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1. India and ASEAN relations enhanced to comprehensive strategic partnership level (Nov. 13, 2022)

India and ASEAN relations enhanced

According to the Ministry of External Affairs the India - ASEAN (Association of SouthEast Asian Nation) ties have been upgraded to the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership level** from the earlier Strategic Partnership. This upgradation of ties signifies a greater level of trust between the two sides and conveys a sense of mutual value, strategic alignment and positive intent to further strengthen ties.

The upgradation of the ties between the two sides was agreed upon during the visit of the Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar to Cambodia to participate in the **19th India ASEAN** summit held on 12 November 2022. The 19th India ASEAN summit has been designated as the **commemorative summit, to mark the 30 years of Indian ASEAN relationship. Cambodia is currently the chairman of the 10 nations ASEAN group.**

He will also participate in the 17th East Asia Summit to be held in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh.

The focus area of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership are as follows;

- Advanced maritime cooperation in areas of maritime security including maritime security, countering piracy, search and rescue operations and humanitarian assistance and disaster management. The two sides will work to implement the Asean Outlook on the Indo-Pacific and India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.
- Strengthen cooperation in cybersecurity, digital economy and fintech, including the interoperability of digital financial systems.
- Enhanced cooperation in sustainable development with the focus on new and emerging technologies for renewable energy, smart agriculture, healthcare and space.
- Promote the revival of tourism and enhance activities involving youth,
- Work together on regional and international issues of common concern to promote peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

Bilateral meeting with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen

The Vice President also held a meeting with the Cambodian Prime Minister **Hun Sen**. India and [Cambodia](#) signed 4 memorandums of understanding.

The Indian side announced a grant of **\$426,000** to support Cambodia's efforts to remove mines that were laid from the late 1970s to the 1990s.

Background to the India ASEAN meeting

As per the **Look East foreign policy** of the Narasimha Rao government in 90s, the government of India focussed on increasing trade and investment with East Asia with special focus on ASEAN.

Evolution of India -ASEAN relationship

- India was initially made a **sectoral partner** by ASEAN in 1992. With the increasing depth in the relationships the status was changed to a **Dialogue Partner** in 1996.
- In 2022 the relationship was further upgraded to **Summit level**
- And finally in 2012 it was elevated to **Strategic partnership**.

Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN)

It is considered to be one of the most successful regional groups in the world.

It was set up in 1967 as a group of South-East Asian nations.

At present there are 10 members in the group. They are

Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

The headquarters of ASEAN: **Jakarta, Indonesia.**