



BAJIRAO IAS ACADEMY

THE HINDU ANALYSIS

**26th JANUARY
2026**



**GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS TO
LEGISLATURE**

Issues surrounding the Governor's address

**India-UAE ties stability, substance, strategic
union**

India-EU Free trade Agreement

Ashok chakra to Shubhanshu Shukla

Prelims Practice question for Today

Q. With reference to the Monroe Doctrine, consider the following statements:

1. It was proclaimed by the United States in the early 19th century.
2. It opposed further European colonization in the Americas.
3. It declared that the United States would not interfere in the internal affairs of European countries.
4. It led to the immediate withdrawal of European powers from their colonies in Latin America.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1, 2 and 3 only
(c) 2 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4



The Donroe Doctrine, Venezuela's fragile pragmatism

Several other rules on contraband, which is more evident than in the aftermath of the U.S. military intervention in Venezuela and its abolition of sitting President Nicolás Maduro. On January 15, as Venezuela's opposition leader María Corina Machado met U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House and handed over the Nobel Peace Prize she had won in 2022 for leading Venezuela's movement against autocracy, CIA Director John Ratcliffe was in Caracas meeting with Nancy Rodríguez, the Maduro's former Vice President and now the interim President of the beleaguered country. On January 14, Mr. Trump had directed Mr. Rodríguez as "a terrific person" with whom the U.S. was "getting along very well".

This article, when the outbreak of an invasion is underway, is a sign of an regime's power to lead the nation and its citizens to a better future. It is a sign of a regime's power to lead the nation and its citizens to a better future. It is a sign of a regime's power to lead the nation and its citizens to a better future.

Learnings beyond borders

Mr. Washington's latest focus is on its own constraints. Venezuela's crisis is predominantly a result of its own policy, especially in the oil and reform. Excessive chief executive publicly called Venezuela "unsustainable". With oil prices relatively low, the profit margins that would justify such investment remain uncertain. This economic reality may ultimately require the administration to draw down its assets for Venezuela's (and including only its own and India through licensed intermediaries and more investment to restore the regime's control of the oil industry and its export to the West.

Champions of the sovereign resource control of the Bolivarian project, provided that Mr. Chávez first came to power. Mr. Rodríguez will seek to preserve what she can of the welfare state. But she will remain constrained.

Venezuela's search for a clean start for the developing world. Economic diversification could have materialized, but that time is no longer when a regime's interests. The warning is about the limits of the emerging multipolar order, when the Trump regime moved against Venezuela, neither China nor Russia, for all their claims, about a post-American world, was willing to confront Washington in its declared sphere of influence. An alternative may only emerge if the Global South acts in concert rather than waiting for the great power rivalry to provide shelter.

India-UAE ties stability, substance, strategic union

India-UAE ties — stability, substance, strategic union

At a time of significant churn in global geopolitical equations, relations between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) stand out for their remarkable stability and a steady deepening. The very brief visit of UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (MbZ) to India, last week, was a clear reflection of this robustness. The January 19, 2026 visit was substantive, outcome-oriented and strategically significant. This visit, the eleventh at the leadership level in as many years, shows the mutual importance the countries accord to each other.

A continuity

Since MbZ's last visit in January 2024 as the chief guest at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, two other high-profile engagements have reinforced bilateral momentum. At the Prime Minister's personal invitation, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Khalid bin Mohamed bin Zayed, and the Crown Prince of Dubai, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, visited India, yielding concrete outcomes across sectors such as defence, nuclear cooperation, energy, education and economic engagement. The active participation of the next generation of Emirati leadership lends a distinctive depth and continuity to the India-UAE partnership.

Following the signing of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2017, the relationship has evolved in a genuinely comprehensive manner. MbZ's latest visit produced a wide-ranging set of outcomes, including a defence cooperation framework, a joint space initiative, a target of \$200 billion in bilateral trade, collaboration in artificial intelligence, data embassies, infrastructure investment, partnership on small nuclear reactors, a supercomputing cluster in India, and a 10-year LNG supply agreement.

The signing of a Letter of Intent towards a Strategic Defence Partnership is timely, given the



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The partnership
is based on trust
and shared
interests, and
stands out for
its stability

evolving defence architecture in parts of West Asia. Equally significant was the unequivocal joint condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, and the emphasis that no country should provide a safe haven to those who finance, plan, or perpetrate such acts.

Infrastructure investment

The UAE's interest in India's infrastructure story is well established. The Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)'s \$1 billion commitment to India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) Master Fund in 2017 was an early signal. Since then, UAE entities have emerged as key long-term substantial investors.

