

## **India - Qatar Relations**

India-Qatar cooperation in diverse sectors has been steadily growing in an excellent framework provided by historically close ties and regular and substantive engagement, including at the highest levels of the two Governments. The large, diverse, accomplished and highly regarded Indian community is making an important contribution to Qatar's growth and development and in nurturing the bonds of deep-rooted friendship and multi-faceted cooperation between the two countries.

### **Political Relations**

At the invitation of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, HE Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the PM and Minister of Interior of Qatar undertook his first official visit to India on 2-3 December, 2016. HE the Qatari Prime Minister was accompanied by Minister of Finance H.E. Mr. Ali Shareef Al Emadi, Minister of Municipality and Environment, HE Mr. Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Rumaihi, Minister of Transport and Communication, HE Mr. Jassim bin Saif Al Sulaiti, CEO of Qatar Airways HE Mr. Akbar Al Baker, Chairman of Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Jassim Al-Thani, Deputy CEO of Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), Mr. Ahmed bin Jassim bin Mohamed al-Thani and several key captains of Industry. During the visit, on December 2, Prime Minister and Interior Minister HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani addressed a working dinner with businessmen. At the meeting, he announced the establishment of a Qatar-India Business Council.

On December 3, the two Prime Ministers had a delegation level meeting followed by a working lunch. During the talks, the two Prime Ministers reviewed the state of bilateral relations. Both discussed key issues of energy, trade and security. The two leaders also emphasized the need to take practical steps to build on the framework provided by the Agreement on Defence Cooperation by enhancing cooperation in the fields of specialized training, exchange of information and joint production of defence equipment.

Both sides agreed to increase the level of participation in infrastructure development projects on either side and undertook to exchange information on available investment opportunities. The visit provided another opportunity for the two sides to exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest, with particular reference to the security situation in West Asia, Middle East and South Asia. The two sides resolved to work closely to combat terrorism and radicalization and noted the importance of consolidating the values of tolerance and preventing the spread of sectarianism. They discussed cooperation on counter-terrorism, intelligence sharing and countering terror-financing and money laundering, apart from other transnational crimes.

Five Agreements/MOUs were signed, including the Agreement for Exemption of Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic, Special and Official Passport Holders and MOUs on Technical Cooperation in Cyber Space and Combating Cyber Crime; and between the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy of Qatar and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), in addition to a Letter of Intent for e-visas for tourists and businessmen. Separately, an MoU between Qatar Ports Management Company ("Mwani Qatar") and Indian Ports Global Private Limited was concluded. During the visit, Prime Minister of Qatar called on Hon'ble President Shri Pranab Mukherjee. The Home Minister of India, Shri Rajnath Singh, called on the Prime Minister of Qatar during the visit. National Security Advisor Ajit Doval also called on the Qatari Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi undertook an official visit to Doha on 4-5 June, 2016 at the invitation of HH the Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. PM's visit provided an excellent opportunity for both sides to engage at the highest level, and imparted fresh momentum to our bilateral ties. This was the highest-level visit from India to Qatar since the visit of former PM Dr. Manmohan Singh in November, 2008.

PM interacted with and addressed about 500 Indian workers at a medical camp, organized by the Indian Community Benevolent Forum and the Indian Medical Association. PM also had a fruitful round table interaction with top investors/businessmen of Qatar on 5 June. The Minister of Economy and Commerce of Qatar, HE Sheikh Ahmed bin Jassim Al Thani, who is also Vice Chairman of Qatar's Sovereign Wealth Fund, Qatar Investment Authority [QIA], co-chaired the meeting.

On 5 June, PM was received by HH the Emir at the Emiri Diwan, with ceremonial honours, and a Lunch Banquet was hosted in PM's honour. The two leaders exchanged views on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of common interest. Both sides agreed to constitute an inter-ministerial High Level Joint Committee to regularly review all bilateral matters, as well as regional and global issues of mutual interest. They agreed to further enhance high-level political exchanges, defence and security cooperation, trade and economic relations and people-to-people linkages. Before his departure from Doha, PM addressed the Indian community at a community event organized in his honour by the Embassy.

