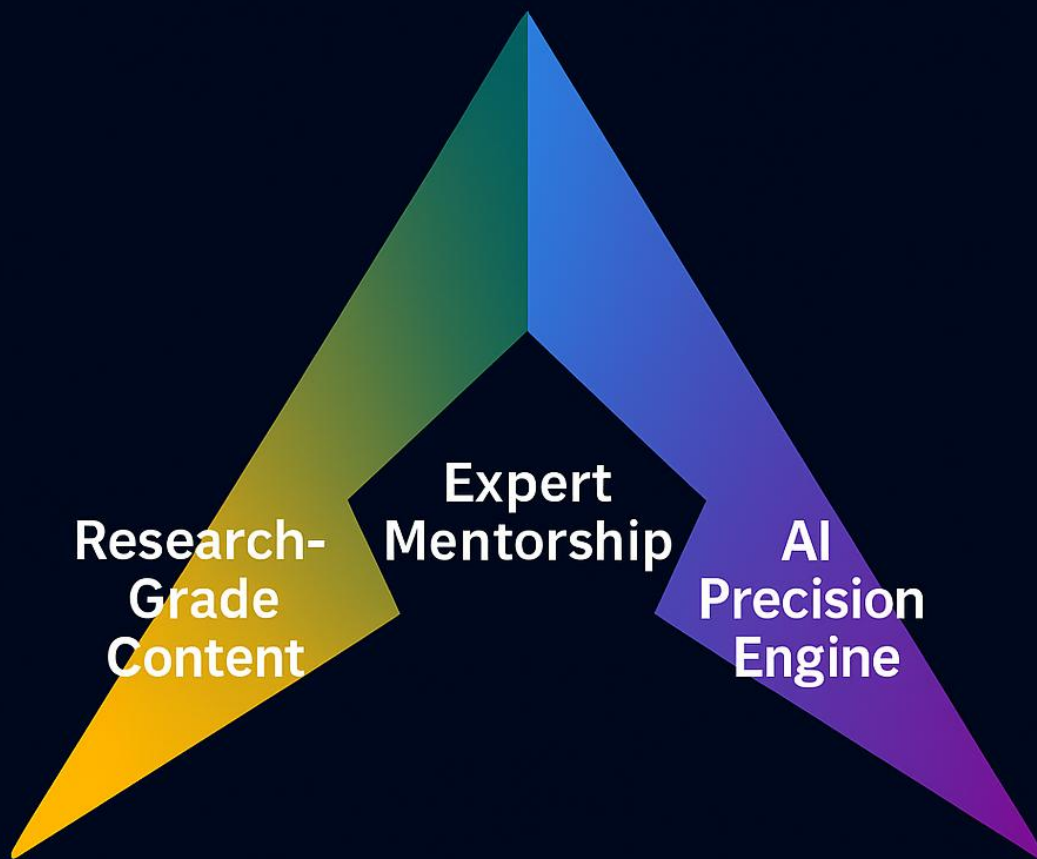


PrepAlpine

The Next-Generation UPSC Institution

Where Research Meets Mentorship & Precision



Preparation Meets Precision

A Next-Generation Learning Institution

Copyright © 2025 PrepAlpine

All Rights Reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means—whether photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods—without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

For permission requests, please write to:

PrepAlpine

Email: info@PrepAlpine.com

Website: PrepAlpine.com

Disclaimer

The information contained in this book has been prepared solely for educational purposes. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, PrepAlpine makes no representations or warranties of any kind and accepts no liability for any errors or omissions. The use of any content is solely at the reader's discretion and risk.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS DATED 23.05.2026

GS Paper II: International Relations

1. India–Cyprus Strategic Partnership

a. Introduction

India and Cyprus have upgraded their bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership during the visit of Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides to India. The two countries signed agreements in several areas, including defence cooperation, cyber security, counter-terrorism, maritime transport, technology, education, culture and Search and Rescue.

