



India-Algeria Strengthen Defence Ties

For Prelims: [Non-Aligned Movement \(NAM\)](#), [International Organizations and Agreements](#), [Bilateral Relations](#), [Economic Cooperation and Trade](#), [Geopolitics of Africa](#)

For Mains: India's Foreign Policy, Globalization and Trade Relations, Economic Development Strategies, Regional Cooperation in Africa, Political Relations and Diplomatic Engagements

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Why in News?

Recently, the Chief of Defence Staff of India visited Algeria, leading to the conclusion of a significant **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on defence cooperation between India and Algeria.

- This agreement is aimed at strengthening strategic interests and military ties between the two nations.



What are the Recent Development in the India-Algeria Relation?

- **Significant Visit:** The recent visit coincided with Algeria's **70th** anniversary of its revolution on 1st November, marked by military parades and ceremonies, highlighting Algeria's historical and political heritage.
- **Strategic Cooperation:** India re-established its **defence wing in Algeria** and encouraged

Algeria's reciprocal establishment in India.

- Emphasizing India's role as a "**Vishwa Bandhu,**" or **global partner**, CDS highlighted India's readiness to share defence experiences and expertise.
- **Integrated Defence Statement:** The Integrated Defence Staff commented that the MoU would strengthen mutual understanding, laying a foundation for long-term collaboration in various sectors.
 - The discussions included India's advancements in defence manufacturing under '[Make in India](#)' and '[Make for the World](#),' offering Algeria potential avenues for collaboration.
 - CDS reiterated India's support for peaceful conflict resolution globally, mentioning that India has reinstated its defence wing in Algeria and expressed support for Algeria's defence wing in India.

What are the Significant Areas of India-Algeria Relationship?

▪ Diplomatic Relations:

- India and Algeria established diplomatic ties in **July 1962**, the year Algeria gained independence from French colonial rule.
- India also supported Algeria's liberation movement. Both countries joined the [Non-Aligned Movement](#) post-independence, maintaining solidarity on international issues.

▪ Bilateral Trade:

- Bilateral trade between India and Algeria **peaked at USD 2.9 billion in 2018**, later dropping to **USD 1.5 billion in 2021** due to [COVID-19](#) and Algeria's import restrictions.
- Trade rebounded in 2022, **growing 24% to USD 2.1 billion**, with India's exports reaching **USD 848.16 million** and imports **USD 885.54 million in 2023-24**.
- Major exports include [rice](#), [pharmaceuticals](#), and granite, while imports focus on [petroleum oils](#), [LNG](#), and calcium phosphates.

▪ Bilateral Agreements:

- India and Algeria have signed several agreements to foster cooperation:
 - A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between [All India Radio \(AIR\)](#) and **Algerian National Radio was signed in 2015**.
 - A **Space Cooperation Agreement was signed in 2018**, facilitating the use of satellite technology for applications such as crop forecasting and disaster management.
 - A **Visa Waiver Agreement** for holders of diplomatic and official passports took effect in **October 2021**.

▪ Cultural Engagement:

- The **10th International Day of Yoga (IDY)** was celebrated on **21st June, 2024**, in Algeria at the well-known **Jardin d'Essai du Hamma garden**. The event attracted over 300 yoga enthusiasts of diverse ages and backgrounds.

▪ Space Cooperation:

- The **India-Algeria Space Cooperation Agreement**, signed in 2018, covers joint efforts in space science, technology, and applications.
- Algeria's space agency discussed satellite applications, such as crop forecasting and disaster management, with [ISRO](#), and India launched four **Algerian satellites in 2016**.
- A **Joint Committee** Meeting in 2022 furthered cooperation, with Algeria requesting support for satellite capacity building.

▪ Indian Community:

- Approximately **3,800 Indians** are currently residing in Algeria, working in various sectors.
- Many are technically skilled and employed on projects in remote areas, while others work in semi-skilled roles such as masons, carpenters, painters, and welders.
- The community also includes **13 Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI)** cardholders, **10 Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)**, and 15 Indian students.

