

India-UAE Relations

India and United Arab Emirates (UAE) enjoy strong bonds of friendship based on age-old cultural, religious and economic ties between the two nations. The relationship flourished after the accession of H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan as the Ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1966 and subsequently with the creation of the UAE Federation in 1971. Both countries soon established diplomatic relations in 1972 with UAE Embassy in India opening in 1972 and Indian Embassy in UAE opening in 1973. Since then, both sides have made sincere efforts to improve relations in all fields.

Political Relations

India-UAE bilateral relations have received impetus from time-to-time with exchange of high-level visits from both sides. The historic visit of Honorable Prime Minister of India to UAE on 16-17 August 2015 marked the beginning of a new comprehensive and strategic partnership. In the Joint Statement issued after the visit, both leaders agreed to work together not only to consolidate achievements in the existing domains but also to explore newer areas of cooperation. H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of UAE Armed Forces, visited India from February 10 – 12, 2016 on a State visit and had wide-ranging discussions on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest and reached a broad consensus and signed MoUs / agreements pertaining to (i) facilitation of Institutional Investors in Infrastructure, (ii) Cooperation in Renewable Energy, (iii) Cooperation in Combating Cyber-Crimes, (iv) Cultural Exchange, (v) Space, (vi) Skill Development, (vii) Insurance and (viii) Currency swaps. This was followed by his another visit to India from 24-26 January 2017 as the Chief Guest at India's Republic day celebrations.

The momentum imparted to the partnership by these visits at the highest level has been sustained and followed up by several Ministerial level visits from both sides. India and UAE have institutional mechanisms in place for addressing the sector-specific issues. This is in the form of Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation (JCM); Strategic Dialogue; Foreign Office Consultations (FOC); High Level Task Force on Investment (HLTFI); Joint Committee on Security Matters (JCSM); Joint Committee on Consular Matters (JCCM); Joint Defense Cooperation Committee (JDCC); Joint Working Group (JWG) on Renewable Energy and Joint Committee on Manpower Resources (JCMR). JCM, strategic Dialogue, FOC and HLTFI are held at the Ministerial/Assistant Ministerial levels. JCSM, JCCM, JDCC and JSMR are held at senior official (Secretary/Additional Secretary) levels. In addition to above a Local Coordination and Grievance Redressal Mechanism to redress grievances of the Indian community is also in place in the form of a Local Coordination Committee (LCC). LCC, comprising of officers from the Embassy and their UAE counterparts meets on a regular basis to follow-up on consular, manpower and community related issues.

Since the beginning of 2017, there has been an intensification of high level visits.

- MoS (IC) for Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy and Mines Mr. Piyush Goyal visited UAE on 17-18 January for the 7th IRENA Assembly and World

Future Energy Summit.

- MoS for Defense Dr. Subhash Bhamre visited UAE on 19-20 February.
- Then Minister of Railways Mr. Suresh Prabhu visited UAE on 5-7 March and discussed cooperation opportunities in Infrastructure development.
- MoS for External Affairs Mr. MJ Akbar visited UAE on 10-11 April to address the UAE Ambassador's Forum; the first time a foreign dignitary was invited by UAE to address their Ambassador's Forum. He also met Dr. Anwar Gargash, MoS for Foreign Affairs, UAE; and Sultan bin Saeed Al Mansouri, Minister of Economy, UAE.
- MoS for Food Processing Ms. Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti visited UAE on 6-7 August to promote participation of UAE Food Companies in 'World Food India 2017', she also met Mr. Thani Al Zeyoudi and discussed promoting cooperation in food processing sector between two countries.
- MoS for External Affairs Shri MJ Akbar visited UAE on 28-29 October to attend 2nd India-UAE Strategic Dialogue; Dr. Anwar Gargash, MoS for Foreign Affairs, UAE led the UAE delegation. Shri Akbar also met Mr. Mohammed Bin Ahmad Al Bawardi, Cabinet Minister and MoS for Defence Affairs and called on H.H. Sheikh Hamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chief of the Crown Prince Court and CEO & Managing Director of Abu Dhabi Investment Authority.
- Mr. N. Chandrababu Naidu visited UAE on 21-22 October to explore trade and investment cooperation from UAE for Andhra Pradesh.
- MoS for External Affairs Shri MJ Akbar visited UAE on 8 November to attend the opening ceremony of Louvre museum in Abu Dhabi. During his visit he called on Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Commercial Relations

India-UAE bilateral relationship has evolved into a significant partnership in the economic and commercial sphere. India-UAE trade is around US\$ 52 billion (2016-17) making India the largest trading partner of UAE, while UAE is India's third largest trading partner (after China and US). UAE is the second largest export destination of India of over US\$ 30 billion for the year 2016-17.

