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BILATERAL RELATIONS

INDIA - SEYCHELLES

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INTRODUCTION

India–Seychelles relations are built on five decades of friendship, strategic cooperation, and shared interests in the Indian Ocean. Diplomatic relations were established in 1976 following Seychelles' independence, making 2027 the milestone 51st anniversary of bilateral diplomatic ties. Over the years, the relationship has expanded from historical, people-to-people connections into a robust partnership encompassing maritime security, defence, healthcare, education, capacity building, digital transformation, trade, climate resilience, and the Blue Economy.

India has emerged as one of Seychelles' cornerstone development and security partners, supporting essential infrastructure, community-development projects, healthcare, training, and maritime capabilities. The partnership received historic momentum in February 2026 during the State Visit of President Dr. Patrick Herminie to India. During this visit, India announced a USD 175 million Special Economic Package—comprising a USD 125 million rupee-denominated Line of Credit and a USD 50 million grant—directed toward housing, infrastructure, mobility, health, and maritime security. The two nations also adopted the transformative Joint Vision for Sustainability, Economic Growth and Security through Enhanced Linkages (SESEL).

The bilateral matrix was further elevated during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's State Visit to Seychelles in June 2026. The two countries exchanged nine milestone agreements and legal instruments, covering extradition, agriculture, seafarer certification, outer-space cooperation, healthcare, digital payments (UPI), and the development of the new Seychelles National Hospital. Strategic ties were augmented later in August 2026 through focused ministerial agreements dedicated to joint development in fisheries, marine aquaculture, and scientific research.

Economic engagement continues to offer immense scope for expansion. According to data from the High Commission of India in Seychelles, Seychelles imported US$91.73 million worth of goods from India in 2024 against exports of US$2.46 million. Trusted Indian enterprises retain a core footprint in Seychelles' domestic landscape, led by institutional mainstays like Bank of Baroda, Bharti Airtel, and Tata.
With the Indian Ocean serving as a shared strategic space, India and Seychelles are positioned to deepen cooperation across trade, investment, digital connectivity, climate innovation, and maritime domain awareness. Entering its second half-century, this enduring partnership reinforces a unified vision of a secure, resilient, and prosperous Indian Ocean region.



HISTORY

India–Seychelles relations have historical roots dating back to 1770, when the first recorded Indians arrived in the islands. During the colonial period, commercial and maritime links with India strengthened the movement of people, goods and cultural influences between the two regions.

Diplomatic relations were established on 29 June 1976, immediately after Seychelles gained independence. India established its mission in Victoria in 1979, appointed its first resident High Commissioner in 1987, and Seychelles opened its resident mission in New Delhi in 2008.

Over the decades, regular high-level exchanges have transformed the relationship into a broad partnership covering defence, maritime security, development cooperation, healthcare, education, trade, infrastructure and the Blue Economy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2015 visit further strengthened cooperation in areas including maritime security, hydrography and renewable energy.

The year 2027 marks 51 years of India–Seychelles diplomatic relations, with both countries reaffirming their longstanding friendship and shared interests in a secure and prosperous Indian Ocean.

The historic year has also brought a new phase of cooperation through the SESEL Joint Vision, Prime Minister Modi's June 2026 State Visit and the exchange of nine agreements and legal instruments, reflecting the expanding scope of bilateral relations.



ECONOMIC RELATIONS

India and Seychelles share expanding economic relations encompassing trade, investment, banking, telecommunications, healthcare, infrastructure, tourism and development cooperation. In 2024, Seychelles imported US$91.73 million worth of goods from India and exported US$2.46 million to India. Indian products such as food items, rice, cement, vehicles, medicines and medical equipment have an established, trusted presence in the Seychellois market.

Indian businesses have significantly contributed to Seychelles' economy, with Bank of Baroda, Bharti Airtel, Tata and Ashok Leyland among the notable Indian companies operating or supplying critical products and services. Demonstrating long-term commitment, Airtel has invested more than US$25 million in its Seychelles telecommunications infrastructure and operations since entering the market in 1998.