Ongoing discussions on the UAE's participation in developing the Special Investment Region in Dholera, Gujarat reflect this commitment. The envisaged partnership covers strategic assets including an international airport, pilot training facilities, maintenance and repair infrastructure, a greenfield port, a smart urban township, rail connectivity and energy infrastructure.

Investor interest in Dholera has been reinforced by successful roadshows in the UAE, where sovereign wealth funds and institutional investors have shown a strong appetite. Dholera's appeal lies in its status as a government-backed smart city, with advanced connectivity and utilities, anchor investments by major corporates, focus on high-technology sectors such as semiconductors and electric vehicles, and its potential as a future hub within the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. The announcement that DP World and First Abu Dhabi Bank will establish offices in GIFT City further enhances its profile as an emerging international financial centre. These offices will serve as critical bridges connecting Indian companies with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Middle East and Northern Africa markets. ADIA already operates from GIFT City, reinforcing the UAE's long-term financial engagement with India. Buoyed by the strong

performance of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which has led to a 37% rise in bilateral trade since FY 2022-23, leaders have set an ambitious target of \$200 billion in trade by 2032. India's exports to the UAE grew by 28% last year to \$36 billion, while imports rose by 41% to \$64 billion, making the target realistic. This expansion could partly offset export pressures arising from unilateral tariff measures elsewhere. Beyond trade volumes, CEPA has significantly deepened trust between businesses and investors on both sides.

Initiatives such as Bharat Mart at Jebel Ali will provide a major boost to India's MSME exporters. The proposed Bharat-Africa Sea aims to connect Indian exporters with markets across Africa by leveraging DP World's logistics footprint. The Virtual Trade Corridor announced during Sheikh Khalid's visit is close to becoming operational and could also support broader connectivity initiatives such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.

Building on the MoU on civil nuclear cooperation signed in September 2024, the decision to explore partnerships in advanced nuclear technologies, including large reactors, small modular reactors, operations and safety, is particularly significant. With the UAE generating nearly a quarter of its electricity from nuclear power, complementarities are evident, especially in the context of India's clean energy ambition.

The overview

The significance of MbZ's visit extends beyond announced deliverables. Recent intra-GCC political dynamics could have wider regional implications. India, with deep stakes across West Asia, must continue to carefully recalibrate its relationships, guided by strategic autonomy and multi-alignment, while avoiding entanglement in regional rivalries. The India-UAE partnership, anchored in trust and shared interests, offers a stable pillar amid regional uncertainty.

India-UAE Relations: A Model of Stability and Strategic Convergence

- At a time of significant churn in global and regional geopolitics, India-United Arab Emirates (UAE) relations stand out for their remarkable stability, continuity and steady deepening.
- The brief but substantive visit of UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (MbZ) to India in January 2026 reaffirmed the robustness of this partnership.
- The relationship has evolved into a genuinely comprehensive and future-oriented strategic partnership.

Deepening Strategic Partnership

1. Leadership-Level Continuity and Political Trust

- Since the signing of the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2017)**, high-level engagements have sustained momentum.
- The visits of the Crown Princes of Abu Dhabi and Dubai to India, at the Prime Minister's personal invitation, highlight the active involvement of the next generation of Emirati leadership.
- This continuity has lent durability and strategic depth to bilateral ties.

2. Defence and Security Cooperation

- The signing of a **Letter of Intent towards a Strategic Defence Partnership** during MbZ's visit is timely, given evolving security dynamics in West Asia.
- Both countries unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and reiterated that no country should provide safe havens to terrorists.



Expanding Economic and Trade Engagement

3. Trade and CEPA Outcomes

- The **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** has significantly boosted bilateral trade, which has grown by 37% since FY 2022–23.
- India's exports rose to \$36 billion, while imports touched \$64 billion.
- Leaders have set an ambitious but realistic target of **\$200 billion in bilateral trade by 2032**, strengthening economic interdependence and insulating India from global trade uncertainties.

4. Infrastructure and Investment Collaboration

- The UAE has emerged as a major long-term investor in India's infrastructure.
- ADIA's investment in the **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)** and ongoing discussions on the **Dholera Special Investment Region** reflect this commitment.
- Planned projects include airports, ports, smart cities, rail connectivity and energy infrastructure.