The following seven MOUs/Agreements were signed during PM's visit: (1) MOU for investment in National Investment and Infrastructure Fund of India; (2) MOU on Financial Intelligence Unit – India (FIU-IND) and the Qatar Financial Information Unit (QFIU); (3) MOU for Cooperation in Skill Development and Recognition of Qualifications; (4) MOU for Cooperation in the field of Health; (5) Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Custom Matters; (6) MOU on Tourism Cooperation; and (7) First Executive Program for MOU in the field of Youth and Sports. As a special gesture to mark PM's visit, the Qatari side released 23 Indian prisoners under Emiri pardon on the first day of the holy month of Ramadan on 6 June. PM, who discussed the well-being and welfare of Indian nationals with the Qatari leadership, expressed gratitude, via twitter, to the Emir for this gesture. EAM also tweeted to convey thanks to Qatar.

General [Dr.] Vijay Kumar Singh, [Retd.], MOS for External Affairs MOS [VKS], visited Qatar on 5 September, 2016 as a follow up visit to PM's visit to Qatar in June 2016. During his meeting with H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar and Mr. Soltan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi [SAM], Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Qatar, a whole gamut of bilateral issues, including bilateral relations as well as other issues of mutual interest, including terrorism and the situation in J&K, were discussed. MOS [VKS] also handed over a letter to HH the Emir from our PM on bilateral relations during his meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar.

Earlier, the Emir of Qatar HH Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani had paid a State Visit to India in March 2015. Previously, the then Emir HH Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani [now the Father Emir] had visited India in 1999, 2005 and 2012.

During HH the Emir's visit to India in March, 2015, the two sides discussed ways and means to build a forward-looking partnership by broadening and deepening the

bilateral engagement and by better leveraging the existing complementarities between the two countries in key areas of mutual interest including inter alia, energy, power, petrochemicals, investments, infrastructure, project exports, education, culture, health, human resource, media and information technology. Six Agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit, in the following areas: (i) Transfer of sentenced Persons; (ii) Mutual Cooperation between Foreign Service Institute, MEA and Diplomatic Institute, MFA; (iii) Cooperation in Information and Communication Technology; (iv) Cooperation in Atmospheric and Ocean Sciences; (v) Cooperation in Radio and Television; and (vi) Mutual Cooperation and Exchange of News between Qatar News Agency and United New Agency.

India's National Security Adviser [NSA], Shri Ajit Doval, visited Qatar on 11-12 February 2015 and handed over a message from PM to HH the Emir of Qatar. NSA also met Qatar's Prime Minister & Minister of Interior and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

There have also been other high level contacts between the two countries in the recent past. External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj and Dr. Khalid bin Mohammad Al Attiyah, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar (QFM) spoke on phone a few times and also met at the India-GCC Ministerial meetings on the sidelines of the 69th and 70th UNGA in New York in September, 2014 and September, 2015, respectively. Ahead of the 70<sup>th</sup> UNGA Session, the Emir had received a letter from PM on UN reform and other multilateral issues, and conveying India's thanks for Qatar's support for the First International Day of Yoga (IDY).

Mr. Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Rumaihi, former Assistant Foreign Minister (AFM) had visited Delhi on 5 June, 2014 and held Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with Shri Anil Wadhwa, and the then Secretary(East), and called on EAM. The then Secretary(East) had visited Doha during the holy month of Ramadan on 9 July, 2014. He met with AFM Al Rumaihi and the Emir's Political Adviser, and called on HE the Prime Minister of Qatar. Law and Justice Minister Shri D.V. Sadananda Gowda met with Qatar's Justice Minister Dr. Hassan bin Lahdnan Al Hassan Al Mohannadi during his visit to Doha as the leader of the Indian delegation to the 13<sup>th</sup> United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (UNCCPCJ) in April, 2015. Qatar's Transport Minister and Commander of Qatar Emiri Air Force visited the Aero Indian Exhibition in Bengaluru in February, 2015.

Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Petroleum & Natural Gas [MOPNG] Shri Dharmendra Pradhan visited Doha on 8-10 November 2015, leading a high level delegation to the 6<sup>th</sup> Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable (AMER). As a special gesture, HE the Prime Minister of Qatar along with Dr. Mohammed bin Saleh A Sada, Minister of Energy and Industry received MOPNG for a meeting on 9 November before the inauguration of the 6<sup>th</sup> AMER; MOPNG also had a separate meeting with his counterpart. MOPNG's address at the first Plenary Session of 6<sup>th</sup> AMER was highly acclaimed. He held bilateral meetings with Heads of a number of other delegations. MOPNG also had an interaction with a broad-based gathering of the Indian community in Qatar.

