



H.M. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
King of Saudi Arabia

23rd SEPTEMBER 2026

A large, stylized graphic for Saudi National Day. The words "SAUDI NATIONAL DAY" are written in a bold, golden, 3D block font with a yellow outline, set against a light blue background. In the bottom right corner, there is a partial view of a traditional Saudi dish, likely machwiyah, served in a white bowl with a red and white checkered pattern.

**H.R.H. Mohammed bin Salman
The Crown Prince & Prime Minister
of SAUDI ARABIA**



H.E. Suliman Eid Alotaibi
Consul General, Mumbai

"Our Pride Lies in Our Nature"

23rd SEPTEMBER 202696thSAUDI
NATIONAL DAY*Our Pride Lies in Our Nature*H.M. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
King of Saudi ArabiaH.R.H. Mohammed bin Salman
The Crown Prince & Prime Minister
of SAUDI ARABIAH.E. Suliman Eid Alotaibi
Consul General, Mumbai

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CONGRATULATIONS & BEST WISHES**On The Occasion of 96th National Day of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia****IPEPCIL****Indian Personnel Export Promotion Council**

(Certificate of Incorporation No. 21368 of 1979. The Registrar of Companies, Maharashtra)

CIN No.: U74910MH1979NPL021368 Website: www.ipepcil.org**A Message on the 96th National Day of
the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

It is a privilege and an honour to extend my warmest greetings and heartfelt congratulations on the 96th National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, His Excellency Mr. Haytham bin Hasan Al Malki, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to India, His Excellency Mr. Sulaiman Eid Alotaibi, Consul General of Saudi Arabia in Mumbai, and the people of the Kingdom.

The bonds between India and Saudi Arabia transcend diplomatic and economic relations. They are rooted in centuries of civilizational interaction, mutual respect and enduring people-to-people connections. Today, these relations have developed into a comprehensive strategic partnership encompassing trade, investment, energy, technology, infrastructure, skills and human-resource mobility.

The movement of Indian human resources to the Kingdom has been an important and mutually beneficial component of this partnership. For over four decades, the IPEPCIL member fraternity has contributed significantly to facilitating the mobilisation of Indian professionals, skilled workers and other human resources to Saudi Arabia through organised and regulated recruitment channels. Generations of Indian expatriates have, in their respective capacities, contributed to the Kingdom's development journey while strengthening the social and economic bridge between our two nations.

As Saudi Arabia enters an exciting new phase of transformation under Vision 2030, the opportunities for deeper cooperation between our countries continue to expand. India's vast human-resource capabilities, skills and professional expertise can remain an important enabler of the Kingdom's ambitious development priorities, while responsible and sustainable workforce mobility can further strengthen this longstanding partnership.

On this momentous occasion, IPEPCIL and its entire member fraternity join me in conveying our profound respect, warmest greetings and best wishes to the leadership and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

May the Kingdom continue its journey of peace, progress and prosperity, and may the historic friendship and strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia reach ever greater heights.

V. S. Abdulkareem
President, IPEPCIL

23rd SEPTEMBER 2026

96

NATIONAL DAY OF
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Greetings and good wishes on the auspicious occasion of 96th National Day of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to

His Royal Majesty King Salman bin Abdul Aziz

His Royal Highness The Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman

His Excellency Consul General in Mumbai Suliman Eid Alotaibi

Haroon T Memon - Chairman

Fahad Haroon Memon - General Manager



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23rd September 2026

96th SAUDI NATIONAL DAY



H.M. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
King of Saudi Arabia



H.R.H. Mohammed bin Salman
The Crown Prince & Prime Minister
of SAUDI ARABIA



H.E. Suliman Eid Alotaibi
Consul General, Mumbai

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FLOURISHING INDIA-SAUDI BILATERAL TIES

India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia enjoy close friendly relations reflecting the centuries old economic and socio-cultural ties. Diplomatic relations were established in 1947.

