

India, France amend double taxation pact; Modi, Macron launch 'Year of Innovation'

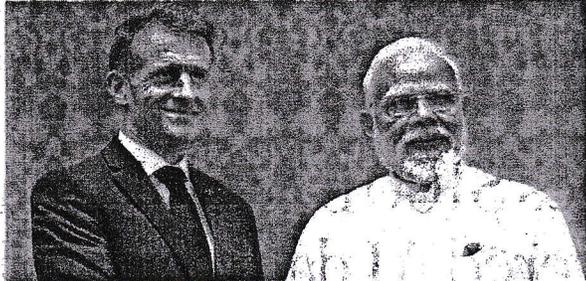
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Mumbai

India and France will forge a special global strategic partnership, boost trade and investments, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron announced on Tuesday.

The countries cemented their long-standing relations further, signing multiple agreements in the areas of defence, health, critical minerals and taxation, among others during their bilateral discussion in Mumbai.

TURNING POINT
Modi said 2026 was a turning point in India's relationship with Europe, with the signing of the Free Trade Agreement with the European Union last month.

On Tuesday, India and France amended the protocol on double taxation avoidance agreement. This will boost trade and investments between the two countries, Modi said.



FOSTERING TIES. In Mumbai on Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron virtually inaugurate the Tata-Airbus H125 light utility helicopter final assembly plant in Karnataka. ANI

The two leaders also virtually inaugurated the final assembly plant of H125 helicopters, set up jointly by Airbus and Tata Advanced Aerospace Systems in Karnataka.

Later, they launched the 'India-France Year of Innovation' centred around AI, digital technologies and start-ups.

France is among India's closest friends with a strategic partnership that is nearly three decades old.

"Relations between India

and France are special. France is one of India's earliest strategic partners. Together with President Macron, we have brought unprecedented energy to these relations," Modi said while announcing the special global strategic partnership on Tuesday.

In his remarks, Macron said, "Indo-French relations are based on openness, trust and ambitions. The two countries believe in an open and free Indo-Pacific and don't support hegemonic or-

der." He said the two countries are working together in defence and space, and added that France supports technology transfer to India.

External Affairs Ministry's Additional Secretary Piyush Srivastava said there were discussions between the two leaders (Modi and Macron) on various issues like defence, civil nuclear co-operation and counter-terrorism. "There is also a strong focus now on people-to-people ties," he added.

BEL-SAFRAN JV

India and France signed an agreement on reciprocal deployment of defence personnel at each others' units.

A joint venture between Bharat Electronics Ltd and Safran for production of Hammer missiles was also announced.

Other initiatives include setting up of an Indo-French Centre for AI in health, a Centre of Digital Science and Technology, and a National Centre of Excellence for Skilling in Aeronautics.