

## India, France join hands for Indian Ocean security

Pointing out the political acceptability of France across Indian political spectrum and the historic role it has played in providing sensitive technologies for both space and military programmes, a senior military scientist said, “these agreements will bring back the momentum.” The two sides also signed a new protocol for the exchange of classified information between the two sides.

The two sides also agreed on the need for early conclusion of the ongoing discussions between DRDO and French firm Safran for combat engines for the indigenous Tejas fighters. They presently fly on GE manufactured American engines. “If the M88 engines of Safran are to be produced in India with full ToT (transfer of technology) that might solve a lot of our concerns regarding the Tejas programme,” the military scientist pointed out.

Both sides also announced a vision document on cooperation on a number of space-research related issues, including space security. The space agreement is designed to support joint maritime operations as it will help in maritime surveillance for the Indian Ocean region. The visiting French leader also presided over the signing of an important agreement that will allow mutual recognition of academic qualifications.

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