

## **India – Jordan Relations**

### **Overview:**

India's relationship with Jordan has always been characterized by warmth and goodwill based on mutual respect. First bilateral agreement for cooperation and friendly relations was signed in 1947 and got formalized in 1950 when the two countries established full-fledged diplomatic ties. In 2015, 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of diplomatic relations was celebrated with large scale cultural activities to enhance people to people exchanges. Recent high level exchanges including meeting between Hon'ble Prime Minister (PM) and His Majesty King Abdullah (KA) in September 2015 and first ever HoS level visit to Jordan by Hon'ble Rashtrapati (President) in Oct 2015, EAM's transit visit in January 2016, MoS for External Affairs (MJA)'s official visit in November 2016, visit of Chief of Royal Court to India in Mar 2017, visit of Jordanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Mr. Ayman Safadi to India in Dec 2017 and the recent visit of Hon'ble PM Shri.Narendra Modi to Amman from 9-10 Feb 2018, during his official visit to Palestine on 10 Feb 2018 have given a boost to bilateral relations. HM King Abdullah visited India on a state visit from 27 February to 1 March 2018 and met with Hon'ble Rashtrapati, Hon'ble Vice President, Hon'ble PM & Hon'ble EAM for bilateral discussions. Twelve MoUs/Agreements were inked during this visit.

The 10th TEJC was held in New Delhi from 4-5 July 2017, led by Minister of Commerce and Industry Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman and Jordanian Minister of Trade, Industry and Supply Mr.Yarub Al-Qudah. FOC's are being held on a regular basis. First FOC was held in Amman at the level of Secretary (East) in 2014 and the second in New Delhi from 1-2 November, 2016. The Indian side was led by Secretary (ER).

Since November, 2014, Government of India offers e-Tourist Visa facility to Jordan. To help Jordan in its capacity building efforts, 30 ITEC slots have been made available apart from other scholarships under ICCR. GOI has increased ITEC slots from 30 to 50 since 2015-16, which was announced during the State visit of President to Jordan in October 2015. In October 2014, our Mission in New York handed over a cheque amounting to US\$500,000 to the United Nations in New York for the Emergency Response Fund for Jordan. In 2015 we paid the second tranche of 0.5 million by bank transfer directly to Jordan Government. In December 28, 2016, Ambassador handed over a cheque of US\$2 million towards cash grant from GOI to the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan towards humanitarian assistance.

Our interaction with Jordan in multilateral fora, particularly under UN framework has fostered better understanding on mutual concerns and priorities. Jordan had extended its support for India's candidature for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for the term 2011-12 and India had reciprocated its support to Jordan's candidature for the term 2014-16. In October 2014, our Mission in New York handed-over a cheque amounting US \$ 500,000 to the United Nations in New York for the Emergency Response Fund for Jordan. King Abdullah reassured of his full support to India's candidature for the permanent seat at the expanded UNSC. Both sides also cooperate in WTO and other international fora. Indian Embassy shifted to its new premises in Abdoun, Amman. Secretary (ER) accompanied by JS(WANA), inaugurated the new Chancery building of Embassy of India on 04 June 2017. Ms. Areej Al-Hawamdeh, Secretary General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Expatriates represented Jordan at the event. A bilateral meeting was held between the two after the event at the Embassy.

### **Political Relations:**

HM King Abdullah visited India on a state visit from 27 February to 1 March 2018. Deviating from protocol, Hon'ble PM Shri.Narendra Modi received the King upon his arrival at New Delhi Airport. On 28 Feb EAM Smt.Sushma Swaraj called on King Abdullah and discussed means to strengthen bilateral cooperation, as well as regional & international developments. Then the King visited prestigious Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi and held interaction with the faculty members. A 5-year MoU on Academic Cooperation was signed between IIT-D & Al Hussein Technical University of Jordan. King also visited the elite National Security Guard (NSG) Training Headquarters in Manesar, Haryana. Later HM King Abdullah paid floral tributes at Mahatma Gandhi samadhi, Rajghat and signed the guest book. Then he attended the CEO's Roundtable organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) in New Delhi and interacted with some of the prominent business leaders. On 1 March, PM Modi and King Abdullah addressed a conference 'Islamic Heritage: Promoting Understanding and Moderation' held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. Then the two leaders held delegation level bilateral talks at Hyderabad House and witnessed the inking of 12 MoU/Agreements. Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu called on HM King Abdullah and held discussion over the bilateral & regional issues. Earlier, Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji and PM received King Abdullah at Rashtrapati Bhawan where the King was accorded Ceremonial Welcome. Rashtrapati ji also hosted a banquet in the honour of HM King Abdullah.

