

India–Denmark 2030

From Green Strategic Partnership to
Innovation, Enterprise and Strategic Scale



A THOUGHT PAPER

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Purpose, Method & Executive Summary



1. Purpose & Method

This paper examines the evolution of India–Denmark relations and the areas in which the partnership has the strongest potential to deepen toward 2030. It treats the Green Strategic Partnership as the foundation, while exploring the next layer of cooperation across trade and investment, intellectual property, enterprise internationalisation, technology commercialisation, startups and MSMEs, emerging technologies, maritime security, and the India–EU economic relationship. It does not prescribe a program or institutional model; it identifies avenues that merit deeper public-policy and commercial attention.

The paper draws on primary and official sources, including government press releases and joint statements, the 2021–2026 Joint Action Plan, the DPIIT–DKPTO Memorandum of Understanding, and the published positions of the Embassy of Denmark, the European Commission and the Government of India. Reported figures and institutional developments are current as of **12 August 2026**.



2. Executive Summary

A

A mature institutional foundation

India–Denmark relations now rest on a strong institutional architecture: diplomatic ties since 1949, the Joint Commission since 2009, the Green Strategic Partnership from 2020, and the 2021–2026 Joint Action Plan covering energy, water, maritime affairs, science and technology, intellectual property, health, food and mobility.

B

The next phase is about scale

The central opportunity toward 2030 is to translate this architecture into greater commercial, technological and innovation scale. Green cooperation can increasingly serve as the platform through which research, IP, enterprises, investment and talent move between the two economies.

C

An increasingly services-led economic relationship

Government of India data indicate that in 2025 bilateral merchandise trade was about US\$2.05bn and services trade about US\$4.25bn. The relationship is therefore broader than goods trade alone suggests and already reflects business, technology and services linkages.

D

IP as a horizontal economic pillar

The India–Denmark IP framework goes well beyond administration. It covers awareness, training, SME outreach, protection, valuation and commercialisation, making intellectual property a potential connector between innovation, technology transfer, enterprise growth and cross-border market activity.

E

Startups, SMEs and emerging technologies

The Action Plan already recognises knowledge-based startups and SMEs, incubators, accelerators, IP rights and challenge-driven innovation. New and emerging technologies, advanced research, AI and deeper startup engagement are likely to become increasingly important in the next phase of the relationship.



**GREEN
STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP**



INNOVATION



**INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY**



ENTERPRISE



**STRATEGIC
SCALE**

“

India–Denmark 2030:
The relationship can evolve from a successful green governmental partnership into a broader green–innovation–enterprise partnership, where Danish technological capabilities and Indian scale generate greater two-way investment, commercialisation and strategic cooperation.

India–Denmark: From Diplomatic Relations to Strategic Partnership

India and Denmark enter the second half of the 2020s with a bilateral relationship that is considerably more institutionalised, sector-specific and economically oriented than it was at the beginning of the decade. Formal diplomatic relations were established in 1949, while the contemporary architecture of cooperation began to take clearer shape with the establishment of the Joint Commission for Cooperation in 2009. Since then, successive agreements in maritime affairs, science and technology, energy, intellectual property, health and other sectors have progressively widened the scope of engagement.



A Relationship Built in Stages

1949	India and Denmark establish formal diplomatic relations.
2009	The Joint Commission for Cooperation creates an overarching institutional mechanism for bilateral engagement.
2019	A maritime cooperation framework strengthens engagement in shipping, green maritime technologies, shipbuilding, training and investment.
2020	The Green Strategic Partnership is launched. The same year also sees the signing of the DPIIT–Danish Patent and Trademark Office cooperation framework on intellectual property.
2021–2026	The Joint Action Plan establishes a detailed whole-of-government framework covering green transition, enterprise, research, innovation, IP, health, agriculture, maritime cooperation and mobility.
2022	The two prime ministers review implementation of the partnership and indicate an intention to work toward an enhanced Comprehensive Green Strategic Partnership beyond the existing Action Plan.
2024–2025	The relationship continues to deepen through areas including health cooperation, renewed IP engagement and stronger green-sector business participation.
2026	The bilateral conversation begins to widen further toward new and emerging technologies, advanced research, startups, artificial intelligence, defence and mobility.
2030	The next phase may increasingly be judged by how effectively this architecture generates technology partnerships, investment, commercialisation and sustained two-way enterprise activity.



