

The European Union flag, featuring twelve yellow stars in a circle on a blue background, is partially visible on the left side of the cover.

# EU-India Collab Monitored

The official report  
for the EU-India  
People's Summit

May 2021



visit our website: [euindiasummit.com](https://euindiasummit.com)



## ■ BACKGROUND

On 8th May 2021, India and the European Union will hold their 16th Summit, in which they will make steps to negotiate a trade agreement. The first EU-India summit took place in 2000 in Lisbon, Portugal. At the 15th Summit, held in virtual format on 15th July 2020, they agreed on the **EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025**. When we summarise key commitments below, we signal through italics and quotations marks that they are paraphrased from the original.

## ■ INDIA AND THE WORLD

In 2021 and 2022, India is a member on the UN Security Council.

In 2022, India will hold the G20 Presidency.

## ■ THE PEOPLE'S SUMMIT

As the EU-India Summit is a diplomatic summit and thus closed to the public, we are hosting a People's Summit in the build-up to the official summit: Through a series of **panels, movie screenings and workshops**, we take a closer look at **the core areas of collaboration between India and the EU**.

With speakers from civil society, the private sector and academia, we tie together these topics to make educational events on what steps are needed to make this collaboration fruitful and **envisage a plural, democratic, secular and rights-based future of EU-India relations**. Throughout the Summit, we reiterate: A trade agreement between India and the EU must contain a **human rights clause**.

<b>PEOPLE</b>	<i>May 1</i>
<b>URBAN FUTURES</b>	<i>May 2</i>
<b>IDENTITY &amp; NATIONS</b>	<i>May 3 &amp; 6</i>
<b>HUMAN RIGHTS</b>	<i>May 4 &amp; 5</i>
<b>DIGITAL DEMOCRACY</b>	<i>May 5 &amp; 6</i>
<b>BUSINESS, TRADE &amp; HUMAN RIGHTS</b>	<i>May 7 &amp; 8</i>

For a detailed schedule, to sign up for events, and to access the recordings afterwards, visit our website [euindiasummit.com](http://euindiasummit.com).



## Climate change, clean energy & environment

- "commitment to Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement" (limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels)

▼ Uttar Pradesh will start the **construction of an international airport in Noida**, near New Delhi. Zurich AG will be the main partner.

■ India has yet to make public its strategy for the Paris Climate Agreement.

- "support for India's transition to a resource efficient and circular economy, to address air, water and land pollution and maintain biodiversity and conserve forests"

▼ India's 2020 rules for **Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)** permit **ex-post facto clearance for resource extraction and other possibly polluting projects**. The rules do not require a mandatory consultation process, and give no right to complaint for indigenous communities.

▼ India **censored Fridays For Future** in June 2020 for campaigning against the EIA, and has filed **criminal cases against climate activists, including Greta Thunberg**.

- "ongoing cooperation between the EU and India under the Clean Energy and Climate Partnership, International Solar Alliance and International Platform on Sustainable Finance"

▼ On June 18, 2021, India's Prime Minister organized *Unleash Coal*, India's first ever **commercial auction of over 40 new coal mines**.

Wake  
up





## Human Rights

*Continued commitment to the projects started in 2018 under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) (EUR 5.38 million) :*

- "continued commitment to human rights domestically and in multilateral fora"



In March 2021, Swedish V-Dem Institute declared India an "**electoral autocracy**" and Freedom House downgraded India's status to "**partly free**"

- "Women Human Rights Defenders"



India's **arrests of Women Human Rights Defenders** after the Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests, Farmer's protests and others

- "ending violence and discrimination against Dalits and other minorities"



Increase in **lynchings, caste-based atrocities, "communal" (religious) mob violence**, especially in Uttar Pradesh



**Deportation** of Rohingya refugees

- "access to justice for children"



**undocumented detention of children** in Jammu and Kashmir that are denied by the Juvenile Justice Commission

- "accountability in the criminal justice institutions with particular focus on torture, prisoners with mental illness, economically disadvantaged persons dependent on legal aid and persons on death row"



India's National Human Rights Commissions reports of **custodial deaths remain high** (approx. 5 per day for the past decade)

- "rights of the urban homeless"



lack of access to **compensation for destruction of homes** and property during February 2020 riots in Delhi





EU-INDIA COMMITMENTS AFTER 2020 SUMMIT ON

## Digital Infrastructure & Security

- *"Sustainable digital infrastructure"*

▼ According to Access Now, India ranked **highest in the number of internet shutdowns** imposed in 2020. At 109, it imposed 103 more than Yemen, which ranks second-highest. The longest was imposed in Jammu and Kashmir on August 4, 2019, after its semi-autonomous status was unilaterally abrogated. Near-fully functional internet was restored only on February 5, 2021, after 18 months. This is the **longest internet shutdown ever imposed in a democracy**.