A new dawn in bilateral ties

At a virtual summit between PM Narendra Modi and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, India and UAE unveiled a roadmap for expansion of ties



ABOUT THE DEAL
The comprehensive economic partnership agreement, or CEPA, is India's first such pact in a decade

WHAT IT ENVISIONS
\$100BN bilateral trade expected to grow to in the next five years
India's trade with the UAE is worth \$60bn right now — making it India's third largest trade partner

\$15BN worth additional trade in services also expected in five years
It provides benefits such as enhanced market access and reduced tariffs, and also opens up Arab and African markets to the Indian side

A QUICK DEAL
Negotiation for the deal was one of the shortest in recent years. The two sides began work on the pact in Sept last year and finalised it in less than three months

AREAS OF FOCUS
India and UAE also issued a joint vision statement that outlined the future course of ties and highlighted areas of focus, including enhanced maritime cooperation, joint steps to fight terrorism among others

"This agreement reflects the deep friendship, shared vision and trust between the two countries. I am sure this will usher in a new era in our economic relations and our business will grow from \$60 billion to \$100 billion in the next five years." —NARENDRA MODI, Prime Minister



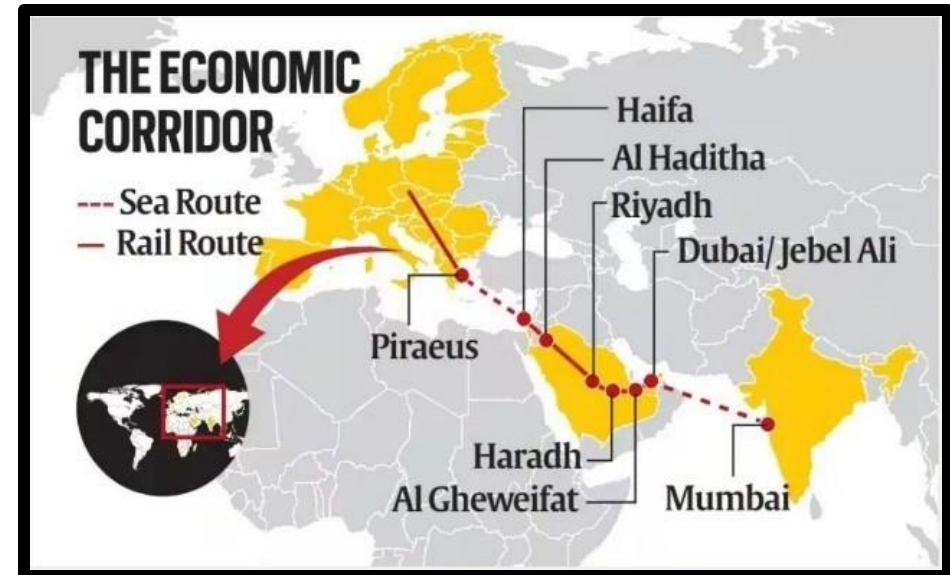
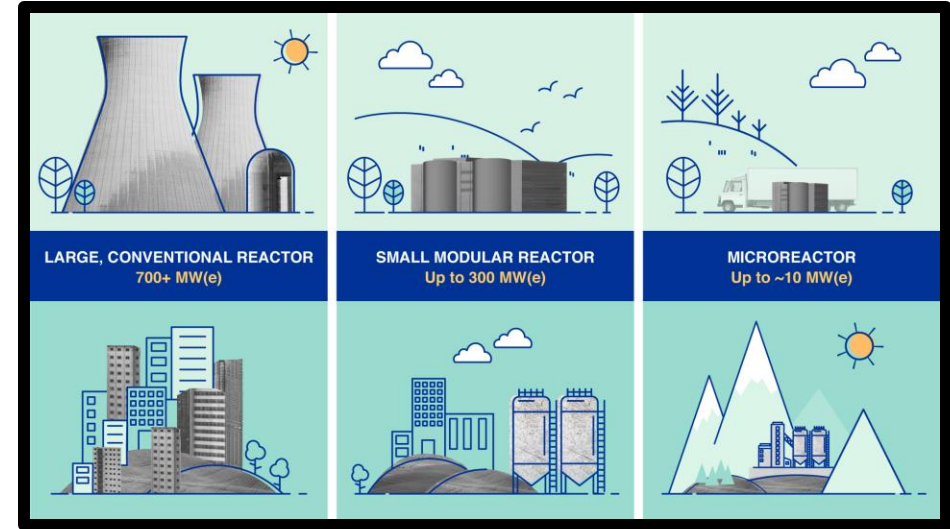
Cooperation in Emerging and Strategic Sectors

5. Energy and Nuclear Cooperation

- Building on the 2024 MoU on civil nuclear cooperation, both countries are exploring partnerships in **large reactors, small modular reactors, safety and operations**.
- With the UAE generating nearly a quarter of its electricity from nuclear power, complementarities align well with India's clean energy ambitions.
- A **10-year LNG supply agreement** further strengthens energy security.