The Partnership Architecture Today



Green Transition

- Renewable energy
- Offshore wind
- Power-to-X and green fuels
- Water and circular economy
- Sustainable cities
- Green shipping



Enterprise & Economy

- Trade and investment
- Business establishment
- Startups and SMEs
- Food and agriculture
- Life sciences
- Advanced industry



Innovation & Knowledge

- Intellectual property
- Science and technology
- Joint R&D
- Universities
- Digitalisation
- Technology commercialisation



Strategic & People

- Skilled mobility
- Academic exchange
- India–Nordic engagement
- Maritime security
- Emerging defence dialogue
- Multilateral cooperation



Strategic Perspective: The Green Strategic Partnership has created the institutional foundation. The next phase of India–Denmark relations can increasingly be judged by how effectively that architecture generates technology partnerships, investment, commercialisation and sustained two-way enterprise activity.

Economic Relationship & Complementary Strengths

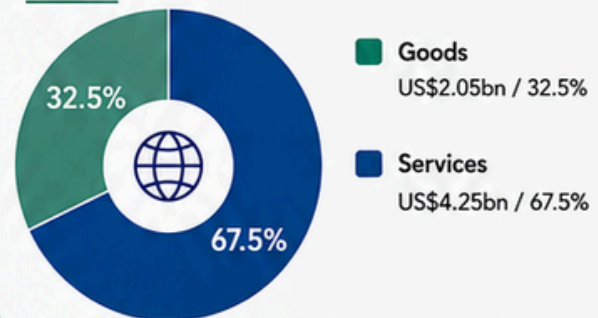
The India–Denmark relationship has developed beyond a predominantly diplomatic and green-cooperation framework into a meaningful economic partnership. Its composition, however, is important. Services now form the larger component of bilateral trade, reflecting the growing role of technology, engineering, professional services and knowledge-intensive economic activity alongside merchandise trade.



India–Denmark Economic Snapshot

	Bilateral goods trade, 2025	US\$2.05 bn
	Bilateral services trade, 2025	US\$4.25 bn
	Combined reported trade	≈ US\$6.30 bn
	Estimated Indian investment in Denmark	≈ US\$560 mn
	Cumulative Danish direct investment into India through 2024	US\$1.413 bn
	Indian companies operating in Denmark	≈ 40
	Danish companies invested in India	≈ 200

2025 Trade Composition



Government of India figures cited in this paper indicate combined goods-and-services trade of approximately US\$2.82 billion in 2016 and US\$3.68 billion in 2019, compared with roughly US\$6.30 billion in 2025. Danish cumulative investment in India has likewise increased substantially from the levels reported at the beginning of the decade. Danish investment in India is visible across shipping, renewable energy, environment, agriculture, food processing and urban development, while Indian companies in Denmark have a presence particularly in IT services, engineering and renewable energy.



Complementary Strengths

India brings

- Large deployment markets, infrastructure demand and manufacturing scale
- Large IT, engineering and digital-services base; expanding startup ecosystem
- Pharmaceuticals, health technology capability, talent and a large health market
- Large agricultural and food-processing economy
- Ports, shipbuilding ambition, maritime services and a major Indian Ocean location
- Cost engineering, market scale and growing research output

Denmark brings

- Specialist capabilities in wind, energy systems and green-industrial technology
- Highly digitalised economy; clusters in robotics, AI and increasingly quantum technology
- Strong pharmaceutical, biotech and life-science commercialisation ecosystem
- Food safety, dairy, fermentation, ingredients and an export-oriented biosolutions ecosystem
- Global shipping capability and specialist green-maritime know-how
- Dense research–industry linkages and commercialisation platforms



Where the complementarity becomes commercial

- Green Energy —**
Danish technology + Indian deployment scale
- Digital & Advanced Technology —**
Indian engineering scale + Danish innovation ecosystems
- Life Sciences —**
Indian manufacturing and talent + Danish research and commercialisation
- Maritime —**
Indian maritime scale + Danish green-shipping capability



The European Multiplier

The wider India–EU economic relationship could further strengthen the bilateral commercial environment. The conclusion of India–EU FTA negotiations in January 2026 creates the prospect of improved market-access conditions once the agreement completes legal and ratification processes. For India–Denmark relations, the significance is two-directional: Danish companies could gain from an increasingly integrated commercial relationship with the Indian market, while Indian businesses can consider Denmark within a broader Nordic and European market strategy.