A 12-member Qatari delegation led by Major General Saad Bin Jassem Al Khulaifi, Director General of Public Security, Ministry of Interior of Qatar attended the First Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2016 [AMCDRR 2016] [under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction] in New Delhi from 3-5 November, 2016.

## **Defence**

India-Qatar Defence Cooperation Agreement, signed during the visit of former PM to Qatar in November 2008 and extended for a further period of five years in 2013, is implemented through the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC), which had its fourth meeting in Delhi on 6-7 January, 2015. As a follow up of the 4<sup>th</sup> JDCC, a scoping delegation of Qatar Coast Guard visited India from 21-25 February, 2015, and a team from Joaan bin Jassim Command and Staff College visited India in April 2015.

A three-member delegation from Joaan Bin Jassim Joint Command and Staff College, led by its Commandant during their visit to India from 13-18 April, 2015, visited National Defence College (NDC), Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), National Maritime Foundation (NMF) and Defence Services Staff College (DSSC, Wellington). A Brigadier rank officer of Qatar Armed Forces joined the 56<sup>th</sup> NDC course in January 2016.

Indian Coast Guard Ship ICGS SANKALP visited Doha Port from 24-28 January 2016 in conjunction with the celebrations of India's 67<sup>th</sup> Republic Day. For the first time ever, the 34-member ceremonial band of Qatar Armed Forces played the National Anthems of the two countries at the Embassy's Official Reception to celebrate India's 67<sup>th</sup> Republic Day on 26 January, 2016.

A 6-member delegation from Qatar Emiri Naval Forces [QENF] attended Indian Navy's International Fleet Review (IFR) at Vishakhapatnam from 4-8 February, 2016. A high level delegation from the Qatar Emiri Land Forces participated at the Ninth International Land, Naval, Internal Homeland Security and Defence System Exposition - 'DEFEXPO INDIA-2016', held in Goa from 28 to 31 March, 2016.

A high level delegation from India participated at the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (DIMDEX 2016) held at Doha, Qatar from 29-31 March 2016. The delegation was led by Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba, Flag Officer Commanding in Chief, Western Naval Command of the Indian Navy [now Chief of the Naval Staff] and included two senior officers of the Indian Coast Guard. Indian Naval Ship 'Beas' visited Doha port from 28 March to 01 April 2016 to participate in DIMDEX 2016.

A three member delegation of QENF led by Brigadier Tariq Khaled Al Obaidly, Director of Education and Courses, visited the Southern Naval Command, Kochi, Indian Naval Academy [INA], Ezhimala and INS Hamla, Mumbai, from 18-22 April, 2016.

## **Commercial Relations**

With an annual import of 7.5 million metric tons (MMT) of LNG under a long term contract between Petronet of India and RasGas of Qatar, and some spot purchases by Indian companies from time to time, Qatar is the largest supplier of LNG to India, accounting for over 65% of India's global import and 15% of Qatar's export of LNG. On 31 December, 2015, Petronet LNG, India's largest natural gas importer, and Qatar's RasGas Co. Ltd signed an agreement for an additional supply of 1.0 mn tons of LNG annually from the RasGas through the remainder of the 25-year contract, ending in 2028.

Besides, LNG, India also imports ethylene, propylene, ammonia, urea and polyethylene from Qatar. Therefore, the balance of trade continues to be heavily in Qatar's favour. India's exports to Qatar have stabilized in the range of US\$900 million to US\$1,000 million. However, imports in value terms have declined sharply in the last 1-2 years due to the decrease in international oil and gas prices. Bilateral trade touched a high of US\$ 16.68 billion in 2013-14 and dropped to US\$ 9.93 billion in last fiscal 2015-16. The balance of trade is heavily in favour of Qatar. Major items of Indian exports are machinery & equipment, transport equipment, articles of iron or steel, plastic & articles thereof, construction material, electrical and electronic items, textiles & garments, chemicals, precious stones, rubber, spices and cereals. India is the third largest export destination for Qatar (behind Japan and South Korea) and ranks at 10<sup>th</sup> position for Qatar's imports.

