

India-Finland Relations - Strategic Partnership in Digitalisation and Sustainability

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India-Finland Relations Latest News

- India and Finland have **elevated** their **bilateral ties** to a “Strategic Partnership in Digitalisation and Sustainability” following talks between the Indian Prime Minister and Finnish President (Alexander Stubb) in New Delhi.
- The visit resulted in **multiple agreements** covering mobility, environment, statistics, and emerging technologies, reflecting a growing convergence in technology, sustainability, and global governance.
- The partnership comes amid the recent conclusion of the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (2026) and aims to deepen cooperation between India and the Nordic region.

Key Outcomes of the India-Finland Talks

- **Institutional and economic initiatives:**
 - Goal to double bilateral trade by 2030.

- Establishment of a Joint Working Group on Digitalisation.
- Formation of a Joint Task Force on 6G telecommunications.
- Enhanced startup ecosystem connectivity between the two countries.
- Initiation of a consular dialogue mechanism to improve people-to-people engagement.

- **Agreements signed:**

- Three key agreements were signed in the areas of –
 - Migration and Mobility (comprehensive agreement facilitating movement of talent and students).
 - Environment cooperation.
 - Statistical collaboration.
- These agreements aim to strengthen economic exchanges, knowledge transfer, and sustainable development initiatives.

Areas of Strategic Cooperation

- **Digital technology and emerging technologies:**

- The partnership focuses on high-technology sectors, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), 6G telecommunications, Quantum computing, and Digital infrastructure.
- India and Finland aim to promote **trustworthy technologies** and resilient digital ecosystems.

- **Sustainability and circular economy:**

- India and Finland will co-host the World Circular Economy Forum in India.
- Cooperation in clean energy, environmental protection, and sustainable technologies will be expanded.
- Finland's expertise in circular economy models aligns with India's sustainable development goals and climate commitments.

- **Defence, space and critical technologies:**

- Both nations agreed to deepen cooperation in defence and security technologies, space cooperation, semiconductors and critical minerals supply chains.
- This is important for supply chain resilience and technological self-reliance.

Examples of India-Finland Cooperation

- **Synergy:** Between Finnish technological expertise and India's scale of implementation –

- **Telecommunications:** Finnish company Nokia's networks and mobile technology have connected millions in India.
- **Infrastructure:** Finnish architects contributed to the construction of the Chenab Rail Bridge, the world's highest railway bridge.
- **Bioenergy:** Collaboration helped establish the world's largest bamboo-to-bioethanol refinery in Numaligarh (Assam).

- **Education and mobility:**

- Finland is emerging as a preferred destination for Indian students and skilled professionals.
- The Migration and Mobility Agreement aims to facilitate legal migration and talent exchange.

- Expanded cooperation in teacher training, school-to-school partnerships, and research on the future of education.
- Finland's globally reputed education system offers valuable learning opportunities for India's education reforms.
- **Arctic and Polar cooperation:**
 - Finland is an important partner for India in the Nordic and Arctic region.
 - Key areas of collaboration include Arctic and polar research, climate change monitoring, and sustainable resource management.
 - This aligns with **India's Arctic Policy** (2022) and its growing role in polar scientific research.

India-Finland Relations

- **Background:** Finland established diplomatic relations with India in **1949**. In recent years, there has been an increase in joint initiatives and the active exchange of delegations between the two.
- **Bilateral trade:** In the range of EUR 1.5–2 billion annually. Finland has a slight trade surplus with India, especially in the goods trade.
- **Investment:** Over 100 Finnish companies have operations in India. Large Finnish companies like Nokia, Wartsila, UPM, Lindstrom, Fortum, Ahlstrom, Elcoteq, etc., have manufacturing facilities in India.

Challenges and Way Forward

- **Limited bilateral trade volume:** Trade between India and Finland remains modest compared to potential. Use the India-EU FTA to expand trade and investment opportunities.
- **Geographical and market distance:** Limited direct connectivity and awareness between businesses. Expand startup and innovation ecosystem collaboration.
- **Technological competition:** Collaboration must navigate global competition in advanced technologies. Promote joint research and development in emerging technologies.
- **Geopolitical uncertainties:** Ongoing global conflicts (in the Middle East, Sudan and Ukraine) and shifting alliances may affect economic and security cooperation.
 - **Convergence on global governance and geopolitics:** Both countries emphasised –
 - Urgent reform of global institutions to address emerging global challenges.
 - Commitment to multilateralism and global cooperation.
 - Joint commitment to eliminate terrorism in all its forms.
 - On the need to restore a rules-based international order.

Conclusion

- The elevation of India-Finland relations reflects the growing importance of technology, innovation, and sustainability in modern diplomacy.
- By combining Finland's technological expertise and education excellence with India's scale and economic growth, the partnership has the potential to –
 - Strengthen India-EU relations,
 - Promote resilient supply chains, and

- Contribute to a rules-based international order.

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