



His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, meets Dr S Jaishankar, Indian External Affairs Minister, in November 2020.



His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, with Dr S Jaishankar on his visit to the UAE last year.

# THE FUTURE DEPENDS ON WHAT WE DO IN THE PRESENT



Pavan Kapoor  
India Ambassador to the UAE

*On the occasion of the 72nd Republic Day of India, the Embassy of India in the UAE extends its warmest greetings to all members of the Indian community.*

**T**he ongoing vaccination drive in India, UAE and many other countries across the globe presents a positive outlook into the future. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "The future depends on what we do in the present". While it is not possible to accurately predict the future, all of us can take steps in the current situation, so that we are better prepared for the future. As the Covid-19 pandemic situation continues across the world, we need to remind ourselves that our present actions

will ensure a successful end to this phase of the virus. We are proud that many Indian nationals, as responsible members of the larger UAE community, not only participated as volunteers in the vaccine trials here but have also now become part of the 'Choose to Vaccinate' campaign in the UAE.

India-UAE bilateral relations are time tested and have continued over hundreds of years of cultural and civilisational connections between the people of the two countries. Our bilateral ties have broadened in scope, and today span virtually all areas, including new areas like space and new technologies. Both countries have strong partnerships in traditional areas like energy, trade and investment. Even during the pandemic, our top leadership kept in regular touch, using traditional telephonic methods as well as newer virtual technologies, to consult and coordinate our positions on important bilateral, regional and global issues, and of course to enhance mutual cooperation in effectively fighting the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, during the pandemic, we were able to work together even more closely in the critical areas of healthcare and food security. Our External Affairs Minister, Dr S Jaishankar, visited UAE in November 2020 to personally convey a message of appreciation from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the UAE leadership, for taking great care of the Indians here, since the onset of Covid-19 pandemic. This was followed by the recent visit of Shri V Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs, India, to interact with the Indian community and understand what further steps can be taken by the Government of India to help the community overcome the disruptions caused to their lives by the pandemic.

The contributions made by our vibrant and talented community to the growth of both India and the UAE are commendable. The Indian community here has played a vital role and worked in close cooperation with the Embassy and the Consulate in helping the most vulnerable of our people during the pandemic. The community remains the

foundation and strength of the India-UAE comprehensive strategic partnership.

A key focus area of the Embassy of India in Abu Dhabi and our Consulate General in Dubai has been and will continue to remain, the welfare of our community members. In the initial weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Embassy and Consulate both made considerable efforts to arrange for medicines, testing and isolation facilities for those affected in the community. We also set up dedicated 24x7 helplines for emergencies and medical and psychological counselling, and provided food and accommodation or rent assistance to our people, with the help of a number of Indian community groups and charitable organisations. Under the Vande Bharat Mission, the largest ever peacetime repatriation exercise, the Embassy and the Consulate arranged for the safe travel of all Indian nationals who needed to go back to India urgently and subsequently negotiated an air bubble arrangement for direct flights between UAE and India during these special times. We are continuing to help those who need help while living in the UAE as well as those wanting to return to the UAE to resume their jobs or unite with their families.

The Government of India is fully aware of the social and economic impact of Covid-19. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said, it is time for all Indians to try to convert the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, into opportunities. To generate the required stimulus for the economy, the Government of India had announced the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, a special economic package. The cumulative amount of the package was Rs30 lakh crores, or equivalent to 15 per cent of India's GDP. This aims at giving investment support to different sectors of the economy, boosting employment and fostering self-sufficiency within various sectors of the economy.

The Government also introduced the National Education Policy 2020 in August last year. This policy is an outcome of a large-scale exercise involving in-depth stakeholders' consultations. This has come after nearly three decades and will prove





Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, with Dr S Jaishankar.



Ahmed Ali Al Sayegh, UAE Minister of State, with V Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs, India, on his visit to the UAE.



Sheikh Nahyan Mubarak Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence, with V Muraleedharan earlier this month.

to be a major step in liberalising our education ecosystem and in providing more freedom of choice to the students and learners. The new policy is aimed at developing critical and innovative thinking abilities in our youth. The flexibility provided in taking subjects across streams will also aid in this process.

The Government has also taken steps for the welfare of the Indian community abroad, especially the Indian workers who have returned from overseas. The Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan, with an outlay of Rs50,000 crore, was announced for migrant workers who returned to their home states after losing their jobs. The Government of India is working closely with state governments to upskill such individuals. The Ministry of External Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, has also developed the Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support (SWADES) programme. This database of qualified citizens returning from overseas will help to map the skill sets and experience of expatriates returning to India and link them with potential employment opportunities.

Covid-19 has taught us many lessons, prominent among them being the need to be more self-reliant. The uncertainty caused by the pandemic

has created a global demand for shorter, more trusted and resilient supply chains and India has responded through the policy of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', building stronger capacities at home to make a larger contribution abroad. India is consistently making it easier to do business today, both for domestic and global players. Our objective is to further strengthen our own trade, investment and services in order to become a reliable partner of the world. The motto behind this policy is to 'Make in India for the world'.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had assured the world, from the platform of the United Nations last September, that India will continue to play the role of a trusted partner in meeting the healthcare needs of the global community. On January 16, as he launched India's domestic vaccination drive, he reiterated that India's vaccine production and delivery capacity will be used to help all of humanity in fighting this crisis. In line with this commitment, on January 20, India announced the 'Vaccine Maitri', or vaccine friendship policy, by launching the special supply of Covid-19 vaccines to its neighbouring countries like Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar to begin with, and is expected to gradually expand to many others. These vaccines are being supplied in many cases as grant assistance but in some cases, they will also be supplied commercially. Importantly, these vaccines are being supplied to these friendly countries within a week of the rollout of the vaccine in India itself.

The fact that such a large number of Indians choose to live and work in the UAE reflects the closeness and comfort level that Indians have in the UAE. We believe that the multiple stimulus measures introduced by the UAE leadership and the ongoing successful vaccination drive would promote economic growth and restart business activities that would, in turn, generate job opportunities, including for Indian nationals, in the near future.

Our three million-plus community here is the foundation of enduring India-UAE ties and is a matter of pride for our country. The Embassy, as a home away from home, will continue to focus on the welfare of all Indians in the UAE, with a special focus on the most vulnerable. We will also work closely with the various Indian community associations to address the concerns of their members.

Jai Hind!



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V Muraleedharan interacts with the Indian community in Abu Dhabi as India Ambassador to the UAE Pavan Kapoor looks on.