6. Technology, Connectivity and Innovation

- Collaboration now extends to **artificial intelligence, space cooperation, supercomputing, data embassies and digital trade corridors**.
- Initiatives such as **Bharat Mart at Jebel Ali**, the **Bharat-Africa Setu**, and the **Virtual Trade Corridor** aim to enhance MSME exports and regional connectivity,
- complementing larger initiatives like the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.



Issues surrounding the Governor's address

The issues surrounding Governors' address

What do Articles 175 and 176 of the Constitution mandate? How are Governors acting against established constitutional practices when it comes to the yearly address to State legislatures, especially in Opposition-ruled States? What were the recommendations of the Sarkaria and Punchhi Commission?

EXPLAINER

Background

The story so far:

There have been a series of issues in Opposition-ruled States with respect to the address by the Governor to the State legislature at the commencement of the first session of the year. This has raised constitutional and political questions about the Governor's role in State legislature.

What is the history?

Section 63 of the Government of India Act, 1935 (GOA Act) provided that the Governor may in his discretion address the provincial legislature. From April 1937, when provincial autonomy started under the GOA Act, the Governor's speech was prepared in consultation with the council of ministers in provinces that laid down the legislative agenda.

Similarly, in the Constituent Assembly, while adopting the Article dealing with Governors' address to State legislature, it was understood that it would reflect the policy of the elected council of ministers and not the Governor's personal views.

What are Constitutional provisions?

Article 175 of the Constitution specifies that the Governor may address the house(s) of the State legislature. This is not a mandatory address and may be rarely used by a ruling government.

Article 176, on the other hand, provides that the Governor shall address the house(s) of the State legislature at the commencement of the first session after each general election to the Legislative Assembly and at the commencement of the first session of each year. This is a mandatory address to be prepared by the council of ministers, and delivered by the Governor, outlining the government's achievements in the previous year and its roadmap for policies in the ensuing year. This address is also provided whenever a



No more protocol: Karnataka Governor Thiruvanantharam Gelli at the joint session of the State legislature, at the Vidhana Sabha, in Bengaluru, on January 22, via PTI photo.

new assembly is constituted to enable a newly sworn-in council of ministers to outline their policies to the elected representatives and through them to the citizens at large. Article 176 further directs that the rules of procedure of the house(s) shall have provisions for allotment of time for discussion of matters referred in such address. This is the 'Motion of thanks on Governor's address' where the ruling and opposition legislators debate on policy matters announced in the address before voting on the same.

The Supreme Court in *Shreehar Singh versus State of Punjab* (1974) had held that the Governor is only a constitutional head who acts on the advice of the council of ministers. In *Nobara Abhis versus Deputy Speaker* (2005), the Supreme Court reiterated that the address under Article 175 or 176 is to be performed by the Governor on the aid and advice of the

What are the current issues?

The current issues arise because Governors in Opposition-ruled States act against established constitutional practices. In Tamil Nadu, the Governor had skipped some portions of the address prepared by the council of ministers in 2022 and 2023. Subsequently, since 2024, the Governor has failed to address the assembly as required under Article 176. In Kerala, the Governor skipped a few portions of the policy address prepared by the State's cabinet. In Karnataka, the Governor did not read out the address prepared by the council of ministers but instead delivered his own two-line address before leaving the joint session of the legislature.

It is pertinent to note that the Governors take the oath of office under

Article 159 that requires them to 'preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law.' Such actions go against constitutional principles and the law as settled by the highest court of the country. There have been instances of friction between elected governments and nominated governors since the 1960s with respect to the formal yearly address to the State legislature.

However, current instances are more frequent with Governors altogether skipping the address.

What can be the way forward?

Governors act as the nominal head of the State executive just like the President does for the Union executive. Further, the Governor acts as an appointee of the Centre which may be required for maintaining the unity and integrity of the nation in critical times. Nevertheless, federalism is also a basic feature of our Constitution and the Governor's office should not undermine the powers of popularly elected governments. The underlying issue for conflicts has been the politicisation of the Governor's post.

Many political leaders have called for abolition of the post in the past. But considering our quasi-federal constitutional scheme, such demands for abolition are likely to remain only on paper. The reform that can be implemented is the recommendation of the Sarkaria and Punchhi Commission. As per these recommendations, the Constitution may be amended to provide that the Chief Ministers of States shall be consulted before the appointment of Governors. While this may not be a panacea for all issues between Governors and elected governments, it could be a good starting point to minimise discord on important legislative issues and avoid confrontation on customary practices like the annual address.

