

The Potential Implications of a New Indo-French Defense Deal

written by Saddam Tahir | July 26, 2023



In order to maintain regional security and address global challenges, India and France have a long-standing defense partnership. They have entered into a number of defense agreements over the years, strengthening their strategic alliance and promoting regional stability.

Recently on 15 July 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that defense ties are the basic pillar of India's bilateral relationship with France, the two countries agreed on the construction of three additional submarines and the co-development of fighter jet engines. However, both sides remained silent on the sale of additional 26 Rafale-M fighter jet planes

The Rafale fighter jet deal is among the most notable agreements between the two countries. The agreement to purchase 36 Rafale fighter jets from Dassault Aviation in France, signed in 2016, marked a significant turning point in Indo-French defense cooperation. For India to modernize its air force and improve its defense capacity, this deal was essential.

The 2006 Scorpene submarine deal, in which France's Naval Group (formerly DCNS) agreed to build six Scorpene class submarines in India, was another historic agreement. The agreement placed a strong emphasis on technology transfer and domestic manufacturing, supporting India's "Make in India" initiative. These agreements are a part of a larger trend that shows increased cooperation. France has emerged as one of India's most dependable allies in Europe, with collaborations in a variety of fields, such as civil nuclear energy, space exploration, and defense.

Given this background, the size and scope of a new defense agreement between the two nations could potentially have significant effects.



First off, a new agreement would probably strengthen the strategic alliance between France and India. Increased defense cooperation would highlight their shared vision for regional and global security as both countries agree on the significance of a multipolar world and freedom of navigation in international waters.

The second benefit is that it might greatly improve India's defense capabilities. Depending on how the agreement is structured whether it calls for the purchase of more sophisticated equipment, the transfer of technology, or joint development and production it could aid in the modernization of India's armed forces and the expansion of its defense industry.

Third, the agreement might have broader geopolitical repercussions. Stronger ties with France could support India's position in the Indo-Pacific region as it seeks to counteract China's rise and maintain its strategic independence. Stronger defense ties with India could increase France's role and influence in the Indo-Pacific, where it has territories and strategic interests.

Fourth, a new defense agreement might open the door to more cooperation in fields like space, cybersecurity, and civil nuclear energy. Defense cooperation frequently sparks wider strategic and technological cooperation, fostering a more profound and all-encompassing bilateral relationship.

It's important to be aware of any potential difficulties. Any defense deal must be handled carefully to prevent inciting regional unrest. Additionally, a focus on transparency would be necessary to allay any domestic worries about the agreement's costs and advantages in both countries.

In conclusion, a new Indo-French defense agreement would build on a solid foundation of defense cooperation, but it could have far-reaching effects. The two countries' strategic alliance would probably be strengthened, India's defense capabilities would be improved, the Indo-Pacific region's geopolitical dynamics would change, and more cooperation in other strategic areas might result. Both countries will have to carefully navigate the agreement, balancing domestic issues with regional sensitivities, while concentrating on their shared interests and vision for regional security and global stability.