

India Norway Bilateral Relationship Elevated to Green Strategic Partnership

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India Norway Bilateral Relationship Latest News

- India and Norway have elevated their bilateral relationship to a “Green Strategic Partnership” during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s historic visit to Oslo, the first by an Indian PM in over 40 years.

India-Norway Bilateral Relations

- India and Norway share a longstanding partnership built on shared democratic values, mutual respect, and growing cooperation across diverse sectors.
- Norway, a Nordic country located in Northern Europe, is renowned for its advanced technology, sustainable development practices, and rich natural resources, particularly in the maritime and energy sectors.

Historical Background

- Diplomatic relations between India and Norway were established in 1947, soon after India’s independence.

- Norway was among the first countries to recognise India's sovereignty and establish formal diplomatic ties.
- Over the decades, the relationship has evolved from initial development cooperation to a comprehensive partnership encompassing trade, technology, and strategic affairs.
- The last visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Norway was by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1983, making PM Modi's 2026 visit historically significant after a gap of over 40 years.

Strategic and Diplomatic Engagement

- The strategic partnership between India and Norway has grown steadily, with both countries sharing common views on:
 - Rules-based international order
 - Dialogue and diplomacy for conflict resolution
 - Reform of global institutions, including the UN
 - Combating terrorism in all its forms
 - Sustainable development and climate action
- Both nations are active participants in multilateral forums such as the United Nations, World Trade Organisation, and various international climate agreements.
- Norway has consistently supported India's bid for permanent membership in a reformed UN Security Council.

Economic and Trade Relations

- India-Norway economic relations have expanded significantly in recent years. Key aspects include:
 - Bilateral Trade: Bilateral trade between India and Norway was **US \$ 1.05 billion** in 2024-25. India exported goods worth US\$ 630 million and imported goods worth US\$ 420 million.
 - Investments: Norwegian companies have invested in India in sectors including renewable energy, telecommunications, shipping, and IT. Major Norwegian firms like Telenor, Equinor, Yara, DNV, and Jotun have a presence in India.
 - Sovereign Wealth Fund: The Government Pension Fund Global of Norway, one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds, has substantial investments in Indian companies and government securities.
 - Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement: Recently implemented through the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA), which includes Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, and Liechtenstein, providing a framework for deeper economic integration.

Cultural and Educational Collaboration

- Indian Diaspora: Presently, the Indian community in Norway is around 30,000.
- Educational Exchanges: There are also sizable numbers of Indian students and faculty members in different universities.
- Cultural Events: There are more than 40 Indian Associations in Norway, organised on various basis. Since 2010, Turbandagen (Turban Day) and Oslo Colour Festival (since 2022) have been the two most popular cultural events in Norway.

News Summary: PM Modi's Historic Visit to Norway

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first-ever visit to Norway resulted in a significant milestone with both countries elevating their bilateral relationship to a "**Green Strategic Partnership**."
- The visit, which took place as part of PM Modi's four-nation European tour, marked the first visit by an Indian PM to Norway in over 40 years.

Elevation to Green Strategic Partnership

- During delegation-level talks with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre in Oslo, both leaders announced the upgrade in bilateral ties. PM Modi highlighted that the new partnership would ensure increased collaboration in:
 - Clean Energy
 - Climate Resilience
 - Blue Economy
 - Green Shipping
- The Norwegian PM emphasised that the partnership provides "the foundation to work on knowledge, resources, and ambitions for the green transition, where we depend on succeeding, both of us."

Key Agreements Signed

- Multiple Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed during the bilateral meeting, covering:
 - High-tech Health Solutions and digital health
 - Digital Public Infrastructure
 - Space Cooperation: An MoU between ISRO and the Norwegian Space Agency to deepen ties in the space sector
 - Artificial Intelligence and Research
 - Health Technology

Triangular Cooperation Agreement

- A significant outcome was the signing of a Triangular Cooperation Agreement.
- Under this agreement, India and Norway will jointly provide human development solutions to countries of the Global South using India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).
- This reflects the growing recognition of India's leadership in digital technology and its potential to benefit developing nations.

Indo-Pacific Initiative

- Norway announced its decision to join the **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative** (IPOI), reflecting the growing strategic convergence between the two countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

Arctic and Polar Cooperation

- PM Modi acknowledged Norway's role as a key Arctic nation and expressed gratitude for its support in operating India's Arctic research station "Himadri." Both leaders emphasised the importance of cooperation in:
 - Understanding climate change
 - Protecting fragile ecosystems
 - Securing the future of humanity
 - Joint polar research

Honour for PM Modi

- In a significant gesture of bilateral friendship, PM Modi was awarded the **Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit** by His Majesty King Harald V of Norway.

India-Nordic Summit

- Following the bilateral meeting, PM Modi will attend the Third India-Nordic Summit in Oslo, which will be attended by leaders from:
 - Norway: PM Jonas Gahr Støre
 - Denmark: PM Mette Frederiksen
 - Finland: PM Petteri Orpo
 - Iceland: PM Krístián Freystadóttir
 - Sweden: PM Ulf Kristersson
- The summit will further strengthen India's engagement with the Nordic region.

Significance of the Visit

The elevation of India-Norway ties to a Green Strategic Partnership is significant for several reasons:

- **Climate Leadership:** Reinforces both nations' commitment to combating climate change.
- **Economic Opportunities:** Opens new avenues for trade and investment, particularly in clean technology.
- **Global South Cooperation:** The Triangular Cooperation Agreement positions India as a development partner using its DPI expertise.
- **Strategic Convergence:** Norway's participation in IPOI strengthens India's Indo-Pacific strategy.
- **Multilateral Engagement:** Reinforces India's growing role in global governance and Nordic engagement.

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