

INDIA WATCH

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POLITICAL ISSUES

BAHRAIN

1. India signs pact with Bahrain for cooperation on terrorism

New Delhi, Wednesday, 2 December 2015

India signed an agreement with Bahrain on cooperation in combating international terrorism and trans-national organized crime. It was signed between Internal Minister Rajnath Singh and Bahrain's Interior Minister Lt. General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-02/news/68717336_1_india-signs-pact-india-and-bahrain-abdulla-al-khalifa

2. Sushma to visit Bahrain for first India-Arab League ministerial

New Delhi, Wednesday, 16 December 2015

India is set to deepen its ties with the 22-member Arab League as part of its 'Link West' policy when External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj visits Bahrain on 20 December for the first ministerial meeting of the India-Arab League Cooperation Forum.

Source: The Statesman, Kolkata

<http://www.thestatesman.com/news/world/sushma-to-visit-bahrain-for-first-india-arab-league-ministerial/110886.html>

ISRAEL

3. It's now ok to speak of India-Israel defence ties... We're not shy, ashamed: Daniel Carmon

New Delhi, Tuesday, 22 December 2015

In the event titled 'Idea Exchange' moderated by the National Editor (Strategic and International Affairs) of the *Indian Express* Praveen Swami, Israeli Ambassador to India Daniel Carmon discussed ways to improve India-Israel defence ties.

Source: The Indian Express, New Delhi

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/its-now-ok-to-speak-of-india-israel-defence-ties-were-not-shy-ashamed>

4. Indian Navy successfully test fires Long Range Barak 8 missile from INS Kolkata

New Delhi, Wednesday, 30 December 2015

India successfully conducted the maiden firing of its jointly developed Barak 8 Surface-to-Air missile (LRSM), crossing a significant milestones in enhancing its anti-air warfare capability.

This was a joint venture between Israel Aerospace Industries and Defence Research and Development Organization, India.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/indian-navy-successfully-test-fires-long-range-barak-8-missile-from-ins-kolkata/articleshow/50378363.cms>

See also: Reuters, London

<http://in.reuters.com/article/india-defence-missile-idINKBN0UD0QI2015123>

IRAN

5. India attaches importance to ties with Iran: PM Modi

New Delhi, Tuesday, 29 December 2015

Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated that India attached high importance to its relations with Iran and showed keenness to further strengthen ties with it especially in trade, investment, oil and gas, connectivity and port development.

Source: The Indian Express, Mumbai

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/india-attaches-importance-to-ties-with-iran-says-pm-modi/>

See also: The Economic Times, Mumbai

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-iran-strategic-partnership-discussed-at-first-joint-commission-meeting/articleshow/50361593.cms>

SAUDI ARABIA

6. Mumbai Police Commissioner Ahmad Javed is new envoy to Saudi Arabia

Mumbai, Saturday, 12 December 2015

Mumbai Police Commissioner Ahmad Javed who is a 1980-batch IPS officer, has been appointed as the next Indian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

Source: The Indian Express, Mumbai

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/mumbai-police-commissioner-ahmad-javed-is-new-envoy-to-saudi-arabia/>

See also: Hindustan Times, New Delhi

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/mumbai-cp-ahmad-javed-appointed-as-indian-envoy-to-saudi-arabia/story-yM8DDtmDhPoMcBgOlzRzvM.html>

See also: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-11/news/68959991_1_indian-embassy-new-envoy-saudi-arabia

ECONOMIC ISSUES

EGYPT

7. Egypt wants Indian investment in Suez Economic Zone: Envoy

New Delhi, Wednesday, 16 December 2015

Egyptian envoy to India Hatem Tageldin said that Egypt is keen that India should participate in the Suez Canal Economic Zone, a mega development project adjacent to the New Suez Canal, which would provide Indian investors close connectivity with both Europe and Africa.

Source: The Statesman, Kolkata

<http://www.thestatesman.com/mobi/news/business/egypt-wants-indian-investment-in-suez-economic-zone-envoy/110849.html>

IRAN

8. India expresses interest in preferential trade agreement with Iran once sanctions are lifted

New Delhi, Tuesday, 1 December 2015

India has expressed its interest in signing a preferential trade agreement with Iran once international sanctions on the Persian Gulf nation are lifted.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-expresses-interest-in-preferential-trade-agreement-with-iran-once-sanctions-are-lifted/articleshow/49989768.cms>

9. Farzad-B gas field: India asks Iran to expedite procedures

New Delhi, Tuesday, 29 December 2015

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj met the Iranian Minister for Economic Affairs and Finance Ali Tayyebnia and urged Iran to expedite the completion of all necessary procedures for its participation in the US\$5 billion Farzad-B gas field.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-29/news/69379715_1_chabahar-port-shanghai-cooperation-organisation-economic-cooperation

10. Iran, India ink economic co-op agreement, Chabahar Port in focus

Tehran, Wednesday, 30 December 2015

A comprehensive economic cooperation document was inked by Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ali Tayyebnia and Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj. India would invest US\$85 million in Iran's south-eastern port of Chabahar.

