

INDIA-CYPRUS RELATION: INTERNATIONAL RELATION

NEWS: PM Modi visit to cyprus

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

India–Cyprus relations were strengthened with PM Modi's 2025 visit, focusing on a strategic roadmap, defence cooperation, and alignment on international platforms. Cyprus' economic, diplomatic, and geographic relevance offers India a vital partner in the EU and Mediterranean region.

Context and Recent Developments

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Cyprus in 2025 — the first Indian PM to do so in over two decades.
- The visit aims to deepen bilateral cooperation, strengthen diplomatic and economic ties, and counterbalance regional geopolitical dynamics (especially Turkey's stance).

About Cyprus

- Cyprus is an island nation in the eastern Mediterranean, geographically in Asia but politically aligned with Europe as an EU member.
- Gained independence from the British in 1960.
- Internal conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots led to a Turkish invasion in 1974. The northeast part of Cyprus is under the self-declared "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", recognized only by Turkey.
- UN peacekeeping forces have maintained a buffer zone since then.

Strategic Roadmap

- Both countries agreed to establish a Five-Year Strategic Roadmap to guide future bilateral cooperation.
- The roadmap aligns Cyprus Vision 2035 and India's Viksit Bharat 2047 — both aiming at inclusive growth, digital transformation, and environmental sustainability.

Honours and Recognition

- PM Modi was conferred the “Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III” — Cyprus' highest civilian honour, named after its first President and freedom leader.

Economic and Trade Relations

- India and Cyprus have built a robust economic relationship:
 - Cumulative FDI from Cyprus to India (April 2000 – March 2025): USD 14.65 Billion — making it one of the top 10 investors in India.
 - Bilateral trade in 2023–24 stood at USD 137 million.

- Indian exports to Cyprus: Pharmaceuticals, ceramics, textiles, machinery, chemicals, iron & steel.
- Cypriot exports to India: Pharmaceuticals, alcoholic beverages, manufactured goods.
- India-Cyprus-Greece Business & Investment Council launched to boost trilateral economic relations.
- India's push for EU Free Trade Agreement was reiterated, with Cyprus supporting early finalisation by end-2025.

Defence Cooperation

- MoU on Defence Cooperation signed in December 2022.
- Bilateral Defence Cooperation Programme (BDGP) for 2025 signed in January 2025.
- Strengthens strategic defence ties in line with India's broader outreach in the Mediterranean and Europe.

Cultural and Historical Ties

- Cultural Cooperation Agreement signed in 1980.
- Active exchange of cultural groups; Yoga Day celebrations in Cyprus.
- India honoured Archbishop Makarios by naming an avenue in New Delhi after him.
- Shared commitment to values such as non-alignment, democracy, and secularism.

International and Diplomatic Alignment

- Cyprus has consistently supported India at global forums:
 - Strong backing for India's permanent seat at the UN Security Council.
 - Supported India's civil nuclear engagement with the US at NSG and IAEA.
- India supports a peaceful resolution of the Cyprus dispute through UN-backed bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, based on international law and UNSC resolutions.

Strategic Significance of Cyprus for India

- Cyprus is a key node in the proposed India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).
- Will assume EU Council Presidency in 2026 — giving India a strong ally within the EU decision-making architecture.
- Balancing Turkey: Closer ties with Cyprus serve as a subtle strategic response to Turkey's vocal support for Pakistan on Kashmir and at the OIC.

Conclusion

- The visit marks a deepening of India–Cyprus ties, not just diplomatically but across defence, trade, technology, and geopolitics.
- As India strengthens its European footprint, Cyprus will serve as both a strategic partner and an entry point into EU affairs, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/a-message-to-turkey-why-pm-modis-trip-to-cyprus-is-significant-7-points-economy-europe-india-middle-east-europe-economic-corridor/articleshow/121873183.cms>