Mahatma@150 during the years 2019 and 2020 and the two governments jointly launched a commemorative stamp on Mahatma Gandhi on Gandhi Jayanti on 2 October 2019. Under the “India for Humanity” initiative, the two countries have held at least four artificial limb fitment programmes (Jaipur Foot) in Vinh Phuc, Quang Ninh and Yen Bai provinces in Vietnam.

24. Yoga is very popular among the people of Vietnam and the Embassy and the Consulate General of India in partnership with local authorities has been organizing International Day of Yoga at multiple locations in Vietnam in June every year. In June 2022, the 8th International Day of Yoga celebrations were held in 25 locations in Vietnam.

Indian Community in Vietnam

25. Nearly 6000 people from India, including short-term visitors, constitute the Indian community in Vietnam. Majority of them are based in and around Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) in the southern part of Vietnam. Most of the community members are professionals employed in business and trading companies and sectors such as IT, hotels/restaurants, mining, yoga institutions, civil aviation and schools. Indian businesses such as ONGC Videsh Limited, Bank of India, Bharat Electronics Limited, Hindustan Computers Limited and others have presence in Vietnam.

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