Strategic Perspective: The India–Denmark economic proposition is fundamentally one of specialised capability meeting scale. The next phase of bilateral growth can increasingly depend on translating this complementarity into investment, technology deployment, joint innovation and sustained two-way enterprise activity.

Intellectual Property as Strategic Infrastructure

Intellectual property is often treated in bilateral relationships as a specialised legal or administrative subject. In the India–Denmark relationship, however, it has the potential to perform a much wider economic function. IP provides the infrastructure through which innovation can be protected, valued, licensed, transferred, invested in and ultimately commercialised across markets. For a partnership increasingly focused on green technologies, life sciences, digital innovation, research and enterprise, this gives intellectual property relevance far beyond patent administration.



An Unusually Broad Bilateral IP Framework

The DPIIT–Danish Patent and Trademark Office (DKPTO) Memorandum of Understanding, signed on 25 September 2020, created a broad framework for cooperation between the two countries. Its scope extends beyond patent examination and includes IP awareness among businesses, researchers, educational institutions and the public; training, expert exchanges and outreach; dissemination of IP knowledge to industry, universities, R&D institutions and SMEs; cooperation relating to the protection, enforcement and use of intellectual-property rights; exchange of experience concerning IP valuation and appraisal; and the role of IP in facilitating trade and commercialisation.

The original four-year cooperation period was subsequently renewed, while the bilateral framework and its Work Plan remained listed as active by IP India in August 2026. The wider India–Denmark Joint Action Plan also links IP cooperation with commercialisation of green technologies, geographical indications and traditional knowledge.



IP as Connective Infrastructure

Rather than becoming another standalone pillar alongside energy, maritime affairs, health or technology, intellectual property can operate as the connective infrastructure underneath each of them.

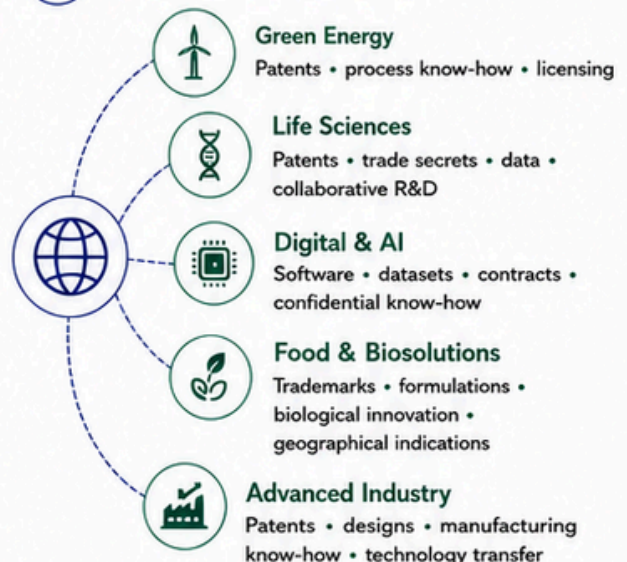


From IP Administration to Innovation Economics

IP Dimension	Bilateral Relevance Toward 2030
Awareness & IP Readiness	Startups, MSMEs, researchers and internationalising businesses need to understand what to protect, where to protect it and at what stage.
Patents & Technology Protection	Particularly relevant to green fuels, wind, water technologies, biotechnology, medtech, advanced manufacturing and deep tech.
Trademarks, Designs & GIs	Important for Indian consumer businesses entering Nordic/EU markets and Danish food, design and branded products operating in India.
IP Valuation & Financing	Valuation can transform IP from a registration into an economic asset relevant to investment, licensing and commercial transactions.
Licensing & Technology Transfer	Important where Danish specialist technologies are adapted or manufactured in India and Indian IP-intensive firms participate in Danish ecosystems.
Research Commercialisation	Joint R&D becomes more commercially relevant when ownership, licensing and routes to market are considered from the outset.
Enforcement & Confidence	Effective IP protection can reduce risk and increase confidence around cross-border technology partnerships.