Both countries are keen to expand collaborations for mutual benefit in the fields of energy; trade, finance and investments; infrastructure; education and research; sports; travel and tourism; and other areas. Besides official interactions, people-to-people contacts and initiatives by private sector are energising dialogue and cooperation in various sectors. India's corporate sector is increasingly pursuing business opportunities in Qatar. A number of reputed Indian companies, particularly in construction/infrastructure and IT, have operations in Qatar, including L&T; Punj Lloyd; Shapoorji Pallonji; Voltas; Simplex; TCS; Wipro; MahindraTech; HCL; etc. SBI, ICICI and other Indian banks have limited operations under the Qatar Financial Centre or private exchange houses in Qatar.

Following an MoU signed between Aiana Resorts (part of Leela Group) and Faisal Holding during the Emir's visit to India in March, 2015, both partners are constructing high end luxury apartments complex in Doha's West Bay area, with 50% investment by each. During the Emir's visit, another MoU was signed for setting up a multi-speciality hospital in Qatar in partnership with Medanta of India.

On 7 June, 2016, the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SCDL) announced that a Qatari company, Al Balagh Trading & Contracting and Indian construction company, Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T), had been appointed as the main contractors to build the 40,000 seat capacity Al Rayyan Stadium for FIFA 2022. The joint-venture was made official at a signing ceremony at SCDL.

In the economic arena, there have been a number of other notable developments in our bilateral cooperation with Qatar in the last over two years. Mr. Sultan Al Khater, Under Secretary in the Ministry of Economy & Commerce had led an 18 member composite delegation, focused on economic partnership, to New Delhi on 25-26 March, 2014. There has been significant expansion in business operations of Indian companies in infrastructural and IT sectors present in Qatar, including such prestigious projects such as Gold Line Metro and Wakra Bypass highway being awarded to Larsen & Toubro. 45 Indian companies participated in Project Qatar Exhibition (PQE) in Doha in May, 2014. The number increased to 60 at PQE held in May, 2015.

More than 50 Indian companies, under the banner of ASSOCHAM, participated in Project Qatar 2016 organized from May 9-12, 2016 at Doha Exhibition & Convention Center (DECC), in which a total of over 1,800 companies participated, with nearly 1,100 exhibitors. Over 40 countries were present in 22 pavilions. The event also featured the 13th International Construction Technology & Building Materials Exhibition which provided a B2B platform to discuss investment and trade opportunities.

'Vibrant Gujarat' business delegation from Gujarat visited Doha from 3-5 September, 2014. The Embassy organized three business and investment events, attended by several Qatari businessmen/investors, in Doha on 25 September, 2014 coinciding with PM's launch of the 'Make in India' campaign. A 20-member NASSCOM delegation visited Doha on 18-19 March, 2015.

There has also been encouraging participation from Qatar at major business conferences in India – the 4<sup>th</sup> India-Arab Partnership Conference in New Delhi on 26-27 November, 2014; Vibrant Gujarat Summit in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 11-13 January, 2015; the Partnership Summit 2015 in Jaipur, Rajasthan from 15-17 January, 2015; BlackRock India Investor Summit in New Delhi on 3 February, 2015 (at which former PM of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor Al Thani was among the attendees) and Aero India in Bengaluru from 18-22 February, 2015.

In its engagement with Qatar Investment Authority and other relevant Government organisations, and private businessmen and investors in Qatar, Embassy of India, Doha continues to actively promote 'Make in India' and other major initiatives of Gol and highlight India's distinctive strengths as a preferred business and investment partner.

Minister of Railways Shri Suresh Prabhu, Qatar's Finance Minister Ali Shareef Al Emadi and Governor of Qatar Central Bank Sheikh Abdulla Bin Saoud Al Thani were among the dignitaries who attended the inauguration of the full fledged branch of Doha Bank in Mumbai on 29 April 2015.

The Embassy organized a substantive programme for the visit of a 7-member multi-sectoral delegation from the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) led by Dr. Naushad Forbes, President-designate, CII to Doha on 20-21 October 2015.

A delegation of Indian Electrical & Electronics Manufacturers' Association [IEEMA] visited Qatar on 27 October 2015 to promote 'ELECRAMA 2016' scheduled to be held in Bengaluru from 13-17 February 2016.

