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BILATERAL RELATIONS

INDIA - NETHERLANDS

INTRODUCTION

India and the Netherlands enjoy a strong and multifaceted bilateral relationship grounded in shared democratic values and extensive cooperation across political, economic, technological and cultural fields. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1947. The Netherlands is an important partner for India in Europe, particularly in trade, investment, water management, agriculture, innovation and high technology.

The relationship was further strengthened through high-level exchanges, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to the Netherlands on 16–17 May 2026. During the visit, India and the Netherlands adopted the Roadmap of India–Netherlands Strategic Partnership, providing a framework for expanding cooperation in priority areas. The two sides also discussed cooperation in semiconductors, artificial intelligence, digital technologies, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, health, space, water and maritime cooperation.

The Netherlands is also an important investment partner for India and a significant gateway to the European market. Both countries continue to strengthen cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, multilateral institutions and global issues, including climate change, sustainable development and international peace and security. Cooperation in science, technology and innovation is an important part of the partnership.

The two countries are also promoting greater collaboration in clean energy and sustainable development. People-to-people contacts, education and cultural exchanges further contribute to strengthening bilateral relations. India and the Netherlands share common interests in promoting a free, open and rules-based international order. The partnership continues to expand into new areas of cooperation, reflecting the growing strategic importance of both countries to each other. These developments have strengthened the India–Netherlands relationship as a forward-looking and comprehensive partnership.



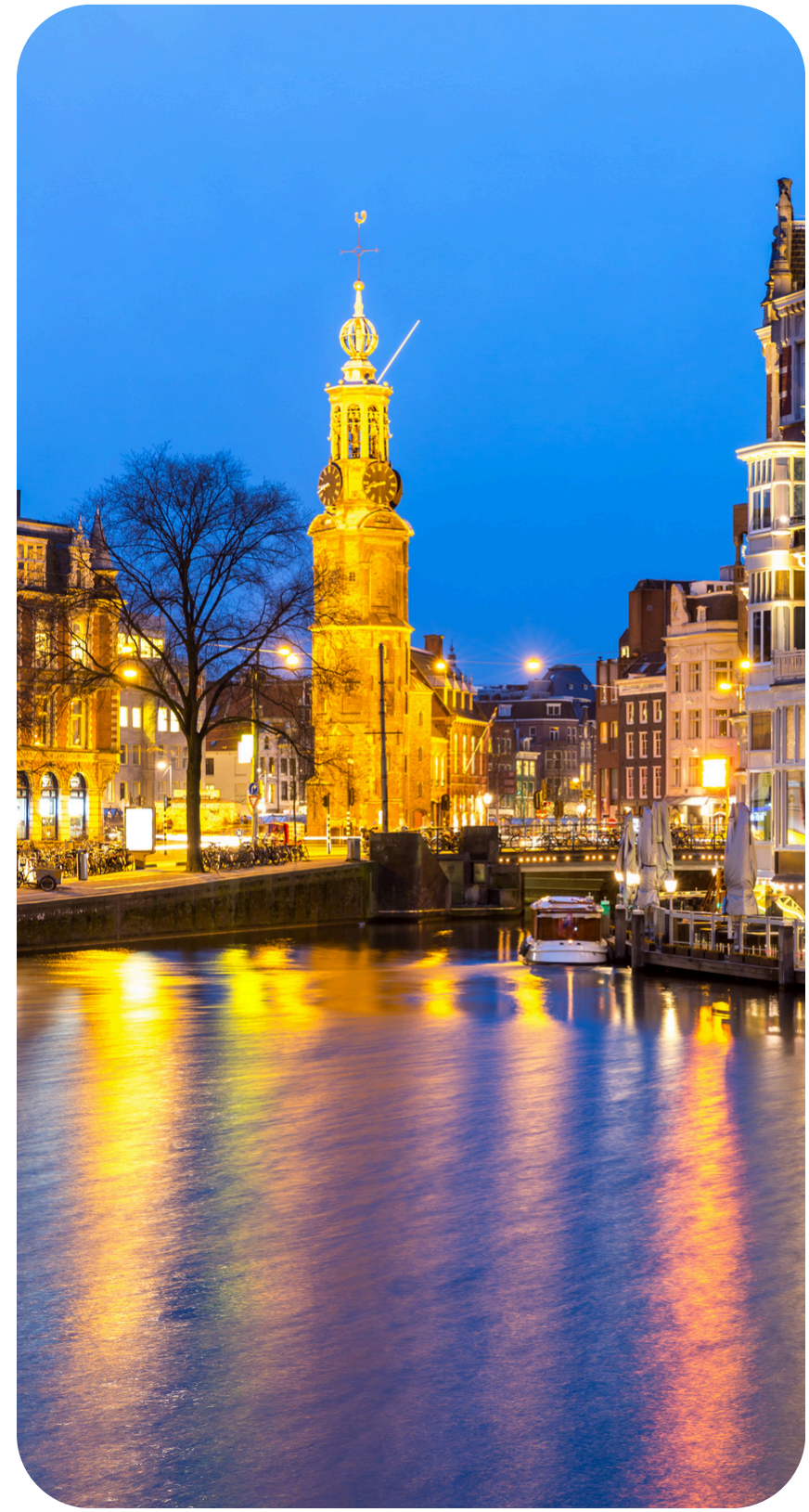
HISTORY

The India–Netherlands relations date back to the early 17th century as far as 1605 when the Dutch entered the Mughal Empire for trading purposes. Dutch presence on the Indian subcontinent lasted from 1605 to 1825. Merchants of the Dutch East India Company first established themselves in Dutch Coromandel, notably Pulicat, as they were looking for textiles to exchange with the spices they traded in the East Indies.

