



International Relations

India-Lithuania Relations

Tags:

- **GS Paper - 2**
- **Bilateral Groupings & Agreements**
- **Growth & Development**

For Prelims: Klaipeda port, Baltic Countries, Sagarmala Project, India's ITEC program, Neighboring Countries of Lithuania.

For Mains: Major Aspects of India-Lithuania Relations.

Why in News?

Recently, Indian Minister of State for **Ports, Shipping, and Waterways** and **Vice Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania**, convened in New Delhi to bolster the **maritime bilateral relations between India and Lithuania**.

What are the Major Highlights of the Meeting?

- **Resident Mission Inauguration in Vilnius:** The inauguration of **India's Resident Mission in Vilnius** was **commended**, highlighting it as a significant step affirming India's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Lithuania.
- **Bilateral Trade Growth:** India emphasized the **positive trajectory of bilateral trade, citing a consistent increase to USD 472 million by the fiscal year 2022-23**, signifying a steady rise in economic collaboration between the two nations.
- **Collaboration on Port Infrastructure and Klaipeda Port's Advantages:** Discussions centered on exploring collaboration

opportunities, **leveraging India's expertise in port infrastructure development.**

- - This collaboration is aimed at **capitalizing on Lithuania's strategic location** as a gateway to vital industrial areas in Eastern Europe.
 - The spotlight was on the **unique advantages of Klaipeda port**, notably its **year-round ice-free status**.
 - As the **leading Baltic port for container transshipment**, it holds a pivotal position in facilitating trade, boasting advantageous land connections to key industrial zones in Eastern Europe.
- **Diverse Investment Opportunities:** India presented a spectrum of investment avenues to Lithuania across various sectors, including **Port Modernization (PPP), Port Connectivity, Coastal Shipping, Maritime Technology, Sagarmala Project, and Decarbonization initiatives**, aiming to foster comprehensive economic partnerships and sustainable growth.



What are the Major Aspects of India-Lithuania Relations?

▪ Historical Ties

- **Linguistic Similarities: Lithuanian and Sanskrit languages** share linguistic commonalities, suggesting ancient connections.
 - Pre-Christian Lithuania worshiped nature and revered a trinity of gods - **Perkunas, Patrimpas, and Pikuolis**.
- **Intellectual Exchange:** Vydunas, a 19th-century philosopher, drew parallels between **Lithuanian and Hindu spiritual culture**, creating a philosophical system inspired by Vedanta.
 - Lithuanian travelers like **Antanas Poska and Matas Salcius** delved into Sanskrit and Indian culture in the 1930s and 1940s.
 - **Sanskrit became part of Vilnius University's academic curriculum** in the 1970s, fostering academic ties between India and Lithuania.

▪ Political Relations:

- **Recognition:** India acknowledged **Lithuania's independence from the USSR in 1991**, establishing diplomatic relations in **1992**.
- **Embassy and Consulates:** Lithuania opened its Embassy in New Delhi in 2008 and maintains three Honorary Consuls in India.
 - An Honorary Consul of India has operated in Vilnius since 2014.
- **India-Lithuania Forum:** Initiated in 2010, fostering multi-dimensional ties encompassing culture, education, business, and science.

▪ Trade Dynamics:

- **Major Indian imports From Lithuania:** Edible vegetables, wood and articles of wood, textiles, electrical machinery and equipment, iron and steel, optical, photographic and measuring instruments.
- **Major Indian Exports to Lithuania:** Nuclear boilers and reactors, pharmaceutical products, fish, organic chemicals, tobacco and manufactured tobacco, textile articles, iron and steel.

▪ **Cultural Engagement**

- **Yoga and Spiritual Interests:** Lithuanians exhibit keen interest in Indian cultural traditions, particularly Yoga. Celebrations of International Yoga Day are widespread in Lithuania.
- **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme(ITEC) Program:** Over 400 Lithuanian nominees attended various courses under India's ITEC program, fostering mutual learning and cooperation.

