



BILATERAL RELATIONS
INDIA - ITALY

INTRODUCTION

India-Italy relations refers to the international relations that exist between India and Italy. Historically, trade dates back to the era of the Roman Empire. India maintains an Embassy in Rome, and a Consulate-General in Milan. Italy has an embassy in New Delhi, and Consulate-Generals in Mumbai and Kolkata.

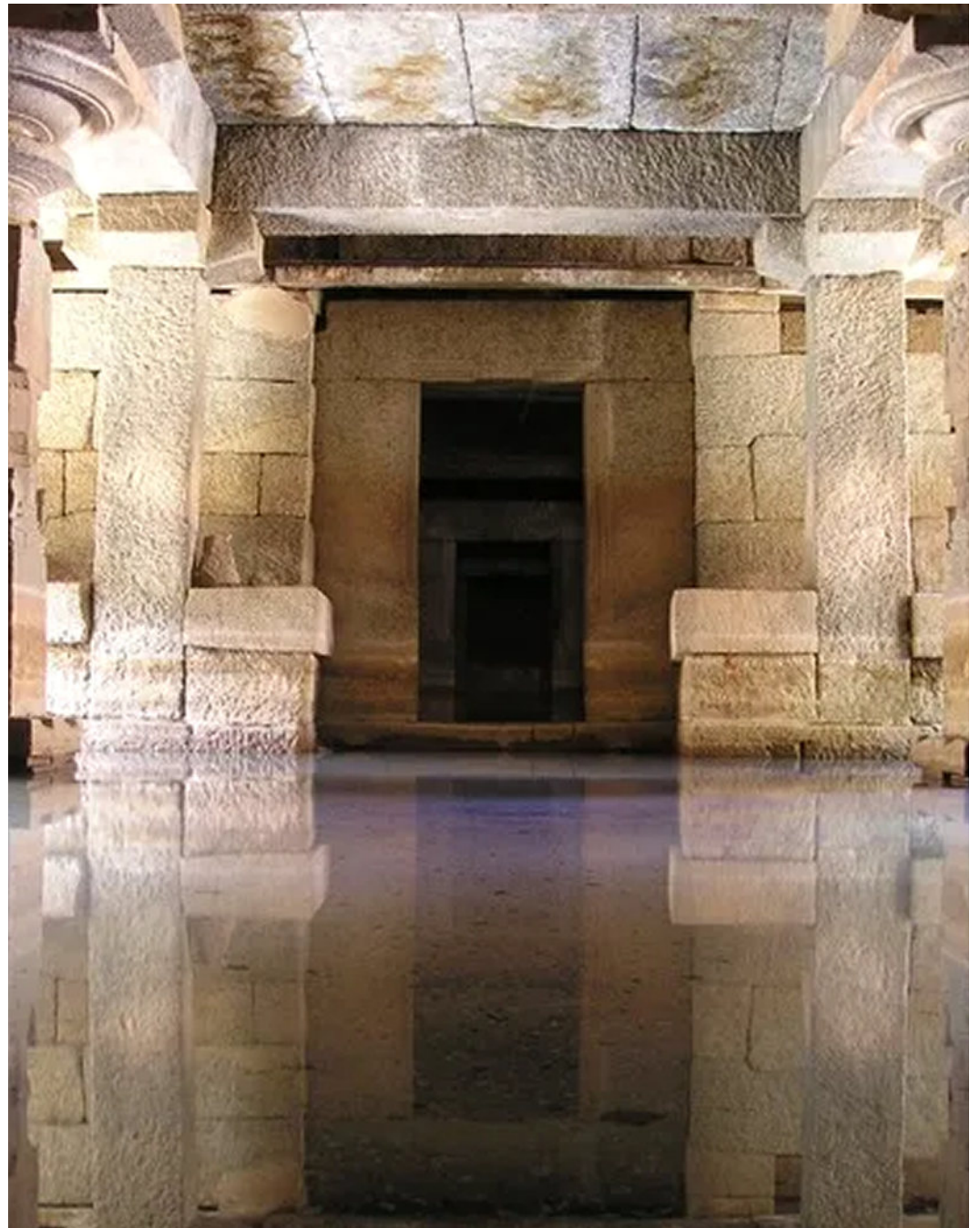


EARLY HISTORY

Indo-Roman relations

Relations between India and Italy date back to ancient times. Works from authors such as Diodorus Siculus' Library of History, Arrian's Indika, and Pliny the Elder's Natural History make references to India. Trade links flourished between India and the Roman Empire, particularly in the first and second century AD. Caches of Roman coins have been discovered across the Indian peninsula, and evidence indicates the existence of permanent settlements of Roman merchants in South India.

