

India- ASEAN Relations

India's Look East Policy was initiated in 1990s and since then, India's relationship with ASEAN remains one of the cornerstones of our foreign policy and the very foundation of our Look East Policy. India became a sectoral dialogue partner of ASEAN in 1992, which was upgraded to full dialogue partnership in 1996. Since 2002, we have had annual Summits with ASEAN. ASEAN and India commemorated the 20th anniversary of dialogue-level partnership and the 10th anniversary of Summit-level partnership with a Commemorative Summit in New Delhi under the theme 'ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace and Shared Prosperity' on December 20-21, 2012. The Commemorative Summit attended by the Leaders from all the 10 ASEAN countries endorsed elevating our partnership to a 'Strategic Partnership'. The Leaders also adopted the 'ASEAN-India Vision Statement', which charts the future of ASEAN-India cooperation.

ASEAN-India functional cooperation is diverse and includes cooperation across a range of sectors, such as trade, science & technology, agriculture, environment, human resource development, space science, new and renewable energy, information and communication technology, telecommunications, transport and infrastructure, tourism and culture, and health and pharmaceuticals.

At the 7th ASEAN-India Summit in October 2009, India announced a contribution of USD 50 million to ASEAN-India Cooperation Fund to support implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action 2010-15, which envisages cooperation in a range of sectors in the political, economic and socio-cultural spheres for deepening and intensifying ASEAN-India cooperation. This was in addition to the ASEAN-India Science & Technology Fund set up in 2007 with an initial corpus of US\$ 1 million and the ASEAN-India Green Fund also established in 2007 with US\$ 5 million for funding pilot projects to promote adaptation and mitigation technologies in the field of climate change.

At the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in December 2012, the Leaders welcomed the conclusion of the negotiations on ASEAN-India Trade in Services and Investment Agreements. The ASEAN-India Trade-in-Goods Agreement was signed on 13 August, 2009 at the ASEAN-India Economic Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok and became fully operational from 1 August 2011 when the process of ratification by all the ASEAN countries was completed. The total trade between India and ASEAN increased by 37% in 2011-12, reaching USD 79.3 billion, surpassing the trade target of USD 70 billion by 2012.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India organized the 2nd ASEAN-India Business Fair from December 18-20, 2012. Meetings of the ASEAN-India Business Conclave and the ASEAN-India Business Council were also held on December 19, 2012. ASEAN-India Ministers of Trade met on the sidelines on December 19, 2012.

The Ministry of Agriculture convened the 2nd ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry in New Delhi on 17 October 2012 along with an Agri Expo from 17-19 October 2012. The Ministry of Environment and Forests convened the 1st Meeting of the ASEAN-India Environment Ministers on 6-7 September 2012 in New Delhi which followed an ASEAN-India Workshop on Capacity Building on Nagoya Protocol on 4-5

September 2012. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy convened the 1st ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting on New and Renewable Energy in New Delhi on 7 November 2012, preceded by a Workshop on New and Renewable Energy on 5-6 November 2012.

The 4th ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers Meeting was held in Vientiane on January 21, 2013, where a Protocol to amend the MoU on Strengthening Tourism Cooperation between ASEAN and India was signed and the ASEAN-India tourism website (www.indiaasean.org) was launched. Visa on arrival facility is extended to 7 ASEAN countries (Lao, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Singapore, Indonesia and Philippines).

The first ever meeting of the Heads of Space Agencies of India and ASEAN member countries was held in Bangalore on 19-20 June 2012 to discuss cooperation in the space sector. An ASEAN-India Expert Meeting on Climate Change was organized at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore on 27 – 28 June 2012. The first ever Joint Consultations between ASEAN SME Working Group and India was held on 15 November 2012 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The interface between Parliamentarians has also been strengthened through participation at the 31st, 32nd and 33rd General Assemblies of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) in 2010, 2011 and 2012 as Observer. An AIPA delegation, led by its President and Speaker of the House of Representatives of Indonesia, Mr. Marzuki Alie visited India from July 28-August 2, at the invitation of the Speaker, Lok Sabha.

Co-operation between India and ASEAN is also being intensified in the cultural, educational and academic fields, through the promotion of people-to-people contacts, and ongoing initiatives such as the Youth Exchange Programmes, Media Exchange Programmes, Special Training Courses for ASEAN Diplomats and Eminent Persons Lecture Series. India has established Centres for English Language training (CELT) and Entrepreneurship Development Centres (EDC) in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV countries).

An ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group (AIEPG), established as per the Plan of Action 2010-15, to “chart a vision statement towards the long-term strategic partnership between ASEAN and India in addressing regional and global issues”, with Eminent Persons representing all the 10 ASEAN countries, ASEAN Secretariat and Eminent Persons from India held four meetings: Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 2-3 August 2011; New Delhi, India 20-21 October 2011; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 9-10 March 2012 and Kochi, India, 16-17 September 2012 and finalized their Report to the Leaders. The 10th ASEAN-India Summit in Phnom Penh took note of the 'Report to the Leaders' of the AIEPG and commended the AIEPG for their excellent work in producing a good and concise Report.

Delhi Dialogue is a track 1.5 event held annually in New Delhi where leaders, opinion makers, diplomats, academia and think-tanks of India and ASEAN come together to discuss ways to intensify and broaden political, strategic, economic and civil society interaction between the two regions. Delhi Dialogue V under the theme 'India-ASEAN: Vision for Partnership and Prosperity' was held in New Delhi on February 19-20, 2013. It was inaugurated by Shri. Salman Khurshid, External Affairs Minister of India. H.E. Mr. Le

Luong Minh, Hon'ble Secretary General of ASEAN, H.E Senator A. Kohilan Pillai, Deputy Foreign Minister of Malaysia, H.E. U. Zin Yaw, Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar, H.E. Mr. Pham Quang Vinh, Deputy Foreign Minister of Vietnam and senior representatives from all other ASEAN member states participated in it.

Two other major events organized in the run-up to the Commemorative Summit included the 2nd ASEAN-India Car Rally and a Shipping Expedition of the sail training ship INS Sudarshini to ASEAN countries. The INS Sudarshini Expedition was flagged off from Kochi on 15 September 2012. The Ship port calls included Padang, Bali, Manado, Brunei, Cebu, Manila, Da Nang, Sihanoukville, Bangkok, Singapore, Klang, Phuket and Sittwe, before it returns to India via Port Blair to conclude at Kochi on March 29, 2013.

The ASEAN-India Car Rally 2012 was flagged off from Yogyakarta, Indonesia on 26 November 2012. The rally traversed through 8 ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Myanmar) and reached Guwahati on 16 December 2012 after covering a distance of about 8000 kms over 21 days. ASEAN and Indian Leaders gave a ceremonial flag down to the Car Rally on 21 December 2012 at New Delhi. Several "Marker" events, including business seminars, tourism road-shows and cultural performances were organized along the route of the Car Rally and the ports of call of INS Sudarshini, to highlight how connectivity can impact business and people-to-people linkages.

An ASEAN-India Artists Camp was held in Darjeeling, India, from June 11-17, 2012 and the ASEAN-India Civilizational Dialogue in Patna on July 20, 2012. Cultural troupes from all ASEAN countries performed in various cities in India including Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram on December 13/14, 2012 and finally participated at a fusion cultural performance on the evening of December 20, 2012, to mark the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit.

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