

5. Pm Modi's Norway Visit - Green Strategic Partnership and Indo-Pacific Cooperation – International Relation

1. Why in News

1. PM Modi's first bilateral visit by Indian PM to Norway after 43 years
2. India and Norway formally declared upgrade of bilateral ties to Green Strategic Partnership
3. Norway joined India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) framework
4. Triangular cooperation offering India's Digital Public Infrastructure to Global South
5. PM Modi awarded Grand Cross of Royal Norwegian Order of Merit by King Harald V (Norway's highest civilian honour for foreign heads of government)

2. Key Highlights of the Meet

Green Strategic Partnership

1. India and Norway formally declared upgrade of bilateral ties to Green Strategic Partnership

2. Ensures increased collaboration in sectors -

1. Clean Energy (solar, wind, hydrogen, offshore renewables)
 2. Climate Resilience (adaptation, mitigation, climate finance)
 3. Blue Economy (sustainable fisheries, marine resources, ocean governance)
 4. Green Shipping (zero-emission vessels, sustainable ports, maritime decarbonization)
3. Comprehensive framework for sustainable development cooperation

Norway Joins Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)

1. Norway formally joined India's IPOI framework launched 2019
2. **IPOI** - Promotes free, open, rules-based Indo-Pacific
3. **Seven pillars** - Maritime security, maritime ecology, maritime resources, capacity building and resource sharing, disaster risk reduction and management, science-technology-academic cooperation, trade connectivity and maritime transport
4. Norway's accession strengthens European engagement in Indo-Pacific
5. Counters China's maritime assertiveness

Triangular Cooperation Agreement

1. India and Norway will jointly offer India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) to Global South countries

India's DPI stack -

1. **Aadhaar** - Biometric digital identity system (1.3+ billion enrolled)
2. **UPI (Unified Payments Interface)** - Real-time payment system (100+ billion transactions annually)
3. **CoWIN** - COVID-19 vaccination platform (model for health infrastructure)
4. Combining India's scalable digital solutions with Norway's development assistance
5. Triangular cooperation - Two developed/emerging countries helping third developing country

Diplomatic Outcomes

1. Norway reaffirmed support for India's permanent seat in reformed UN Security Council
2. Strengthening India's UNSC reform bid
3. European support crucial for India's aspirations

PM Modi's Award

1. Awarded Grand Cross of Royal Norwegian Order of Merit by King Harald V
2. Norway's highest civilian honour for foreign heads of government
3. Recognition of strengthening bilateral ties and personal diplomacy

Agreements Signed

1. Strengthening cooperation in -
 1. Clean energy (renewable technologies, energy efficiency)
 2. Offshore wind (Norwegian expertise in North Sea wind farms)
 3. Sustainability (circular economy, waste management)

4. Geosciences (Arctic research, climate science, oceanography)
5. Academic collaboration (student exchanges, joint research, university partnerships)

3. About Norway

Geography

1. Narrow country in northern Europe
2. Shares Scandinavian Peninsula with Sweden and Finland
3. Coastline famous for fjords (sea inlets between steep cliffs)
4. Fjords carved by glaciers; mountainous terrain
5. Arctic location (northern regions within Arctic Circle)

Political Status

1. Although not in European Union, Norway part of European Economic Area (EEA)
2. EEA provides access to EU single market without EU membership
3. Member of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) since 1949
4. Strong defense cooperation with Western allies

Economy

1. Biggest source of national income – Extraction and export of offshore oil and gas
2. World's largest sovereign wealth fund – Government Pension Fund Global (GPF) ~USD 1.6 trillion
3. High per capita income (~USD 90,000)
4. Diversified economy – Energy, maritime, fisheries, technology
5. Strong welfare state model

4. Brief on India–Norway Bilateral Ties

Historical Relations

1. India and Norway established bilateral relations in 1947 (shortly after India's independence)
2. Warm, friendly ties based on shared democratic values
3. Consistent cooperation over 75+ years