IP as the Connecting Layer



Strategic Perspective: The next significance of India–Denmark IP cooperation may lie in connecting protection with commercialisation — creating stronger pathways through which research and innovation can move toward licensing, technology transfer, investment and cross-border enterprise activity.



RESEARCH



INNOVATION



IP



COMMERCIALISATION



ENTERPRISE



SCALE

High-Potential Sector Corridors

The next phase of India–Denmark economic cooperation is likely to be strongest in sectors where an existing bilateral foundation intersects with genuine economic complementarity. The six corridors below are not exhaustive; they represent areas in which Danish specialised capabilities can meet Indian scale, demand and talent, while also creating opportunities for Indian enterprises to participate in Danish and wider Nordic innovation ecosystems.



“ Strategic Perspective: The strongest India–Denmark sector corridors are those in which cooperation can move beyond knowledge exchange into technology deployment, joint innovation, commercialisation and sustained two-way enterprise activity.

Startups, MSMEs & Enterprise Internationalisation

The next commercial layer of India–Denmark relations could increasingly be shaped by startups, SMEs and innovation-led enterprises. This would not represent a new direction outside the existing bilateral framework. The 2021–2026 Joint Action Plan already identifies knowledge-based startups and SMEs, entrepreneurs, incubators, accelerators, intellectual property rights, standards and challenge-driven innovation as areas for stronger cooperation. The 2022 bilateral Joint Statement also referred to a Letter of Intent involving Invest India and the Technical University of Denmark aimed at facilitating startup collaboration.

The opportunity toward 2030 is therefore to consider how this institutional foundation can translate into stronger enterprise internationalisation, commercial partnerships and innovation linkages.



From Sector Fit to Market Entry

The strongest opportunities are likely to emerge where enterprise internationalisation follows existing sector complementarities rather than broad market promotion alone.



Digital and AI Companies

Can look toward Danish and Nordic customers, research partnerships and advanced technology ecosystems.



Life-science and Health Companies

Can engage with Denmark's pharmaceutical, biotechnology and health-innovation capabilities.



Clean-tech Businesses

Can connect with established Danish strengths in wind, energy systems, green fuels and sustainability technologies.



Food-tech and Biosolution Companies

Can find relevance in Denmark's food, fermentation, ingredients and biosolutions ecosystem.



What Enables Successful Internationalisation?

Cross-border expansion depends on more than market awareness. Several factors shape whether an enterprise can convert interest into sustained commercial activity.



Access to customers and business partners



Regulatory and certification requirements



Intellectual-property protection and commercialisation



R&D and technology partnerships



Availability of skilled talent



Operating environment and cost considerations



Ability to identify credible routes to market

Denmark in an Indian Enterprise Strategy



A Commercial Market

Access to customers, distributors, corporate partners and specialised demand.



An Innovation and R&D Base

Research institutions, universities and industry networks that enable collaborative R&D and product development.



A Specialist Sector Ecosystem

Strength in clean technology, life sciences, maritime technologies, food and biosolutions, digital technologies and advanced industrial systems.



A Nordic and European Platform

Access to Nordic and wider European customers, partners and innovation networks.

Enterprise Pathway to the Nordic / EU Ecosystem



Indian Startup / MSME

Innovation-led enterprise seeking growth beyond domestic markets.



Denmark

- Market Access
- RD Collaboration and Partnerships
- IP Protection
- Pilot and Scale



Nordic / EU Ecosystem

- Regional Market Access
- Value Chain Integration
- Innovation and Investment Opportunities



Strategic Perspective

The next commercial layer of India–Denmark relations could increasingly be shaped by startups and MSMEs. The strongest opportunity lies in connecting Indian enterprises with Danish sector strengths, innovation ecosystems and Nordic market opportunities where there is genuine commercial fit.

Emerging Technology & Strategic Cooperation

A widening outer ring beyond the Green Strategic Partnership

The Green Strategic Partnership remains the defining foundation of India–Denmark relations, but the bilateral agenda is beginning to extend into areas that were far less prominent when the 2021–2026 Action Plan was framed.

At their May 2026 meeting during the Third India–Nordic Summit in Oslo, the Indian and Danish prime ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation in new and emerging technologies, communications, advanced research, startups and academic exchanges, while also discussing artificial intelligence and defence cooperation. This represents an important broadening of the relationship from predominantly green and sectoral cooperation toward a more technology-intensive strategic agenda.

