



## India-Poland Relations

**For Prelims:** [International Energy Agency](#), [International Solar Alliance](#), [Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure](#), [World War II](#), [European Union](#), [Yoga](#), [North Atlantic Treaty Organisation](#)

**For Mains:** India-Poland Relations, Strategic Partnership and Its Implications

**Source:** [PIB](#)

### Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister of India's visit to Poland marked a significant milestone as [India and Poland](#) celebrated the **70th anniversary of their diplomatic relations**.

- During this historic visit, both nations elevated their bilateral relationship to a **"Strategic Partnership,"** committing to deepen cooperation across various sectors.

### What are the Key Highlights of Prime Minister of India's Visit to Poland?

- **Elevation to Strategic Partnership:** The two nations have agreed to elevate their bilateral relationship to a **"Strategic Partnership,"** highlighting the deep-rooted ties and mutual commitment to enhancing cooperation.
- **Five-year Action Plan:** Building on the momentum from the Strategic Partnership, the two sides agreed to develop and implement a **five-year Action Plan for 2024-2028**, focusing on the following priority areas for bilateral collaboration:
  - **Political Dialogue and Security:** Regular high-level contacts, annual political dialogues, and security consultations.
    - The two sides decided that the next round of the **Joint Working Group for defence cooperation** will take place in 2024.
  - **Trade and Investment:** Focus on balancing trade, exploring high-tech and green technology opportunities, and enhancing economic security.
    - They committed to exploring new areas of cooperation and agreed to utilise the **Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation (JCEC)** to address trade imbalances and expand the trade basket.
      - JCEC is an institutional mechanism led by the Commerce Ministers of both countries. It includes Joint Working Groups focusing on Infrastructure, Tourism, Railways, Food Processing, Renewable Energy, Information Technology, and Agriculture.
  - **Climate and Technology:** Cooperation on sustainable technology, clean energy, and space exploration.
    - Both sides agreed to work on concluding a cooperation agreement to **promote the safe, sustainable, and secure use of space and commercial space ecosystems**, and to promote human and robotic exploration.
    - Poland recognizes **India's ambition to join the [International Energy Agency](#)**.

- India encouraged Poland to join the [International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)](#) and the [Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure \(CDRI\)](#) to address global environmental and disaster related challenges.
- Recognizing the critical importance of [cyber security](#) for economic and social development, both sides will enhance close interaction and increase exchanges in **Information and communications technology (ICT) related fields**.
- **Transport and Connectivity:** Enhancing transport infrastructure and increasing flight connections.
- **Counter-Terrorism Efforts:** Both leaders reiterated their commitment to **combating terrorism in all its forms** and stressed the importance of implementing UN Security Council resolutions.
  - They also agreed to push for the early adoption of the [Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism \(CCIT\)](#).
- **India-EU:** India and the EU will support the early conclusion of the ongoing [India-EU trade and investment negotiations](#), the operationalization of the [India-EU Trade and Technology Council \(TTC\)](#), and the implementation of the **India-EU Connectivity Partnership** to advance the India-EU Strategic Partnership in trade, new technologies, and security.
- **Cultural and People-to-People Ties:** Strengthening cultural exchanges, educational partnerships, and tourism.
- **Memorial Visits and Historical Tributes:**
  - **Dobry Maharaja Memorial:** PM of India paid tribute at the **Dobry Maharaja Memorial in Warsaw**.
    - The memorial commemorates the deep respect and gratitude of the Polish people and government for the **Jamsaheb of Nawanagar (Jamnagar in Gujarat)**, Shri Digvijaysinhji Ranjitsinhji Jadeja, who provided shelter to over a thousand **Polish children during World War II**, earning him the title "**Dobry (Good) Maharaja**" in Poland.
  - **Kolhapur Memorial:** The PM of India also visited the Kolhapur Memorial.
    - The memorial is dedicated to the generosity of the **princely state of Kolhapur** in providing shelter to around 5,000 Polish refugees, including women and children, during World War II.
    - **Kolhapur State (1710-1949) was a Maratha princely State of India.** In 1949, the princely state of Kolhapur was merged into the Bombay presidency.
  - **Monument to the Battle of Monte Cassino:** The PM of India laid a wreath at this monument, recognizing the shared **sacrifices of soldiers from Poland, India, and other nations during World War II**.
    - The monument commemorates the **Second Polish Corps' soldiers who fought in the Battle of Monte Cassino**, one of the bloodiest battles of World War II.
  - **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier:** Paying respects at this revered site, PM of India honoured **Polish soldiers who died in service**, reflecting the **solidarity between India and Poland**.
    - The monument is dedicated to all the **soldiers who died anonymously in the fight for their homeland**. It was founded in 1925 in honour of those who had **defended Poland in World War I and in the Polish-Soviet War**.