The historic visit of His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to India in Jan 2006 was a watershed moment that resulted in the signing of the "Delhi Declaration". It was followed by the "Riyadh Declaration" in 2010 during the visit of the then

Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh to the Kingdom, which elevated the bilateral relations to a strategic partnership.

The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Riyadh in April, 2016 led to an enhanced and comprehensive co-operation in the political, economic, security and defence realms. During the visit, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud conferred the Kingdom's highest civilian honour, the 'King

There have been regular high level exchanges between India and Saudi Arabia. In 2025 alone, nearly 35 ministerial and senior official-level interactions across various domains took place. In FY 2024-25, bilateral trade stood at \$41.88 billion, with Indian exports at \$11.76 billion and imports at \$30.12 billion.

Abdulaziz Sash', on Modi. The visit of His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, to India in Feb, 2019 further carried forward this momentum. During the visit, it was announced that the Kingdom would invest about US\$ 100 billion in India and six MoUs/agreements were signed in various fields, including investment, tourism, housing, exchange of audio-visual programmes, and an agreement was signed to pave way for Saudi Arabia to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

Modi visited Riyadh

again on Oct 28-29, 2019, during which the Strategic Partnership Council Agreement was signed, establishing a high-level council to steer the bilateral relationship. As many as 12 MoUs were signed during this visit across several fields including

energy, security, defence production, civil aviation, medical products, strategic petroleum reserves, small and medium scale industries and training of diplomats. The prime minister also delivered the keynote address at the third Future (Cont. on page - 7)

**SAUDI NATIONAL DAY**
23rd SEPTEMBER 2026



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Consul General, Mumbai

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H.M. Salman bin Abdulaziz
Al Saud King of Saudi Arabia

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**SAUDI NATIONAL DAY**
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FLOURISHING INDIA-SAUDI

(Cont. from page - 6)
Investment Initiative Summit.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, Crown Prince & Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, visited India on Sept 9-11, 2023 to participate in the G20 Leaders' Summit and to co-chair the first Leaders' Meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council along with Modi. During this visit, eight MoUs /Agreements were signed across several fields including energy, banking, investment, manufacturing, archival co-operation, anti-corruption and water desalination.

Modi undertook a state visit to the Kingdom on April 22, 2025. Modi and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, Crown Prince & Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, held official talks at Jed-

dah and exchanged views on bilateral, regional, and international issues. They also co-chaired the second Leaders' Meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council. A Joint statement was issued. Both sides agreed to collaborate on establishing two oil refineries in India. Four bilateral MoUs/Agreements in the fields of Space, Health, Sports

(Anti-Doping) and Postal Co-operation were signed. The Strategic Partnership Council was expanded to four ministerial committees, namely: (1) Political, Consular & Security Cooperation Committee; (2) Defence Co-operation Committee; (3) Economy, Energy, Investment & Technology Committee; (4) Tourism & Cultural Co-operation Committee.



Indian community in Saudi

The Indian community in the Kingdom numbers at about 2.74 million and is a living bridge between the two countries. The contributions made by the Indian community to the development of Saudi Arabia are well acknowledged. A number of Indians living in Saudi have received the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards.

Labour-related co-op-

eration in an important aspect of the bilateral relationship. In April 2025 and Oct 2025, the India-Saudi Joint Committee Meeting on Labour Co-operation were held. In March 2022, an Agreement on Skill Verification Programme was signed between the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship of India,

and Takamol holding, Ministry of Human Resources & Social Development of Saudi Arabia. The two countries have also signed the Agreement for Domestic Sector Workers and the Agreement for General Category Workers.

The annual Haj pilgrimage is another important component of India-Saudi Arabia bilateral relations. Annual quota for Indian

Hajis is 175,025. Each year an average of 1.5 million Indian pilgrims perform Umrah. India has digitised the Haj process by providing the Haj mobile app, health facility-e-MASIHA, e-luggage pre-tagging, and linking the HGOs (Hajj Group Organizers) with the digital system, which has simplified the procedures for pilgrims.

