

INDIA WATCH

No. 73

February 2016

POLITICAL ISSUES

BAHRAIN

1. Indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft Tejas to take part in Bahrain Air Show
New Delhi, Sunday, 17 January 2016

India's Light Combat Aircraft Tejas arrived at the Sakhir Airbase in Bahrain to participate in the International Air show from 21 January to explore export potential.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-01-17/news/69840678_1_lca-tejas-drdo-indian-air-force

2. India Bahrain sign pact on transfer of sentenced persons

Manama, Saturday, 23 January 2016

External Affairs Minister of India Sushma Swaraj held talks with her Bahraini counterpart and signed an agreement for the mutual transfer of sentenced persons.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-01-23/news/70012473_1_little-india-pact-affairs-minister-sushma-swaraj

EGYPT

3. India, Egypt relationship has got 'new momentum': Envoy

Cairo, Wednesday, 27 January 2016

On the occasion of India's Republic Day, its Ambassador to Egypt Sanjay Bhattacharyya said that bilateral relationship has got a "new momentum" and both countries are looking to enhance their economic engagement and scientific collaboration besides deepening cultural engagement.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-01-27/news/70120600_1_economic-engagement-momentum-indian-envoy

ISRAEL

4. Visit of External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj to Israel

New Delhi, Tuesday, 12 January 2016

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj would visit Israel on 17-18 January, during which she would hold discussions with the Israeli leadership and review entire gamut of bilateral relations.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/government-press-release/visit-of-external-affairs-minister-smt-sushma-swaraj-to-israel-january-116011200615_1.html

See also: NDTV, New Delhi

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/sushma-swaraj-to-visit-palestine-israel-from-january-17-18-1265181>

See also: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/sushma-to-lay-ground-for-modis-israel-visit/article8115026.ece>

5. Sushma Swaraj's two-day Israel visit to boost bilateral ties

New Delhi, Saturday, 16 January 2016

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's two-day visit to Israel from 17 January is expected to give a boost to burgeoning cooperation between two countries in areas as diverse as counter-terrorism and water management.

Source: Hindustan Times, New Delhi

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/sushma-swaraj-s-two-day-israel-visit-to-boost-bilateral-ties/story-ldMYuXYfKS5DI2vmTNSy7J.html>

See also: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-01-17/news/69840602_1_two-day-visit-swaraj-prime-minister-narendra-modi

6. India attaches top priority to ties with Israel: Swaraj

Jerusalem, Monday, 18 January 2016

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj called on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to discuss an entire spectrum of the bilateral relationship. She also said that India attaches the highest importance to its ties with Israel.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/external-affairs-minister-sushma-swaraj-visit-to-west-asia-india-attaches-top-priority-to-ties-with-israel-says-sushma-swaraj/article8120359.ece>

See also: The Indian Express, New Delhi

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/india-attaches-top-priority-to-ties-with-israel-sushma-swaraj/#>

JORDAN

7. India eyes safe zone in Jordan for humanitarian work in Syria

New Delhi, Monday, 11 January 2016

Jordanian officials said that India may consider launching its humanitarian efforts for the war-affected in Syria from a base in neighbouring Jordan. The proposal is likely to feature in the talks to be held between visiting Syrian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Walid Al Moallem and Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-eyes-safe-zone-in-jordan-for-humanitarian-work-in-syria/article8093309.ece>

OMAN

8. India and Oman conduct bilateral naval exercise 'Naseem Al Bahr'

New Delhi, Friday, 22 January 2016

India and Oman would conduct the 10th edition of bilateral maritime exercise 'Naseem Al Bahr' in the Arabian Sea from 22-27 January 2016. Two Oman Navy ships RNOV Al-Shamikh and RNOV Al-Seeb would participate in the exercise.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/maritime-cooperation-india-and-oman-conduct-bilateral-naval-exercise-naseem-al-bahr/articleshow/50683967.cms>

See also: Business Standard, Mumbai

http://www.business-standard.com/article/government-press-release/ships-of-royal-oman-navy-arrive-for-bilateral-maritime-exercise-naseem-116012200755_1.html

PALESTINE

9. Visit of External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj to Palestine

Delhi, Tuesday, 12 January 2016

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj would visit Palestine on 17 January 2016.

Source: Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/government-press-release/visit-of-external-affairs-minister-smt-sushma-swaraj-to-palestine-january-116011200616_1.html

10. Entire Indian leadership committed to Palestinian cause: Sushma Swaraj

Mumbai, Sunday, 17 January 2016

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj reaffirmed India's consistent support for the Palestinian cause, emphasizing that there has been "absolutely no change in its policy in this regard."