- *"Full support to an open, free, stable and secure cyberspace"*

▼ On February 14, 2021, the Delhi Police **arrested Disha Ravi (22) of Fridays for Future India for sharing a 'toolkit' on Twitter**, in which information is compiled on the farmer's protests and how to voice criticism towards the Indian government, for instance through writing letters and petitions. **Greta Thunberg** and **Rihanna** also feature in the police's case.

- *"High level of protection of personal data and privacy"*

▼ On February 25, 2021, the Indian Government notified the Information Technology (Guidelines of Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. Under these IT Rules, companies must remove content that threatens "the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India" upon request. The rules also state that platforms must hand over **information about users to law enforcement** upon request. **Encrypted messaging platforms will also be forced to keep information** on who the "first originator" of any message is.

## Research, Higher Education & Innovation

- *"cooperation in social sciences and humanities"*



In January 2021, the Ministry of External Affairs of India announced that professors and administrators require prior **approval to hold online conferences**, webinars or calls with an international audience that are centred around issues relating to the security of the Indian state or which are "clearly related to **India's internal matters**". In addition, the names of all participants in such seminars will have to be approved in advance by the government. In February, the central government responded to criticism and said that it would modify and clarify the order.

- *"joint research on energy, infectious diseases, biotechnology"*



Indian researchers worked on EU's Horizon 2020 research projects to develop a **vaccine against CoViD-19**, and the EU and India collaborated intensively on pandemic responsiveness.



## Parliament & Civil Society

- "EU-India Think Tank Twinning and strategic partnerships"



In December 2020, *disinfo.eu* uncovered that at least 10 NGOs at the UN Human Rights Council and **three groups in the European Parliament** have been impersonating real or dead people and **lobbying for Indian interests since 2005**.

These NGOs and accompanying fake news outlets were registered at the address of the Srivastava Group in New Delhi. One NGO, the International Institute for Non-Aligned Studies, **organized an informal visit for 27 EU far-right delegates** to India in 2019.

- "Parliamentarians of the EU engage with Indian civil society in India and/or in the EU to encourage regular exchange between parliaments and civil society"



The **Hindu-extremist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)** has a **strong presence within Indian upper-caste diaspora** in Europe, has for instance tried to influence the Indian diaspora's votes (e.g. in the 2019 UK general elections), and compromises the sense of security of secular and minority-origin Indian diaspora. The RSS aims to turn India into a 'Hindu nation', and sympathizes with the Nazi Holocaust against European Jews. It was banned in India in 1948 for its alleged involvement in the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. India's ruling party, the BJP, is the political wing of the RSS.





## Security

- "Best practices in military-to-military exchanges"



In February 2021, Belgian arms manufacturer *FN Herstal* cancelled and German *Heckler & Koch* were **denied export licences for weapons exports to India**. The Parliaments in both countries cited **poor human rights records** in states such as Gujarat, Manipur, Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

- "Countering Terrorism-Financing"



India's Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), the country's primary anti-terrorism legislation, permits to **criminalize doctors giving medical aid and lawyers giving legal aid**, if those helped are considered a threat to national security.



In October 2020, India's National Investigation Agency **raided, citing allegations of "terror" funding, several human rights NGOs**, including the NGO of Zafarul-Islam Khan (former chairman of Delhi Minority Commission), the premises of Khurram Parvez (coordinator of the J&K Coalition of Civil Society), and other activist lawyers.



The Massachusetts-based digital forensics firm Arsenal Digital uncovered that activist Rona Wilson, accused of left-extremist terrorism, had **evidence planted on his laptop**. The co-accused's laptops were also targeted by an unknown attacker.

## Trade, Business & Economy

- "Free Trade Agreement (in discussion since 2007), full market liberalisation and trade for post-COVID-19 economic recovery"

▼ The Modi government's **crony capitalism** benefits Mukesh Ambani (Reliance Group) and Gautam Adani (Adani Group). After financing election campaigns of the ruling BJP, **several government-owned businesses were sold to them at unusually low prices**, they received exemptions on credits granted from public banks, and have emerged as **oligarchs**. Since the start of the BJP's tenure in 2014, Ambani's wealth increased from \$23 billion to \$83 billion, and Adani's from \$2.6 billion to \$50 billion.

