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India and Qatar elevate ties in trade, energy and investment

Qatar's sovereign wealth fund has \$1.5 billion FDI in India, and the joint statement said that the Qatar side announced a commitment to invest USD 10 billion in India.

Written by [Shubhajit Roy](#) [Follow](#)

New Delhi | Updated: February 19, 2025 05:06 IST



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President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi receive Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, Tuesday. (Express photo by Renuka Puri)

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani held talks in New Delhi Tuesday, India and Qatar decided to elevate their ties to a "strategic partnership", double the target of bilateral trade to USD 28 billion in the next five years, and bring Qatari investment of USD 10 billion to India.



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The Uttar Pradesh government has made arrangements for prisoners who wish to perform 'snan' at the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj. On February 21, Sangam water will be brought to the inmates to perform snan. Arrangements are also being made to conduct worship and...

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Modi, in a post on X, said, "Had a very productive meeting with my brother, Amir of Qatar H.H. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, earlier today. Under his leadership, Qatar has scaled new heights of progress. He is also committed to a strong India-Qatar friendship. This visit is even more special because we have elevated our ties to a Strategic Partnership."

They also discussed exploring a Free Trade Agreement between India and Qatar, elevating ties while focusing on trade, investment and energy. Trade between the two countries is \$14 billion annually, and they set a target to double it to \$28 billion by 2030.

Qatar's sovereign wealth fund has \$1.5 billion FDI in India, and the joint statement said that the Qatar side announced a commitment to invest USD 10 billion in India.

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On Sheikh Al Thani's second visit to India, both countries signed two agreements and five MoUs, covering areas like economic cooperation, youth affairs and a double taxation avoidance agreement.

Within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), India has signed strategic partnerships with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Kuwait; Qatar is the latest to join that club.



As the two leaders held talks at the Hyderabad House, the MEA in a post on X said, a "new milestone" was on the cards of this "special India-Qatar partnership". (X@narendramodi)

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Arun Chatterjee, Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, briefing reporters on the bilateral talks, said, "Trade, investment and energy were among the major topics of discussion between the two leaders today. **The trade today between India and Qatar is about US \$14 billion annually. Both sides have agreed to set a target to double this in the next five years.**"

STORY CONTINUES BELOW THIS AD

On the investment by Doha, he said Qatar's Sovereign Wealth Fund, the Qatar Investment Authority, currently has about US \$1.5 billion FDI in India in sectors like retail, power, IT, education, health, affordable housing.

THE OUTCOMES

- Expedite negotiations on the India-Qatar Bilateral Investment Treaty.
- Explore a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.
- Qatar's commitment to invest USD 10 billion.
- Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) to open an office.
- Nationwide rollout of UPI acceptance in Qatar.
- Celebrate India-Qatar Year of Culture, Friendship and Sports in the near future.
- Extension of e-visa facility to Qatari nationals.

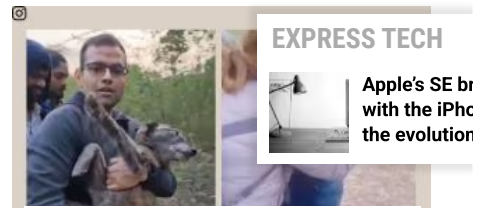
"Both leaders today identified a number of areas in which the Qatar Investment Authority can increase investments in India. This includes infrastructure, ports, ship-building, energy including renewable energy, smart cities, food parks, start-ups, and new technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and machine learning," he said. The emphasis on new tech is significant, with the world looking at AI as the new frontier of tech.

On energy ties, Chatterjee said, "**India and Qatar share a very vibrant partnership in the area of energy. Qatar is a major source of LNG for India. Both leaders today noted that in February 2024, Qatar Energy and Petronet LNG Limited had signed an agreement for supply of 7.5 million metric tonnes per annum of LNG from Qatar to India for 20 years starting 2028.**"