This development is significant because Cyprus, though a small country, occupies an important strategic position in the eastern Mediterranean. Its location near West Asia, Europe, Turkey and the Levant gives it relevance for maritime security, connectivity and India's outreach towards Europe. The partnership also fits into India's wider diplomatic approach of building issue-based cooperation with strategically located middle and small powers.

Thus, India–Cyprus relations should be understood not merely as a bilateral upgrade, but as part of India's expanding diplomatic footprint across Europe, the Mediterranean and West Asia-linked geographies.



b. Key Features of the Partnership

- **Defence Cooperation Roadmap:** India and Cyprus have unveiled a five-year defence cooperation roadmap for 2026–2031. This roadmap indicates that both sides want to give long-term structure to defence cooperation rather than limiting it to occasional exchanges.
- **Agreements Across Multiple Sectors:** Six agreements were signed across important sectors. These include cooperation through a joint working group on counter-terrorism, a cyber security dialogue, diplomatic training, innovation and technology, Search and Rescue, and cooperation in higher education, research and culture.
- **Interest in Indian Defence Equipment:** Cyprus has expressed interest in procuring Indian defence equipment, including drones and missiles. This is important because it reflects the

growing credibility of India's defence industry and supports India's ambition to become a defence manufacturing and export hub.

- **Migration and Social Security Cooperation:** Both sides also agreed to speed up negotiations on a Migration and Mobility Partnership and a Social Security Agreement. These agreements are relevant for Indian professionals, workers and students in Cyprus, as they can help improve legal mobility, social security protection and people-to-people ties.
- **Investment and Connectivity Dimension:** Cyprus has projected itself as an investment gateway between India and Europe. Both countries also discussed cooperation under the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor, which gives the partnership a wider connectivity and gooeconomic dimension.

Taken together, these features show that the partnership is not limited to diplomatic symbolism. It combines defence, technology, mobility, maritime cooperation, investment and connectivity.

c. Strategic Importance of Cyprus for India

- **Strategic Location and Institutional Position**
The importance of Cyprus lies less in its size and more in its location and institutional position. Cyprus is a member of the European Union and is located in the eastern Mediterranean, close to West Asia, Turkey, Syria and Europe. This makes it a useful strategic node for India's engagement with Europe and the Mediterranean region.
- **Support for India's Europe Outreach**
As a member of the European Union, Cyprus can support India's engagement with Europe in areas such as trade, investment, technology, mobility and education. While larger European powers remain important, smaller European Union members can also shape discussions, build coalitions and support India's interests within European institutions.
- **Relevance for Connectivity**
Cyprus' Mediterranean location makes it relevant for connectivity initiatives linking India, West Asia and Europe. In this context, cooperation under the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor can give Cyprus a role in logistics, maritime transport, port connectivity and resilient supply chains.
- **Turkey Factor**
Cyprus has strained relations with Turkey. This creates a degree of strategic convergence with India, especially because Turkey has often supported Pakistan on issues concerning India. However, India should avoid reducing the relationship only to an anti-Turkey framework. The geopolitical context adds strategic depth, but the partnership must remain broader and issue-based.

Thus, Cyprus is valuable for India not as a major power centre, but as a strategically located node in India's wider Mediterranean and European engagement.

d. Defence Cooperation and India's Export Ambitions

- **Structured Defence Engagement:** The defence cooperation roadmap for 2026–2031 is one of the most important outcomes of the partnership. It provides a structured framework for cooperation in defence exchanges, training, capability development and possible defence trade.
- **Significance of Cyprus' Interest in Indian Equipment:** Cyprus' interest in Indian drones and missiles is especially significant. It shows that India's defence industry is gradually moving from import dependence towards export capability. This supports broader national objectives under Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- **India as a Defence Supplier:** India's defence exports have gained visibility due to improvements in indigenous platforms, missiles, unmanned systems and surveillance technologies. When smaller but strategically located countries show interest in Indian defence equipment, it strengthens India's profile as a reliable defence supplier.
- **Implementation Requirements:** However, the success of this cooperation will depend on timely delivery, quality assurance, after-sales support, training and long-term maintenance

arrangements. Defence exports require not only production capacity, but also credibility, reliability and sustained diplomatic engagement.

