

Modi begins two-day France visit to boost strategic partnership

PARIS AGENDA. Bilateral talks with French President Emmanuel Macron, CEO Forum scheduled today

Our Bureau
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Prime Minister Narendra Modi received a ceremonial welcome and guard of honour on his arrival at the Paris airport on Thursday for his two-day visit to France, during which important announcements are expected in a number of areas of strategic co-operation, including defence, trade and investments, and climate

"In a special gesture, Elisabeth Borne, Prime Minister of France, received Prime Minister Modi at the airport," according to an official statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs.

DEFENCE DEALS

Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron are expected to green-flag some high-profile defence deals during the visit, including the purchase of Rafale-M fighters and Scorpene-class



WARM WELCOME. Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by Indian diaspora upon his arrival in Paris PTI

submarines, and also announce plans for supply chain integration to boost manufacturing, per sources.

"This year marks the 25th anniversary of our strategic partnership. Rooted in deep trust and commitment, our two countries co-operate closely across various domains, including defence, space, civil nuclear, the blue economy, trade, investment, education, culture, and people-to-people ties. We also work together on

regional and global issues," the Prime Minister said in his departure statement ahead of his visit to France and the UAE on Thursday.

GUEST OF HONOUR

The PM's engagements in Paris on Thursday include meetings with the President of the Senate (Upper House) Gerard Larcher and with Borne, a community event at La Seine Musicale, and a private dinner hosted by Macron.

"I am confident that my visit will provide a new impetus to our strategic partnership," Modi said.

On Friday, the Indian PM will be the Guest of Honour at the Bastille Day celebration, which commemorates the 'Storming of the Bastille Prison' in 1789 during the French Revolution.

BILATERAL TALKS

Modi and Macron will also hold their bilateral talks on Friday, where they are likely to review cooperation under key pillars of the strategic partnership, including security, civil nuclear technology, counter-terrorism, cyber security, space, climate change, and the integration of supply chains.

The two leaders will participate in the India-France CEO Forum, which will be attended by CEOs and senior representatives of top companies from both sides.

"I look forward to meeting President Macron and

holding wide-ranging discussions on taking forward this longstanding and time-tested partnership over the next 25 years. I have had the opportunity to meet President Macron several times since my last official visit to France in 2022, most recently in Hiroshima, Japan, in May 2023 during the G-7 Summit," the PM said in his statement.

From Paris, Modi will travel to Abu Dhabi for an official visit on July 15, where he will meet UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi.

The UAE will host the 28th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP-28) later this year. "I also look forward to exchanging views on strengthening global cooperation towards accelerating climate action to facilitate the energy transition and implementation of the Paris Agreement," Modi added.