The Emerging Technology Layer

Several areas now offer potential for deeper engagement toward 2030.



Artificial Intelligence

India brings a large digital and engineering base, rapidly expanding AI deployment and a substantial technology ecosystem. Denmark offers a highly digitalised economy, strong research institutions and opportunities for specialised applications in areas such as health, energy, industry and public services.

The bilateral opportunity may therefore lie not only in AI research, but in sector-specific applications, responsible deployment, industry collaboration and research partnerships.



Quantum & Advanced Research

Quantum technologies are increasingly becoming part of the wider India–Europe technology agenda. Denmark's specialised research environment and India's expanding capabilities in advanced science create potential for collaboration in research, academic exchange, talent and eventual commercial applications.



Semiconductors, 6G & Deep Technology

The broader EU–India framework is increasingly focused on semiconductors, high-performance computing, AI, quantum technologies and 6G. These developments can create additional channels through which Indian and Danish researchers, startups and technology firms interact.

Technology and Security Are Beginning to Intersect

As digital systems become increasingly embedded in energy, ports, communications, health and industrial infrastructure, the distinction between economic technology cooperation and strategic resilience becomes less clear.

Areas that could gain greater relevance include:



Cybersecurity

Protection of digital systems, industrial technologies and critical infrastructure.



Critical Infrastructure Resilience

Energy systems, ports, communications networks and other infrastructure increasingly depend on secure digital technologies.



Maritime Security

Denmark's maritime expertise and India's strategic position in the Indian Ocean create a natural connection between commercial maritime cooperation and wider questions of maritime resilience and security.



Defence & Dual-Use Technologies

The 2026 bilateral dialogue has begun to include defence and AI. These areas remain at an earlier maritime cooperation and should therefore be understood as emerging rather than established pillars.



EU–India Security & Defence Partnership

The wider framework covers maritime security, cyber issues, emerging technologies and critical-infrastructure resilience, offering an additional European platform for cooperation.

The Emerging Outer Ring



Green Technology

The foundational layer of the India–Denmark partnership.



AI & Deep Tech

Artificial intelligence, data technologies and advanced digital solutions.



Quantum & Advanced Research

Collaborative research, innovation and future technologies.



Cyber & Critical Infrastructure

Digital security, resilience and protection of critical systems.



Maritime Security

Safe seas, secure trade routes and maritime cooperation.



Arctic & Ocean Cooperation

Scientific research, climate, biodiversity and sustainable development.



Research, Universities & Talent as the Connecting Layer

Many of these emerging technologies depend on ecosystems rather than individual companies.

Universities, researchers, startups, technology firms and highly skilled professionals will therefore become increasingly important to the bilateral relationship.

Potential areas include:

- joint advanced research
- academic exchange
- university-to-industry collaboration
- deep-tech startups
- researcher mobility
- technology demonstration
- pathways from research to commercialisation

This reinforces a wider theme running through this Thought Paper:

Research → Innovation → IP → Commercialisation → Enterprise → Scale



Strategic Perspective

The emerging technology agenda does not replace the Green Strategic Partnership. It expands the number of actors and capabilities that can participate in it. By 2030, India–Denmark relations could increasingly connect green transition with advanced research, digital technologies, strategic resilience and specialised scientific cooperation.

India–Denmark 2030: Strategic Avenues

From established cooperation to greater economic and innovation scale

Three Priority Avenues



01 IP as Horizontal Innovation Infrastructure

India and Denmark already possess an unusually broad intellectual property cooperation framework. Toward 2030, its economic relevance can increasingly lie in connecting IP awareness, valuation, licensing, technology transfer, commercialisation and cross-border enterprise across sectors.

This can enable cooperation in clean technology, life sciences, food and biosolutions, maritime technology and deep tech.



02 Startups & MSMEs as the Next Enterprise Layer

Startups and SMEs are already recognised within the bilateral Action Plan. The opportunity now is for them to become a more visible component of India–Denmark commercial activity.

The strongest possibilities are likely to emerge where Indian enterprise capabilities align with Danish specialist ecosystems in digital technology, clean tech, life sciences, food and biosolutions, maritime and advanced industry.



