

India-Egypt Bilateral Relations

India and Egypt, two of the world's oldest civilizations, have enjoyed a history of close contact from ancient times. 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

Both the countries share close political understanding based on long history of contacts and cooperation on bilateral, regional and global issues, and multilateral fora and were the founding members of Non-Aligned Movement. 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) Shri. S. M. Krishna visited Cairo in March 2012 and the Egyptian Foreign Minister Mr. Nabil Fahmy visited India in December 2013.

After the new government led by President Sisi took over in June 2014, EAM Smt. Sushma Swaraj 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.

During 2018 to 2019, a number of Ministerial level visits from India to Egypt took place, which included - Minister of Defence Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman visited Egypt in September 2018 and met her Egyptian counterpart.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vineet Saran, Judge, Supreme Court of India, attended the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt in October 2019. Minister of State (IC) for Civil Aviation, Housing and Urban Affairs and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri visited Egypt in November 2019 and met with Minister of Trade & Industry of Egypt Mr. Amr Nassar. MoS also delivered the keynote address at the inaugural session of the "Regional Conclave on India - West Asia and North Africa (WANA)" organized by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

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 Foreign Minister Mr. Sameh Hassan Shoukry in March 2018 for India-Egypt Joint Commission Meeting (JCM), Minister of State for Military Production, General Mohamed El Assar in April 2018 to attend DEFEXPO in Chennai, Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Eng Tarek-EI Molla to attend 16th International Energy Forum in Delhi in April 2018 and Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Mr. Ezz el-Din Abu-Steit to attend COP14 UN Convention to combat desertification in September 2019.

Besides the JCM, 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. A dialogue mechanism exists between the Indian Council of World Affairs(ICWA) and the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA). The latest round of dialogue between ICWA and ECFA took place in Cairo in September 2019.

Economic Relations

Egypt has been traditionally one of India's most important trading partners in the African continent. The bilateral trade showed positive growth in 2017-18 to reach the level of US\$ 3.68 billion and further increased by 23% in 2018-19 to reach US\$ 4.55 billion. During 2018-19, India was Egypt's 9th largest trading partner, 8th largest export destination and the 10th largest import source. During the period April – November 2019, the trade volume stood at US \$ 3.17 billion (Imports to India – US\$ 1.42 billion; Exports from India- US\$ 1.75 billion). During this period, top three Indian exports were: petroleum products, meat and cotton

yarn while the top three Indian imports were: crude petroleum, petroleum products and fertilizers. The last Joint Trade Committee meeting was held in New Delhi in March 2019.

Over 450 Indian companies are registered in Egypt, of which around 50 are active in various sectors with a combined investment exceeding US\$ 3 billion. 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 companies are present in a range of sectors like apparel, agriculture, chemicals, energy, automobiles, retail and others. It is estimated that overall, these companies provide direct and indirect employment to approximately 35,000 Egyptians. Indian companies have also executed projects in Egypt. L&T successfully completed Toshka 2 – Wadi Halfa 220 kV double circuit overhead transmission line project and it was successfully energized on 13 January 2020. Previously, L&T executed 500kV / 220 kV GIS substation projects for Egypt Electricity Transmission Co. in Ain Sokhna and Ras Ghareeb and 220kV overhead transmission line from Safaga to El-Qusair. These projects were worth a total of US\$ 133.3 million. Sterling & Wilson built a cumulative capacity of 250 MW of Solar PV plants in 5 projects in Aswan in 2018-19, worth a total of US\$ 250 million, in addition to a data center project worth US\$ 3 million. Apart from this, the company has been awarded contract to connect renewable green energy to the main EETC Grid in a \$28 million deal. Mahindra Susten, a part of Mahindra & Mahindra Group has recently been awarded a 200 MW solar PV project in Aswan.

Egyptian investments in India are to the tune of US\$ 36.7 million which include EISewedy Group (smart electrometers); KAPCI Coatings (car paints) and Modern Waterproofing Group / Bitumode (waterproofing membranes and protection boards for construction industry).

The grant-in-aid projects 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 in Al Azhar University is operational. As a part of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and under 'India for Humanity' initiative, Jaipur Foot Artificial Limb Fitment Camp was organized at Assuit in May-June 2019. During the Camp, 550 artificial limbs were provided to 500 beneficiaries.

Technical cooperation and assistance has been a major part of our bilateral relationship. Since the year 2000, over 1000 Egyptian officials have benefited from ITEC and other programmes. During the year 2019-20, 110 ITEC scholarships were availed by Egyptian officials. 16 officials availed IAFS scholarships and 10 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. MoU between National Sugar Institute (NSI) Kanpur (India) and Faculty of Sugar and Intergrated Industry Technology (FSIIT), Assuit, Egypt was signed on 21 November 2019 to provide framework for collaboration in research, development, training and exchange of experts in the field of sugarcane, sugar beet and sugar industry. A MoU to establish an ICCR Chair (September 2016 – June 2018) was signed with the Ain Shams University in March 2016. Visiting professors in the fields of Mathematics and Bioinformatics occupied the ICCR chair.

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

Cultural Relations

The Maulana Azad Centre for Indian Culture (MACIC) was established in Cairo in 1992. The centre has been promoting cultural cooperation between the two countries, through Hindi, Urdu and Yoga classes; seminars; film shows; exhibitions etc. The 25th edition of Glimpses of India painting competition, in October-November 2019, saw participation of around 16000 students across 1600 schools from twelve governorates of Egypt. The 7th edition of India by the Nile, the annual Indian cultural festival, was held from 5-17 March 2019 in three cities in Egypt – Cairo, Alexandria, and Port Said. The 5th edition of International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Cairo, Ismailia and Al-Minya in June 2019. In November 2019, Egyptian Embassy organized 'Egypt by Ganga' Festival in New Delhi and Mumbai with participation of cultural troupes from Egypt.

The Embassy / MACIC organized a series of functions/events to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. An event to mark

150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and International Day of Non-violence was organized in collaboration with the League of Arab States (LAS) on 2 October 2019 at LAS Headquarters which featured a seminar and photo exhibition. A commemorative stamp on Mahatma Gandhi was released by Egypt Post on 6 November 2019.

Three streets in Cairo are named after Indian leaders namely, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Dr. Zakir Hussein. There are three busts of Mahatma Gandhi in Egypt– one at the Supreme Council of Culture, Cairo, one at Al-Horreya Park, Zamalek and one in Alexandria at the Bibliotheca Alexandria. The bronze bust at Al-Horreya Park was unveiled on 6 November 2019 by Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State (IC) for Civil Aviation, Housing and Urban Affairs and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry to mark the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Indian Community

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. Many 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. About 290 Indian students are studying in Egypt, mainly in Al Azhar University, and a few in Ain Shams and Cairo Universities.

India Business Forum (IBF) in Egypt was launched in 2012 by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The CII-IBF is a platform for Indian companies in Egypt to share information and raise issues of concern to authorities in Egypt. IBF also aims to promote and support the activities of its members in Egypt and play the role of a catalyst in enhancing trade and investment between the two countries.

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