Apart from textiles, the items traded in Dutch India include precious stones, indigo, and silk across India, saltpeter and opium in Dutch Bengal, and pepper in Dutch Malabar. Indian slaves were imported on the Maluku Islands and in the Cape Colony.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the Dutch lost their influence more and more. The Kew Letters relinquished all Dutch colonies to the British, to prevent them from being overrun by the French. In the Battle of Colachel (1741), Travancore king Marthanda Varma's army defeated the Dutch East India Company, resulting in the complete eclipse of Dutch power in Malabar. Although Dutch Coromandel and Dutch Bengal were restored to Dutch rule by virtue of the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1814, they returned to British rule owing to the provisions of the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824.

Under the terms of the treaty, all transfers of property and establishments were to take place on 1 March 1825. By the middle of 1825, therefore, the Dutch had lost their last trading posts in India. Nevertheless, remains of the Dutch period can be found from Surat to Kolkata as well as in other parts of India.



STATE VISITS

High-level visits have played an important role in strengthening India–Netherlands relations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the Netherlands on 16–17 May 2026. During the visit, he held talks with Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten. The two leaders reviewed the entire range of bilateral relations. They discussed ways to further strengthen the bilateral partnership. The visit focused on expanding cooperation in trade and investment. Cooperation in semiconductors and critical technologies was also discussed. Both sides emphasised cooperation in artificial intelligence and digital technologies. Agriculture and sustainable food systems were important areas of discussion. The two countries also discussed water management and climate cooperation. Renewable energy and the energy transition were among the areas highlighted. Cooperation in health, space, science and technology was also reviewed. The two sides adopted the Roadmap of India–Netherlands Strategic Partnership 2026–2030. The visit provided further momentum to the strategic and economic relationship. It reaffirmed the commitment of India and the Netherlands to strengthen their long-term strategic partnership. The two sides also discussed cooperation in maritime and logistics sectors. They highlighted the importance of strengthening business-to-business and institutional partnerships. The leaders welcomed opportunities for greater cooperation in innovation and sustainable development. The visit further strengthened cooperation in emerging and high-technology sectors. It marked an important milestone in the continuing expansion of India–Netherlands bilateral relations.



MODERN ERA RELATIONS

Economic Relations

India and the Netherlands established diplomatic relations in 1947, soon after India's independence. Since then, bilateral relations have expanded from traditional commercial ties into a broad and multifaceted partnership. Economic cooperation has remained an important pillar, with the Netherlands emerging as a major trade and investment partner for India in Europe. Cooperation has expanded into agriculture, water management, climate change, renewable energy, science and technology, innovation and healthcare. The two countries have also developed strong cooperation in digital technologies, semiconductors, artificial intelligence and sustainable development. The 2026 India–Netherlands Joint Statement welcomed the Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters, aimed at facilitating legitimate trade and strengthening customs cooperation.

The Netherlands is an important gateway for Indian businesses to European markets, while Dutch companies have a significant presence in India. People-to-people relations are strengthened by the Indian diaspora in the Netherlands and educational and cultural exchanges. India and the Netherlands also cooperate closely on Indo-Pacific issues and multilateral platforms. High-level political exchanges have provided further momentum to bilateral relations. The Roadmap of India–Netherlands Strategic Partnership 2026–2030 provides a framework for expanding cooperation in priority areas. The two countries are working together to promote innovation and entrepreneurship. Cooperation in semiconductor technology and advanced manufacturing has emerged as an important new area.

Both sides are also strengthening collaboration in water technology and sustainable agriculture. The Netherlands supports India's efforts towards clean energy and climate-resilient development. Cooperation in space technology and scientific research is also growing. Digital transformation and artificial intelligence offer new opportunities for collaboration between Indian and Dutch institutions. The two countries continue to encourage greater business-to-business and institutional partnerships. Educational exchanges contribute to stronger links between universities and research institutions. The Indian community in the Netherlands remains an important bridge between the two countries. These developments have transformed India–Netherlands relations into a modern, forward-looking and comprehensive partnership. Cooperation in maritime connectivity and port development is also gaining importance, reflecting the strategic significance of the Indo-Pacific region. Both countries are promoting collaboration in infrastructure, logistics and resilient supply chains. India and the Netherlands are also working to strengthen cooperation in health, pharmaceuticals and medical technology. The expanding partnership reflects the shared objective of promoting sustainable economic growth, technological progress and stronger strategic cooperation between the two countries.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS



Economic and commercial relations form an important pillar of the India–Netherlands partnership. The Netherlands is India's 10th largest merchandise trading partner globally and the 2nd largest in the European Union during FY 2025–26. Total merchandise trade stood at USD 23.287 billion in FY 2025–26, accounting for 1.91% of India's total merchandise trade, with India recording a trade surplus of USD 11.714 billion. The Netherlands is also the fourth largest investor in India, with cumulative Dutch investments of around USD 55 billion since 2000. Indian companies have invested around USD 28 billion in the Netherlands, making the Netherlands the fourth largest destination for Indian Overseas Direct Investment. There are over 300 Dutch companies in India and over 300 Indian companies in the Netherlands. A major recent development was the establishment of the India–Netherlands Joint Trade & Investment Committee (JTIC) in December 2025, providing an institutional mechanism for regular dialogue on trade, investment and economic cooperation.

The 2026 India–Netherlands Joint Statement welcomed the Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters, aimed at facilitating legitimate trade and strengthening customs cooperation. The two sides are working to strengthen resilient and secure supply chains. Collaboration in green hydrogen and renewable energy is gaining importance. The partnership also supports greater business-to-business and institutional cooperation. These developments are further strengthening bilateral trade, investment and long-term economic cooperation.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

India and the Netherlands share a longstanding and multifaceted partnership, based on strong democratic values and shared interests. Diplomatic relations were established in 1947 and have developed into a broad relationship covering political, economic, technological and people-to-people cooperation. The two countries have strengthened their partnership through regular high-level political consultations and institutional mechanisms. Cooperation has expanded significantly in trade and investment, agriculture, water management, climate action, science and technology, innovation and healthcare. New areas of strategic cooperation include semiconductors, artificial intelligence, digital technologies, clean energy, space and critical technologies.



The Netherlands is an important partner for India in the European Union and Indo-Pacific region. Both countries share common interests in promoting a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific. The Netherlands also serves as an important gateway for Indian businesses to European markets. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the Netherlands in May 2026, India and the Netherlands adopted the Roadmap of India–Netherlands Strategic Partnership 2026–2030. The Roadmap provides a framework for strengthening cooperation in priority areas. Both sides agreed to deepen cooperation in economic security, technology, energy transition, sustainable development and connectivity. The two countries also continue to strengthen collaboration in education, culture and people-to-people contacts. The partnership has evolved into a forward-looking strategic relationship focused on shared prosperity, innovation and sustainable development.

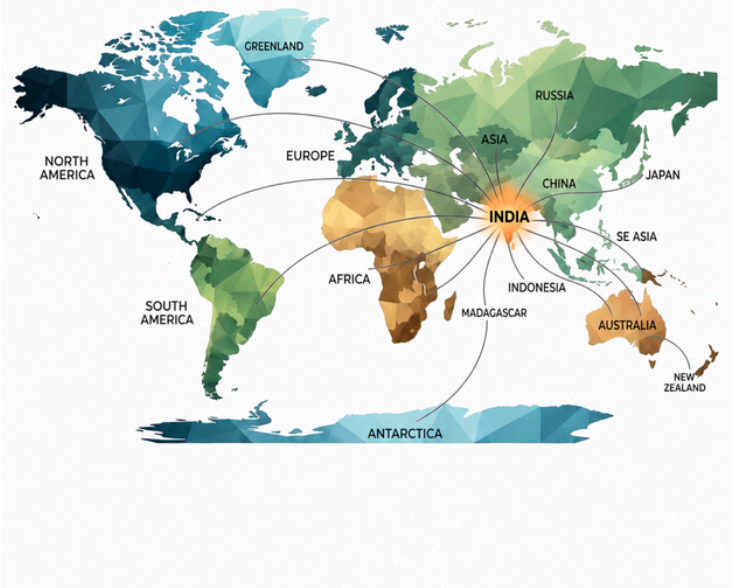


BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

India and the Netherlands have strengthened their bilateral framework through the Roadmap of India–Netherlands Strategic Partnership 2026–2030, adopted during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the Netherlands in May 2026. The Roadmap provides for focused, time-bound initiatives to deepen the partnership and promotes cooperation in areas including trade and investment, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, maritime cooperation, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, medtech, high technology and innovation. The two countries also welcomed the Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters, aimed at facilitating legitimate trade and strengthening cooperation between customs authorities. The 2026 Joint Statement further emphasised cooperation in semiconductors, artificial intelligence, digitalisation, science and technology, water, agriculture, health, space and energy transition. India and the Netherlands also agreed to strengthen cooperation through the Joint Trade and Investment Committee, providing an institutional mechanism for addressing trade and investment issues. The two sides also emphasised cooperation in climate action and sustainable development. They welcomed greater collaboration between businesses, research institutions and technology partners. The partnership also seeks to promote innovation, economic growth and resilient supply chains. These agreements and institutional arrangements provide a framework for expanding the India–Netherlands strategic and economic partnership.



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