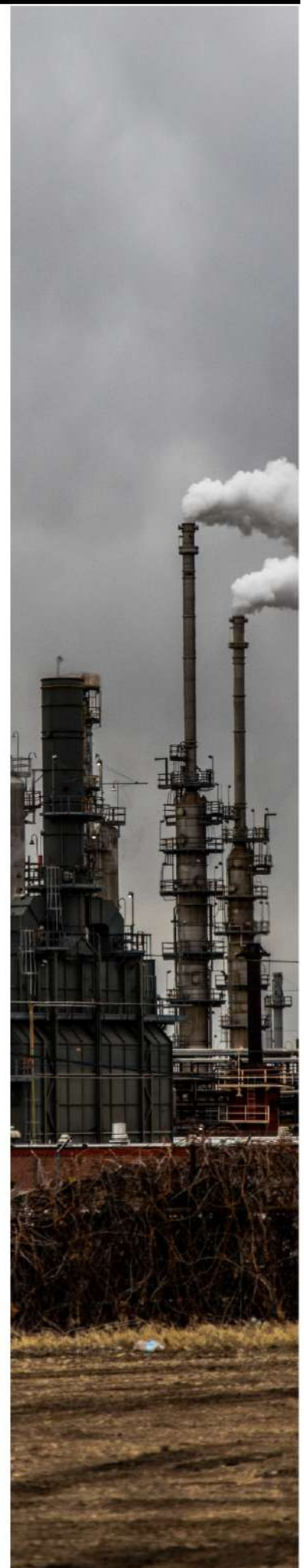
- "Sustainable and inclusive growth"

▲ In September 2020, the **EU Parliament Committee** on Legal Affairs proposed a Directive on **mandatory corporate environmental and human rights due diligence** along the global supply chain to the EU Commission. A majority voted in favour of the Directive on March 10, 2021.

▼ The price of a **household cooking gas**, or LPG (Liquified Petroleum Gas) doubled between 2014 and 2021 to 819 INR per cylinder, after the **government removed subsidies**. Taxes paid on petrol and diesel sales have increased four-and-a-half-fold. This exorbitant spike **adversely impacts food security**, causes **health hazards** and **air pollution** as households revert to burning wood, and threatens financial security in an already pandemic-hit economy.

- "Mobility of workers between the EU and India"

⚠ **Equality Labs** brought attention to the **"export" of caste discrimination** by Indian diaspora abroad. Especially graduates from Indian Institutes of Technology working in companies abroad **harass and exclude lower-caste colleagues**. In India itself, such caste discrimination is increasingly culminating in violent hate crimes.







## **Mobility, Employment & Social Policy**

- "Establish an annual EU-India Policy Dialogue covering different issues in the area of employment and social policy (occupational safety and health, social security, minimum wage, informal economy, ...). Cooperate on the eradication of child labour by enforcing the ILO Conventions ratified by India (138 on Minimum Age, and 182 on Worst Form of Child Labour)"

▼ On 8 May 2020, the government of the largest Indian state, Uttar Pradesh, **suspended more than 30 labour laws** for three years, allegedly as an attempt to increase investment. The laws relate to settling industrial disputes, **child labour, bonded labour or modern slavery, health and working conditions of workers, trade unions, contract workers, migrant workers and minimum wages.**

▼ In 2020, the Government passed without public consultation **three laws on agriculture** and trade, in protests against which **248 farmers have died**. The laws do not exclude the possibility of farmers **losing their land if they are unable to fulfil contract payment**, and lend themselves to the creation of market monopolies by large agricultural corporations, who can **determine the prices of agricultural produce and thus impoverish farmers**. Approximately 32 farmers have committed suicide every day for the past 25 years due to insecure market and climate conditions.



# **Sustainable Cities & Urban Development**

- "Further implement the Partnership for Smart and Sustainable Urbanisation, namely supporting smart and sustainable cities, promoting investments in sustainable urbanization, promoting climate action and disaster risk reduction in cities, developing effective solid waste management & treatment and promotion of circular economy, developing effective water supply & sewage system and innovation in housing."



While Uttar Pradesh is a pioneer in developing "Smart Cities", the state has an exponential increase in caste-based gang rapes, religious hate crimes, mob lynching, extrajudicial killings - atrocities that can be traced back to incitement by the state's political leadership, including the Chief Minister.





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LEARN MORE?**

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