India–Nordic Summit Format

1. Allowed regular, structured interactions at Prime Ministerial levels
2. First summit held 2018 in Stockholm
3. Includes Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Iceland
4. Multilateral engagement complementing bilateral ties

Joint Commission Meeting (JCM)

1. Between Foreign Ministers
2. High-level mechanism of coordination
3. Covering entire gamut of relations (political, economic, cultural, scientific)
4. Regular consultations

UN Security Council Support

1. Norway supporting India's pursuit of permanent membership in reformed UNSC
2. Consistent diplomatic backing

Bilateral Trade

1. USD 1.05 billion in 2024–25
2. **India exports** – USD 630 million (pharmaceuticals, textiles, chemicals, engineering goods, seafood)
3. **India imports** – USD 420 million (machinery, fish products, paper)
4. Trade in services – Around USD 1 billion (IT services, shipping, professional services)
5. Trade surplus in India's Favor

EFTA Trade Agreement

1. India and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) signed Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) in 2024
2. **EFTA members** – Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein

3. Expected to enhance trade, investments, technology transfer
4. Market access to high-income European countries outside EU

Investment

1. **Government Pension Fund Global (GPF) of Norway** - Invested close to USD 28 billion (till 2025) in Indian capital market
2. One of largest sovereign wealth fund investors in India
3. Invested across sectors - IT, pharmaceuticals, banking, energy
4. **FDI inflows from Norway (2000-2025)** - USD 764 million
5. Sectors - Renewable energy, maritime, logistics, technology

Arctic/Polar Cooperation

1. **India's first permanent research station 'Himadri'** - Set up in Arctic in 2008 at Svalbard, Norway
2. National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) carry out multiple scientific expeditions to Arctic annually
3. **India Observer State in Arctic Council since 2013** -
 1. Arctic Council - Intergovernmental forum for Arctic cooperation
 2. 8 member states (including Norway), 13 observers (including India)
 3. Research on climate change, Arctic ecology, indigenous communities
4. Cooperation on climate science, glaciology, oceanography

Space Cooperation

1. ISRO uses Norway's Svalbard ground station on commercial terms
2. Receives data from Indian Remote Sensing (IRS) satellites
3. Kongsberg Satellite Services (KSAT) setting up ISRO antenna in Svalbard
4. Polar orbit satellite tracking advantage (high latitude location)

5. Significance of Norway for India

Maritime and Blue Economy Cooperation

1. Norway global leader in shipping, fisheries, offshore energy, ocean management
2. World's 4th largest shipping nation
3. Expertise in sustainable ocean governance, fisheries management, aquaculture

India can benefit from -

1. Port modernization (Norwegian port technologies)
2. Marine technology (autonomous ships, green propulsion)
3. Sustainable fisheries practices
4. Deep-sea exploration

Energy Security

1. Norway one of world's major exporters of crude oil and natural gas
2. 13th largest oil producer, 3rd largest gas exporter globally
3. As India's energy demand rises (projected 800+ million tonnes oil equivalent by 2040), Norway serves as stable, reliable partner
4. Diversification of energy imports reducing Middle East dependence
5. Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) supplies
6. Renewable energy technology transfer

Economic and Investment Relations

1. Norway important investor in India
2. **Sectors** - Renewable energy (offshore wind), logistics (shipping, ports), maritime services, technology
3. **Government Pension Fund Global** - Among world's largest sovereign wealth funds (USD 1.6 trillion globally)
4. Investments in Indian companies providing capital, governance standards, long-term stability

5. Technology partnerships in advanced manufacturing

India-EFTA Trade Agreement (TEPA)

1. Signed with India in 2024
2. Expected to enhance trade, investments, technology transfer

Benefits for India -

1. Market access to high-income EFTA countries
2. Technology transfer in manufacturing, pharmaceuticals
3. Investment commitments (USD 100 billion over 15 years from EFTA)
4. Job creation (1 million jobs targeted)

