



5th India - Singapore Defence Ministers' Dialogue

Why in News

Recently, the **5th Defence Ministers' Dialogue (DMD)** between **India and Singapore** was successfully held through a video conferencing.



Key Points

- **Agreement Signed :**

- **Implementing Agreement on Submarine Rescue Support and Cooperation** between the two Navies was signed.
- **Joint Stand:**
 - **Bilateral Cooperation:**
 - Both the countries conveyed their full support towards the early conclusion of agreements to **facilitate conduct of live firings and to establish reciprocal arrangements for the cross-attendance of military courses.**
 - They welcomed the initiatives to expand bilateral defence cooperation including the implementing agreement on [Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief \(HADR\)](#) cooperation in August 2020.
 - The **cyber agencies** of both armed forces have also **stepped up engagements.**
 - **Impact of Covid-19:**
 - Both countries exchanged views on the impact of the global [Covid-19 pandemic](#) on the defence and security engagements, including the best practices adopted by their Armed Forces.
 - **Defence Exercises:**
 - Both the countries successfully conducted the **27th edition of [Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise \(SIMBEX\)](#)** and also participated in the second edition of the **[Singapore-India-Thailand Maritime Exercise \(SITMEX\)](#)**, both held in November 2020.
 - These **exercises enhance interoperability** amongst the navies and **underscore the shared responsibility** of the countries to **work together to keep sea lines of communications open.**
- **India's Stand:**
 - India **conveyed gratitude** for the role of the **Singapore Armed Forces**, in supporting foreign workers, many of whom were Indian Nationals, at the peak of pandemic.
 - India reaffirmed [Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\)](#) centrality in the regional security architecture and pledged India's support to all endeavours of the [ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting \(ADMM\)-Plus.](#)
- **Singapore's Stand:**
 - Singapore complimented India's successes in bringing down the overall numbers of **Covid-19 cases** despite challenges of scale in terms of geography and population.
 - It also expressed **support for India's upcoming co-chairmanship** of the **ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on HADR.**

Note:

- **Singapore** has been [ranked 2nd](#) in the most powerful passport report '**Henley Passport Index 2021**'.
- The [first UN treaty to be named after Singapore](#), the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation (or, **Singapore Convention on Mediation**) recently came into force.
- Recently, the [Hawker Culture in Singapore](#) was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity at the 15th session of the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC).

India-Singapore Relation

- **Defence and Security Cooperation:**

- India and Singapore share **similar concerns** about **the challenges posed by terrorism and extremism** and have found it mutually beneficial to evolve a broad framework of security cooperation.
- Singapore participates in [Indian Ocean Naval Symposium \(IONS\)](#) and multilateral Exercise [MILAN](#) hosted by Indian Navy.
- Singapore's membership of [Indian Ocean Rim Association \(IORA\)](#) and India's membership of ADDM+ (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting - Plus) **provides a platform for both countries to coordinate positions** on regional issues of mutual concern.

▪ **Science & Technology Cooperation:**

- [Indian Space Research Organisation \(ISRO\)](#) launched Singapore's first indigenously built micro-satellite in 2011, 2 more in 2014 and 6 in 2015.
- In June 2018, both the countries signed six Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the area of [artificial intelligence](#), **machine learning, cognitive computing and big data analytics** to improve **healthcare, cybersecurity, automation, mobility, smart energy systems and e-governance**.

▪ **Trade and Economic Cooperation:**

- Singapore is **India's 2nd largest trade partner** among ASEAN countries.
- **Total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** from Singapore into India was **USD 73.3 billion** (till June 2018) which was 19% of total FDI inflow.
- The **outward Indian FDI to Singapore was USD 62.9 billion** (till August 2018), making Singapore one of the top destinations for Indian investments.
- In 2018, the High Commission of India also launched a **startup engagement platform, India-Singapore Entrepreneurship Bridge (InSprenneur)**.

▪ **Infrastructure and Connectivity:**

- **Connectivity:** Singapore is directly connected to 18 Indian cities by 8 airlines, there are now **308 weekly services (616 weekly flights) by Indian and Singaporean airlines**.
- **Smart Cities:** A consortium of Singapore companies is developing **Amaravati, the new capital city of Andhra Pradesh**. Singapore is also working with Rajasthan in preparing Concept Plans for **townships in Udaipur and Jodhpur**; with Himachal Pradesh for developing an integrated **township of Greater Shimla**; and with Maharashtra for **development of Orange Smart City and master planning of Pune Metropolitan Region**.

▪ **Cultural Cooperation:**

- Singapore's large Indian diaspora through a number of cultural societies and Singapore's official support sustains a **high level of cultural activity in Singapore**.
- They celebrated the 4th [International Day of Yoga \(IDY\)](#) through 173 yoga sessions and attended by approx. 8000 people.
- Even on [Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary](#), celebrations were launched with a projection of Gandhiji's video on the world's largest HD video screen at Suntec Convention Centre.

▪ **Indian Community:**

- Ethnic Indians constitute about **9.1% or around 3.5 lakhs of the resident population of 3.9 million in Singapore**.
- **ASEAN-India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)** was held in Singapore on 6-7 January 2018 as part of commemoration of 25 years of **ASEAN-India Partnership**.

Source: PIB