Hon'ble PM Shri.Narendra Modi transited Amman from 9-10 Feb 2018, during his official visit to Palestine on 10 Feb 2018. This has been the first ever visit by an Indian PM to Palestine. PM was received upon arrival at the Airport by the acting PM of Jordan Dr. Mamdouh Al-Abbadi and Minister of State for Investment, Mr.Muhannad Shehadeh. The Mayor of Amman, Dy Governor of Amman, chief of Amman Police and Head of Security & Protection Unit of Queen Alia International Airport joined the reception crew. PM was received by HM King Abdullah at his private residential palace on a Friday as an exceptional gesture. There was a ceremonial reception for PM followed by a brief bilateral meeting with the King.

Hon'ble Rashtrapatiji paid a State visit to Jordan from October 10-12, 2015, which was first ever at HOS level from India. During the visit, Rashtrapatiji met with His Majesty King Abdullah, Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour and DPM and FM Mr Nasser S. Judeh. Rashtrapatiji also separately met with Senator President and Foreign Relations committee. He inaugurated Mahatma Gandhi Road and planted & dedicated an Olive tree to the World Peace. Heads of both states remotely inaugurated the \$860 million JIFCO Joint Venture. Six agreements/MoUs were signed in various fields of cooperation including on Cultural Exchange Programme 2015-17, Maritime Transport, Bureau of Indian Standards and Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization, Foreign Service Institute of India and Jordan Institute of Diplomacy. In addition 10 MOUs for Educational cooperation between the Indian Universities and Institutes and their Jordanian counterparts were signed. University of Jordan conferred an Honorary Doctorate on Rashtrapatiji. In August 2017, His Majesty King Abdullah sent a cable to Hon'ble Rashtrapatiji congratulating him on taking presidential oath.

Earlier on the sidelines of UNGA in September 2015, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri.Narendra Modi met His Majesty King Abdullah. The landmark State visit of King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein and Queen Rania to India in December 2006 provided an excellent opportunity for exchanging views on all aspects of our bilateral relations. During the visit, a number of bilateral agreements were signed. Dr Fayez Al-Tarawneh,

Chief of Royal Court (CRC) visited India from 7-10 March, 2017 at the invitation of MoS (MJA). During his visit to India, CRC called on the President, VP, PM, MoS (MJA) and NSA. His address at ICWA focused on the theme Global war on terrorism and its implications on Middle East region and beyond. He also interacted with Indian industry at meeting organized by FICCI.

The then MOS(EA), Shri E. Ahamed made a transit halt in Amman on 20 November 2011 en route to Ramallah (Palestine) and called on the then Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Awn Shwkat Al-Khasawneh. His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal paid a visit to India during October-November 2012. Shri S.M. Krishna, the then External Affairs Minister (EAM), accompanied by an official delegation, made a transit visit to Amman on 8 and 11 January 2012. During the course of the visit, the Indian side led by EAM and the Jordanian side led by H.E. Mr. Nasser S. Judeh held talks on bilateral and regional issues of mutual concern. MOS(EA) again paid an official visit to Jordan on 2-3 July, 2013, and transited on 6 July, 2013. During the visit, he called on PM Ensour and met with Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh. Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Commerce and Industry Smt.Nirmala Sitharaman visited Jordan from 29 to 31 March, 2015 for the 9th Joint Economic Committee Meeting held in Amman on 30 March 2015. During her stay in Amman from March 29 to 31, 2015 she had bilateral meetings with DPM & FM Mr.Nasser Judeh and Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Ms.Maha Ali.