(Cont. on page - 8)




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HAJ: PILGRIMS' PROGRESS

Haj is the annual pilgrimage made by Muslims to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. It takes place during Dhu'al-Hijjah, which is the final month of the Islamic calendar --- usually in June or July.

Every year, millions of Muslims from across the world make the journey to Mecca from wherever they live.

Haj is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. These are the five key duties that every Muslim is expected to do in their lifetime. Muslims are required to make the journey to Mecca for Haj at least once in their life, if they are physically able and can afford to do so. In addition to Haj, the four other important duties are: SHAHADAH: The Muslim declaration of faith. The words of the Shahadah are repeated multiple times during the day.

SALAT: Muslims must pray five times a day at specific times.

ZAKAT: Muslims must give away a portion of their income to help other Muslims in need.

SAWM: Muslims fast for a month

during Ramadan.

For Sunni Muslims, the Five Pillars are the core duties of Islam. Shia Muslims follow the Five Pillars plus five additional duties, and together these are called the Ten Obligatory Acts.

Before the Haj commences, pilgrims must enter a physical and spiritual condition known as Ihram. This begins with the Niyah or intention to perform Haj, and includes wearing specific garments of two simple white cloths for men and modest attire for women. These identical white garments strip away visible markers of class, wealth or nationality, symbolising that all pilgrims stand equal before God.

After entering Mecca in Ihram, many pilgrims perform an initial Tawaf by circling the Kaaba, a black stone structure at the heart of the Great Mosque in Mecca (Masjid al-Haram), seven times in a counterclockwise direction. This symbolises unity in the worship of the one God. Pilgrims can then perform the Sai, a ritual of walk-



ing seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwa, located within the mosque.

The Kaaba, meaning cube in Arabic, is Islam's holiest site and serves as the Qibla, the direction that Muslims face during prayer. Muslims believe Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim) and his son Ishmael (Ismaeel) built the Kaaba by God's command, symbolising the return to pure monotheism.

The Kaaba measures 13.1 metres (43 feet) high, 12.8m (42ft) in length, and 11.03m (36ft) in width. The Kaaba is covered in a black cloth known as the kiswah and is decorated with gold Arabic text featuring Quranic verses.

Pilgrims then proceed to Mina, located about 8km east of the Kaaba, where they will spend the night in prayer and reflection. Mina is famously known as the "city of tents" due to the vast expanse of one lakh white tents to house the millions of pilgrims.

Thousands of tents are prepared to host millions of Muslim pilgrims during the annual pil-

grimage.

On the second day of Haj, pilgrims arrive early at the plains of Mount Arafat, about 15 km from Mina. They spend the afternoon in Wuquf (standing) from midday to sunset, praying and repenting. Arafah is the most important ritual of Haj and symbolises a preview of the Day of Judgment. Muslims worldwide are encouraged to fast on this day and engage in prayer and reflection.

After sunset, pilgrims travel to Muzdalifah, 9km away. There, they perform Maghrib and Isha prayers before collecting pebbles for the next day's ritual. Pilgrims throw stones at a pillar representing the devil in Mina outside Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

On this day, Muslims from around the world celebrate the first day of Eid al-Adha, or the celebration of the sacrifice. On this day, pilgrims perform the following rituals: Rami al-Jamarat al-Kubra (stoning the largest pillar). Pilgrims return to Mina, where they

(Cont. on page - 9)

Indian community in Saudi

(Cont. from page - 7)

For the first time, an official delegation from the Saudi-India Parliamentary Friendship Committee of the Shura Council visited India in Dec 2025. India-Saudi Arabia Parliamentary Friendship Group has been constituted by the Indian Parliament in Feb 2026.

