

New Strategic Partnership

ITALIAN NATIONAL DAY

Solidarity, sustainability, innovation

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE



The bilateral trade ties between Italy and India have strengthened over the last few years, taking the relationship between the two nations to newer heights, writes H.E. Vincenzo de Luca, Ambassador of Italy to India

Relations between Italy and India have grown closer over the last few years. The virtual Summit held in November 2020, between the Prime Ministers of Italy and India, marked a crucial milestone and culminated with the adoption of a joint declaration and a plan of action that laid out the strategic goals that both the countries committed to for the next five years.

Italy and India also committed to work together in the multilateral arena as both nations believe in an efficient multilateralism, one that is capable of responding to the needs of a multipolar world.

The Global Health Summit, organised by Italy, within its G20 Presidency, and the European Union set out core principles on the way ahead to tackle future pandemics. In this context, Italy committed to continue working with Indian partners for a reinforced role of the international institutions, starting from the World Health Organisation.

The friendship between Italy and India lies on three basic pillars: Solidarity, sustainability and innovation. These have characterised the development of their relations over the past year.

Solidarity: The outburst of the greatest global health challenge of Italian Era took the world by surprise. During the first wave of the Coronavirus pandemic, Italian and Indian institutions were faced with the delicate challenge of repatriating the significant number of nationals temporarily touring the respective countries. In a situation where the lockdown was in place and the movement of people was compromised due to the much-needed restrictive measures adopted to curb the spread of the virus, it was only thanks to the outstanding cooperation among our institutions that repatriation operations were carried out in a smooth and orderly fashion. Italy got immense support from India during this period.



Similarly, a couple of months ago, India was challenged with a terrible second wave of coronavirus cases. As friends do in times of need, Italy stood next to India in the fight against Coronavirus and extended all possible support

#DigitalInIndia
From April 1, 2020 to May 1, 2021, total digital meetings: 386
Average meetings a month: 29
Sectorial meetings: 257
Virtual Summit between the Prime Ministers: 1
First Italian digital sectorial business mission of companies on Food Processing in India: 350 companies from India and Italy, 300 B2B

to India. Within the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism, Italy was among the first countries to deliver medical equipment and supplies by bringing a delegation from the Italian Civil Protection Department who landed a hand in a very challenging moment for the country. **Sustainability:** Italy is working closely with India to make the planet a better place by



Italy support to India's #FightAgainstCorona

Italy contributed to India's fight against coronavirus by providing high tech equipment to the ITPB Hospital in Greater Noida and to Lakshadweep, Rajasthan and Kerala. The missions were coordinated by the Italian Civil Protection Department within the European Civil Protection Mechanism, with the cooperation of the Italian Embassy in New Delhi, the Italian Air Force and Guardia di Finanza who provided the flights for the transportation of the material that landed in Delhi on May 3rd and 13th. A third Covid-relief flight is in the pipeline.

Italy helped India with:

- an oxygen production plant from Piedmont Region (able to supply oxygen to 100 hospital beds simultaneously)
- ventilators from the Extraordinary Commissioner for the Covid19 Emergency
- ultrasound systems from Lombardy Region
- masks from Hope Onlus
- ventilators from Versalis, Eni Group
- oxygen concentrators from Veneto Region Veneto

investments have been made by Italian companies in this field. Many more are eager to contribute to India's green economy transition. Over the past year, Italy dedicated 66% of its digital meetings to eco-

economic related issues and will continue to be at the service of business communities of both nations to further enhance our bilateral trade and promote reciprocal investments. **Innovation:** Looking at the

future, Italy and India have been working extensively to reinforce their research and innovation partnership. This year, Italy is launching a new executive protocol on science and technology which has already received great interest from the scientific institutions of our countries. The country is now looking forward to the new projects on mobility and joint networks. The recently organised 'Digital Innovation Forum' has brought together academic institutions from both the countries that shared experiences in the fields of advanced technology and manufacturing.

Italy and India worked extensively together also in tackling the challenges of COVID-19 by co-organising webinars that allowed to exchange experiences and to explore areas of cooperation for future projects, especially in the field of drug repurposing and immunisation. Both nations also enriched the partnership of their respective space agencies who are collaborating on the development of joint projects in the field of exploration and innovations.

To further develop this vision, Italy plans to open a new Consulate General in Bengaluru, one of the India's main technology and innovation hubs.

With these and many more collaborations at various levels, bilateral relations between the two nations will continue to thrive in the years to come. Looking forward to more Italy in India and more India in Italy!

—For editorial queries, contact us at Pooja.Madhok@timesgroup.com

Festival of Italian culture in India

In January 2021, Italy inaugurated the Festival of Italian Culture in India, with an event at the presence of the Indian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Director General of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. A rich cultural program was crafted for the year. Many activities focused on Dante Alighieri, in commemoration of the 700th anniversary of his death: From the participation of experts to the Jaipur Literature Festival, to musical, theatrical and cinematographic productions dedicated to the Divine Comedy. Italy also focused on cinema and the collaboration between creative industries during three open-air cinema sessions "Notti Stellate". The screening of Pasolini and Rossellini's documentaries on India were also shown amongst other prominent works from Italian directors.

In fashion, an exclusive webinar in partnership with Camera Nazionale Moda Italiana, was organised in February, with the participation of the CEOs of Diesel, Canali, Zegna, Sergio Rossi along with Reliance and Myntra.

Besides, an innovative project on music was developed in collaboration with the Embassy of Brazil in New Delhi, with whom there is a collaboration in the design field.

