

Key Indo-French business news

January 2026

External Affairs Minister's visit to France in early January

France hosted External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar for high-level engagements, including participation as Guest of Honour at the French Ambassadors' Conference in Paris. Jaishankar met with France's President Emmanuel Macron and his diplomatic team to reinforce cooperation ahead of Macron's upcoming visit to India.



French bakery and café brand PAUL debuts in Bengaluru

Iconic French bakery and café brand PAUL has opened its first outlet in Bengaluru, introducing artisanal breads, pastries and café classics to the city's culinary scene. The launch marks the brand's continued expansion in India, targeting urban consumers with premium café experiences rooted in French baking heritage.



Alstom secures 5-year maintenance contract for electric locomotives

Alstom, through its joint venture with Indian Railways Madhepura Electric Locomotive Private Limited (MELPL), has secured a €62 million, five-year maintenance service contract for 300 WAG-12B electric freight locomotives at the Sabarmati depot. The agreement covers comprehensive scheduled and unscheduled maintenance.



ENGIE secures its first hybrid Solar & Storage project in India

ENGIE has secured its first hybrid solar and battery storage project in India, combining a 210MWp solar plant with a 60MWh battery energy storage system in Tamil Nadu. The project will deliver firm renewable power during peak demand periods and improve grid stability by enabling energy shifting and dispatchable solar generation.



Dassault Aviation could assemble up to 96 Rafale jets in Nagpur

If the 114 Rafale fighter jet deal is confirmed and according to recent industry reports, 18 aircraft could be delivered in flyaway condition by 2030, while the remaining 96 could be assembled at the Dassault Reliance Aerospace Limited (DRAL) facility in the MIHAN SEZ and have up to 60% indigenous content.



L'Oréal to invest \$383M in AI-driven beauty tech hub in Hyderabad

L'Oréal will invest over \$383 million to establish a beauty tech hub in Hyderabad, focusing on AI-driven innovation and advanced digital beauty solutions. The facility is expected to create around 2,000 tech jobs by 2030 and serve as a global base for beauty technology development.



Legrand India opens a 30,000 sqm mega plant in Nashik

Legrand inaugurated a new 30,000 sqm facility in Nashik, one of the group's biggest globally, to produce busbar trunking systems, distribution boards, racks, cable trays and industrial plugs and sockets. The plant will serve the high-growth data-centre segment and supply both domestic and international markets.



Schneider Electric to invest ₹623 crore in Telangana

Announced following the World Economic Forum in Davos, Schneider Electric India will invest ₹623 crore to expand its manufacturing facilities in Gagillapur and Shamshabad, boosting production of electrical safety products including air circuit breakers, moulded case circuit breakers, contactors and push buttons.



All-new Renault Duster 2026 launched, built at Chennai plant

Renault has unveiled the all-new 2026 Duster SUV in India, featuring updated design, connected technology and enhanced safety and powertrain options. The new Duster is being manufactured in India at the Renault Group Chennai plant, underscoring local production for both domestic sales and export potential.



EU-India FTA concluded for deeper market access

The EU-India FTA will eliminate or reduce tariffs on around 96.6% of European exports to India and cut duties on most Indian goods entering the EU, saving up to €4 billion annually in tariffs and expanding market access in key sectors. The agreement further enhances services access, customs facilitation and IP protection.



Sayaji Industries and Nigay SAS a form JV to build caramel plant

Sayaji Industries Limited has entered a 50:50 joint venture with France's Nigay SAS to set up a state-of-the-art caramel manufacturing facility in Ahmedabad. The plant will cater to high-growth markets in India, the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia. Operations are expected to begin by the end of calendar year 2027.



Arabelle Solutions (EDF) expands its nuclear manufacturing at Sanand

Arabelle Solutions (owned by EDF Group) held the opening ceremony for the expansion of the Low Pressure Outer Casing facility at its Sanand plant in Gujarat, reinforcing local manufacturing of critical nuclear turbine components. The site also highlighted diploma women engineers operating advanced machinery.



Kothari Industrial Corp Ltd targets French footwear brand Kickers

KICL has introduced the French footwear brand Kickers in India in 2024 under a 30-year licence and is now in talks to acquire the brand's intellectual property from its French owner. After Crocs and Adidas, KICL is evaluating the deal as part of its strategy to scale branded footwear and potentially shift manufacturing to India.