India and Saudi Arabia enjoy a long history of cultural engagements. In recent years, bilateral

cultural activities have accelerated in line with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030.

A new Ministerial Committee on Tourism and Cultural Co-operation under the Strategic Partnership Council was announced in April 2025. In Nov 2025, bilateral MoU on Cultural Co-operation was signed in Riyadh during the visit Minister of Tourism & Culture of India.

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India, Saudi defence partnership

The bilateral defence partnership between Saudi and India has strengthened in recent years. First ministerial visit on the defence side in over 12 years took place when Ajay Bhatt visited Riyadh for the second World Defence Show in Feb, 2024. An agreement was signed for defence ammunition exports

from India to Saudi Arabia worth \$225 million during the visit. In Feb, 2026, Junior defence Minister Sanjay Seth attended the third World Defence Show (WDS), where he inaugurated the India Pavillion, a first for WDS.

A new Ministerial Committee on Defence Co-operation under the India-

Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council was announced in April 2025. The seventh Joint Committee on Defence Co-operation (JCDC) meeting was held in New Delhi in August 2025. Inaugural Navy Staff Talks and Army Staff Talks were held in 2025.

Chief of General Staff of Saudi Armed Forces visit-



India-Saudi Arabia Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation held in New Delhi

ed India in Dec last. It was the first official visit of Saudi CGS to India. Chief of Naval Staff of India visited the Kingdom in Feb 2018, followed by visit of Chief of Army Staff of India in Dec 2020. Chief of Naval Staff of Saudi Arabia also visited India in Jan 2024. He again visited in Febr 2026 to participate in the ninth IONS Conclave of Chiefs in Visakhapatnam. A high level Saudi military delegation participated in Aero India 2025.

Two editions of the bilateral naval exercise "Al Mo-hed Al Hindi" have been

held, in 2021 and 2023. The first ever bilateral Land Force Exercise "EX-SADA TANSEEQ-I" was held in 2024 in Rajasthan.

Training courses and capacity building initiatives constitute an important part of bilateral defence co-operation. As many as 76 trainees from King Fahd Naval Academy of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces completed their Afloat Training Course at 1st Training Squadron (ITS) of the Indian Navy in July 2024. A Saudi delegation visited IFC-IOR in Gurugram for study tour (July 2025).

HAJ: PILGRIMS' PROGRESS

(Cont. from page - 8)

throw seven pebbles at the largest of three stone pillars. This ritual represents the stoning of the devil, which symbolises rejection of Satan's temptations.

Qurbani (animal sacrifice): Pilgrims or agents on their behalf, offer an animal sacrifice in remembrance of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to God.

Halq or taqir (shaving or trimming hair): Men

shave or trim their heads and women cut a small portion of hair. This symbolises spiritual renewal.

Tawaf al-lfadah (main tawaf): Pilgrims return to Mecca to perform Tawaf, circling the Kaaba, followed by Sai, walking seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwa. This ritual reenacts Hagar's desperate search for water for her son Ismail and stands as a tribute to her unwavering faith and per-

severance.

Pilgrims return to Mina and perform Rami (stoning) of all three stone pillars on each day. Pilgrims who remain for an extra day repeat the stoning ritual at all three pillars once more.

Before leaving Mecca, pilgrims perform a final Tawaf around the Kaaba, known as the tawaf al-wada or a "farewell tawaf", signifying a spiritual farewell to the holy sanctuary.



H.M. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
King of Saudi Arabia



للمملكة العربية السعودية

96th SAUDI NATIONAL DAY 2026



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The Crown Prince & Prime Minister of
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Over 29mn foreign tourists visited Saudi in 2025

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development announced its "Tourism Trends and Policies 2026" report, which reflected the rapid growth and notable achievements of the Saudi tourism sector, strengthening Saudi Arabia's position on the global tourism map and consolidating its presence as one of the fastest-growing tourism destinations in the world.