The discovery of an Indian ivory statuette in the ruins of Pompeii confirms that goods were traded both ways. The Roman Empire and Indian civilizations also exchanged diplomatic missions. An Indian embassy sailed from Bharuch (referred to as Barygaza by the Romans) in 25 BC and arrived in Rome four years later. Records also exist of Indian embassies being sent to Trajan, Antoninus Pius, Julian the Apostate and Justinian.



Middle Ages

Relations and trade between the Mediterranean and India ended after the fall of the Roman Empire, but resumed after a few centuries. In the middle Ages, Italian merchants once again began to ply the old routes towards the east used by the Romans. The most notable among these merchants was Marco Polo, who visited south-east India and ports such as Kayak, Comorin (now Kanyakumari), Quilon (now Kollam), Thana, Somnath and Cambay. Marco Polo published his travelogue *The Travels of Marco Polo* in which he described the life and customs in India at the end of the 13th century.

Many other notable Venetians also visited India. Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri, a lawyer from Naples, visited South India during a trip around the world he had begun 1693. Gemelli Careri provides a detailed description of the camp of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb during the Deccan campaign in 1695, in *Giro Intorno al Mondo*, published in 1699. Many other Italians have also visited India and their names are mentioned on old chronicles. Apart from merchants and travelers, Italians also served in other roles in India such as physicians and artillerymen. Italian Jean-Baptiste Ventura contributed to the organization of the infantry in the army of Ranjit Singh in the 1830s and 40s.

Modern History

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of India and the Italian Republic were established in 1947. Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Italy in 1953. President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro was the first Italian head of state to visit India in February 1995. President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi visited India in February 2005.

Romano Prodi became the first Italian Prime Minister to visit India in February 2007. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Italy to attend the 35th G8 summit at L'Aquila in July 2009. External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna represented India at the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Unification of Italy in Rome In June 2011.

After some years of tensions due to the case of the two Italian marines accused of killing two fishermen off the coast of Kerala, the two countries revived normal relations thanks to Prime Ministers Paolo Gentiloni and Narendra Modi. The two leaders described Gentiloni's visit in India in 2017 as a "new beginning" and a great opportunity for both countries.



ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Bilateral trade

Bilateral trade between India and Italy grew by 12 times in the 2 decades between 1991 and 2011, from EUR 708 million to EUR 8.5 billion. Bilateral trade began experiencing a decline from 2012, decreasing to €7.1 billion in 2012 and €6.95 billion in 2013.

On November 29, 2017, India and Italy signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for enhancing bilateral cooperation in the health sector. This MoU was signed between Union Health Minister J P Nadda and the visiting Italian Health Minister Beatrice Lorenzin. The MoU envisages cooperation in health sector by pooling in technical, financial and human resources for accomplishing the ultimate objective to upgrade infrastructural resources, medical education and research in both countries. Activities to be carried out under the scope of this MoU include exchange and training of doctors, setting up of health care facilities and promotion of business development opportunities in pharmaceuticals.



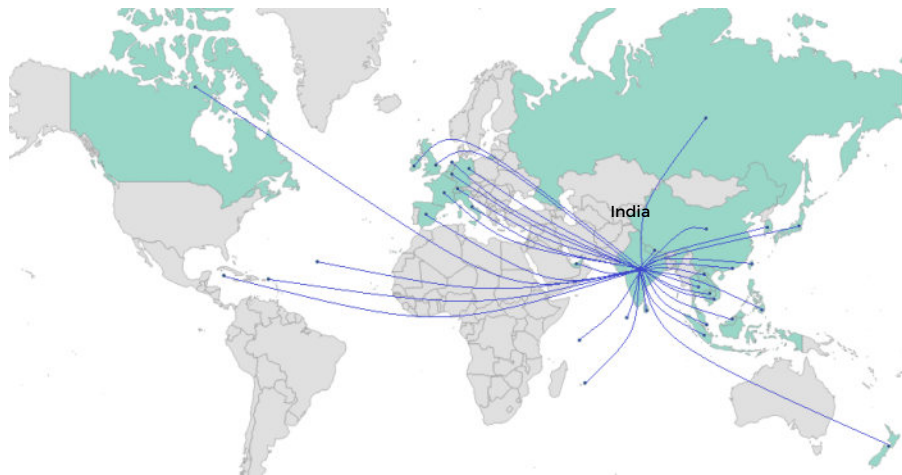
FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

Italian companies invested €694 million in India in 2011, and over €1 billion in 2012. As of December 2012, Italy had an accumulated investment of €3.75 billion in India, or 9% of the total European Union FDI in India.

Indian investment in Italy grew from €584 million in 2004 to €10 billion in 2011. Italy accounted for 2.3% of India's total investment in the European Union.



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