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THE GIST

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Issues Surrounding the Governor's Address to the State Legislature

- In recent years, several Opposition-ruled States have witnessed constitutional friction regarding the Governor's address to the State legislature at the commencement of the first session of the year.
- Instances of Governors deviating from established conventions have raised important constitutional and political questions about the scope of the Governor's role within India's federal framework.

Constitutional and Historical Context

1. Historical Evolution

The practice of the Governor addressing the legislature traces its origins to **Section 63 of the Government of India Act, 1935**, which allowed the Governor to address the provincial legislature at his discretion.

However, after the introduction of provincial autonomy in 1937, the Governor's speech was prepared in consultation with the council of ministers.

During the Constituent Assembly debates, it was clearly understood that the Governor's address would reflect the policies of the elected government and not the personal views of the Governor.

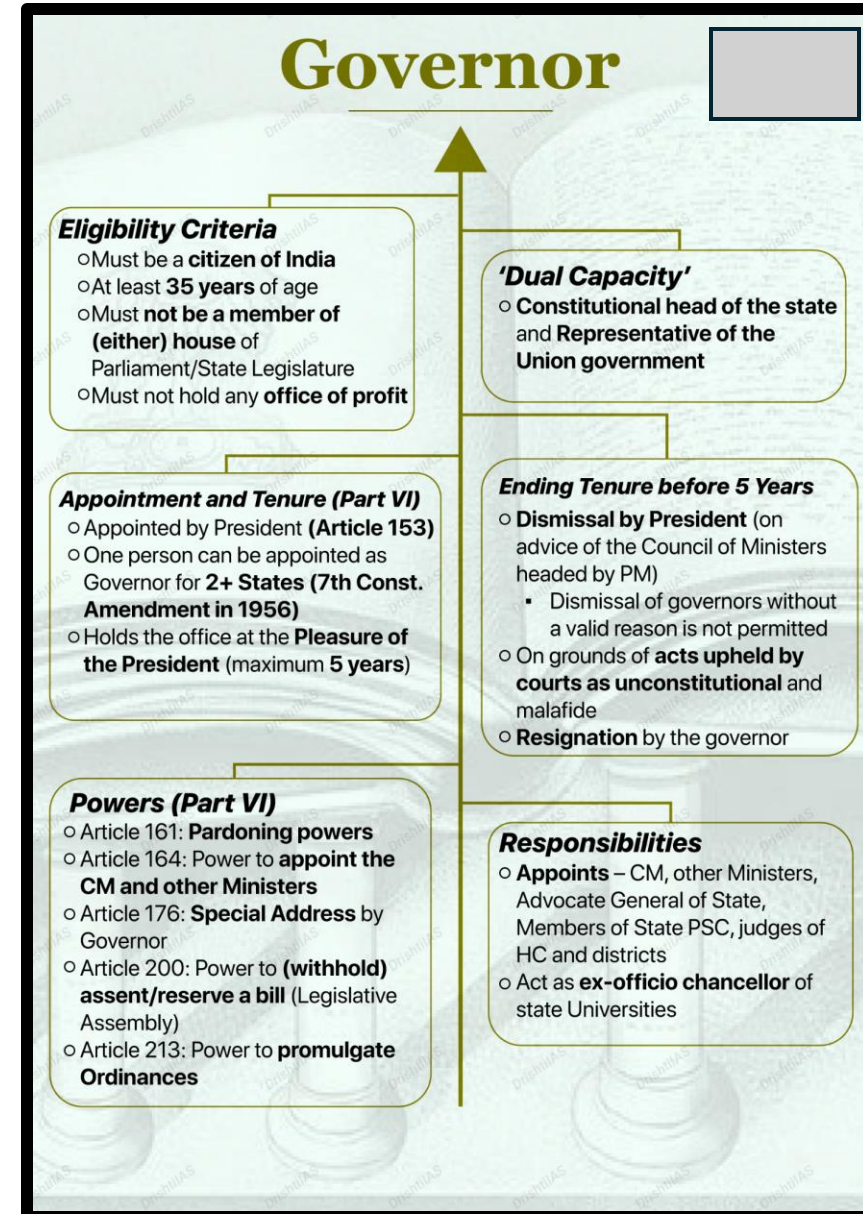
2. Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 175** empowers the Governor to address the State legislature at any time, though this is discretionary and rarely used.
- **Article 176** mandates the Governor to address the legislature at the commencement of the first session after each general election and at the first session of every year.
- This address, prepared by the council of ministers, outlines the government's achievements and policy roadmap. The Constitution also provides for a '**Motion of Thanks**', enabling legislative debate and accountability.