The report highlighted that Saudi Arabia achieved the highest growth rate in the number of inbound international tourists between 2019 and 2025 compared with the OECD member countries and partner economies included in the study, recording 67pc growth, confirming the success of efforts aimed at developing the tourism sector and enhancing its competitiveness globally, Arriyadiyah reported.

The report showed that the number of tourists arriving from abroad rose



from 17.5 million in 2019 to 29.3 million in 2025, an increase of about 11.7 million tourists, exceeding pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels and reflecting the acceleration of the sector's growth and the recovery of its momentum at a pace exceeding that of many global markets.

It also indicated that inbound tourism continued to strengthen its economic contribution, as total spending by tourists arriving from abroad reached SR176.6 billion in 2025, recording five per cent

growth compared with 2024, reflecting the sector's rising economic value and its increased contri-

bution to supporting economic growth and diversifying sources of income.

For domestic tourism, the report confirmed that the domestic market continued to play its role as a fundamental pillar of the sector's sustainability and resilience, as the number of domestic tourists reached 93.3 million in 2025, an increase of eight per cent, while their spending rose by 10pc to SR127.1 billion (\$33.91 billion), reflecting growing domestic demand and the expansion of tourism options and products

across Saudi Arabia's various regions.

The report highlighted the growing economic and social impact of the tourism sector in Saudi, as tourism's direct contribution to gross domestic product reached 5.2pc, according to preliminary estimates for 2026, while the number of direct jobs in the sector exceeded one million and women's participation reached 47pc reflecting the sector's role in supporting economic development and empowering national talent.



SUCCESSFUL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Bilateral trade ties have steadily grown over the years between India and Saudi Arabia. India is the second largest trade partner of Saudi Arabia whereas Saudi Arabia is the fifth largest trading partner of India. In FY 2024-25, bilateral trade stood at \$41.88 billion, with Indian exports at \$11.76 billion and imports at \$30.12 billion. Major commodities of export from India to Saudi Arabia include engineering goods, rice, petroleum products, chemicals, textiles, food products, ceramic tiles. Major commodities which India imports from the Kingdom are crude oil, LPG, fertilizers, chemicals, plastic and products thereof.

The total Saudi investment in India including that of Saudi sovereign wealth fund - PIF, other Saudi companies and Sau-

di backed Vision Fund, has been about \$10 billion. Major Saudi investors in India include Armaco (energy), Zamil Group (steel), Al Fanar (renewable energy), SABIC (chemicals), SALIC (food sector), Abdul Latif Jameel (auto sector) and Petromin (automobile solutions). Indian investment in Saudi has increased in recent years reaching about \$3 billion.

These investments are across diverse sectors such as consultancy services, construction projects, telecom, information technology, financial services and software development, pharmaceuticals etc. There are over 6000 Indian companies registered in the Kingdom.

Two meetings of High Level Task Force on Investment (HLTFI) have taken place, in July 2024 and in April 2025. HLTFI was



agreed upon by both sides during the visit of His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud to India in Sept 2023, and is co-chaired by Principal Secretary to the PM of India and HRH Energy Minister of Saudi Arabia.

The first India-Saudi Investment Forum was organized on the sidelines of this visit, which was co-chaired by Commerce Min-

ister Piyush Goyal (HCIM) and Saudi Minister of Investment Khalid Al Falih. More than 50 B2B and B2G MoUs/Agreements were signed during this Forum.

HCIM and HRH Saudi Energy Minister co-chaired the 2nd meeting of the Economic Committee under SPC in Oct 2024 in Riyadh. Saudi Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources visited India in Feb 2025. On

12-13 Nov 2025, Saudi Investment Minister led a large business delegation to India for engagements with government and private entities. Saudi was the Partner country at the World Food India 2025 held in New Delhi in September 2025. Saudi Minister of Transport & Logistic Services Saleh Al Jasser attended "WINGS INDIA 2026" in Hyderabad.