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## MODI SPEAKS TO FRENCH DIPLOMAT, SAYS HAPPY WITH PROGRESS TWO COUNTRIES MADE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Europe, European Union (EU) and India

Emmanuel Bonne, Diplomatic Advisor to the French President <u>Emmanuel Macron</u> called on Prime Minister <u>Narendra Modi</u> after the representatives of the two countries discussed key issues at their annual strategic dialogue. Modi told the French diplomat that he is happy with the progress the two countries have made and conveyed his best wishes to the French President.

The <u>Ministry of External Affairs</u> (MEA) later informed India and France discussed key issues such as counter-terrorism, maritime security, cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region and vowed to accord high priority to their partnership.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval led the Indian delegation, while the French delegation was headed by Emmanuel Bonne at the talks.

The Prime Minister expressed his satisfaction with the progress both countries have made on key aspects of the India-France strategic partnership, including counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, defence and strategic cooperation, etc.

Bonne also briefed the Prime Minister on India-France cooperation on various regional and global issues, including maritime and multilateral cooperation.

Prime Minister fondly recalled his recent exchanges with President Macron, and conveyed his best wishes for his health. He also reiterated his invitation to President Macron to visit India as soon as conditions permits.

The Prime Minister later tweeted, Had a productive meeting with Mr. Emmanuel Bonne, Diplomatic Advisor to President Macron. Expressed joy at the progress in India-France Strategic Partnership, a force for global good in the post-COVID world. Reiterated the invitation to my friend Emmanuel Macron to visit India.

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In its statement, the MEA said the two sides held discussions on a variety of issues including counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, defence cooperation, maritime security, regional and global issues and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

The French release on the dialogue said, at the dialogue, they reiterated their attachment to an inclusive, rules-based Indo-Pacific which contributes to a multipolar Asia in a multipolar world.

the agenda of the strategic dialogue covered all aspects of the Indo-French strategic partnership in the Indo-Pacific and in the fields of space, defence, security, civil nuclear energy, among others.

On each topic, the two sides noted the high degree of convergence of views and agreed on concrete steps to further enhance their cooperation, the French statement said.

During his meetings, Bonne conveyed President Macron's wish to further strengthen the relationship of trust and friendship between France and India in 2021.

"Indo-French cooperation will be key to tackling global challenges in 2021, such as ensuring equal and universal access to COVID-19 vaccines, protecting climate and biodiversity, and building a renewed multilateralism," the French statement said.

Bonne highlighted that France will work closely with India in the UN Security Council in 2021-2022 and reiterated France's support for India's bid for a permanent seat, it said.

Both sides reaffirmed the high priority they accord to the India-France strategic partnership and highlighted the convergence of views between the two countries, the MEA said.

(With inputs from agencies)

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