Qatar Airways started its flight to Nagpur on 1 December 2015. [Nagpur is the 13<sup>th</sup> destination in India for regular Qatar Airways flights from Doha]. Qatar Airways (QA) now has total weekly passenger flights of 102 across 13 key cities in India.

India Tourism, Dubai, in cooperation with Embassy of India in Doha organized a well-attended promotional exhibition/road show for the travel and tour operators in Doha, Qatar, on 18 November, 2015 to promote 'Destination India', along with 11 hotels & a tour operator from India. Members of the Travel Industry and Media of Qatar interacted with the officials of India Tourism-Dubai.

On 29 August, 2016 Qatar National Bank (QNB), Qatar's largest bank, received RBI approval for retail operations and opened a branch in India in order to provide comprehensive banking services. QNB (India) had hitherto provided investment and finance consultancy and advisory services for Middle East companies establishing businesses and investing in India.

A 9-member delegation from Gujarat led by Dr. Rajiv Kumar Gupta, Principal Secretary, Government of Gujarat, visited Doha on October 10-11, 2016 to promote 7th

'Vibrant Gujarat' Global Summit to be held in Gandhinagar from January 10-13, 2017. During their visit, the delegation participated in the networking event organized by IBPN, held a round table meeting with members of Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI), met CEO and executives of Qatar Development Bank (QDB), met senior representatives of Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) and "Muntajat", the Qatari PSU for marketing of petrochemical products.

While the current volume of Qatar's FDI in India is modest, Qatar's Sovereign Wealth Fund [Qatar Investment Authority (QIA)] and other State-owned entities, as well as private investors in Qatar are keenly looking at attractive investment options in infrastructural sectors in India in various sectors, including real estate/construction, roads/highways, airports/airlines, ports; LNG, petrochemicals and fertilizers; and tourism/hospitality.

There is vast potential for QIA to substantially increase its investments in India, keeping in view India's huge investment needs (\$1 trillion in next five years in infrastructural sectors alone) and investment friendly policies, as also QIA's keenness to diversify its global portfolio. Mission has been actively engaged with QIA and other State-owned and private entities in Qatar, highlighting the new initiatives and policies of the current Government, such as 'Make in India' and the distinctive advantages of India as an investment destination. During PM's visit to Qatar from 4-5 June, 2016, a MoU for investment in India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) was signed with QIA.

Petrotec 2016 Exhibition took place in India at Pragati Maidan from 4-7 December, 2016. More than 600 exhibitors from over 50 countries took part in it. Qatar was represented by Minister of Energy and Industry and the current OPEC President HE Dr. Mohammed Bin Saleh Al-Sada.. Dr. Al Sada was one of the speakers at the Exhibition and in his address he highlighted the role played by OPEC in regulating and balancing the global oil market. He also mentioned that India is one of the key beneficiaries of the prevalent low oil prices in the world market.

### **Cultural Relations**

Cultural ties between India and Qatar are deep rooted and actively nurtured by both sides. Qataris admire India's cultural diversity. There is a regular flow of Indian artistes performing in Qatar at events organised by community organizations affiliated to the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), apex body of associations of the Indian community functioning under the aegis of Embassy of India, Doha, and private sponsors. With the Embassy's cooperation and support, ICC organized a large scale Community Festival titled 'A Passage to India' in November, 2013; March, 2015 and April, 2016, aimed at presenting India in a composite manner, i.e. showcasing India's rich cultural diversity as well as strengths and achievements in different spheres. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of this Festival was organized in celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Late Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of India's Constitution.

ICCR-sponsored photo exhibition on Islamic Monuments of India, and Kathak performances and Kalbeliya folk dance performances organised by the Embassy in Doha in September-October, 2014, August, 2015 and April, 2016, respectively, were highly acclaimed. Exhibitions on India by young photographers held by Qatar Photographic Society in the last three years have also been very popular. A few Indian films/documentaries are usually shown at the annual Film Festival of Doha Film

Institute. Both countries had signed an Agreement on Cultural Cooperation during the former Emir's visit in April 2012. The Qatari side has proposed to celebrate India-Qatar Year of Culture in 2019.

There are 14 Indian schools in Qatar, offering CBSE curricula to over 30,000 students, most of whom are the children of Indian nationals working in Qatar.

