

Mission SAGAR to Community Development Projects: India-Seychelles Relations intensifies

India and Seychelles signed several memorandums of understanding and new projects strengthening the bilateral relationship between the two countries. Seychelles holds a detrimental position in the Indian Ocean Region and India must nurture this bilateralism. The meeting witnessed a warm welcome by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to his counterpart Wavel Ramkalawan mentioning him to be a 'son of India', given the President's Indian roots. Highlighting the importance of Seychelles for Indian diplomacy, Prime Minister Modi mentioned the SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) project and that security developments were possible because Seychelles and India remains anticipated for future tactics with security challenges and developments. He said, *"India and Seychelles share a strong and vital partnership in the Indian ocean neighbourhood. Seychelles is central to India's vision of 'SAGAR' - Security and Growth for All in the Region."* The Indian Ocean Region has become more active in recent years, with the Chinese military footprint in the region. Expressing concerns over maritime security, India presented the 'made in India' fast patrol Vessel to Seychelles to protect all its maritime resources.

Apart from maritime security and challenges to it, the two countries discussed future debacles in dealing with the ongoing pandemic. India's vaccine drive has covered the maximum number of countries so far; some given for commercial



Mission SAGAR II - Image source: PIB

benefits and others were gifted. Seychelles was the first country that had received the Indian vaccine of about 50,000 doses. Even in the challenging times, India's policy of approaching its closest ally. Reiterating the mentioned statement, *"Seychelles was the first African country to receive the 'Made in India' COVID-19 vaccine,"* he added. India's Vaccine Maitri drive has most certainly placed the country in one of the strongest players of the pharmaceutical domain. As a friend to India, the country is also committed to battle adversaries related to climate change. Being an island nation, Seychelles is more prone to climate change adversaries and hence India handed an energy-efficient project of building a solar plant. Prime Minister added, *"I am happy that today we are handing over a One-Megawatt solar power plant in Seychelles built with India's assistance. All these projects reflect the development priorities of Seychelles, which is of growth with care for nature."*

India's vision of human-centric cooperation was reflected in the virtual high meet. The two countries jointly inaugurated 10 'high impact' community development projects. These

projects mark another milestone to celebrate India-Seychelles bilateral relations. The meet intensified and glorified bilateralism as the Prime Minister concluded saying, “India-Seychelles friendship is truly special. And, India takes immense pride in this relationship.”

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