

INDIA- PALESTINE BILATERAL RELATIONS

India's support for the Palestinian cause is an integral part of the nation's foreign policy. In 1974, India became the first Non-Arab State to recognize Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In 1988, India became one of the first countries to recognize the Palestinian State. In 1996, India opened its Representative Office in Gaza, which was later shifted to Ramallah in 2003.

2. India has always played a proactive role in garnering support for the Palestinian cause in multilateral fora. India has consistently supported, co-sponsored, and voted in favour of UN General Assembly Resolutions on issues regarding securing the right to self-determination of Palestinians (Res.79/163, 2024), peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine (A/Res/79/82, 2024) and Palestinian refugees' properties and their revenue (A/Res/78/75, 2023). In April 2024, India voted in favour of the Human Rights Council Resolution on the Right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. India has actively participated and contributed constructively to the regional and global meetings on Palestine and Gaza since October 2023, including the NAM Ministerial meeting in January 2024, the Cairo Ministerial Conference to enhance the Humanitarian response in Gaza in February 2024 and the High Level Conference in Amman on Urgent Humanitarian response in Gaza

3. In 2011, India voted in favour of Palestine becoming a full member of UNESCO. The NAM Ministerial Committee on Palestine was established under India's Presidency during the VII NAM Summit in New Delhi in 1983. During its terms as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, India continued to voice its support for a negotiated solution resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine, within secure and recognized borders, at peace beside Israel as endorsed in the relevant UNSC and UNGA Resolutions.

Important Bilateral Visits and Political Interactions

4. There have been regular high-level bilateral visits between India and Palestine. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid a historic visit to Palestine on 10 February 2018, the first for an Indian Prime Minister. Prior to that, President Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Palestine in October 2015, marking the first visit by an Indian President to Palestine. There have been other high-level visits from India to Palestine in recent years viz. Visit of Smt. Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister in January 2016 and Shri M.J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs in November 2016. Late President Yasser Arafat visited India several times. President Mahmoud Abbas visited India in 2005, 2008, 2010, 2012 and in May 2017 on his third State Visit. During his visit in 2017, President Abbas had discussions with Rashtrapati and Prime Minister while the Vice President and EAM called on him.

5. During the COVID-19 pandemic, in April 2020, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi spoke with President Abbas over the phone. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Palestine Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh met during the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference held at Glasgow, United Kingdom. Prime Minister Modi has also held bilateral meetings with President Mahmoud Abbas on the sidelines of multilateral meetings. Their most

recent meeting was on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2024.

6. External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar held a phone call with then Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh in December 2023, in the aftermath of the 7 October conflict, during which he reiterated India's longstanding support for the Palestinian people.

7. Foreign Minister, Dr. Varsen Shaheen, visited India on 28-31 January 2026 to participate in the meeting of India-Arab League Foreign Ministers. During the meeting she held a bilateral meeting with External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar. She also called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with other participating Ministers.

Joint Commission Meeting

7. The first Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) between India and Palestine was held in Ramallah in November 2016. The JCM was co-chaired by Shri M.J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs and Dr. Riad Malki, Foreign Minister of Palestine.

Foreign Office Consultations

8. The first round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) between India and Palestine were held in Ramallah in May 2015. The second round of FOCs was held in New Delhi in April 2017. The third round of India-Palestine Foreign Office Consultations was held virtually in September 2020.

Developmental Cooperation

9. India has provided various forms of developmental cooperation assistance to Palestine over the years amounting to approximately US\$ 141 million. India has also provided a total of US\$ 39 million of budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority. Our support also includes the provision of medical assistance in the form of medicine.