For further information, follow @ItalyinIndia



Towards energy transition

ITALY AND INDIA HAVE BEEN WORK TOGETHER TOWARDS ENERGY TRANSITION AND TACKLING THE PROBLEMS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



As a fast-growing economy, expected to increase its urban population by 200 million in the next 20 years, India needs energy. Increasing its manufacturing capacity and further developing its urban structure will boost energy consumption, with estimates forecasting almost the doubling of today's volumes over the long term. In the vision of the government, energy justice must be pursued while fully abiding to India's global commitments for sustainable growth.

Meeting these goals requires India to implement a significant transformation of its energy mix, progressively moving towards de-carbonisation and a wider use of alternative sources, such as gas, hydrogen, bio-fuels and renewables.

Along this path, India is not alone. In the recent meeting between leaders, the EU and India highlighted the urgency of addressing the interdependent challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and agreed to cooperate in view of accelerating the deployment of renewable energy, promoting energy efficiency, developing smart grids and storage technologies, and modernising the electricity market.

Both the nations should work towards creating a model city which is not only a place where recycling or reusing is a widespread practice among its residents, but is also a place which is created with new and innovative concepts that are sustainable—where the initial stages of design, choice of materials, and energy used ensure sustainability and eco-friendly living



In this framework, Italy is already engaged in a wide-scope partnership, in line with the action plan adopted in November 2020, during the last meeting between the Prime Ministers of Italy and India, whose pillars include green economy, clean tech and renewables. This led to cooperation between the two nations in various fields. First, the solidity of the renewable-grid connection needs attention. Increasing the resilience and the digitalisation of electricity distribution is a clear priority. All five key dimensions of national transmission grids—Safety, adequacy, resilience, quality and efficiency—are to be taken into account and developed.

Second, mobility needs attention. A responsible attitude requires the rapid implementation of a circular approach and the introduction of alternative technologies, not only for electric vehicles, but also green fuels, such as waste biofuels (e.g. Hydrogen, Bio-Methane, second generation Bioethanol).

Third, is the field of waste management. It entails the application of new technological solutions, including for the selection and upcycling of recyclable plastic waste and for the conversion of non-recyclable waste (plastics and waste fuel) into methane,

methanol or other chemicals. Finally, the focus is on smart cities. In the framework of circular economy, the perspective is that of adopting a new model of city, not only a place where recycling or reuse is a widespread practice, but based on a new concept that starts from the initial stages of design, choice of materials and energy and that embraces all urban areas in a holistic way.

For the development of all such areas, governments need to provide policy steering and to design a conducive regulatory framework, also aimed at providing financial incentives and at attracting foreign investments and know-how.

Italy is at the forefront of technology and expertise in tackling the energy transition, in the development of renewable energy and management of smart grids, and is keen in enhancing the partnership with India. The lessons

learned from the experience of Italy's regulation of the energy sector could be particularly useful, covering areas from the energy market, to safety in the energy sector, from renewable sources to the use and exploitation of grids.

For all of these reasons, the prospect of a strategic partnership between Italy and India on energy transition seems bright. Such cooperation could build on the Italian experience in the sector and be enriched by the contribution of Italian authorities, research centers and private companies, many of which are already present in India.

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Food processing: The key to strengthened ties

Food processing is yet another pillar of strengthened partnership between Italy and India



Italy has shown an increasing awareness on food issues, building on the legacy of the expo that was organised recently, dedicated to the theme 'Feeding the planet', which culminated with the adoption of the Milan Charter within the framework of the United Nations.

Since 2016, food processing has increasingly occupied an important role in the agenda of relations between Italy and India. It was a process accelerated in 2020, especially given to the digital platform, and formalised as a priority of the partnership at the virtual summit held last November.

Italy, traditionally, has exceptional competence and world-class quality excellence in the sector. In particular, it is one of the leading manufacturers and exporters of food packaging and processing equipment. Indeed, Italy is India's third largest supplier of packaging machinery and fourth largest for food processing equipment. When it comes to innovation in this field, Italian technology is a benchmark in the sector. Food processing technology is core for the improvements in packaging and recipes or new product launches.

India has become an important economic partner

for Italy. As far as food processing is concerned, the food processing digital mission held in 2020, helped set up strategy to strengthen the Italian presence in this segment. In particular, it has consisted in: 1) Increasing direct meetings between Italian associations and local administrations to present domestic products and multiply the supply opportunities; 2) Enhancing the involvement of Mega Food Parks already

India has become an important economic partner for Italy. As far as food processing is concerned, the 'Digital Indo-Italian Mission on food processing', held between July 15 to 16, 2020, helped set up strategy to strengthen the Italian presence in this segment

Italy has launched with the Fanidhar Mega Food Park in Gujarat an innovative project aiming at offering an "Italian Technological Excellence platform" as well as supporting and facilitating exchange programs with Italian Universities. Such process has been structured through the involvement of the Emilia-Romagna Region, ANIMA (Italian association representing companies operating in the engineering sector) FederUnacoma (Italian Federation of Agricultural Machinery Manufacturers) and Italy's Export Credit Agency, SACE. It aims to create synergy between agriculture and industry of the two countries and leverages Italian expertise, research and development of new and more efficient technologies.

With the convergence of relevant institutional, associative, financial and territorial centres of reference, and the support of digital platform, it represents effective best practices and a model that may be replicated in other market sectors, especially for the benefit of the SMEs.

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