Judicial Interpretation

The Supreme Court has consistently clarified the Governor's role as a **constitutional head**:

- In **Shamsher Singh vs State of Punjab (1974)**, the Court held that the Governor must act on the aid and advice of the council of ministers.
- In **Nabam Rebia vs Deputy Speaker (2016)**, the Court reiterated that the Governor's address under Articles 175 and 176 must be delivered as advised by the elected government.



Contemporary Challenges

3. Deviations from Constitutional Practice

- Recent incidents indicate a departure from settled conventions.
- Governors in States such as **Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka** have either skipped portions of the address, refused to deliver it altogether, or substituted it with personal remarks.
- Such actions undermine the mandatory nature of Article 176.

4. Implications for Federalism

- Governors swear an oath under **Article 159** to preserve and defend the Constitution.
- Selective reading or refusal to deliver the address erodes constitutional morality, disrupts legislative functioning and weakens cooperative federalism.
- The increasing frequency of such actions highlights the growing politicisation of the Governor's office.

Tamil Nadu Governor R. N. Ravi abruptly walked out of Legislative Assembly as Chief Minister M. K. Stalin, disapproved his selective deviation from the approved text



India-EU Free trade Agreement

India, EU showing a fractured world another way to engage: von der Leyen

India and Europe have made a clear choice... strategic partnership, dialogue, and openness, says European Commission President Antonio Costa says India and EU share responsibility to protect rules-based international order; the two leaders will be chief guests at the Republic Day celebrations

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

India and the European Union are giving a "fractured world" an alternative, said European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, even as the EU trade commissioner announced that negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) are "nearing conclusion" at the beginning of the EU delegation's visit to Delhi. While the FTA will be watched most closely, in terms of bilateral gains for both countries, it is the timing of the summit, amid unprecedented transatlantic tensions between the EU and the United States over territorial issues and trade, that is most significant.

"India and Europe have made a clear choice... strategic partnership, dialogue, and openness," she said in a social media post. "We are showing a fractured world that another way is possible," she added.

The EU chief arrived in Delhi on Saturday, after a tense week at the World Economic Forum conference



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with European Council President Antonio Costa and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen during a meeting in New Delhi on Sunday. /ANI

at Davos, where many European leaders sparred with U.S. President Donald Trump over his claims on Greenland and tariff threats. Prior to that, the EU leadership was in Paraguay to sign a major EU-MERCOSUR FTA between European and South American countries.

Both the European Commission President and EU Council President Antonio Costa were given a formal

guard of honour at the Delhi airport on Sunday, and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar called on them in the evening to set the agenda for the next two days of intensive India-EU engagements, including at the Republic Day parade on Monday, and the EU-India Summit and a Business summit on Tuesday.

"India is a crucial partner for the EU. Together, we share the capacity and res-

ponsibility to protect the rules-based international order," Mr. Costa said.

Mr. Jaishankar also held talks with his counterpart, EU Vice-President/High Representative Kaja Kallas, and described the "growing comfort and strong convergences of the India-European Union partnership" in a post on social media. According to an EU statement, the two sides will adopt a joint EU-India

comprehensive strategic agenda during the visit, addressing security and defence ties, trade, technology partnerships and connectivity issues.

They will also discuss global issues, including the "importance of an effective multilateral system, a free and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, Russia's war against Ukraine, [and] the situation in the Middle East (West Asia)," the statement added.

The strategic agreement is also significant as it will come days after the U.S. issued its latest Defense Strategy 2026, that considerably downplays ties with Europe and omits all mention of India.

'Nearing conclusion'

While the statement did not confirm the EU-India FTA, that has been under negotiation since 2007 and re-launched in 2022, was ready for signing on Tuesday, it said that the deal would boost bilateral trade and investment and "drive shared prosperity".

"I'm confident to say we're nearing the conclusion of our FTA negotia-

tions. The cumulation of an intense past year," said Maros Sefcovic, stating this is his 10th ministerial engagement with Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, who confirmed that the FTA talks were "closer to a fruitful outcome".

According to reports, the two sides have made more progress in the last few days on lowered tariffs and unprecedented market access to India for European companies, and technology cooperation and job opportunities for Indians, despite issues over areas like agricultural good, auto tariffs, and environmental taxes.

Mr. Costa and Ms. von der Leyen will attend India's 77th Republic Day celebrations as chief guests on Monday. They will also attend an "At Home" reception at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in the evening. Their summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi will take place on Tuesday, followed by a business event.