Source: Tehran Times, Tehran

http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=251862

See also: The Economic Times, Mumbai

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-and-iran-trying-to-seal-chabahar-port-deal-by-january/articleshow/50212231.cms>

11. India-Iran trade partnership: Delhi and Tehran to host each other's bank branches

New Delhi, Thursday, 31 December 2015

Delhi and Tehran decided to host a chain of domestic banks in each other's country. Iran's Pasargad and Parsian banks would open branches in Mumbai and Delhi respectively.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/india-iran-trade-partnership-delhi-and-tehran-to-host-each-others-bank-branches/articleshow/50387921.cms>

JORDAN

12. India, Jordan to promote co-operation in IT and electronics

New Delhi, Wednesday, 30 December 2015

India and Jordan would be promoting co-operation in information technology and electronics (IT&E) under a pact signed in October and this was conveyed to the Cabinet at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Source: Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/india-jordan-to-promote-co-operation-in-it-and-electronics-115123000473_1.html

KUWAIT

13. India to organize conference on Indian firms' role in Kuwait's developmental process

Dubai, Tuesday, 8 December 2015

India organized a conference to discuss the role of Indian Engineering Procurement and Construction companies in Kuwait's developmental process.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-08/news/68865761_1_simplex-projects-essar-projects-indian-embassy

14. Mahindra Comviva to help Kuwait's Ooredoo boost VAS revenues

Dubai, Wednesday, 9 December 2015

Mahindra Comviva, an Indian provider of mobility solutions, entered the Kuwait market by announcing its first-ever strategic value-added service business management deal with a communications company in the Gulf country.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-09/news/68899912_1_mahindra-comviva-vas-services-mobility-solutions

OMAN

15. Remittance from Oman to India made easy with new facility

Dubai, Monday, 28 December 2015

A real time account credit facility has been established in Oman to help Indian expatriates to directly transfer money to India.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-28/news/69356717_1_travancore-state-bank-flashremit

QATAR

16. India re-negotiating terms of gas contract with Qatar: Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan

New Delhi, Monday, 21 December 2015

Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan said that India is re-negotiating the terms of long-term gas contract with Qatar to reflect the slump in global energy rates but no binding agreement has been signed so far.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-21/news/69212521_1_petronet-lng-ltd-pll-gail-india-ltd

17. Accel Partners sells fractional stake in FlipKart to Qatar Investment Authority for US\$100 million

New Delhi, Monday, 21 December 2015

Accel Partners sold a fractional stake in FlipKart to Qatar Investment Authority for US\$100 million (about Rs 650 crore), in a deal that values India's biggest online marketplace at US\$15 billion.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-21/news/69212425_1_accel-partners-iconiq-capital-flipkart-cofounder

18. India's energy muscle helps Petronet get better Qatar gas deal

New Delhi, Thursday, 31 December 2015

India's biggest gas importer Petronet LNG would buy liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Qatar's Rasgas at almost half the original price, in a renegotiated deal that would save about US\$605 million a year.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-31/news/69426688_1_gas-importer-petronet-lng-rasgas

See also: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-31/news/69426724_1_petronet-lng-rasgas-spot-lng-prices

See also: Reuters, New York

<http://in.reuters.com/article/india-petronet-qatar-idINKBN0UE0JE20151231>

See also: Business Line, Chennai

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/qatar-agrees-to-lower-price-in-gas-deal-with-india/article8049876.ece>

SAUDI ARABIA

19. India, Saudi Arabia try to sort out joint fund irritants

New Delhi, Monday, 14 December 2015

The Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs Anil Wadhwa said that India and Saudi Arabia are exploring ways to overcome the issue of exemption from capital gains tax on the proposed US\$750-million joint fund to facilitate investments into the Indian infrastructure sector.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-14/news/69033659_1_capital-gains-tax-fund-tax-exemptions

UAE

20. India to sign agreements with UAE for info on illegal bank a/c: CBDT

New Delhi, Monday, 21 December 2015

India is close to signing collaborative jurisdictional agreements with the United Arab Emirates for dealing with challenges related to the siphoning of black money, Central Board of Direct Taxation (CBDT) stated in its new report.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-to-sign-agreements-with-spore-uae-and-hong-kong-for-info-on-illegal-bank-a/c-cbd/articleshow/50265842.cms>

CULTURAL ISSUES

UAE

21. President Pranab Mukherjee greets people, government of UAE on their national day

New Delhi, Tuesday, 1 December 2015

President Pranab Mukherjee extended greetings to the people and the government of the UAE on the eve of their national day and expressed the hope that the two countries would work closely to further expand and deepen the bilateral relations.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/president-pranab-mukherjee-greets-people-government-of-uae-on-their-national-day/articleshow/50000685.cms>

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

QATAR

22. Qatar Airways plans to add new flight routes in India

Mumbai, Thursday, 10 December 2015

Premier Gulf carrier Qatar Airways planned to launch flights to new Indian destinations and add to its frequencies to bolster its operations in 2016.

Source: DNA, Mumbai

<http://www.dnaindia.com/money/report-qatar-airways-plans-to-launch-flights-to-new-indian-cities-2154041>

See also: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-10/news/68930952_1_qatar-airways-al-baker-gulf-carrier

SAUDI ARABIA

23. Two Indians among three killed in missile attack in Saudi Arabia

New Delhi, Sunday, 20 December 2015

Two Indians were among the three killed when a missile fired from strife-torn Yemen struck Saudi Arabia's south-western border city of Najran.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-20/news/69186417_1_two-indians-strife-torn-yemen-missile-attack

24. Assault on Indian workers strains ties with Saudi Arabia

New Delhi, Friday, 25 December 2015

The growing number of assault cases on Indian workers in Saudi Arabia is causing a strain between the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/assault-on-indian-workers-strains-ties-with-saudi-arabia/article8027116.ece>

See also: Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/tortured-indian-workers-return-from-saudi-arabia-115122600080_1.html

Note: One Crore=10 million

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