**Yoga** : Qatar was a co-sponsor to the Resolution at the UNGA adopted unanimously with a record 177 co-sponsors, declaring 21 June as the International Day of Yoga (IDY). Q-Post released a commemorative stamp to mark this occasion. The Embassy organized a public event to celebrate the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Day of Yoga at Al Gharafa Sports Club on 21 June. The event was attended by a large gathering, including Qatari dignitaries; members of Diplomatic Corps; Indian nationals and other expatriates.

*Fath Al Khair* [meaning 'the Victory of the Good'] Dhow undertook a voyage from Doha to Mumbai, via Oman during 5 October - 17 November 2015. On arrival in Mumbai, the crew were given a warm and enthusiastic reception at a ceremony attended by Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra Shri C. Vidyasagar Rao and other dignitaries and officials. This unique initiative was launched in 2013 under the patronage of HH Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir of Qatar, as a commemoration by Qataris of the historical pearl trade route that existed between Qatar and India. It is significant that on its second voyage, *Fath Al Khair* sailed to Mumbai, whereas its first voyage was to neighbouring Gulf countries.

Mr. Hassan Al Thawadi, Secretary General of Qatar's Supreme Committee of Delivery and Legacy for FIFA 2022, and other senior officials participated in the Asian Football Confederation annual awards function held at Gurgaon on 29 November 2015. There has been regular and active participation from India at major sports tournaments held in Qatar, including Snooker where India won a silver and a bronze and World Military Games where India won a silver in November, 2016. Indian Golfer Ms. Aditi Ashok won the first edition of the Qatar Ladies Open [European Tour] Tournament in November, 2016.

### **Indian Community**

Indian nationals comprise the largest expatriate community in Qatar and are engaged in a wide spectrum of professions, including medicine; engineering; education, finance; banking; business and media. They are highly regarded for their honesty, hard work, qualifications and contribution to the development and progress of Qatar.

The Embassy accords priority to reaching out to the Indian community in Qatar in a pro-active and inclusive manner, ensuring their well-being and welfare, and renders services to them efficiently and in a helpful manner. Several volunteers from the Indian community are also helping our workers, mainly through the Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF), functioning under the aegis of Embassy of India, Doha. ICBF was awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award [PBSA] in January, 2011.

An official delegation led by Shri. Pradeep Kumar Mohanty, Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala, along with Smt. Rani George, Secretary NORKA and Shri. R.S.Kannan, CEO, Norka Roots, visited Qatar from 18-19 April, 2016 and met with Ambassador and other officials. Several issues related to the welfare of Indian



community in Qatar, especially Non Resident Keralites [NRKs] were discussed during the meeting. Ambassador attended the 5<sup>th</sup> PBD Panel Discussion 'Managing Migration to ECR Countries' on 28 June, 2016 in New Delhi which was chaired by Hon'ble EAM.

Both countries have a Joint Working Group on Labour and Manpower Development, The Fourth Meeting of the Joint Working Group [JWG] on Labour and Manpower Development between India and Qatar was held in New Delhi on 24 and 25 November, 2016. Shri Manish Gupta, Joint Secretary [OIA-I], headed the Indian delegation. Mr. Mohammed Hassan Al Ubaidali, Head of Labour Section, led the Qatari delegation. The Qatari delegation also included Mr Salih Saeed Al-Shawi, Director, International Cooperation Department in the Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs and Mr. Badar Abdulla Al Sideequi, Legal Researcher. The third JWG on Labour and Manpower Development between India and Qatar was held in Doha in August, 2015.

The Embassy remains in close contact with the authorities concerned in Qatar regarding the well being of our workers and other nationals. We welcome the process of labour reforms undertaken by Government of Qatar and look forward to expeditious implementation of these and further steps being considered.

**Useful Resources:**

Embassy of India, Doha Website:  
[www.indianembassyqatar.gov.in](http://www.indianembassyqatar.gov.in)

Embassy of India, Doha Twitter Handle:  
<https://twitter.com/IndEmbDoha>

Embassy of India, Doha Facebook Page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/IndianEmbassyQatar>

Embassy of India, Doha Youtube Account:  
[www.youtube.com/user/Embassydoha](http://www.youtube.com/user/Embassydoha)

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**December 2016**