10. The major development assistance projects executed successfully by India include:

- i. National Printing Press at Ramallah
- ii. Palestine-India Techno Park
- iii. Jawaharlal Nehru Library at the Al Azhar University in Gaza.
- iv. Mahatma Gandhi Library-cum-Student Activity Centre at the Palestine Technical College at Deir Al Balah in Gaza.
- v. Jawaharlal Nehru Secondary School for Boys in Abu Dis
- vi. Jawaharlal Nehru Secondary School for Girls in Asira Al-Shamaliya
- vii. Primary school in Muthalath Al Shuhada Village in Jenin Governorate
- viii. Primary school in Tamoon Village in Tubas Governorate
- ix. India-Palestine Centre for Excellence in ICT & Digital Learning & Innovation Centre in Al-Quds University in Abu Dis, and in Ramallah
- x. Vocational Training Centre (VTC) in Yatta and Palestine Polytechnic University (PPU) in Hebron

11. **Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)**

As part of its developmental cooperation, India has signed 7 Quick Impact Projects with Palestine since 2021, and have been successfully completed, namely:

- i. Rehabilitation of Yasser Arafat Square in Ramallah City (USD 50,000)
- ii. Integration of Technology into Education with the Young Scientists Club (Al Muntada) (USD 46,960)
- iii. Establishing Beitunia Municipality Nursery (USD 50,000)
- iv. Construction of Aqraba Children Park (USD 50,000)
- v. Developing Grid Solar System at Awtar Centre in Nablus Governorate (USD 23,150)
- vi. Establishing and Equipping an IT Centre in Qalqilia Municipality Public Library (USD 50,000)
- vii. Urgent maintenance for 12 houses in SOS Village in Bethlehem (USD 50,000).

The following two Projects are being implemented:

- viii. Renovation of the Jericho Women's Charitable Society in Jericho (USD 50,000)
- ix. Installation of solar panels at the Al Bireh Municipality (USD 50,000)

12. **Artificial limb fitment camp:**

As part of India for Humanity initiative launched by EAM in October 2018, an artificial limb fitment camp was organized in July 2023 in Palestine by Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayta Samiti (BMVSS), Jaipur which benefited 438 Palestinians with 473 limbs fitted during the camp.

Bilateral Trade

13. Trade between India and Palestine is conducted through Israel and therefore, comprehensive trade statistics are not available. India-Palestine annual bilateral trade volume was USD 145.597 million for the year 2023. As per the data published by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Indian exports and imports were USD 1.370 million and USD 144.227 million respectively. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics reports that India has a share of 0.09% of Palestine's exports, while India ranks 12th among the importing countries for Palestine with 1.74% share of total Palestine's imports.

14. Indian exports to Palestine include marble, granite, articles of stone, plaster and cement, basmati rice, raw material for making vaccines, coffee, cashew nuts, sugar, sweet biscuits, sacks and bags for the packing of goods, animal products, vegetable products, prepared foodstuffs, mineral products, chemical Industries, plastics, leather and furskins, wooden industries, textiles, headgear, umbrellas, walking sticks, seat-sticks, natural or cultured pearls, precious or semi-precious stones, precious metals, mineral products, base metals, machinery and mechanical appliances; vehicles and associated transport equipment, optical, photographic, cinematographic, measuring, checking, precision, medical or surgical instruments and apparatus; clocks and watches and musical instruments' parts and accessories. On the other hand, Palestinian exports are mainly Fresh and dried dates, virgin olive oil and its fractions and articles of base metal.

15. In terms of sectors - automotive spare parts, medical tourism, agro and food products, textiles, fabrics, ready made garments, household appliances, stationery products, leather and leather products, agro-chemicals, plastic products, pharmaceuticals and engineering goods could be the target sectors for Indian manufacturers and exporters.

16. An MoU on cooperation between Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI) and Ramallah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) was signed in February 2022. With a view to impart momentum to bilateral trade, the Mission, in partnership with the Palestinian Minister of National Economy, organized the first business seminar "India Surging Ahead" in 2019 and a Business Webinar between Palestinian Businessmen Forum and Indian Economic Trade Organization "Bridging Markets, India-Palestine" in 2020. Moreover, Representative Office of India, Palestine, organized "Jharokha: Celebrating Crafts of India" Exhibition, in association with Hebron Chamber of Commerce and Industries, in February 2022.