This makes the Cyprus partnership useful for India's defence diplomacy, provided it is backed by practical delivery and long-term support systems.

e. Cyber Security and Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

- **Security Dimension Beyond Traditional Defence:** The partnership also includes cooperation in cyber security and counter-terrorism. This gives the relationship an important security dimension beyond traditional defence.
- **Transnational Nature of Modern Threats:** Modern security threats are increasingly transnational. Terrorist networks, illicit financing, cyber attacks, radicalisation, organised crime and maritime vulnerabilities often operate across borders. India has therefore been expanding security cooperation beyond traditional major powers and building networks with countries that occupy important regional positions.
- **Institutional Cooperation:** A joint working group on counter-terrorism can help improve dialogue, information-sharing and coordination on extremist networks. Similarly, a cyber security dialogue can support cooperation on digital threats, critical infrastructure protection, cyber resilience and emerging technology risks.

For India, such cooperation is useful because it broadens its security partnerships in Europe and the Mediterranean region.

f. Maritime and Search and Rescue Cooperation

- **Eastern Mediterranean Context:** Cyprus' location in the eastern Mediterranean gives maritime cooperation special importance. The eastern Mediterranean is a region of high strategic activity due to energy routes, shipping lanes, regional conflicts, migration flows and connectivity projects.
- **Search and Rescue Cooperation:** Search and Rescue cooperation can improve coordination in maritime emergencies, humanitarian operations and regional safety mechanisms. It can also contribute to trust-building and operational familiarity between the two sides.
- **Maritime Transport and Connectivity:** Maritime transport cooperation can support trade, logistics and connectivity under wider India-Europe frameworks. For India, maritime engagement with Cyprus can complement its broader approach of expanding maritime partnerships beyond the Indian Ocean into connected geographies such as the Mediterranean.

This widens the scope of India's maritime diplomacy from immediate neighbourhood concerns to larger Indo-Mediterranean linkages.

g. Migration, Mobility and People-to-People Linkages

- **Importance of Mobility Agreements:** The proposed Migration and Mobility Partnership and Social Security Agreement are important for Indian professionals, workers and students in Cyprus. Such agreements can help create safer, more predictable and legally structured migration channels.
- **Benefits for Students and Professionals:** A mobility framework can support student movement, professional opportunities, skill recognition and academic exchanges. A social security agreement can protect workers from double social security contributions and improve portability of benefits.
- **Social Foundation of Partnership:** These agreements can deepen people-to-people relations and create a more stable social foundation for the strategic partnership.

Thus, mobility cooperation gives the partnership a human dimension and prevents it from being limited only to strategic or economic calculations.

h. Economic and Investment Dimension

- **Cyprus as an Investment Gateway:** Cyprus has highlighted its role as an investment gateway between India and Europe. This is relevant because Cyprus has historically been linked with financial services, investment routing and European market access.
- **Opportunities for India:** For India, cooperation with Cyprus can support investment flows, start-up linkages, technology collaboration and business connectivity with Europe. However, India must ensure that investment cooperation remains transparent, rule-based and aligned with tax and financial integrity standards.
- **Connector Role of Cyprus:** The economic value of Cyprus for India lies not only in bilateral trade volume, but in its role as a connector with European financial, legal and business networks.