During External Affairs Minister Smt.Sushma Swaraj's transit visit to Amman in January 2016, Secretary General Mr.Mohammad Taisir Yassen called on her. MoS for External Affairs Shri M.J. Akbar paid an official visit to Jordan from 09-10 November 2016. During his visit to Jordan, MoS (MJA) met Chief of Royal Court Dr. Fayez Al-Tarawneh, DPM and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr.Nasser Judeh, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mrs. Lina Annab, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr.Isher Khasawneh, Minister of State for Economic Affairs Dr. Yusuf Mansur and Deputy Director General of GID Major General Qasem Rawashdeh. He also interacted with Minister of Interior Mr.Salameh Hammad, Mayor of Amman, Mr. Aqel Biltaji, other high ranking dignitaries from Jordan and prominent members of Indian community during luncheon hosted by Ambassador. The Minister met with the members of the Investment Commission of Jordan, senior members of various Development Zones across Jordan, as well as with the Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA), who organized a roundtable where Dr. Jawad Anani, DPM for Economic Affairs and MoS for Investment Affairs was the Guest of Honour. An 8-member National Security Guard team participated in the Annual Warrior Competition held in Amman during 30 Apr-04 May 2017. 71st Independence Day was celebrated by the Mission where Ambassador addressed the members of the Indian community and friends of India in Amman. In a Reception hosted by Ambassador at India House in Amman H.E. Mr. Imad N. Fakhoury, Hon'ble Minister of Planning & International Cooperation was the Chief Guest and three other cabinet Ministers were also there.

Jordanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Mr. Ayman Safadi, visited India from 27-28, December 2017. During the visit he met the Union Minister for Commerce & Industry Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu, MoS(EA) Shri M.J. Akbar and held bilateral consultations with EAM Smt. Sushma Swaraj on 28 Dec 2017. He also delivered a lecture on "The Middle East at Crossroads: The Challenges of Achieving Peace and Security" at the Indian Council for World Affairs on 28 Dec 2017.

### **Commercial Relations:**

India-Jordan trade is governed by an agreement signed in 1976. A Trade and Economic Joint Committee constituted under the Agreement promote and monitor the progress. Over the years, bilateral trade has grown rapidly despite global economic downturn. A successful cooperation in fertilizer sector between the two countries exists. A Joint venture project worth US\$ 860 million between the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) and the Indian Farmers Fertilizers Cooperative (IFFCO) for manufacturing of Phosphoric Acid set up in Eshidiya was inaugurated by Hon'ble Rashtrapatiji & His Majesty King Abdullah. The MMTC India Ltd inked an MOU with the JPMC on cooperation in the fertilizer sector in June, 2015. A commercial delegation headed by Mr.Thabet Elwir, Chairman of Jordan Investment Commission visited Delhi and Mumbai from 1-3 May 2017 to hold business meetings with Indian companies which were organized by FICCI.

Over two dozen textile factories owned by Indian entrepreneurs with an investment of US\$300 million account for Jordan's exports under the FTA regimes to the west. India became the 4th largest trade partner of Jordan after Iraq, Saudi Arabia and China. Details of trade volume are tabulated below (values in US\$ billion).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Trade turnover</b>	<b>Export to India</b>	<b>Import from India</b>
2010-11	1.304	0.818	0.485
2011-12	2.304	1.483	0.821
2012-13	1.942	0.942	1.000
2013-14	2.206	0.610	1.595
2014-15	2.228	0.857	1.431
2015-16	1.350	0.851	0.499
2016- 17	1.352	0.828	0.524

*[Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, GOI]*

India imports fertilizers, phosphates, phosphoric acid etc from Jordan and exports electrical machinery, cereals, frozen meat, organic and inorganic chemicals, animal fodders, engineering and automotive parts etc. Possibilities for joint ventures in the fields of leather, automobile, IT, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy [Solar] and construction sectors can be explored further. The newly constituted Investment Commission is actively pursuing to attract investors from all across the world, including Indian investments in Jordan especially in ICT, Finance/Banking Services, Renewable energy (Solar) and Bio-medical services sectors. The 10th India-Jordan Joint Trade and Economic Commission (JTEC) was held in New Delhi from 4-5 July, 2017. Minister of Trade, Industry and Supply Mr.Yarub Al-Qudah led a high-level official and business delegation to India for the meeting. Minister of Commerce and Industry, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman led the Indian delegation. During the meeting, the two sides signed Economic and Trade Cooperation agreement. India has extended a US\$ 100 million line of credit to promote Trade and Investment during Rashtrapatiji's State visit to India in October 2015. The Morbi Ceramics Association, Gujarat participated in the event Interbuild Jordan Fair 2017. Chairman of the Jordan Investment Commission H.E. Mr. Thabet Elwir led a high-level delegation business delegation to India in May 2017. The delegation held a business interaction at FICCI and met with Invest India on 01 May 2017. Mission organized Business Promotion Seminar focusing on the State of Rajasthan in association with the Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA) in Amman on 04 October 2017. ITEC Day was celebrated by the Mission on October 31, 2017 with

Chief of Investment Commission of Jordan and Minister of State for Investment Affairs Mr. Muhannad Shehadeh presiding over as the Chief Guest.

