|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| http://www.indianconsulate-sf.org/images/ashokachkra.gif | EMBASSY OF INDIAKUWAIT |

**PRESS RELEASE**

General (Dr.) V K Singh (Retd), Hon’ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India, visited Kuwait on 6-7 September, 2016. During the visit, he held a wide-ranging discussions with H.E. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister and H.E. Mr. Khaled Suleiman Al-Jarallah, Deputy Foreign Minister, on bilateral, regional and community issues. It has been agreed by both sides that the meetings for the bilateral institutional mechanisms viz. Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC), Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) and various Joint Working Groups (JWGs) would be held regularly to further strengthen cooperation in various areas. Hon’ble Minister also met H.E. Ms. Hind Al-Sabeeh, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour (also Minister of State for Development and Planning Affairs) to discuss issues concerning Indian workers, both in domestic as well as private sectors, including the repatriation of about 29,000 Indians who do not have valid visas and non-payment of salaries to Indian workers in Kharafi National. During meeting with H.E. Sheikh Faisal Al-Homoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah, Governor of Farwaniya, he discussed issues concerning Indian community residing in Abbasiya. He also visited a labour camp of Larsen & Toubro executing a GC-30 project of Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) and interacted with about 350 workers.

2. A reception was held by Ambassador in the honour of visiting Minister on 6 September, where about 60 prominent Indians from various walks of life in Kuwait interacted. Hon’ble Minister unveiled the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Embassy premises on the morning of 7 September, the first statue in the Gulf region, to promote Gandhi’s message of peace, communal harmony, non-violence and cleanliness. He held media and community interactions in the Embassy with about 350 members of Indian community who shared the issues concerning them. He also went to see prominent Indian Businessman in Kuwait Mr. Mathunny Mathews (popularly known as Toyota Mathews) at his residence and wished him speedy recovery (Mr. Mathews *played an active role in the evacuation of Indians during1990-91*). During his visit to Kuwait, Hon’ble Minister visited various places of historical and cultural importance viz. Kuwait Towers, Grand mosque, Fatima Zahra Mosque and Al Hashemi-II, the largest [dhow](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dhow) ever built.

3. All issues concerning Indian community were addressed during the visit particularly recruitment of Nurses, Indian Community School, Parental visas to Indian nationals born before 1950, land for Hindu Temple, cremation facilities, status of Indian prisoners, commutation of death sentence of 17 Indian nationals and surge pricing by Air India.

**9 September 2016**