



India-Gabon Relations

For Prelims: UNSC, NAM, ISA

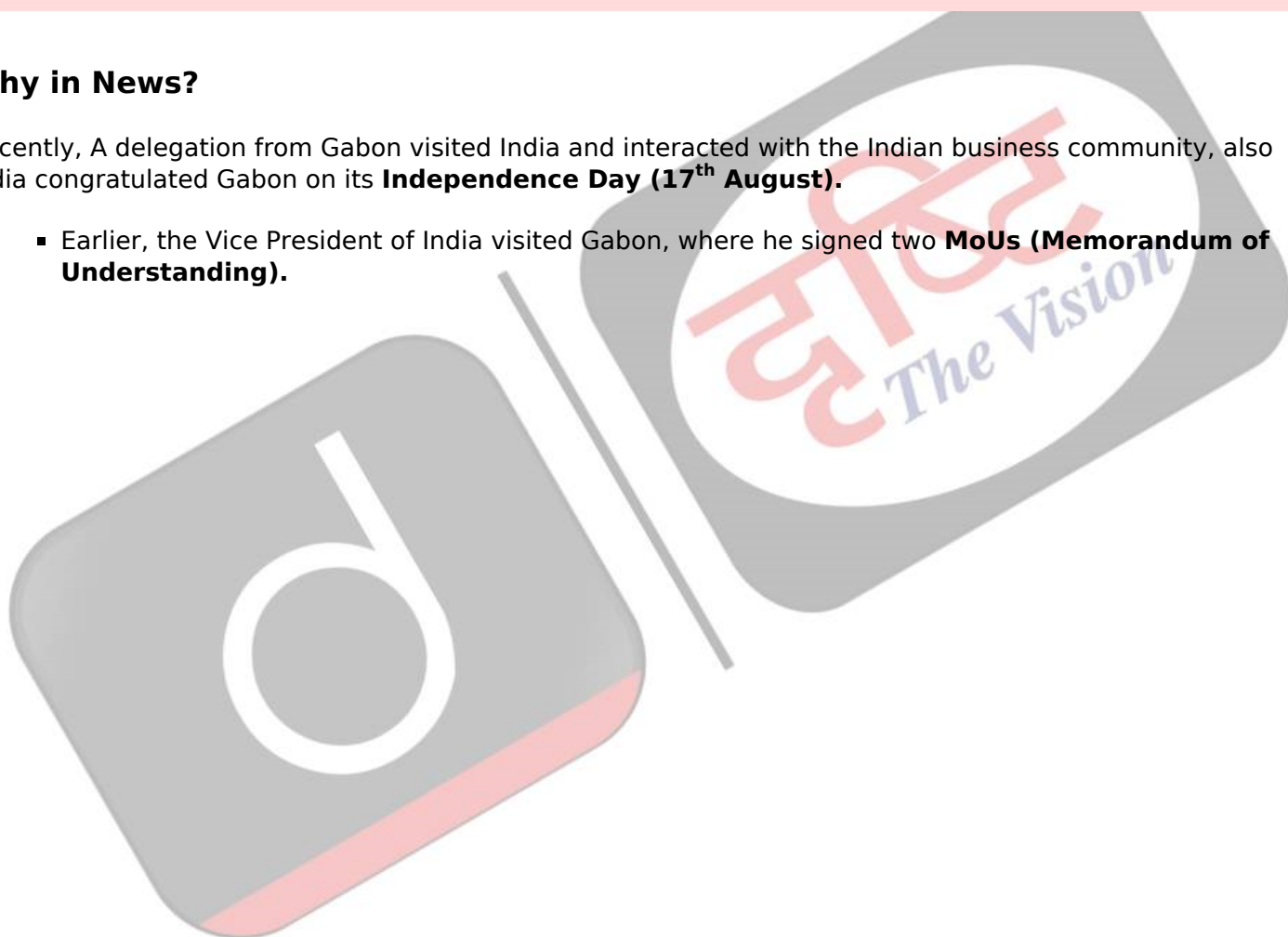
For Mains: India-Gabon Relations and its significance

Why in News?

Recently, A delegation from Gabon visited India and interacted with the Indian business community, also India congratulated Gabon on its **Independence Day (17th August)**.

- Earlier, the Vice President of India visited Gabon, where he signed two **MoUs (Memorandum of Understanding)**.

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What are the MoUs?

- **Establishment of a Joint Commission** between the Governments of India and Gabon.
- Diplomats' training institutes, Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Services and Gabonese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
 - India signed to work with **Gabon to strengthen cooperation in various spheres** at bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels.

How has been the India-Gabon Partnership?

- **Diplomatic:**
 - India and Gabon have **enjoyed warm and friendly relations dating back to the pre-independence era** of Gabon.
 - Former Vice President of India visited the African nation of Gabon in May 2022 making it the **first-ever high-level visit of India to Gabon**.
 - Both India and Gabon are **currently serving as non-permanent members** of the [UNSC \(United Nation Security Council\)](#).
- **Business and Trade:**

- The Bilateral trade between both nations reached USD 1.12 billion in 2021-22.
- India is the **2nd largest destination for Gabonese exports.**
- In the business sector, more than **50 Indian companies are engaged in the Gabon Special Economic Zone.**
- **Cooperation on International Forum:**
 - Both India and Gabon are members of the **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).**
 - NAM focuses on **mainstream contemporary issues of relevance to the developing world.**
 - Gabon **supports India's candidature at various international forums.**
 - India congratulated Gabon for getting elected as a non-permanent member of UN Security Council for the term 2022-23.
 - India supported for the Common African Position enshrined in **the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration.**
 - The **Ezulwini Consensus** is a position on international relations and reform of the United Nations, agreed by the African Union.
 - It calls for a more representative and democratic Security Council, in which Africa, like all other world regions, is represented.
 - The **Sirte Declaration (1999)** was the resolution adopted to establish the African Union.
- **International Solar Alliance:**
 - Gabon was among the first countries **to sign and ratify the International Solar Alliance agreement.**
 - India conveyed **to extend all possible assistance to Gabon to achieve its renewable energy targets.**
 - Gabon plans to have **100% clean energy by 2030.**
- **Education:**
 - A number of Gabonese nationals pursue scholarship/training programs offered by India under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and ICCR schemes.
- **Energy Cooperation:**
 - India imported about USD 670 million worth crude oil from Gabon in 2021-22, making it an **important partner for India's energy security** requirement.
- **Indian Diaspora:**
 - People from the Indian community are basically engaged **in infrastructure projects, trading, export of timber and metal scrap.**
 - The Indian diaspora have been making significant contributions in various fields in Gabon.
 - The Indian community in Gabon has kept Indian culture alive and major Indian festivals are celebrated by the entire community together.

Way Forward

- There is a need to Explore India-Gabon cooperation in green energy, services, health, and agriculture among other sectors.
- Both countries should broaden their economic partnership **to attract investments.**
- There is plethora of possibilities for cooperation in Agriculture such as knowledge transfer in **the farming sector from India to Gabon.**

Source: BS