



## India- Philippines Ties

**For Prelims:** [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea](#), [South China Sea](#), [Act East Policy](#), [BrahMos](#), [ASEAN](#), [ASEAN-India Cooperation Fund](#), [ASEAN-India Green Fund](#)

**For Mains:** India- Philippines Relations

### Why in News?

Recently, **5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation** was convened, between Indian External Affairs Minister and his Philippines counterpart.

- **India and the Philippines** are exploring various avenues to **enhance their defence cooperation**, with a particular **emphasis on [maritime security](#)**.



### What are the Major Highlights of the Meet?

- **Defense Cooperation:** Both Ministers expressed keen interest to continue to work together on defense cooperation, including through the **regular or upgraded official-level interaction among defense agencies, opening of a resident Defense Attache office in Manila, consideration of India's offer for concessional Line of Credit to meet Philippines' defense**

requirements.

- **Maritime Security:** Both countries aim to cooperate on [maritime domain awareness \(MDA\)](#), **joint patrols, and information exchange** to enhance MDA capabilities.
  - Emphasizing the utility of MDA, the Ministers called for the early **operationalization of the standard operating procedure for the [White Shipping Agreement](#)** between the Indian Navy and the Philippines Coast Guard.
- **Cyber Security Cooperation:** Discussions focused on expanding cooperation in existing domains, including anti-terrorism measures and intelligence exchange. Both countries explored avenues for **collaboration in [cyber security](#), [artificial intelligence](#), and [space cooperation](#)**.
- **Regional and International Issues:** The Ministers engaged in wide-ranging discussions on **regional and international issues of mutual interest for e.g., China's growing assertiveness and territorial claims in the [South China Sea](#)**.
  - Emphasizing the need for a peaceful settlement of disputes and adherence to international law, including the [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea \(UNCLOS\)](#) and the **2016 Arbitral Award on the South China Sea**.

## How is India's Relations with Philippines?

- **About: India and the Philippines** are **two democratic countries in the Indo-Pacific region that share common approach towards the [Indo-Pacific](#)**, emphasizing the **importance of a free, open, and stable region**.
- **Political Relations:** India and the Philippines formally established diplomatic relations on **26 November 1949**, shortly after both countries gained independence. (**Philippines in 1946 and India in 1947**).
  - When **India launched [Look East Policy](#) and intensified partnership with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1992**, it also resulted in intensified relations with the Philippines both bilaterally and in the regional context.
  - With the **[Act East Policy \(2014\)](#)**, the relationship with the Philippines has diversified further into **political-security; trade and industry, etc.**
- **Economic Relations:** India is currently the **Philippines' fifteenth largest trading partner**, with trade worth approximately **USD 3 billion in the 2022**.
  - **Also, Philippines** has been a net importer in goods trade with India.
- **Defence Cooperation:** India and the Philippines have a growing defense and security partnership. One of the most significant developments in defence cooperation between India and the Philippines is the **[BrahMos missile deal](#)**, which is expected to be finalised soon.
  - The **BrahMos is a supersonic cruise missile co-developed by India and Russia**, which can be launched from land, sea or air platforms.

## What are the Key Facts About Philippines?

- The **Philippines** is an **archipelago located in Southeast Asia**, bordered by the **Philippine Sea to the east, the South China Sea to the west, and the Celebes Sea to the south**.
  - It consists of **7,641 islands**, with **Luzon and Mindanao being the largest**.
  - The capital city is **Manila**, situated on **Luzon Island**.
- **Mount Apo (2,954 meters) on Mindanao Island is the highest peak, and it is an active volcano.**
- The Philippines has a **tropical climate with high temperatures and humidity year-round**, experiencing wet and dry seasons.
- The Philippines is considered one of the **world's biodiversity hotspots**.
- The Philippines is also **a part of the Pacific Ring of Fire**, which makes it geologically active. It has more than 20 active volcanoes, including **Mayon (recently erupted in 2023), Taal, and Mount Pinatubo (erupted in 1991)**.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous year Question (PYQ)

### Prelims

Q1. Consider the following countries: (2018)

1. Australia
2. Canada
3. China
4. India
5. Japan
6. USA

**Which of the above are among the 'free-trade partners' of ASEAN?**

- (a) 1, 2, 4 and 5  
(b) 3, 4, 5 and 6  
(c) 1, 3, 4 and 5  
(d) 2, 3, 4 and 6

**Ans: (c)**

**Q2. The term 'Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership' often appears in the news in the context of the affairs of a group of countries known as (2016)**

- (a) G20  
(b) ASEAN  
(c) SCO  
(d) SAARC

**Ans: (b)**

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### **Mains**

**Q.** Evaluate the economic and strategic dimensions of India's Look East Policy in the context of the post-Cold War international scenario. **(2016)**

**Source: TH**

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