The year 2026 marked a historic expansion of this economic partnership. India announced a comprehensive US$175 million Special Economic Package, comprising a US$125 million Line of Credit (LoC) and US$50 million in grants. This package is explicitly targeted toward supporting public housing, infrastructure, urban mobility, healthcare, vocational training and maritime security.

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's State Visit in June 2026, the two nations advanced economic integration by operationalising this rupee-denominated LoC. The leaders fast-tracked bilateral discussions on establishing direct shipping lines and implementing local-currency trade mechanisms, while signing milestone agreements covering cross-border digital payments (UPI implementation), agriculture and healthcare infrastructure.

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DEFENCE COOPERATION

India and Seychelles share a longstanding and multifaceted defence and maritime-security partnership, driven by their common interests as maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean Region**.** Cooperation has expanded over the years from traditional military assistance and training to maritime surveillance, hydrography, EEZ patrols, joint exercises, capacity building, search and rescue, and coordinated responses to piracy, illegal fishing, drug trafficking, and other transnational maritime threats. Seychelles occupies an important position in the western Indian Ocean, making maritime security a central pillar of the bilateral relationship.

Maritime surveillance and hydrographic cooperation have become important components of the partnership. India assisted Seychelles in establishing six coastal surveillance radar systems in 2015, which continue to be maintained with Indian assistance. Indian naval vessels have also undertaken hydrographic surveys in Seychelles, including INS Darshak's 2015 survey of Victoria Port and adjoining areas. Indian and Seychelles forces conduct joint EEZ patrols and cooperate in addressing maritime challenges, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, narcotics trafficking, and human trafficking.

Joint military training has also deepened the relationship. The bilateral military exercise LAMITYE has been conducted regularly, with its 11th edition held in Victoria from 9–20 March 2026. The 2026 edition was significant as the first tri-service edition, involving the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force alongside the Seychelles Defence Forces. Seychelles has also participated in other regional maritime engagements, while Indian naval and coast guard ships regularly visit Port Victoria for operational, training, and capacity-building activities.

The partnership gained further momentum in 2025–2026. In February 2025, India gifted the PB Boudeuse to Seychelles, while Indian maritime deployments and training engagements continued throughout 2025. In June 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi handed over the Fast Patrol Vessel PS Lespwar to the Seychelles Coast Guard. The vessel is intended to enhance maritime surveillance, search and rescue, and protection of Seychelles' territorial waters. India also supported the refit of PS Zoroaster, which participated in Exercise MILAN and the International Fleet Review in India before returning to Seychelles.

The defence partnership was reaffirmed during Prime Minister Modi's June 2026 State Visit, when Seychelles and India reiterated their commitment to the country's special place within India's MAHASAGAR vision and to combating piracy, drug trafficking, illegal fishing, and cross-border crime. India reaffirmed its support for maritime surveillance, hydrography, and defence capacity building, reflecting a broader vision of a secure, stable, and prosperous Indian Ocean Region.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

India and Seychelles share a longstanding partnership in technical cooperation and capacity building, with human-resource development forming an important pillar of India's development partnership with Seychelles. Cooperation is primarily channelled through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme, ICCR scholarships and other specialised training and technical-assistance initiatives. More than 1% of Seychelles' population has participated in ITEC programmes, making capacity building one of the most visible aspects of India's development partnership with the country.

Under ITEC, Seychellois professionals and government officials receive opportunities for civilian and defence training in India, while Indian experts may also be deputed to partner countries at their request. Training areas range from information technology, governance and public administration to entrepreneurship, maritime affairs, environmental management, healthcare, telecommunications and other specialised fields. The programme also facilitates study tours and knowledge-sharing between institutions in India and Seychelles.

Education and professional development form another important component of technical cooperation. Seychelles participates in ICCR scholarship programmes, including the India-Africa Maitri Scholarship Scheme. For the 2025–26 academic year, three scholarships were allocated to Seychellois students for undergraduate, postgraduate or PhD studies in Indian institutions. In addition, five Quad STEM scholarships were allocated to Seychelles for four-year undergraduate engineering programmes, supplementing the India-Africa Maitri scholarships.