Benefits for EFTA -

1. Access to large, growing Indian market
2. Reduced tariffs on industrial goods
3. Services sector opportunities

Arctic Cooperation

1. Norway strategically important for India's Arctic policy

Areas of cooperation -

1. Arctic research (climate change impacts, glacial studies)
2. Climate studies (global warming, sea-level rise)
3. Polar science (oceanography, biodiversity)
4. Sustainable development in Arctic region
5. Himadri research station enabling year-round Arctic presence
6. Scientific data crucial for understanding monsoon-Arctic linkages
7. Future Arctic shipping routes (Northern Sea Route) importance

Strategic Importance in Europe

1. Norway's location in Northern Europe and Arctic gives India strategic access to -

1. Emerging geopolitical routes (Arctic Sea routes shortening Asia-Europe distance)
 2. Trade routes in North Atlantic
 3. Arctic areas (resource-rich, geopolitically significant)
1. NATO member strengthening India's engagement with Western security architecture
 2. European partner supporting India's Indo-Pacific vision

Climate Action and Green Technology

1. Norway leader in electric vehicles (85% new car sales electric)
2. Carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology
3. Hydropower expertise (95%+ electricity from hydro)
4. Green hydrogen development
5. Offshore wind technology (floating wind farms)
6. Technology transfer supporting India's net-zero 2070 target

Fisheries and Aquaculture

1. Norway world leader in sustainable fisheries and salmon aquaculture
2. Technology for deep-sea fishing, fish processing, cold chain
3. India expanding Blue Economy; Norwegian expertise valuable
4. Bilateral cooperation in fisheries management

6. Way Forward

Expand Green Partnership Implementation

1. Concrete projects in clean energy, offshore wind, green hydrogen
2. Joint ventures in renewable energy manufacturing
3. Climate finance mobilization for developing countries
4. Capacity building in climate resilience

Strengthen IPOI Cooperation

1. Norway's formal membership should translate into active participation
2. Joint maritime security exercises
3. Ocean governance capacity building in Indo-Pacific
4. Marine pollution control, illegal fishing prevention

Scale Triangular Cooperation

1. Identify Global South countries for DPI rollout (Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia)
2. Norway's development assistance financing implementation
3. India's technical expertise and scalability
4. Create replicable model for South-South cooperation

Enhance Trade and Investment

1. Leverage TEPA for increasing bilateral trade beyond USD 1.05 billion
2. Norwegian investment in India's renewable energy, ports, maritime sectors
3. Indian IT, pharmaceutical exports to Norway
4. Business delegation exchanges

Deepen Arctic Cooperation

1. Expand Himadri research station capabilities
2. Joint research projects on climate-monsoon linkages
3. Participation in Arctic Council activities
4. Explore Arctic shipping route commercial potential

Technology Partnerships

1. Offshore wind technology transfer
2. Carbon capture and storage
3. Electric vehicle ecosystem
4. Digital governance solutions
5. Space cooperation expansion

People-to-People Ties

1. Student exchange programs
2. Academic collaborations
3. Cultural festivals
4. Tourism promotion

7. Conclusion

PM Modi's historic Norway visits after 43 years establishing Green Strategic Partnership focusing clean energy, climate resilience, blue economy, and green shipping represent deepening India-Norway cooperation. Norway joining IPOI strengthens Indo-Pacific engagement; triangular cooperation offering India's DPI (Aadhaar-UPI-Cowin) to Global South combines Indian scalability with Norwegian development assistance. Norway's strategic importance for India lies in maritime-blue economy cooperation, energy security diversification, USD 28 billion GPFG investment, EFTA-TEPA trade agreement, Arctic research through Himadri station, and European Indo-Pacific support ensuring mutual growth and sustainable development.

Source - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/trade-energy-discussions-on-global-conflicts-to-top-agenda-for-modis-nordic-visit/article70991255.ece>