



सत्यमेव जयते

**REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE OF INDIA
RAMALLAH**

PRESS RELEASE

November 18, 2011

Hon'ble Mr. E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs and Human Resources Development is on a two day visit to the Palestinian Territories from November 18-19, 2011. Today on reaching Palestine, he offered his Friday Prayers in Al-Aqsa Masjid in East Jerusalem and met with Sheikh Abdul Azeem Salhab, President of Islamic Endowment Council. In his meeting with Sheikh Salhab, he discussed issues of mutual interest.

Later in the day the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Mr Filippo Grandi called on the Hon'ble Minister. The Hon'ble Minister handed over a cheque of US\$ 1 million as India's annual contribution for the year 2011-12 to be utilized for 'providing daily supplement of food assistance to more than 76,000 students attending UNRWA schools in Gaza for 50 school days under the UNRWA's Emergency Programme in Gaza strip'. Both the dignitaries also discussed issues of future cooperation. The Hon'ble Minister assured UNRWA of the Government of India's continued support in its operations and in its efforts to alleviate the sufferings of Palestinian refugees.

It may be noted that Government of India has since long been contributing annually to the UNRWA's budget and since 2009-10 enhanced its annual contribution to US\$ 1 million, in addition to a special contribution of US\$ 1 million which was paid to UNRWA in response to a flash appeal in 2010.

Tomorrow, November 19, 2011 the Hon'ble Minister would participate in the inauguration of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Multipurpose Sports Centre which was constructed in Ramallah with the funding of IBSA Forum. The IBSA Sports Centre is the first project completed by IBSA funding for the Palestinian National Authority as a gift from people of IBSA countries to the people of Palestine. This also happens to be the first IBSA project in the entire Middle East. There are two more projects in Palestine which are coming up with IBSA funding. One of them is the rehabilitation of the "Al Quds Hospital" in Gaza and the other is the construction of a "Centre for People with Special Needs" in Nablus.

Tomorrow, November 19, 2011 Hon'ble Minister Mr. E. Ahamed is scheduled to meet President Abbas and Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Malki.
