



India-Saudi Arabia

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The Prime Minister of India visited Saudi Arabia from 28th- 29th October 2019. The visit was the second visit of the Prime Minister to the country in three years.

Key Highlights

- **India-Saudi Strategic Partnership Council** was formed to coordinate on strategically important issues. The council will be headed by the Prime Minister and Crown Prince Mohammed and will meet every two years.
India is the fourth country with which Saudi Arabia has formed such a strategic partnership, after the UK, France and China.
- **12 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs)** on issues related to defence industries, security, air services, renewable energy, medicine products regulation, prevention of narcotics trafficking, and the use of RuPay cards in Saudi Arabia.
India also cleared an MoU that will help Hajj pilgrims to travel comfortably in Saudi Arabia during the pilgrimage seasons.
- **Stand on terrorism and other issues:**
 - Both sides condemned terrorism in all forms and stated that no particular religion, race or culture should be linked with international terrorism.
 - Discussed a number of regional conflicts like the **war in Syria** and **Yemen** and sought lasting peace in the Palestinian territories for the establishment of the **independent Palestinian state** based on the pre-1967 borders with "Jerusalem as its capital".
- **Future Investment Initiative:**
 - It is **Saudi Arabia's annual investment forum**, also known as '**Davos in the Desert**'. The informal name derives from the World Economic Forum's annual meeting that is held in Davos, Switzerland, where world leaders discuss and shape agendas for pressing international issues.
 - The Prime Minister of India also invited Saudi companies to invest in India's energy sector as India has set a **target of \$100 billion investment in the sector by 2024**.

- **Cooperation in the Energy Sector:**

- Saudi Arabia is keen to play a role in the **creation of strategic petroleum reserves at Padur in Karnataka.**
- A study is being conducted for the setting up of the **world's largest greenfield refinery at Raigarh in Maharashtra by Saudi Aramco,** Adnoc of the United Arab Emirates and Indian public sector oil companies.

India - Saudi Arabia Ties



- Saudi Arabia is a **strategic partner of India** since the signing of the **Riyadh Declaration in 2010.**
- It is currently **India's second-largest supplier of crude oil** – providing about 18 % of its energy needs. It also has a major role in India's **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPRs).**
 - The largest supplier of crude oil is Iraq.
- It is **India's 4th largest trade partner.** In 2018-19, the India-Saudi bilateral trade was the US \$ 34.03 billion.
- The **2.6 million-strong Indian community in Saudi Arabia** is the largest expatriate community in the Kingdom and is the 'most preferred community' due to their expertise, sense of discipline, law-abiding and peace-loving nature.
- Haj pilgrimage is another important component of bilateral relations.

Source: TH