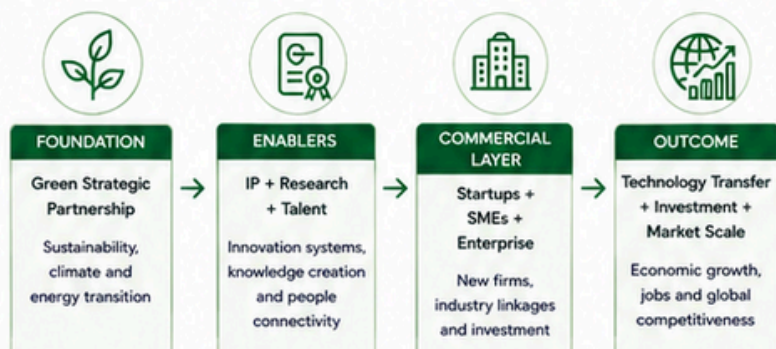
03 Research to Market Cooperation

The strongest long-term model is not simply more bilateral research. The greater economic opportunity is continuity across the complete innovation chain.

This approach is particularly relevant to clean technology, biotech, water, maritime technologies and deep tech, where research and demonstration already form part of bilateral cooperation.



Building the India–Denmark 2030 Value Pathway



Cooperation to Commercial Impact →

Five Further Avenues Toward 2030

04

From Green Cooperation to Green Industrial Scale



Offshore wind, grids, Power-to-X, water, sustainable cities and green shipping already have institutional foundations. Toward 2030, their greater economic significance may lie in moving from pilot to deployment, industrial partnership, investment and scale.

05

A Stronger Two-Way Enterprise Relationship



Denmark → India: specialised technologies, green industrial expertise, life sciences, water, maritime and biosolutions.

India → Denmark: digital services, engineering, R&D, life sciences, startups and deep technology.

The opportunity lies in developing a relationship where technology and enterprises move in both directions.

06

The India–EU Economic Framework as a Multiplier



The emerging India–EU economic architecture could alter the context in which India–Denmark business is conducted.

The negotiated FTA, once brought into force, could influence market access, while its SME and IP dimensions may be particularly relevant to companies expanding between the two markets.

07

Technology & Security as Selective New Frontiers



AI, quantum, cyber, advanced research, critical infrastructure, maritime security and defence technology are increasingly entering bilateral or EU–India dialogue.

These areas broaden the strategic dimension of the partnership while remaining at different levels of maturity.

08

Talent & Mobility as an Enabling Layer



Technology, investment and innovation ultimately move through people. Researchers, engineers, entrepreneurs and skilled professionals can therefore become an increasingly important enabling layer of the relationship.

India–Denmark 2030: What to Watch Next

Watch points, framework design and concluding perspective

1. Four Watch Points



2. Three Questions for the Next Framework



3. Final Thought

Green cooperation created the foundation. Innovation can generate new intellectual property and technology. Commercialisation can convert that innovation into economic value. Enterprises can carry it across markets. Strategic technology and research can widen the relationship.



Concluding Perspective

By 2030, the most meaningful measure of progress may not be the number of new bilateral mechanisms created, but whether the architecture built since 2020 results in greater two-way enterprise activity, technology commercialisation, investment, startup engagement, IP utilisation and durable research-to-market partnerships.

ABOUT NEXTERA POLICY

NextEra Policy is an independent, research-driven industry association committed to strengthening evidence-based policymaking through research, stakeholder engagement, policy dialogue and institutional collaboration. The organisation works across government, industry, academia and international partners to facilitate informed discussions on emerging policy issues and advance innovation-led economic development.



OUR WORK



Policy Research & Publications

Thought papers, policy briefs and analytical reports examining emerging regulatory, economic, technological and governance issues.



Policy Dialogues & Conferences

Platforms that bring together policymakers, industry leaders, academics, legal professionals, researchers and subject-matter experts for substantive policy conversations.



Technology, Innovation & Economic Policy

Research and engagement across intellectual property, emerging technologies, innovation ecosystems, enterprise, international economic relations and technology governance.



Stakeholder & Institutional Engagement

Creating opportunities for interaction between research institutions, policymakers, industry and other stakeholders to encourage informed and evidence-based public-policy discourse.

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