

**Draft Speech
Republic Day Reception
26 January 2026**

**Remarks
Ambassador Anurag Bhushan**

God Kväll, Good Evening, Namaste

Your Excellency Ms Ma Maria Malmer Stenergard, Minister for Foreign Affairs to Sweden and our Chief Guest for the Evening

Distinguished Guests,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Esteemed Community Members,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very warm welcome to you all, and thank you for joining us this evening as we celebrate the Republic Day of India.

On 26 January 1950, India adopted its Constitution and formally became a Republic. The Constitution remains not only a legal framework, but a living expression of our national values—democracy, pluralism, liberty, equality, and justice. These principles continue to guide India's journey as a nation of over 1.4 billion people, and as a responsible stakeholder in an increasingly complex world.

2025 was a year of momentum and resilience for Indian Economy

Despite, global headwinds, India today stands at a moment of strong transformation and optimism. Over the past year, the world has witnessed India consolidate its position as one of the fastest-growing major economies, driven by stability, reforms, investment, and confidence.

India's economic progress in the last year has been shaped by three clear drivers:

First, structural resilience and macroeconomic stability.

Despite global headwinds—ranging from inflationary pressures to supply-chain disruptions and geopolitical uncertainty—India has maintained a steady growth trajectory. This stability has been supported by prudent economic management, sustained domestic demand, and a robust financial sector.

Second, infrastructure and manufacturing as engines of growth.

Over the past year, India has continued expanding world-class physical and digital infrastructure—highways, rail corridors, ports, logistics networks, and modern public services. Manufacturing has also gained strength through the “Make in India” approach, with India building competitive capabilities in electronics, renewable energy components, defence production, and advanced industrial sectors.

Third, India’s digital public infrastructure and innovation-led development.

India’s digital transformation is increasingly being recognised as a model for inclusive growth. The last year has seen greater use of digital public platforms for financial access, governance delivery, and innovation. This has made India not only a market of scale, but also a platform of capability—where solutions can be deployed rapidly and efficiently.

At the same time, India is investing in the future—AI, semiconductors, clean energy, green hydrogen, and sustainable mobility. These are not isolated programmes; they form part of India’s long-term vision of becoming a trusted global hub for technology, talent, and responsible growth.

Excellencies and friends, **the India–Sweden relationship** is rooted in shared democratic values and built on a strong culture of cooperation and trust. Over the years, our partnership has matured into one that is forward-looking, innovation-driven, and deeply aligned with sustainability.

Sweden’s strengths—advanced manufacturing, industrial innovation, climate technologies, and research excellence—match well with India’s scale, dynamism, talent, and rapidly expanding markets.

Our cooperation spans diverse sectors:

- Clean energy and green transition
- Innovation and emerging technologies
- Life sciences and healthcare
- Sustainable urban development and smart mobility
- Industry–academia partnerships and research collaboration
- Digital solutions and next-generation manufacturing

Economic engagement remains a strong anchor of our partnership. Trade and investment flows continue to grow, and Swedish companies have long been respected contributors to India's industrial and technological journey. At the same time, India's growing presence in Sweden—in IT, engineering, research, and entrepreneurship—adds an increasingly vibrant dimension to our ties.

People-to-people connections remain at the heart of this partnership. Indian professionals, researchers, students, and innovators contribute meaningfully to Swedish society and economy, just as Swedish institutions and companies remain valued partners in India's growth story.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

India's engagement with Europe is entering a particularly consequential phase. The EU–India Summit taking **place on 27 January in New Delhi comes at a time** when both sides recognise the strategic imperative of working more closely—economically, technologically, and politically. In fact both President of EU Council and President of European Commission Ursula von der Leyen were Chief Guest of the Republic Day.

In a world shaped by contested supply chains, economic uncertainty, and security challenges, India and the European Union share a common interest in:

- building resilient and trusted value chains,
- strengthening cooperation in critical technologies,
- expanding investment and trade,
- and advancing a shared commitment to a rules-based international order.

A key expectation from this summit is to inject renewed momentum into the ongoing negotiations towards a comprehensive India–EU Free Trade Agreement. Such an agreement, if balanced and ambitious, can unlock enormous opportunities for businesses and consumers on both sides.

An India–EU FTA is not only about tariff lines and market access. It is about shaping the economic architecture of the future—covering services, digital trade, innovation partnerships, sustainable supply chains, green technologies, and investment flows.

Just as importantly, this summit is expected to strengthen India–EU cooperation in a domain that has become central to our times—security and defence.

The world today faces a more challenging security environment—whether in Europe, the Indo-Pacific, or the wider global commons. In this context, a structured India–EU Defence and Security partnership carries strong potential.

Such a partnership can deepen cooperation in areas such as:

- maritime security and protection of sea lanes,
- counter-terrorism and cyber resilience,
- defence technology collaboration,
- and joint efforts to uphold stability and international law.

India's message is clear: we believe security partnerships must be built on trust, respect for sovereignty, and shared responsibility—and the India–EU relationship is well placed to move in that direction.

Friends, India's partnerships today are shaped by realism and ambition—by values and by outcomes. India's growth story is not only about economics. It is about opportunity, inclusion, sustainability, and responsibility.

Sweden, and Europe more broadly, are natural partners in this journey.

As India moves ahead on its path toward becoming a developed country in the coming decades, we see tremendous scope for deeper India–Sweden and India–Europe cooperation—in technology, climate action, mobility, education, innovation, and advanced manufacturing.

On this proud occasion of India's Republic Day, we renew our commitment to democracy, dialogue, and global cooperation. We reaffirm our confidence that partnerships grounded in trust—such as the one between India and Sweden—will continue to grow from strength to strength.

I thank you once again for joining us this evening and for your friendship towards India.

Jai Hind.

Tack så mycket