

India - Vietnam Relations

India and Vietnam, with historical roots in the common struggle for liberation from colonial rule and the national struggle for independence, share traditionally close and cordial bilateral relations. Mahatma Gandhi and Ho Chi Minh, regarded as the Father of Nation in India and Vietnam respectively, led people in their heroic struggle against colonialism in both countries. India was the Chairman of the International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICSC) which was formed in pursuant of the Geneva Accord of 1954 to facilitate the peace process in Vietnam. India initially maintained Consulate-level relations with the then North and South Vietnams and later established full diplomatic relations with unified Vietnam on 7 January 1972. Relations between the two countries were elevated to the level of ‘Strategic Partnership’ during the visit of Vietnam’s Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung to India in July 2007. In 2016, during Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Vietnam, bilateral relations were further elevated to a “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership”, a status that Vietnam shares with only two other countries – Russia and China.

I. POLITICAL EXCHANGES

Recent Visits from India:

Sl. No.	Dignitaries	Date /Year	Remarks
1.	President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind	18-20 November 2018	State Visit
2.	Vice President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu	09-12 May 2019	Official Visit (To attend the 16 th UN Day of Vesak)
3.	Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi	02-03 September 2016	Official Visit
4.	External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj	26-28 August 2018	16th Joint Commission Meeting / 3rd Indian Ocean Conference
6.	President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee	14-17 September 2014	State Visit
7.	Vice President of India Shri Hamid Ansari	14-17 January 2013	Closing ceremony of the India- Vietnam Friendship Year 2012. Commemoration of 40 years of Diplomatic Relations.

Recent Visits from Vietnam:

Sl. No.	Dignitaries	Date /Year	Remarks
1.	President of Vietnam	02-04 March 2018	State Visit

	Mr. Tran Dai Quang		
2.	Prime Minister of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc	24-26 January 2018	To attend ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit-2018 and as Chief Guest for India's Republic Day 2018
3.	Prime Minister of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Tan Dung	27-28 October 2014	State Visit
4.	General Secretary of Communist Part of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong	19-22 November 2013	State Visit

Institutional mechanisms for bilateral exchanges

There are several bilateral mechanisms at different levels between India and Vietnam. The Joint Commission Meeting at the Foreign Ministers' level and the Foreign Office Consultations and Strategic Dialogue at Secretary-level provide the broad framework for bilateral consultations encompassing all areas of mutual interest. The 6th Joint Commission Meeting was held at Hanoi in August 2018. The 10th Foreign Office Consultations and the 7th Strategic Dialogue were held in New Delhi in April 2018. The next round of Foreign Office Consultations and the Strategic Dialogue are being scheduled in Hanoi in 2020.

India-Vietnam Joint Sub-Commission on Trade at Commerce Secretary-Level held its 4th meeting in Hanoi in January 2019. The 12th Annual Security Dialogue at Defence Secretary-level was held in Ho Chi Minh City in October 2019. The 1st India-Vietnam Maritime Security Dialogue was held at Additional Secretary-level in Hanoi in March 2019. Both countries also have regular Parliamentary exchanges.

II. TRADE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Bilateral trade turnover registered an annual growth of 12.81% and touched US\$ 13.69 billion in 2018-2019. As per GOI's data, bilateral trade for the period April-November 2019 reached US\$ 9.01 billion. India is now the 8th largest trading partner of Vietnam. On the other hand, Vietnam is the 4th largest trading partner of India among ASEAN countries after Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. Vietnam is the 8th largest destination of India's exports globally. Vietnam is also the second largest export destination for India after Singapore in the ASEAN region.

India's Investments in Vietnam

India's investments in Vietnam are estimated at around US\$ 1.7 billion including investments routed through third countries. According to Vietnam's Foreign Investment Agency, as of 2019, India has 255 valid projects with total invested capital of US\$922.34 million. Major sectors of investment are energy, mineral exploration, agro-processing, sugar, tea, coffee manufacturing, agro-chemicals, IT and auto components.

Vietnam's Investments in India

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

India has a long-standing development partnership with Vietnam that has made positive contributions towards capacity building and socio-economic development of Vietnam. India has also been providing assistance to Vietnam within the ASEAN framework. Under the Mekong Ganga Cooperation framework, India has a Revolving Fund with an annual contribution of US\$ 250,000 for Quick Impact Projects in Vietnam for development of community infrastructure. So far, 9 Quick Impact Projects have been completed since 2017, while 5 new projects are under implementation. In addition, 7 grant-in-aid assistance projects for the benefit of the Cham community in Ninh Thuan province are under implementation at a total cost of around US\$ 1.54 million. India is also providing technical assistance worth US\$ 2.25 million for conservation and preservation of Cham monuments located in the Quang Nam Province of Vietnam.

III. CULTURAL COOPERATION

The Swami Vivekananda Indian Cultural Centre was established in Hanoi in September 2016 to promote a comprehensive understanding of India and to foster closer links between peoples of both countries through cultural exchanges. Both countries also have regular exchange of youth delegations. Mission also maintains close relations with academia and think tanks in Vietnam. 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 have academic cooperation MOUs with some Indian institutions.

Tourism and People-to-People Contacts

The year 2019 was celebrated as the ASEAN-India Year of Tourism. Mission organized two India-Vietnam Tourism Roadshows in January and August 2019 in Hanoi, whereas another roadshow was organised by the Consulate General of India in Ho Chi Minh City in November 2019. Both countries have facilitated simplified visa regime to promote bilateral tourism. In December 2017, Vietnam extended e-visa facilities to Indian citizens travelling to Vietnam. India has e-tourist visa arrangement for Vietnamese citizens since 2015. The long-awaited direct flights between the two countries commenced in October 2019. It is expected that the direct flight connectivity will further increase two-way tourism as well as trade and business linkages.

Capacity Building, Training, Scholarships

Vietnam has been a large recipient of training programmes under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. Vietnam receives more than 200 training slots annually, including more than 130 training slots under ITEC/Civilian and technical Cooperation Scheme of Colombo Plan and further 70 training slots under ITEC (Defence). Separately, Indian Council of Cultural Relations has several annual scholarship programmes including 14 scholarships under EEP/CEP (Education Exchange programme/Cultural Exchange Programme); 10 under MGCSS (Mekong Ganga Cooperation Scholarship Scheme); 20 under GSS (General Scholarship Scheme); and 4 scholarships for Buddhist and Sanskrit studies. The utilization of annual training slots and scholarships on offer has consistently been very high. The recent initiative of Government of India launched in October 2019 to offer PhD fellowship programme in association with 23 IITs for 1000 students from ASEAN countries, has also received good response from Vietnam. Vietnam was also among the few partner countries where Government of India launched the new e-ITEC programme in October 2019.

150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

Embassy of India organized various events to celebrate Mahatma@150 in 2018-19. These include Jaipur artificial limb fitment camps, which were organized in four provinces of Vietnam, benefitting 1000 people, under 'India for Humanity' initiative of the Government of India. The Embassy of India, Vietnam's Ministry of Information and Communication and Vietnam Post jointly launched a commemorative stamp on Mahatma Gandhi on Gandhi Jayanti in 2019.

Indian Community

An estimated 5000 people from India, including some short-term visitors, constitute the Indian community in Vietnam. A 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, oil refineries, IT sector, hotels/restaurants, mining, yoga institutions, civil aviation sector and schools. Some Indians in Vietnam currently hold senior positions in multi-national companies and international organisations, including the United Nations organisations. Indian Business Chamber (INCHAM), a recognized organisation by the Government of Vietnam, represents Indian community and promotes Indian business interests in Vietnam.

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