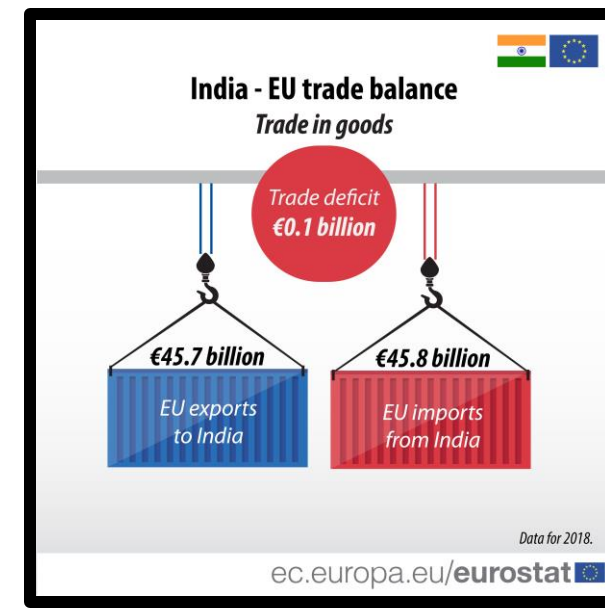
The EU is India's largest trading partner in goods with bilateral trade topping \$136 billion last year.

Context:

- The relationship is in the news as European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President António Costa serve as the chief guests for India's 77th Republic Day, followed by the [16th India-EU Summit](#) to finalise a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and a new Security and Defence Partnership.

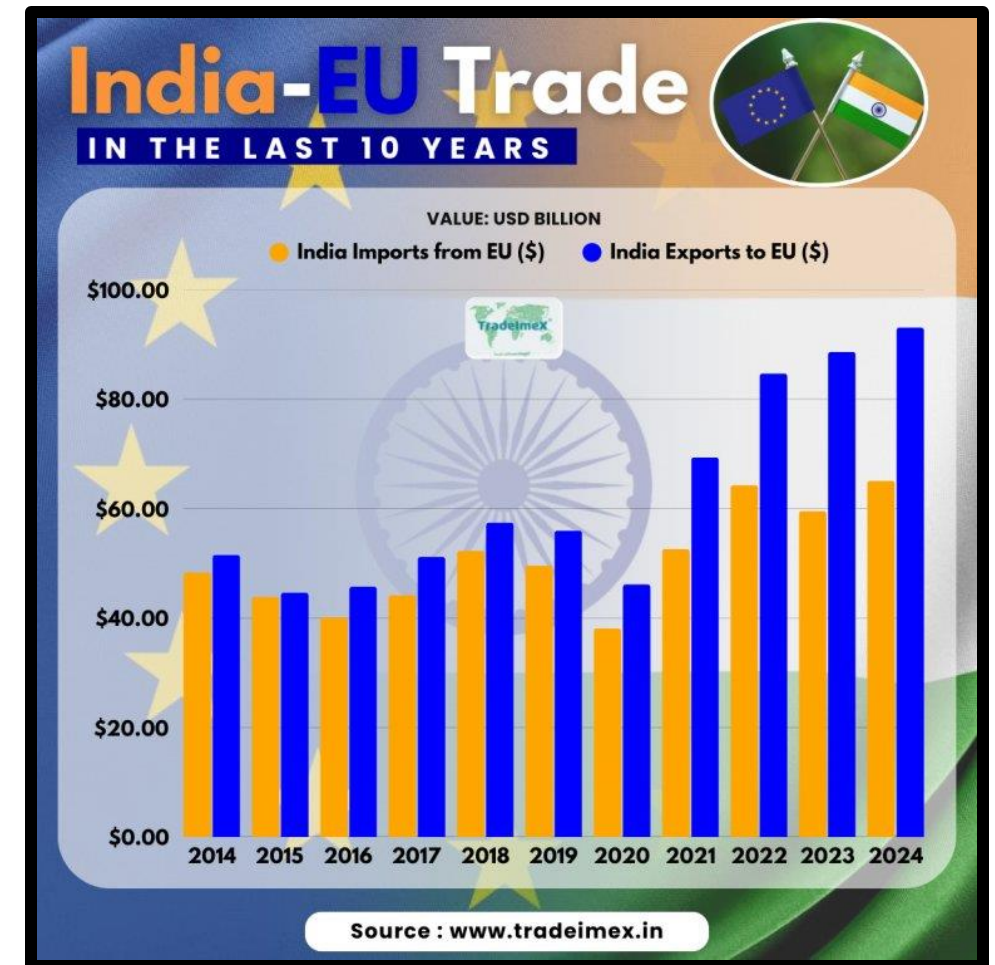
India and the EU — A Fit Partnership

- A fit partnership refers to the pragmatic alignment between India and the EU as they navigate a multipolar world where reliance on traditional powers like the U.S., China, or Russia is being reassessed.
- It is a relationship of necessity and shared strategic autonomy, focusing on creating a resilient trade corridor, technological co-innovation, and a rules-based order that respects sovereign domestic sensitivities.



