



India-Qatar

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Why in News

Recently, India's External Affairs Minister met the top leaders of Qatar and discussed strengthening the economic and security cooperation between the two countries.

- The visit is part of India's ongoing outreach to West Asia, which the country sees as part of its extended neighbourhood.
- Qatar is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council.



Key Points

- **India and Qatar** agreed to maintain **regular consultations and coordination** on all issues of mutual interest at multilateral fora.
 - Issues of mutual interest include energy, power, petrochemicals, investments, infrastructure, development, project exports and education.
- Discussed ways to strengthen the multifaceted bilateral relationship in areas such as **energy, trade, investment, food processing, healthcare, education, culture, defence and security**.
 - Bilateral trade was worth **USD 10.95 billion in 2019-20**.
- India **thanked** Qatar for **taking care** of people from the **Indian community** during the **Covid-19 pandemic**.
 - India and Qatar have maintained close **high-level contacts** during the pandemic.
- India appreciated **Qatari Businessmen Association's** commitment for business partnerships with India and briefed them about new opportunities flowing from **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.
- Qatar's leader **appreciated the contribution of the Indian community** in Qatar and recalled his visits to India.
- **Recent Developments:**
 - Both the countries have decided to set up a **special task force** to facilitate investments by the **Qatar Investment Authority**, part of India's ongoing outreach to key West Asian states to overcome the economic impact of the **Covid-19 pandemic**.
 - The two sides have agreed on **institutionalising measures to promote and protect the rights of workers**, including settling labour issues and facilitating the movement of people between the two countries in a safe and secure manner.

India-Qatar Relation

- **Economic Relations:**
 - **Trade volume:**
 - The last few years witnessed a palpable **decline in the trade volume** between the two countries due to the **decline in the rates of gas and oil** in the international market.
 - **India** is considered to be the **fourth largest export destination for the State of Qatar**.
 - Both India and Qatar also have a **good relation in the banking sector**.
 - **Exports:**
 - **Qatar's key exports to India** include LNG, LPG, chemicals and petrochemicals, plastics, and aluminium articles.
 - **India's key exports to Qatar** include cereals, copper articles, iron and steel articles, vegetables, plastic products, construction material, textiles & garments, etc.

- **Cooperation in the Field of Energy:**
 - Qatar is the **largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to India.**
 - India **imports around 70%** of its needs for the **natural gas from Qatar.**
- **Defence:**
 - India's defence cooperation with Qatar has so far been limited to training, participation in each other's conferences/events and visits by ships of Indian Navy and Coast Guard.
 - **Za'ir-Al-Bahr** (Roar of the Sea) is the **naval exercise** between Indian and Qatar Navy.
- **Cultural Relations:**
 - **Cultural exchange:**

There is a regular flow of Indian artists performing in Qatar at events organised by community organizations affiliated to the **Indian Cultural Centre (ICC).**

ICC is an **apex body of associations of the Indian community** functioning under the aegis of Embassy of India, Doha, and private sponsors.
 - **Yoga:**

India **appreciated** Qatar's support, as a co-sponsor, to its Resolution at the **United Nations General Assembly**, adopted unanimously with a record 177 co-sponsors, declaring **21 June as the International Day of Yoga (IDY).**
 - **Education:**

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.
- **Indian Community:**
 - Indian community is the **largest expatriate group** in Qatar which is estimated to be around **700 million people.**
 - They are making their **contribution in different sectors.** Indians are **highly respected** in Qatar for their **sincerity, hard work, technical expertise and law-abiding nature.**
 - Indians are **employed in almost every local establishment, governmental or private, in various capacities.**
 - **Remittances:**

The remittances which the Indian expatriate community in Qatar send to India are **estimated to be around 750 million dollar per annum.**

Way Forward

- **Qatar** wants to make investment in India in the domain of the infrastructure which includes roads, highways, **economic corridors**, airports, ports, tourism and hotels apart from the projects related to **gas and fertilizers.**

- **India** is looking forward to the direct investment in the **manufacturing and production of the liquefied natural gas** and in **chemical industries**, especially the industry of **fertilizers, urea, petrochemicals**.

Source:IE