H.E. Mrs. Majd Shweikeh, Hon'ble Minister of Information and Communication Technology of Jordan accompanied by H.E. Mr. Muhannad Shehadeh led a high level business delegation to interact with leading ICT companies in Bengaluru, India from 25-27 February, 2018. A delegation of senior representatives and leading IT company CEOs of Jordan accompanied the Ministers. They took part in a Round Table discussion and an interactive session along with a campus visit to Infosys.

### **Cultural Relations:**

There is immense interest in Jordan for Indian art and culture, especially Bollywood films. Bollywood actors like Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan are popular in Jordanian households. Jordan is keen to see Bollywood and other Indian film producers to shoot films at their locations. A delegation from Jordan had participated in the 3rd edition of India International Film Tourism Conclave with the purpose to promote Jordanian locations to Indian film makers. During the visit of President, a cultural exchange agreement between India and Jordan for the period 2015-17 has been signed. There has been regular exchange of cultural troupes. Embassy, in cooperation with local partners, had organized several socio-cultural activities in 2015 to mark the 65th Anniversary of the Diplomatic Relations between India and Jordan.

ICCR sponsored 10 member Rajasthani Folk troupe led by Esak Khan performed in Amman and at Al Dulayl in Zarqa Governorate in Feb 2016. Embassy, in cooperation with local partner, organized a "Bollywood Nite" with a special screening of popular Indian film "Prem Ratan Dhan Payo" at the Zara Centre, Amman on 06 October 2016. Ms.Lina Annab, Hon'ble Minister of Tourism and Antiquities of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan presided over the function as the Chief Guest.

The Mission, in cooperation with the Jordan-India Friendship Society (JIFS), celebrated 126th Birth Anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Chief Architect of the Constitution of India on 13 April 2017 at a solemn ceremony at a local city hotel. H.E. Dr. Awad Abu Jarad Al Mashagabeh, Hon'ble Minister of Justice of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Mission celebrated the 3rd International Day of Yoga at the iconic and historical Citadel Amman on 21 June 2017, where Minister of Youth Mr. Hditha Al Khreisha was present as the Chief Guest. Mission organised a Drawing/Painting Exhibition by Children aged 8 – 14 years resident in Amman as part of pre-event celebrations of 70 years of Indian independence. On 25 September 2017, Mission organized an event to commemorate the 100th Birth Anniversary of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya who has been our nation's inspiration. Mission conducted a photo exhibition on life and times of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on 31 October 2017.

### **Indian Community:**

Jordan is home to more than 10,000 Indians, who are employed in textile, construction and manufacturing sectors, fertilizer companies, health sector, universities, IT, financial companies and multilateral organisation. There are about 25 garment factories across Jordan [Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs)] owned by Indians with an investment of over US\$ 300 million and employing over 10,000 persons. In September 2016, in Association with the Embassy of India, Amman, India Tourism organized "Know India Seminar" for travel trade. Local Indian community in Jordan celebrated festivals of Onam on 24 September 2017 and Diwali on 03 November 2017 in Amman where Ambassador was invited as Chief Guest. Mission celebrated Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas – 2018 at the Embassy premises on 09 January 2018 in which prominent Indians from all walks of life

and friends of India in Jordan participated. Mission also celebrated Hindi Diwas – 2018 at the Embassy premises in which members of the Indian community in Jordan, Mission officials and their family members participated. A 10-member Rajasthani Cultural Troupe sponsored by ICCR performed at three different cities of Jordan. Mission celebrated the 69th Republic Day of India at Embassy premises in Amman with Flag Hoisting followed by singing of the National Anthem on 26 January 2018.

**Useful Resources:**

Website: <http://indembassy-amman.org/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Embassy-of-India-Amman/>

Twitter page: <https://twitter.com/IndiainJordan>

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