Current Trends in India-EU Trade

- The EU is India's largest trading partner in goods, with bilateral trade reaching approximately US\$136 billion in 2024–25.
- Trade in services hit a record high of US\$53 billion in 2023, with Indian IT and professional services exports leading the growth.
- The EU is a leading foreign investor in India, with FDI stock reaching €140 billion in 2023 and over 6,000 European companies operating in India.
- Trade is shifting from traditional commodities to value-added items like electronics, machinery, and specialty chemicals, reflecting India's [China Plus One strategy](#).
- Bilateral merchandise trade has grown by 36% over the last five years, outpacing India's trade growth with the United States.



Opportunities in India-EU Trade:

- Elimination of the current 10% EU tariff would make Indian garments highly competitive against rivals like Bangladesh and Vietnam.
- Europe's lead in [EV platforms](#) combined with India's low-cost manufacturing can create a global supply chain for green mobility.
- India's Pharmacy of the World status can meet Europe's growing demand for affordable generics and specialty chemicals.
- The new Security and Defence Partnership shifts the relationship from buyer-seller to co-producers.
- Regulatory harmonisation through the [Trade and Technology Council](#) (TTC) will allow smoother flow of data and skilled professionals.



Ashok chakra to Shubhanshu Shukla

Shubhanshu Shukla, who flew to space, gets Ashok Chakra

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

On the eve of Republic Day, President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday approved the conferment of Gallantry and Distinguished Service Awards on personnel of the Indian Army, the Indian Navy, and the Indian Air Force, recognising acts of exceptional courage in operations and sustained distinguished service across key operational and command appointments.

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla of the Indian Air Force has been honoured with the Ashok Chakra, the nation's highest peacetime gallantry award. The honour follows his ground-breaking mission to the International Space Station in June 2025.

In the Chakra series of gallantry awards, the President approved the confer-



Shubhanshu Shukla

ment of one Ashok Chakra, three Kirti Chakras, and 12 Shaurya Chakras, including one Shaurya Chakra (posthumous). The gallantry awards include one Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry) and 44 Sena Medals (Gallantry), of which five are posthumous. Additionally, six Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry) were awarded to Navy personnel and two Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry) to Air Force personnel.

The President also approved a total of 301 mili-

tary decorations to Armed Forces and other personnel. These include 30 Param Vishisht Seva Medals, four Uttam Yudh Seva Medals, 56 Ati Vishisht Seva Medals, nine Yudh Seva Medals, two Bars to Sena Medals (Distinguished), 43 Sena Medals (Distinguished), eight Nao Sena Medals (Distinguished), and 14 Vayu Sena Medals (Distinguished).

Further, 135 Vishisht Seva Medals and 98 Mention-in-Despatches were approved for personnel involved in various operations, including Operation Rakshak, Operation Snow Leopard, Operation Hifazat, Operation Orchid, and Operation Meghdoot, as well as rescue and casualty evacuation tasks. Of these, five mentions are posthumous, with 81 awards going to personnel of the Army.

Context

- President Droupadi Murmu on Monday (January 26, 2026) conferred India's highest peacetime gallantry award, Ashoka Chakra, to Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, who created history by becoming the first Indian to set foot on the International Space Station (ISS)

About Gallantry Awards

- They have been instituted by the Government of India to honour the acts of bravery and sacrifice of the officers/personnel of the Armed Forces, other lawfully constituted Forces and civilians.
- These gallantry awards are announced twice a year – first on the occasion of the Republic Day and then on the occasion of the Independence Day.



Background

- Three gallantry awards, namely Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra and Vir Chakra, were instituted by the Government of India on 26th January, 1950.
- Thereafter, the other three gallantry awards, i.e. the Ashoka Chakra Class-I, the Ashoka Chakra Class-II and the Ashoka Chakra Class-III were instituted in 1952.
- These awards were renamed Ashoka Chakra, Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra, respectively, in 1967.

Order of precedence

- The order of precedence of these awards is the Param Vir Chakra, the Ashoka Chakra, the Mahavir Chakra, the Kirti Chakra, the Vir Chakra and the Shaurya Chakra.
- All the gallantry awards may be awarded posthumously.





Thank you

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