India's major export items to the UAE are Petroleum Products, Precious Metals, Stones, Gems & Jewellery, Minerals, Food Items (Cereals, Sugar, Fruits & Vegetables, Tea, Meat, and Seafood), Textiles (Garments, Apparel, Synthetic fiber, Cotton, Yarn) and Engineering & Machinery Products and Chemicals. India's major import items from the UAE are Petroleum and Petroleum Products, Precious Metals, Stones, Gems & Jewellery, Minerals, Chemicals, Wood & Wood Products.

There is an estimated US\$ 8 billion UAE investment in India of which around US\$ 4.03 billion (Mar. 2016) is in the form of foreign direct investment, while the remaining is portfolio investment. UAE is the tenth biggest investor in India in terms of FDI. UAE's investments in India are concentrated mainly in five sectors: Services (10.33%), Construction Development (9.97%), Power (9.54%), Air Transport (8.44%) and Hotel & Tourism (7.82%).

Cultural Relations

The two nations share historical ties and have maintained regular cultural exchanges both at official and people to people levels. The Embassy continues to organize various cultural activities at its own as well as by collaborating with Indian Associations/Cultural Organizations based in UAE.

Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development of the UAE, together with the Indian Business and Professional Group, supported by the Embassy launched the India-UAE Cultural Celebrations Initiative on 4 April 2017 in Abu Dhabi. The third International Day of Yoga was celebrated on 20 June 2017 and it continues to be very popular as in previous years. His Highness Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development and Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid bin Sultan Al Qasimi, Minister of State for Tolerance graced the event.

Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated with great fervor in the Embassy on 2 October 2017. A multimedia presentation on postage stamps issued by approximately 80 countries on Mahatma Gandhi was shown. An audio in Mahatma Gandhi's original voice and a short XPD Division's film "Does Gandhi matter" was also played. The Ambassador honored Ms. Jawahar Saif Al Kumaiti, the Emirati lady who saved the lives of two Indian drivers, for her valiant act. It was followed by brief speeches made by honored guests present on the dais. National Unity Day and Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel were celebrated on 31 October 2017. The Ambassador also unveiled Commemorative stamps on Ramayana issued by Indian Department of Posts during the celebration. The Mission supports cultural events organised by various expatriates Indian Associations.

Indian Community

UAE is home to 2.8 million Indian expatriates, the largest expatriate community in the UAE. Professionally qualified personnel constitute about 15 & 20 percent of the community, followed by 20 percent white-collar non-professionals (clerical staff, shop assistants, sales men, accountants, etc) and the remainder 65% comprises blue-collar workers. There is a significant business community from India. The Indian community has played a major role in the economic development of the UAE. The annual remittances made by the large Indian community in UAE amount to over US\$ 13.75 billion (2015). The contribution of Indian community in development and prosperity of UAE was also acknowledged by UAE Government during the discussions in recently concluded 2nd India-UAE Strategic Dialogue.

With a large number of blue-collared Indian workers, focus of bilateral relations is also on developing efficient grievance-redressal mechanisms for the Indian workers in the UAE. The Embassy brought out "Guidelines for Indian" for benefits of Indian Community in UAE. A comprehensive online web-based 'NRI registration system' has been developed for Indians resident in UAE to register themselves on the system by filling in the requested details. An online web based portal called E-migrate system has been put in place for recruitment of Indian workers including Indian nurses from 1 June 2015.

The Embassy has Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) for providing short-term economic assistance (food, shelter, passage expenses etc.) to destitute workers/housemaids in distress. Indian Workers Resource Centre (IWRC) with a 24-hour helpline is operating in Dubai since November 2010. Recently another IWRC was opened in Sharjah in the September 2017. Regular visits to jails and labor camps by the officers of the Embassy and Consulate and Open house held every working day of the week at the Embassy and Consulate for the Indian Community members, are some of other mechanisms to ensure regular communication between the Embassy & Consulate with the Indian community.

Useful Resources:

Website - <http://www.indembassyuae.org> / <https://www.cgidubai.org>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInUAE/>

Twitter - @IndembAbuDhabi

Instagram-<https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/161221583945487/india-in-uae-embassy-of-india-abu-dhabi/>

YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDKfjP_ZNBKunOITwz0ImGA

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