17. Palestinian business delegations attended India Stone Mart Exhibition at Jaipur in March 2019, PRINTPACK INDIA 2019 International exhibition (14th edition) at India Expo Centre, Greater Noida, Delhi NCR in February 2019, and the 4th and 5th edition of 'IndusFood' organized by Trade Promotion Council of India in March 2021 and January 2022. In 2023, Palestine participated in the 6th India-Arab Partnership Conference, in New Delhi, as well as in World Food India 2023, in Pragati Maidan, and in the 11th International Exhibition for Pharma and Healthcare (IPHEX 2023) at Bharat Mandapam, Delhi.

Training and Capacity Building

18. **ICCR Scholarships:** India provides 35 ICCR scholarships for Palestinian students annually for Graduate, Post-Graduate and Ph.D courses in India. Over 170 students have availed scholarships in the fields of computer engineering, mechanical engineering, management, among other, from Delhi university, Gujarat Technical university, IITs, and other premier universities. Additionally, Palestinian students can avail of ICCR scholarships under the Scholarship Scheme for Indian Art & Culture and Graduate, Post-graduate and Ph.D courses under the AYUSH Scholarship Scheme to study Indian Traditional Medical System such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH).

19. **Indian Technical & Economic Co-operation (ITEC):** 168 slots are offered to Palestine annually under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) for training courses in India aimed at capacity building and skill enhancement in various disciplines such as Information Technology, Public Administration, Proficiency in English Language, Entrepreneurship, Rural Development, Renewable Energy, Cyber Technology, Quality Management, Health & Yoga etc. More than 1300 Palestinian nationals have availed ITEC training in India.

IBSA Cooperation

20. India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) Fund has also funded four projects in Palestine worth US\$ 5 mn. Approximately. These projects include Indoor Multipurpose Sports Complex in Ramallah, Phase I and Phase II of Cardio-Thoracic Unit of Palestinian Red Crescent Society's Al Quds hospital in Gaza, Atta Habib Medical Center in Gaza; and Rehabilitation Centre for People with Mental Disabilities in Nablus.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

21. India supports Palestine and Palestinian refugees through its contributions to UNRWA. India is a member of its Advisory Commission since 2020. India increased its annual contribution to UNRWA from US\$ 1.25 million to US\$ 5 million in 2018. India maintained its annual support to UNRWA, releasing one tranche amounting USD 2.5 million in June 2026, as part of India's annual contribution of USD 5 million. India was recognized as the top emerging donor for UNRWA between 2022-2025.

Humanitarian aid

22. India provided 30 tons of medicine and consumables for the people of Palestine which included a wide range of essential medicine, surgical supplies, and high-energy biscuits, and delivered to Palestine in September 2025.

Culture Relations

23. Indian arts and culture, especially Indian movies, enjoy immense popularity in Palestine. In 2014, a bust of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled at the Garden of Nations in Ramallah. In 2015, an exhibition of paintings of Islamic Monuments in India, and a food festival was organized in Ramallah. Since 2015, International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrations have been celebrated with immense popular support and participation. As part of ongoing Azadi ka Amrit Mahostav, several cultural activities, including film screenings and photo exhibitions have been organized by the Representative Office of India in various Palestinian cities. An Indian Cultural Week was also organized by the Mission, in association with ICCR and Palestinian Ministry of Culture in November 2021. The week-long cultural event covered the cities of Bethlehem, Jericho, Nablus and Ramallah.

24. India-Palestine Youth Exchange Programme was started in 2017. A 50-member Palestinian youth delegation visited India in May 2017 followed by a 29-member Indian youth delegation visiting Palestine in September 2017. During the visit of the Prime Minister in February 2018, it was announced that from 2018, 100-member youth delegations would visit New Delhi and Ramallah.

Indian Community

25. The Indian diaspora in Palestine is very small with only 7 Indian passport holders and 2 OCI card holders living in the territories of Palestine.

Useful Resources

Website: www.roiramallah.gov.in
Facebook: www.facebook.com/IndiaInPalestine
Youtube: www.youtube.com/user/roiramallah
X: www.twitter.com/roiramallah
Instagram: www.instagram.com/india_in_palestine

(July 2026)