This makes Cyprus useful as a platform for economic engagement, even if the direct bilateral market size remains limited.

i. Limitations of the Partnership

- **Limited Standalone Capacity:** India must assess the partnership realistically. Cyprus is a small state with limited military and economic capacity. It cannot be treated as a major standalone power in the same category as France, Germany or Italy.
- **Value as a Strategic Node:** Its value lies in its role as a strategic node. Cyprus combines European Union membership, eastern Mediterranean location, investment linkages and relevance for connectivity projects. Therefore, India's approach should focus on specific and practical areas where Cyprus can add value.
- **Regional Sensitivities:** Another limitation is the sensitive regional environment. Cyprus' disputes with Turkey and the complex politics of the eastern Mediterranean require careful diplomatic handling. India should deepen ties with Cyprus while maintaining strategic balance in its wider West Asia and Mediterranean engagement.

This realistic assessment is important because the success of the partnership will depend on focused cooperation rather than exaggerated expectations.

j. Way Forward

- **Implement the Defence Roadmap:** India and Cyprus should translate the defence roadmap into specific projects, joint training programmes, defence industry engagements and export opportunities. Defence cooperation should move from broad declarations to implementable outcomes.
- **Deepen India-European Union Cooperation:** India should use Cyprus as a bridge for deeper India-European Union cooperation in trade, investment, technology, education and mobility. Regular institutional dialogues can help sustain momentum.
- **Strengthen Maritime Security Cooperation:** Maritime security cooperation should be strengthened in the eastern Mediterranean through information-sharing, Search and Rescue coordination and maritime transport collaboration.
- **Fast-Track Mobility Agreements:** The Migration and Mobility Partnership should be fast-tracked to protect Indian professionals, workers and students. The Social Security Agreement should also be concluded to give legal and welfare protection to Indian nationals.
- **Align with IMEEC:** Cyprus-related cooperation should be aligned with the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, especially in port connectivity, logistics, investment platforms and resilient supply chains.
- **Build Security and Cyber Dialogue:** Both countries should also build sustained dialogue on cyber security, counter-terrorism and regional security, as these issues will remain central to future strategic cooperation.

A practical way forward should therefore combine defence delivery, mobility protection, connectivity planning, maritime cooperation and sustained institutional dialogue.

Conclusion

The India–Cyprus Strategic Partnership shows India’s shift towards building issue-based partnerships with strategically located middle and small powers. Cyprus may not be a major power by itself, but its European Union membership, eastern Mediterranean location and possible role in India–Europe connectivity make it valuable for India’s foreign policy.

The success of the partnership will depend on whether both countries can convert diplomatic intent into concrete outcomes in defence cooperation, mobility, maritime security, technology, investment and connectivity. For India, Cyprus should be viewed not as a large power centre, but as an important strategic node in its wider Europe, Mediterranean and West Asia outreach.

In this sense, the India–Cyprus partnership reflects the widening geography of India’s foreign policy and the growing importance of node-based diplomacy.

Reader's Note — About This Current Affairs Compilation

Dear Aspirant,

This document is part of the PrepAlpine Current Affairs Series — designed to bring clarity, structure, and precision to your daily UPSC learning.

While every effort has been made to balance depth with brevity, please keep the following in mind:

1. Orientation & Purpose

This compilation is curated primarily from the UPSC Mains perspective — with emphasis on conceptual clarity, analytical depth, and interlinkages across GS papers.

However, the PrepAlpine team is simultaneously developing a dedicated Prelims-focused Current Affairs Series, designed for:

- factual coverage
- data recall
- Prelims-style MCQs
- objective pattern analysis

This Prelims Edition will be released separately as a standalone publication.

2. Content Length

Some sections may feel shorter or longer depending on topic relevance and news density. To fit your personal preference, you may freely resize or summarize sections using any LLM tool (ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, etc.) at your convenience.

3. Format Flexibility

The formatting combines:

- paragraphs
- lists
- tables
- visual cues

—all optimised for retention.

If you prefer a specific style (lists → paras, paras → tables, etc.), feel free to convert using any free LLM.

4. Monthly Current Affairs Release

The complete Monthly Current Affairs Module will be released soon, optimized to a compact 100–150 pages — comprehensive yet concise, exam-ready, and revision-efficient.

PrepAlpine