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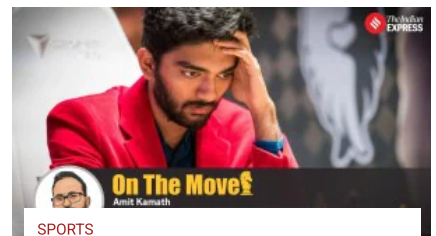
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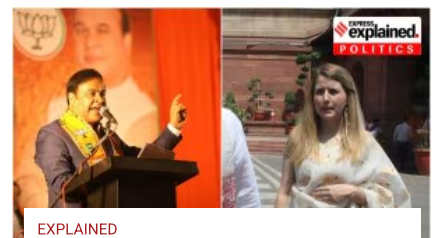
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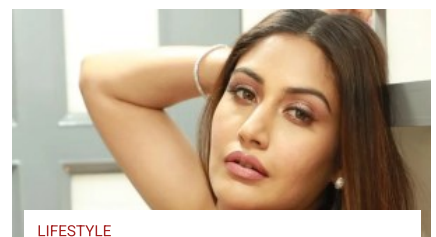
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Asked about the FTA between India and the GCC and India and Qatar, he said, “On India and the Gulf Cooperation Council, we are at this moment negotiating about having a free trade agreement. As far as Qatar is concerned, both sides are exploring the possibility of signing a free trade agreement in future and that was one of the discussions that took place in this round of talks.”

STORY CONTINUES BELOW THIS AD

The two leaders also discussed the situation in West Asia where a ceasefire and hostage-prisoner swap deal has paused the conflict between Israel and Hamas.

“In today’s meeting regarding whether Israel-Hamas was discussed... both the leaders talked about the regional and international issues of mutual interest. Naturally, the Middle East situation and the evolving situation over there came up for discussions. Both sides conveyed their mutual positions that we have on the Israel-Hamas issue. India conveyed its own position, the Qatari side conveyed their own position and we exchanged views. Both the leaders had discussions on that,” Chatterjee said.

One of the issues pending between India and Qatar is the return of a former Indian Navy officer. “Regarding the Navy official who is still over there, I would like to just mention that his matter still remains subjudice in the local courts in Qatar... the Prime Minister appreciated the work that the Amir and his government are doing for the protection and the welfare of our Indian citizens,” he said.

In August 2022, eight former Navy personnel were arrested in Qatar on charges of espionage. They were initially handed death sentences. Following diplomatic intervention by New Delhi, the death sentence was commuted in December 2023. They were released in February 2024, and seven of the eight men have since returned to India – the eighth, retired Commander Purnendu Tiwari, is yet to be sent back.

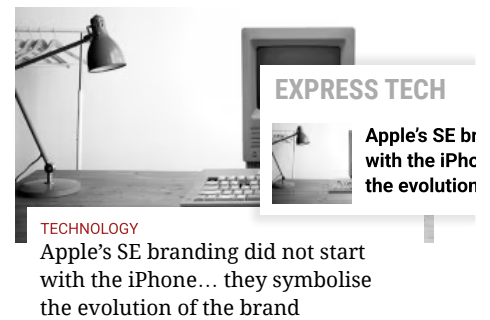
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Acknowledging the people-to-people ties, the joint statement said that the “Qatari leadership expressed deep appreciation for the role and contribution made by the Indian community in Qatar for the progress and development of their host country, noting that Indian citizens in Qatar are highly respected for their peaceful and hard-working nature. The Indian side conveyed deep appreciation to the leadership of Qatar for ensuring the welfare and well-being of this large and vibrant Indian community in Qatar”.

On terrorism, the joint statement said, “The two leaders unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations including cross-border terrorism and agreed to cooperate in combating this menace through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. They agreed to enhance cooperation in information and intelligence sharing, developing and exchanging experiences, best practices and technologies, capacity building and to strengthen cooperation in law enforcement, anti-money laundering, drug-trafficking, cybercrime and other transnational crimes.”

“The two leaders also discussed ways and means to promote cooperation in cybersecurity, including prevention of use of cyberspace for terrorism, radicalisation and for disturbing social harmony. They emphasized the importance of holding regular meetings of the Joint Committee on Security and Law Enforcement.”

Earlier in the day, the Amir was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour at Rashtrapati Bhavan where President Droupadi Murmu welcomed the visiting



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leader. Modi was also present on the occasion.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW THIS AD

India and Qatar also exchanged an agreement on establishment of strategic partnership between the two countries and a Revised Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and its Protocol.

They also signed 5 MoUs on economic collaboration, youth and sports, archives, investments and between business chambers.

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The documents were exchanged between Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, in the presence of Prime Minister Modi and the Amir.



Shubhajit Roy

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