Algerian Revolution

- The Algerian War, also known as the War of Independence or the Algerian Revolution, occurred from **1954 to 1962 between France and the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN)**.
- The conflict was marked by **guerrilla warfare**, maquis fighting, and extensive use of torture, making it a significant decolonization struggle.

- It escalated into a **civil war among different communities within Algeria and had lasting repercussions in metropolitan France**, ultimately leading to Algeria's independence.

Non-Aligned Movement

- The **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)** emerged during the Cold War to maintain independence from the **U.S. and Soviet Union**.
- The concept originated at the **1955 Bandung Conference in Indonesia**.
- The first NAM Summit was held in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in September 1961.
- As of April 2018, NAM has 120 members: 53 from Africa, 39 from Asia, 26 from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 2 from Europe (Belarus and Azerbaijan).
- Founding leaders include **Josip Broz Tito, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Jawaharlal Nehru, Kwame Nkrumah, and Sukarno**.

Why Does Algeria Matter to India?

- **Strategic Partnership:** Algeria's strategic location in the [Maghreb](#) and its historical alignment with India in the **Non-Aligned Movement** provide a solid foundation for a multifaceted partnership, allowing both nations to collaborate on international issues of mutual interest.
- **Energy Security:** With Algeria possessing vast [hydrocarbon reserves](#), India can diversify its energy sources and reduce reliance on a single region, thereby enhancing its energy security and stabilizing its energy imports.
- **Economic Collaboration:** The recent economic reforms in Algeria, including the **withdrawal of restrictive investment rules**, present **significant opportunities for India to engage in trade**, invest in infrastructure projects, and promote capacity development that benefits both economies.
- **Healthcare Cooperation:** India's advanced **pharmaceutical industry** can play a pivotal role in supporting Algeria's healthcare system, fostering medical tourism, and implementing telemedicine programs that enhance the capabilities of Algerian healthcare workers.
- **Security Cooperation:** Given the regional instability and security threats, India and Algeria can strengthen their defense ties through joint counter-terrorism initiatives, enhancing bilateral relations and contributing to regional stability and security.

What are the Major Challenges in India-Algeria Relations?

- **Political and Socio Economic Issues:** Algeria's internal political instability and socioeconomic challenges can hinder consistent diplomatic engagement and mutual initiatives.
- **Limited Regional Cooperation:** The inactive state of the [Arab Maghreb Union](#) limits regional collaboration opportunities, affecting India's engagement strategy in the region.
- **Knowledge Deficit:** A lack of awareness about each other's cultures and political contexts can hinder deeper bilateral relations and cooperative efforts.

Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

- **Establishment:** Founded in 1989 in Marrakech, after a treaty signed by five Maghreb states.
- **Member States:** Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia.
- **Goals:**
 - Strengthen the independence of member states.
 - Safeguard the assets of member states.
 - Cooperate with other regional institutions.
 - Engage in international dialogue.
- **Economic Importance:** The region possesses significant reserves of oil, gas, and phosphate, serving as a transit center to southern Europe.

Way Forward

- **Enhanced High-Level Engagements:** Increasing frequency and depth of political visits can strengthen mutual understanding and collaboration on international issues.
- **Focus on Economic Diversification:** Promoting joint ventures in non-hydrocarbon sectors can reduce Algeria's economic vulnerability while providing Indian businesses with new opportunities.
- **Cultural Exchange Programs:** Initiating programs to promote cultural understanding and knowledge sharing can bridge the gap between the two nations, fostering goodwill and trust.

Drishti Mains Question

Q. "Examine the implications of the recent defence cooperation MoU between India and Algeria in strengthening their strategic partnership amid evolving regional dynamics."

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. Which of the following countries are well known as the two largest cocoa producers in the world? (2024)

- (A) Algeria and Morocco
- (B) Botswana and Namibia
- (C) Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana
- (D) Madagascar and Mozambique

Ans. C

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