



UK Prime Minister Visit to India

For Prelims: Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, India-UK FTA

For Mains: India's relations with the UK, Indo-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2021, 2030 Roadmap for India-UK Relations

Why in News?

Recently, the **UK Prime Minister (PM) visited India**. In this visit, both the countries agreed on a joint statement titled 'Towards shared security and prosperity through national resilience'.



UNITED
KINGDOM



What are the Highlights of the Visit?

- **Respecting India-Russia Relations:** In the context of [Ukraine Crisis](#) and India's neutral stance, UK PM asserted that India's position on Russia is 'well known' and is not going to change.
 - India has historic relationship with Russian and everybody respects it.
- **Cooperation on Indo-Pacific:** The two countries had a shared interest in keeping the Indo-Pacific region free and open, particularly in the face of growing threats of Chinese coercion in [South China Sea](#).
 - Recently, the UK and India have agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the maritime domain as the **UK will join [India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative](#)** and become a major partner on maritime security issues in Southeast Asia.
 - India's **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) is an open, non-treaty-based initiative** for countries to work together for cooperative and collaborative solutions to common challenges in the region.

- **Tackling Extremism:** They agreed to constitute a sub-group on [countering extremism](#) to further enhance cooperation between India and the UK in ensuring that all possible actions are taken against groups and individuals based in or operating out of either country.
- **Extraditing Economic Fugitives:** India conveyed to the UK, that bringing back [economic fugitives](#) to face justice was a "high priority" for the government.
 - Britain responded that it is concerned about this and doesn't welcome people who want to use its legal system to evade the Indian laws.
- **Discussion on FTA:** Both leaders committed that [Free Trade Agreements](#) negotiations will conclude by the end of 2022.
- **Defence Cooperation:** They discussed the next generation of defence and security collaborations across five domains — land, sea, air, space and cyber.

What are the Recent Developments on India's Relations with the UK?

- Despite the challenge posed by the [Ukraine crisis](#), the India-UK relationship has been on an **upward trajectory**, exemplified by the conclusion of a [Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2021](#).
 - The agreement also established a [2030 Roadmap for India-UK relations](#), which primarily outlines the partnership plans for the bilateral relationship.
- Additionally, In January 2022, India and the UK managed to **conclude the first round of talks for an [India-UK Free Trade Agreement](#)**.
 - The negotiations reflected shared ambitions to secure a comprehensive deal between the **fifth (UK) and sixth (India) largest economies in the world** as technical experts from both sides covered over 32 sessions encompassing 26 policy areas.

Way Forward

- A **post-Brexit Britain** needs to make the best of its historic ties; having walked out of Europe, the country needs all the partners it can find and a **rising India is naturally among the top political and economic priorities**.
- Britain remains the fifth-largest economy, a **permanent member of the [UN Security Council](#)**, a **global financial hub**, a center of [technological innovation](#), and a leading cyber power.
 - It has a significant international military presence and wide-ranging political influence.
 - India should try harder to **leverage these British strengths for India's strategic benefit**.

[Source: IE](#)

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