

India-Egypt Bilateral Relations

India and Egypt, two of the world's oldest civilizations, have enjoyed a history of close contact from ancient times. Ashoka's edicts refer to his relations with Egypt under Ptolemy-II. In modern times, Mahatma Gandhi and Saad Zaghloul shared common goals on the independence of their countries, a relationship that was to blossom into an exceptionally close friendship between Gamal Abdel Nasser and Jawaharlal Nehru, leading to a Friendship Treaty between the two countries in 1955.

Political Relations

2. India and Egypt share close political understanding based on long history of contacts and cooperation on bilateral, regional and global issues. The joint announcement of establishment of diplomatic relations at Ambassadorial level was made on 18 August 1947. Both countries have cooperated on multilateral fora and were the founding members of Non-Aligned Movement. There is a new momentum in our relations and a shared desire to take it to a higher level.

3. Since the 1980s, there have been four Prime Ministerial visits from India to Egypt: Shri Rajiv Gandhi (1985); Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao (1995); Shri I. K. Gujral (1997); and Dr. Manmohan Singh (2009, NAM Summit). From the Egyptian side, President Hosni Mubarak visited India in 1982, in 1983 (NAM Summit), and again in 2008. High level exchanges with Egypt continued after the 2011 Egyptian Revolution and then President Mohamed Morsi visited India in March 2013. External Affairs Minister (EAM) visited Cairo in March 2012 and the Egyptian Foreign Minister visited India in December 2013.

4. After the new government led by President Sisi took over in June 2014, EAM paid a visit to Cairo in August 2015. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi met President Sisi on the sidelines of UNGA, New York in September 2015. President Mukherjee and Prime Minister Modi met President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi during the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in October 2015. President Sisi paid a State visit to India in September 2016 accompanied by Mr. Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Tarek Kabil, Minister of Trade and Industry and Mr. Amr El Garhy, Minister of Finance. A Joint Statement was issued outlining the three pillars of political-security cooperation, economic engagement & scientific collaboration and cultural & people-people ties as the basis of a new partnership for a new era.

5. During 2015 to 2019, a number of Ministerial level visits from India to Egypt took place, which included - MOS (IC) for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Prakash Javadekar, who participated in the 15th African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) in March 2015; Special Envoy of PM, Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi met President Sisi in July 2015; Shipping Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari, represented India at the opening of the new Suez Canal in August 2015 and met President Sisi; EAM Smt. Sushma Swaraj visited Cairo and met President Sisi, Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry (and also met the Secretary General of League of Arab States) in August 2015. Two MoUs on Tourism and Science and Technology cooperation were signed during the visit. Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Minister of State for Parliamentary and Minority Affairs participated in the 25th International Conference of Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs at

Luxor, Egypt in November 2015; MoS (IC) for Sports and Youth Affairs Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore visited Egypt in Nov 2017, accompanied by a youth delegation to take part in World Youth Forum in Sharm El Sheikh and met his Egyptian counterpart; MoS for External Affairs Shri M.J. Akbar visited Egypt in October 2017 as Special Envoy of PM and met President Sisi and FM Shoukry. Minister of Defence Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman visited Egypt in September 2018 and met her Egyptian counterpart.

6. Dr. Shawki Alam, Grand Mufti of Egypt participated in the World Sufi Forum, New Delhi in March 2016. Dr. Ali Hanafi Gibaly, President of the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt attended the 19th International Conference of Chief Justices in Lucknow, November 2018. Recent Ministerial visits from Egypt to India include visits of Minister of Defence Sobhi in November 2017, Minister of Public Business Sector Ashraf El-Sharkawy in November 2017, Foreign Minister Shoukry in March 2018 for India-Egypt JCM, Minister of State for Military Production, General Mohamed El Assar in April 2018 to attend DEFEXPO in Chennai and Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Eng Tarek-El Molla to attend 16th International Energy Forum in Delhi in April 2018.

7. There are several mechanisms of bilateral institutional dialogue at different levels such as Foreign Office Consultations, Joint Defence Committee (JDC), Joint Committee Meeting on S&T, Joint Trade Committee, Joint Working Groups on - i) Cyber Issues ii) Counter Terrorism iii) Agriculture, Plant Quarantine and Animal Quarantine iv) ISRO-NARSS etc.

Economic Relations

8. Egypt has been traditionally one of India's most important trading partners in the African continent. The India-Egypt Bilateral Trade Agreement has been in operation since March 1978 and is based on the Most Favoured Nation clause and the bilateral trade has increased more than five times in last ten years. The bilateral trade volume between the two countries had shown consecutive positive growth from 2005-06 to 2012-13, taking the trade from US\$ 1.2 billion to its peak of US\$ 5.45 billion. Starting from 2013-14 the trade volume gradually declined from US\$ 4.95 billion to US\$ 4.77 billion in 2014-15 and to US\$ 3.23 billion in 2016-17, due to general economic slowdown and fall in oil prices. However, it showed positive growth in 2017-18 to reach the level of US\$ 3.68 billion and further grew by 23% in 2018-19 to reach US\$ 4.55 billion. The top three Indian exports during this period were: motor cars, meat & cotton yarn while the top three Indian imports were; crude petroleum, urea and anhydrous ammonia. During the period, India was Egypt's 8th largest export destination the 10th largest import source for Egypt.

