

■ MoUs for agri research, education inked

PM, S. Africa Prez vow to boost bilateral ties

Johannesburg, July 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday met South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and the two leaders discussed ways to expand the bilateral ties in a number of sectors, including trade and investment, IT and defence.

Following the delegation-level talks between Mr Modi and Mr Ramaphosa, three MoUs were signed on cooperation in exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, setting up of Gandhi-Mandela Centre of specialisation for artisan skills and agricultural research and education.

Mr Modi, who arrived here on Thursday met Mr Ramaphosa on the sidelines of the two-day Brics summit whose theme this year is "Brics in Africa".

"Kicking off a series of bilateral meetings on the sidelines of Brics! PM Narendra Modi meets the host South African President Cyril Ramaphosa," external affairs ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said in a tweet.

"Saluting the enduring legacy of Mahatma and Mandela! Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa jointly released a stamp commemorating the two iconic personalities," he tweeted.

India and South Africa are celebrating 21 years of strategic partnership.

"India and South Africa are proud inheritors of legacies of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela," Mr Kumar said.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Cyril



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping attend a session during the 10th Brics Summit in Johannesburg on Friday. — AFP

Ramaphosa discussed expansion of our relationship in trade and investment, agriculture and food processing, IT, defence and people-to-people contacts," he said.

Later, foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale said both the nations expressed satisfaction at the growth in trade and investment, besides improvement in the people-to-people relation.

"President Ramaphosa actually said India-South

Africa relations may be new in terms of re-establishment of diplomatic relations but are in fact very deep-rooted in history. Now what it requires is nurturing, it needs to be watered time to time and such meetings help in that process," he said.

Mr Gokhale said Prime Minister Modi entirely agreed with the South African leader on this, and noted a "very positive" trend on investments and trade. — PTI