

India Is There for Bahrain When It Matters Most



As the Middle East grappled with the fallout of the Iran-US-Israel conflict, India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar embarked on a diplomatic tour of key Gulf states, reaffirming India's relationships with partners who matter deeply to New Delhi — economically, strategically and in terms of the millions of Indian citizens who call the Gulf home.

The Bahrain leg of the tour stood out as particularly significant. Dr. Jaishankar was received by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa in a meeting that underscored the depth of India-Bahrain ties stretching back centuries. The audience with HM the King signalled Bahrain's recognition of India's growing regional role and its value as a stable, constructive partner during turbulent times.

The minister also held substantive talks with His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, covering bilateral



Dr. S. Jaishankar engaged with members of the Indian community in Bahrain during his official visit on July 7.

cooperation, regional security, trade and investment. The discussions reflected a shared interest in stability and the protection of critical maritime routes, including the Strait of Hormuz — whose closure had already sent shockwaves through global energy markets.

"India values its deep and enduring partnership with Bahrain," Jaishankar said following the meetings. "These are not just diplomatic relationships — they are civilisational bonds, strengthened by shared interests and mutual respect."

One of the most emotionally resonant moments of the Bahrain visit came when Jaishankar met

members of the Indian diaspora community — one of the largest and most economically active expatriate communities in the Kingdom. Addressing the gathering, the minister paid tribute to their contributions to both Bahrain's economy and India's own development through remittances, investment and cultural exchange.

The diaspora meeting carried a deeper message — that New Delhi's Gulf diplomacy is not purely transactional but rooted in the lives and welfare of ordinary Indians living and working thousands of miles from home.

Across his Gulf tour, Jaishankar's message was consistent: India is not a bystander in the

Middle East. As a nation that imports a significant share of its energy from the Gulf, hosts millions of its citizens there and conducts billions of dollars in annual trade with Gulf partners, India has as much at stake in regional stability as any party to the conflict.

New Delhi's approach — engaging all sides without taking sides — mirrors its broader foreign policy posture.

The visit to Bahrain, in particular, demonstrated that the bilateral relationship has matured well beyond its historical foundations into a modern strategic partnership — one equipped to navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing regional order.

India's Green Hydrogen Push Gains Global Momentum



India is strengthening its position as a clean-energy leader, with non-fossil sources accounting for 51.93% of installed power capacity by December 2025. Green hydrogen has emerged as a key part of the country's energy transition, particularly for industries and transport sectors where direct electrification is difficult.

Under the National Green Hydrogen Mission, India aims to produce 5 million metric tonnes of green hydrogen annually by 2030. Production capacity of 862,000 tonnes per year has already been allocated to 18 companies, while 15 companies have received awards for 3,000 MW of annual electrolyser manufacturing capacity. Three green hydrogen hubs have also been identified at ports in Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Odisha.

India is applying green hydrogen across fertiliser, petroleum refining and steel industries, while pilot projects are exploring its use in iron production and other hard-to-abate sectors. Hydrogen-powered trains have also been demonstrated by



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Indian Railways.

The strategy extends beyond domestic decarbonisation, with India seeking international partnerships, standards and clean-energy trade opportunities. Cooperation with the EU, UK, Germany and Japan is expanding across hydrogen production, standardisation, exports and long-term green ammonia and methanol agreements.

India's growing green hydrogen sector could therefore support both its development goals and the emergence of a global low-carbon economy.

The Trusted First Responder

India's role as a humanitarian first responder has grown significantly since the devastating Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004. The disaster saw India respond not only to extensive destruction at home but also provide urgent assistance to Sri Lanka, Maldives, Thailand and Indonesia through five major HADR operations involving the armed forces and Coast Guard.

The experience strengthened India's disaster-response capabilities and led to the Disaster Management Act 2005 and creation of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). It also contributed to closer cooperation among India, Australia, Japan and the United States, which later evolved into the Quad.

Since then, India has responded rapidly to disasters across the region and beyond. Operations Neer in the Maldives, Maitri in Nepal, Brahma in Myanmar, Sagar Bandhu in Sri Lanka and Dost in Türkiye and Syria demonstrated India's capacity to provide rescue, medical and relief assistance. India has also supported



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Former Ambassador of India to Thailand and Former High Commissioner of India to Kenya

Mozambique, Malawi and, most recently, earthquake-hit Venezuela in June 2026.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, India supplied 300 million vaccine doses to 99 countries and two UN entities under Vaccine Maitri.

HADR has become a key element of India's foreign policy and Indo-Pacific vision, alongside initiatives such as SAGAR, IPOI, MAHASAGAR and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. Through rapid, needs-based assistance and disaster-resilience efforts, India has emerged as a reliable partner and force for global humanitarian action.



Ties That Keep Growing

India-Bahrain cooperation reached new milestones in 2026

New Indian Consular Application Centre



The Indian Consular Application Centre at Bahrain Mall has completed its first year of operations. It is the first facility of its kind established in Bahrain in 15 years.

Nearly 4,000 e-Visas for Bahrainis



The electronic visa system for Bahraini nationals has also marked its first anniversary. Nearly 4,000 Bahraini citizens have used the facility since its launch, reflecting increased interest in travel to India and the convenience of digital applications.

Defence and maritime cooperation



The Indian Embassy's Permanent Defence Exhibition is now in its third year. The current edition highlights the role of the Indian Armed Forces in national development, with a focus on the Indian Navy-led Combined Task Force 154 (CTF-154) under the Combined Maritime Forces.

Indian Navy leads CTF-154



India joined the Combined Maritime Forces as an Associate Partner in 2022 and became a Full Member in 2023. On February 11, 2026, the Indian Navy assumed command of CTF-154, becoming the first Indian force to lead a CMF task force.

Under Indian leadership, CTF-154 has conducted 14 Staff Enhancement Training programmes, generating more than 2,200 participant-hours of professional training focused on interoperability and operational readiness among partner nations.

Operation Compass Rose 26-1 was conducted virtually from April 20 to 22, bringing together 137 participants from 25 partner nations.

Operation Southern Readiness 26-2 was hosted by the Southern Naval Command of the Indian Navy in Kochi from July 20 to 23, featuring practical and theoretical maritime training.

Painting exhibitions enter third year



The embassy's annual painting exhibitions are entering their third year. This year's programme features three exhibitions highlighting the longstanding friendship between India and Bahrain through art.

Trade and investment

Bilateral trade reaches US\$1.66 billion
India-Bahrain bilateral trade reached US\$1.66 billion between April 2025 and March 2026, an increase of 1.57% compared with the previous financial year. Two-way investments between India and Bahrain currently stand at approximately US\$2 billion.

The first round of negotiations on a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) began in July 2026. The agreement is aimed at facilitating investment, simplifying tax compliance and strengthening business ties.

UN Security Council bid



India has launched its campaign to be elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the 2028-2029 term. The campaign is guided by the philosophy of "SHANTI" — Securing Holistic Advancement through Norms, Trust and Integrity. Its priorities include strengthening the voice of the Global South, reforming multilateral institutions, promoting future-ready peacekeeping, supporting a human-centric approach to artificial intelligence, advancing a rules-based maritime order, and intensifying global efforts against terrorism and terror financing.