

Two-day National Conference

On

India and the Arab World: Contextualizing Past, Present and Future

Organised by
India Arab Cultural Centre
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
(14-15 February, 2017)

Concept Note:

The relations between India and the Arab world can be dated back to antiquity and speak of such inter-cultural dialogues and exchanges between two age-old civilizations. There are a lot of historical evidences for this time-tested cultural tie up. The Old Testament bears ample evidence for maritime mercantile relations between India and the Arab world during Solomon's period. Arabs' Indian connection predates the spread of Islam. There is commonly held view that from about 2500 years ago, the lands of West Asia and North Africa, stretching from Egypt to Iran had traded regularly with Indus Valley. India was a fulcrum of world trade and a meeting point of western and eastern trade routes. The cultural contacts were not confined to the linguistic interactions only, but to a wide variety of activities ranging from menu to the naming of individuals and clans. The Arabs have contributed even to the naming of this region, Hindustan. The name to the religion Hinduism is partly an Arab contribution. The spread of Islam fostered this linkage tremendously.

From the time immemorial these two civilizations have been in constant contact with the exchange of goods, ideas, cultures and people of each other. At this end of history, Indo-Arab relations have been on a distinctive trajectory with the massive movement of people from India to the Arab world and vice versa in the form of pilgrimage or labor migration. A large number of Indian expatriates in different parts of the region are the best example of good relations between the two regions.

In the back drop of popular uprisings in the Arab world, the region has witnessed a great socio-political unrest. Historically, this region has remained a volatile one because of its many regional issues and remained the most happening place in many contexts. It has the privilege to happen the birth place of world's largest influential religions namely Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Ironically, the geo-strategic importance, enormous energy reserves and historical background of west Asia are the curse of this region and have incited and motivated several foreign invasions and occupations.

India, throughout the ages, has enjoyed cordial relations with the Arab world and has enriched each other's culture and civilization. Indian delegations at the courts of Abbasid Caliphates and translation of Indian wisdom and science into Arabic are the best examples. Even in contemporary period, the translation of Indian works into Arabic and development of Arabic language and literature in India form the strong base for political relations. A large number of Indians working in the Arab world also play an important role to maintain cordial relations and the remittances coming from there help Indian economy to grow.

This two-day national conference is an attempt to understand different aspects of Indo-Arab relations and identify the silent features of this relationship and bring to the fore. There is a need for exchange of ideas and approaches at the broader level. The conference will also focus on the cultural exchanges and the civilizational affinity that existed between India and the Arab world for several centuries. The cultural linkages in the past, in fact, have brought these two regions more close to each other and provided the base to maintain the relationship of similar sort in the contemporary times. There will be special focus on Arabic literature and culture in India and its role in maintaining good relations between the two regions.

Major Themes:

- 1. Historical and Political relations**
- 2. Socio-Cultural Relations**
- 3. Religion and Culture in the Arab world**
- 4. Indians in the Arab world**
- 5. Arabs in India**
- 6. Arab Literature in India**
- 7. Islamic and Arabic and Teaching in India**
- 8. Literary and Intercultural interactions between India and the Arab world**
- 9. Reception of Arab Culture in Indian Society**
- 10. India and the Arab Culture: Language, Art, Science, Music, Dance and Popular Culture**

NOTE:

The conference is open to scholars from diverse academic and independent research backgrounds. Therefore the scientific committee of the conference would like to request scholars from different backgrounds like

literature, social sciences and media etc to contribute well-researched papers. The objective of the conference is to expand the horizon of the consciousness of the intellectuals on the Indo-Arab relations in different perspectives. This could only be achieved by adding well-researched and analytical papers to the existing pool of literature on India-Arab relations. The scientific committee of the conference would like to adhere to the international parameters for evaluating the quality and standard of each paper. Merit of the paper will be the sole criteria for getting qualified for the seminar.

The medium of discussion during the seminar will be English and Arabic. Scholars are requested to send the **title of their papers with abstract (300 words) with their C. V. by 25th January and full paper latest by 10th February 2017**. The scientific committee would also like to request the scholars to send their papers in the electronic version as well as in hard copy which should be typed in double space with standard font 14 for English (Ms- Word) and 18 for Arabic (traditional Arabic, Ms-Word) through postal services.

Important Dates:

Date of Seminar:	February 14-15, 2017
Place of Seminar:	India Arab Culture Centre, JMI
Last Date for Abstract Submission:	25 th January, 2017
Last Date for Full Paper Submission:	10 th February, 2017

Seminar Convener
Aftab Ahmad

Seminar Director
Prof. M. H. Ilias