India has also supported Seychelles through institutional and technology-oriented projects. An IT Centre of Excellence, established with Indian assistance at Mont Fleuri, Mahé, was inaugurated in April 2011. Such initiatives have contributed to strengthening Seychelles' digital and human-resource capabilities and have provided a foundation for wider cooperation in information and communications technology.

2026: A New Phase of Technical Cooperation

Technical cooperation received significant momentum in February 2026, when President Patrick Herminie made a State Visit to India. During the visit, the two countries signed seven Memoranda of Understanding covering areas including health and pharmaceuticals, meteorology, digital transformation, ocean services, capacity building, food procurement and culture. Particularly significant were agreements on technical and scientific collaboration between the India Meteorological Department and Seychelles Meteorological Authority, ocean observation and services, and capacity-building programmes for Seychellois civil servants.

The National Centre for Good Governance of India and the Public Service Bureau of Seychelles also established a framework for capacity-building training programmes for Seychellois civil servants. This represents a shift towards more structured institutional cooperation, with an emphasis on strengthening public administration, professional skills and government service delivery.

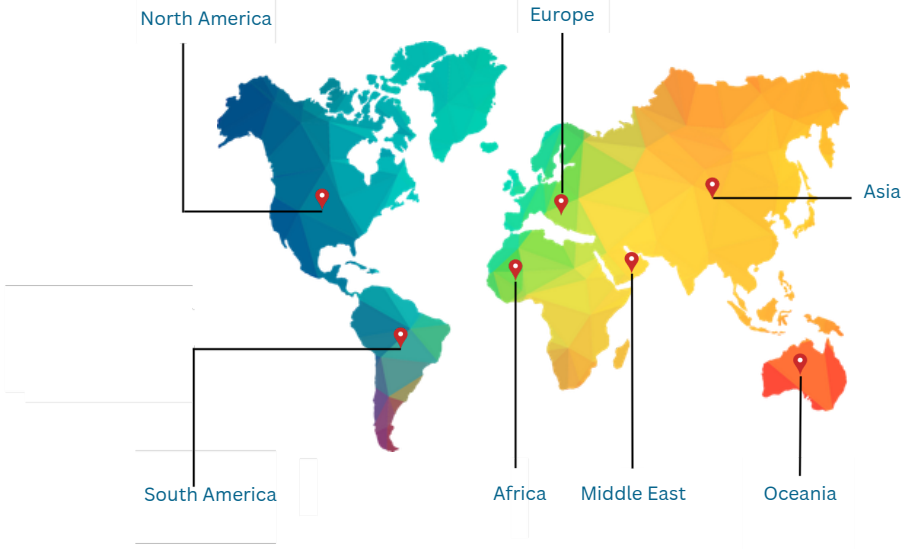
During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's June 2026 State Visit to Seychelles, technical cooperation was further strengthened through initiatives including the Professional and Technical Education Centre, an India-assisted project designed to provide Seychellois youth with vocational and technical skills. Cooperation also expanded into digital banking, healthcare, agriculture, seafaring, space exploration and clean energy, reflecting the increasingly diverse nature of the India–Seychelles technical partnership.

India and Seychelles are also developing cooperation in ocean science and marine services. The February 2026 agreement between India's National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) and the Seychelles Meteorological Authority provides for technical cooperation in ocean observation, ocean services, capacity building, data sharing and maritime scientific research. This is particularly relevant to Seychelles as a Small Island Developing State whose economy and environmental resilience are closely connected to the ocean.

Technical cooperation between India and Seychelles has therefore evolved from individual training programmes into a broader development partnership focused on knowledge transfer, institutional strengthening, digital transformation, scientific cooperation and skills development. With new initiatives in vocational education, public administration, ocean science, healthcare, digital technology and renewable energy, technical cooperation is expected to remain an important pillar of the bilateral relationship.



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