## What is the Significance of the Prime Minister's Visit to Poland?

- **Recalibration of Foreign Policy:** By visiting Poland, India underscores the importance of strengthening ties with **European nations** beyond the traditional countries (Germany, France, and Britain).
  - Poland, being a **growing economy in central Europe**, presents numerous opportunities for India in areas such as trade, investment, and technology.
  - This is expected to **open new avenues for economic cooperation** and balance trade relations, which had previously been skewed.
- **Healthcare Collaboration:** Poland's need for [healthcare professionals](#) presents a **significant opportunity for India**.
  - The potential collaboration in this sector, including the **possibility of Indian doctors working in Poland**, could address Poland's shortage of healthcare professionals and

enhance bilateral cooperation.

- **Geopolitical Context:** The visit is strategically important given Poland's role in the ongoing [conflict in Ukraine](#).
  - Poland's support for Ukraine and its strategic location in Central Europe make it a key partner for India in the region.

## What are the Key Highlights of India-Poland Relations?

- **Political Relations:** Diplomatic relations were established in 1954, with **India's embassy opening in Warsaw in 1957**. Both countries initially aligned against colonialism, imperialism, and racism.
  - During the **Communist era (1944 to 1989)**, relations were close, with several high-level visits and trade interactions facilitated through state trading organizations.
  - Following **Poland's shift to democracy in 1989**, trade transitioned to hard currency arrangements, **reflecting both nations' rising levels of trade** as both economies grew in size.
  - Poland's accession to the [European Union \(EU\)](#) in 2004 further solidified the bilateral relationship, making it a key economic partner for India in Central Europe.
- **Agreements: India and Poland have established several key agreements over the years to strengthen their bilateral relations. Notable early agreements include cultural cooperation (1957), avoidance of double taxation (1989), cooperation in science and technology (1993), Combating Organized Crime and International Terrorism (2003), and extradition (2003).**
  - Recent agreements focus on Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters and agreement on Gainful Occupation for Diplomatic Families (2022).
- **Economic and Commercial Relations:**
  - Poland remains India's largest trading and investment partner in Central and Eastern Europe. Bilateral trade has increased by 192% from USD 1.95 billion in 2013 to USD 5.72 billion in 2023, with the balance of trade largely in India's favour.
    - **Indian exports to Poland:** Textiles, Base metals, Chemicals, Machinery and mechanical appliances, Electrical and electro-technical equipment, Articles of stone, ceramic products and more.
    - **Polish imports to India:** Machinery, Mineral products, Chemicals, optical (measuring, checking instruments) and more.
  - **Investment: Indian investment in Poland exceeds USD 3 billion, with Indian firms involved in various sectors including IT, pharmaceuticals, and manufacturing.**
    - **Polish investment in India is around USD 685 million**, involved in various sectors including clean technologies and electric buses.
- **Cultural and Educational Relations: There is a strong tradition of Indology studies in Poland, with Polish scholars translating Sanskrit into Polish since the 19th century. Indology is studied at several Polish universities.**
  - [Yoga](#) has a long history in Poland, with over 300,000 practitioners and numerous yoga centres and teachers. The **International Day of Yoga** is celebrated with enthusiasm.
  - Commemorations in Poland honour **Jam Saheb Digvijaysinhji Ranjitsinhji Jadeja of Nawanagar** for saving Polish refugees during WWII.
  - Several locations in Poland are named after Indian leaders, and a bust of [Mahatma Gandhi](#) is installed at the University of Warsaw.
- **Indian Community: The Indian community in Poland is approximately 25,000, comprising traders, professionals, and students, with a notable presence of Indian restaurants.**

## Key Facts About Poland

- **Location:** Central Europe. Poland borders **Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Russia** (the Kaliningrad exclave). Its northern border (440 km long) runs along the [Baltic Sea coast](#).

- **Capital city:** Warsaw (In Polish: Warszawa)
- **Geography:** Features sandy beaches of the **Baltic Sea coast**, rolling central lowlands, and snow-capped peaks of the **Carpathian and Sudeten Mountains**. Home to over 1,300 lakes.
- **International organisations:** Poland is a member of the [North Atlantic Treaty Organisation \(NATO\)](#), [United Nations \(UN\)](#), [International Monetary Fund \(IMF\)](#), [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation \(UNESCO\)](#), [World Trade Organisation \(WTO\)](#), [Organisation for Cooperation and Development \(OECD\)](#) and many others.
- **Government and Economy:** **Parliamentary republic with a prime minister as head of government and a president as head of state.**
  - Major Industries include Mining, steelworks, and machinery production; transitioned from communism to a free market economy since the 1980s.
  - Rapid growth since joining the EU in 2004, despite challenges of low wages and high unemployment.
- **Natural Environment:**
  - **Major Rivers:** Vistula and Oder
  - **Biodiversity:** Bialowieza Forest houses the world's largest population of **European bison**; forests are habitats for brown bears, wild horses, chamois goats, Eurasian lynxes, and gray wolves.



**Drishiti Mains Question:**

**Q.** Discuss the significance of elevating the India-Poland bilateral relationship to a "Strategic Partnership." How does this partnership impact both nations' foreign policies and international relations?