9. Over 450 Indian companies are registered in Egypt of which around 50 are in manufacturing and construction with a combined investment exceeding US\$ 3 billion. Approximately half are joint ventures or wholly owned Indian subsidiaries while the rest operate through their representative offices and execute projects for government organizations. Major Indian investments in Egypt include TCI Sanmar (with a value of US\$ 1.5 billion), Alexandria Carbon Black, Kirloskar, Dabur India, Egypt-India Polyester Company (EIPET), SCIB Paints, Godrej, Mahindra and Monginis. Indian Pharmaceutical major Hetero Drugs Ltd launched a JV in May 2015 to produce a Hepatitis-C drug and Sun Pharma has recently commenced operations. Indian companies also execute projects in railway signaling, pollution

control, water treatment, irrigation, anti-collision devices, power sector etc. Indian companies are present in almost every sector including apparel, agriculture, chemicals, energy, automobiles, retail and others. Overall, these companies provide direct and indirect employment to approximately 35,000 Egyptians.

10. Egyptian investments in India are to the tune of US\$ 49 million, which include ElSewedy-Group (smart electrometers); KAPCI Coatings (car paints) and Modern Waterproofing Group/Bitumode (waterproofing membranes and protection boards for construction industry).

11. India's grants-in-aid projects in Egypt include: Pan Africa Tele-medicine and Tele-education project in Alexandria University, Solar electrification project in Agaween village and Vocational Training Centre for textile technology in Shoubra, Cairo, which have been completed. An IT Centre has been established in Al Azhar University and is partially operational.

12. Technical cooperation and assistance has been a major part of our bilateral relationship. Since the year 2000, over 800 Egyptian officials have benefited from ITEC programmes. During the year 2018-19, 118 ITEC scholarships were availed by Egyptian students. 12 students availed IAFS scholarships and 12 others traveled to India under the ICCR scholarship programme. 5 Egyptian students availed Hindi scholarships at Central Hindi Institute, Agra in 2018-19. Egyptian diplomats have been attending the Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats at FSI, New Delhi. FSI also organized a special course for young Egyptian diplomats from 10-22 June 2019. ICAR and the Agricultural Research Center of Egypt are working in the field of agricultural research. 'Science & Technology' cooperation is implemented through biennial Executive Programmes. Visiting professors in the fields of Mathematics and Bioinformatics occupied the first ICCR chair in Egypt from Sep 2016 to June 2018, which was established in Ain Shams University in March 2016.

13. Egypt signed the ISA framework agreement as a founding member in March 2018 and ratified it in January 2019.

Cultural Relations

14. The Maulana Azad Centre for Indian Culture (MACIC) was established in Cairo in 1992 as an institutional embodiment of the spirit of centuries old cultural exchanges between the two great civilizations. MACIC is one of the international centers under Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). MACIC conducts Yoga classes on a regular basis and also offers language courses in Hindi and Urdu. The 24th Edition of Glimpses of India, in November 2018, saw participation of around 14000 students across 1800 schools from 19 governorates of Egypt. The 7th edition of India by the Nile, the annual Indian cultural festival, was held from 5 to 17 March 2019 in three cities in Egypt – Cairo, Alexandria, and Port Said. Yoga has gained immense popularity in Egypt and the International Day of Yoga 2019 was celebrated with enthusiasm in Cairo, Ismailia and Al-Minya.

15. Indian troupes performing Rabindra Sangeet, Qawwali and Kathak visited Egypt in 2018-19 in connection with Tagore Festival, Samaa Festival and the 24th edition of "Glimpses of India", respectively. A ten-member Bhangra Dance troupe from India participated in the 6th International Festival of Drums in April 2018. An ICCR sponsored Indian folk dance group from Bundeli Lok Nritya Natya Kala Parishad participated in the closing ceremony of International

Festival of Drums & Traditional Arts in Cairo in April 2019. Four cultural troupes from India performed in Egypt during India by the Nile in March 2019. Visit of Egyptian cultural troupes to India included the participation of the National Folk Arts group at the Africa Festival in New Delhi, a theatre group at the 7th International Theatre Festival, a Sebaiya Religious Chanting Group at the Islamic Forum, Aswan Folk Arts Group at the Rendezvous Festival in IIT Delhi, and the National Folk Arts Troupe at the International Folk Dance & Music Festival in New Delhi and at the Surajkund International Crafts Mela.

16. The Embassy launched the celebration of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, by organizing commemorative events on 2nd October 2018. The events included the launch of commemorative stamps on Gandhiji issued by Department of Posts, GoI, an exhibition, and a LED projection on the life of Mahatma Gandhi. In November, a photo exhibition- "Kanu's Gandhi"- was organized at El Hanager Gallery, Cairo Opera House grounds and at Bibliotheca Alexandrina. "Satya Vaarta", a roundtable discussion on Mahatma Gandhi was organized at MACIC in November 2018. A Khadi Exhibition was organized at MACIC in January 2019. Seminars including "Gandhi Katha" (a presentation on Mahatma Gandhi's Life and Message - in Hindi) were organized at Cairo University and Ain Shams University in February 2019. A cycling event from El-Dokki to Zamalek on the theme "Gandhi@150" was organized in April 2019. 150 saplings were planted in the American University Cairo Gardens, New Cairo Campus in May 2019. A six week "Jaipur Foot - Artificial Limb Fitment Camp" under the "India for humanity" programme was organized in Assuit in May-June 2019. 500 persons with disabilities in Egypt were provided with 550 artificial limbs during the camp.

17. Three streets in Cairo are named after Indian leaders namely, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Dr. Zakir Hussein. There are two busts of Mahatma Gandhi – one in Cairo at the Supreme Council of Culture and the other one in Alexandria at the Bibliotheca Alexandria.

Indian Community

18. At present, the Indian community in Egypt numbers at around 4200, most of whom are concentrated in Cairo. There are also a small number of families in Alexandria, Port Said and Ismailia. A majority of the Indians are either employed with Indian companies or are professionals with various multinationals. The Mission provides assistance to the Indian Community Association in Egypt (ICAE) and works closely with members of the community.

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