

India, Jordan firm up security cooperation

Warm welcome: Jordan King Abdullah II with President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Thursday. R. V. Moorthy

India and Jordan on Thursday signed a framework agreement in defence cooperation paving the way for a joint strategy to counter common threats.

The defence agreement, the first such understanding between the two sides, is the biggest takeaway of the visit by the Jordanian king Abdullah II, officials said.

“The purpose of the MoU is to promote cooperation between India and Jordan in the field of defence by defining the scope of such cooperation and making provisions for implementation of the cooperation in some of the recognised areas like training; defence industry; counter-terrorism; military studies; cyber security; military medical services, peace-keeping, etc.,” a press release from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) informed. The defence agreement is the result of broadening security and defence-related dialogue between the two sides since the king’s last visit in 2006.

India and Jordan held the first bilateral security dialogue in July 2016 and, according to officials, this exchange, especially in the field of cyber security, is likely to deepen in the coming years.

1991 evacuation

The security cooperation is based on the “tremendous experience that Jordan has in the region [West Asia and North Africa]” said T.S. Tirumurti, Secretary in charge of Economic Relations in the MEA. Amman has provided critical support to India during the 1991 evacuation of citizens from Iraq and also during the latest crises in Iraq and Syria.

On Thursday, King Abdullah II visited the Manesar-based headquarters of the National Security Guards (NSG), where he witnessed a demonstration of the group’s skills in the field of counter-terrorism.

“The Jordanian side has lot of experience in this matter and both sides are resolved to cooperate against terrorism,” said Mr. Tirumurti. The official said that the second edition of the security dialogue is expected later this year.

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