Source: DNA, Mumbai

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-entire-indian-leadership-committed-to-palestinian-cause-sushma-swaraj-2167050>

11. In West Bank, Sushma extends support to Palestinian cause

Ramallah, Sunday, 17 January 2016

During her visit to Ramallah, India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said that the entire Indian leadership remained steadfast in its commitment to the Palestinian cause.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/sushma-swarajs-palestine-israel-visit/article8116615.ece>

See also: Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/sushma-swaraj-meets-palestine-foreign-minister-116011700389_1.html

SYRIA

12. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj Meets Syrian Counterpart

New Delhi, Tuesday, 12 January 2016

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj met Syrian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Walid Al Moallem and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Source: NDTV, New Delhi

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/external-affairs-minister-sushma-swaraj-meets-syrian-counterpart-1264931>

See also: India Today, New Delhi

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/syrian-foreign-minister-to-meet-indian-leaders/1/567099.html>

13. Arrested in Syria, four Indian youths 'planning to join ISIS'

New Delhi, Thursday, 14 January 2016

Syrian Deputy Minister Walid Al Moallem said that four Indians have been arrested by Syrian police, who had gone to that country allegedly to fight alongside the Islamic State (IS).

Source: The Indian Express, New Delhi

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/four-indian-youths-planning-to-join-is-arrested-in-syria/#>

ECONOMIC ISSUES

EGYPT

14. Mahindra launches Scorpio in Egypt

Mumbai, Thursday, 14 January 2016

Mahindra & Mahindra released a press statement that it has launched its Sports Utility Vehicle Scorpio in Egypt in association with Bavarian Auto Group.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2008-01-14/news/28474276_1_sports-utility-vehicle-scorpio-mahindra-mahindra-auto-president-pawan-goenka

IRAN

15. Iran-India US\$ 2.5 billion steel deal totters as end of sanctions looms

New Delhi, Saturday, 16 January 2016

India's largest-ever steel export deal, struck with Iran in 2014 to allow it to buy the metal without violating western sanctions has become mired in a dispute that has seen no payments made or shipments delivered since last fall.

Source: The Indian Express, Mumbai

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/iran-india-2-5-bln-steel-deal-totter-as-end-of-sanctions-looms/#>

16. Iran sanctions end: Cheaper oil, more trade opportunities for India

New Delhi, Sunday, 17 January 2016

The lifting of the sanctions on Iran would benefit India with lower oil prices and more opportunities for trade. It should also bring the proposed India-Iran gas pipeline closer to reality.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/iran-sanctions-end-cheaper-oil-more-trade-opportunities-for-india/article8116964.ece>

17. Sanctions against Iran lifted: India can pay a high price for lost opportunities

New Delhi, Wednesday, 20 January 2016

India has been caught unawares by an earlier-than-expected lifting of sanctions on Iran by the US, say government officials who fear that Tehran might turn hawkish on negotiations with New Delhi on economic collaborations inordinately delayed by India.

Source: The Indian Express, Mumbai

<http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/sanctions-against-iran-lifted-india-can-pay-a-high-price-for-lost-opportunities/#>

18. India's trade with Iran set to increase

Mumbai, Tuesday, 26 January 2016

After the ending of sanctions on Iran, India's access to the Middle Eastern country, especially for food and allied products, machinery and tools, infrastructure projects, and pharmaceutical products, would increase, according to Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank).

Source: Business Line, Chennai

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/indias-trade-with-iran-set-to-increase/article8155000.ece>

JORDAN

19. India aims to more than double trade with Jordan

New Delhi, Wednesday, 27 January 2016

India, a major importer of rock phosphates, potash and finished fertilizers from Jordan, aims to more than double the trade with the country in the coming decade.

Source: The Financial Express, Noida

<http://www.financialexpress.com/article/economy/india-aims-to-more-than-double-trade-with-jordan/202716/>

QATAR

20. Qatar scraps floor, cap in gas price formula with India

New Delhi, Sunday, 3 January 2016

The world's largest gas exporter Qatar has slashed the price of gas it supplies to India by almost half by removing a floor and cap in the pricing formula, but has introduced a small fixed component to protect its interest.

Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-01-03/news/69486436_1_petronet-lng-rasgas-oil-price#

See also: The Times of India, New Delhi

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Qatar-halves-gas-price-waives-Indias-Rs-12000cr-liability/articleshow/50401540.cms>

MULTILATERAL ISSUES

ARAB LEAGUE

21. Sushma Swaraj leaves for Bahrain to attend first India-Arab Ministerial meeting

Bahrain, Saturday, 23 January 2016

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj left for Bahrain to attend the first ministerial meeting of the India-Arab League Cooperation Forum to strengthen the countries relationship with the 22-member grouping. During her two-day visit, Swaraj would hold bilateral meetings with her Bahraini counterpart Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa.

Source: DT News, Bahrain

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppId=13309&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=2>

See also: NDTV, New Delhi

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/sushma-swaraj-arrives-in-bahrain-for-first-india-arab-ministerial-meet-1269239>

See also: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-01-23/news/70012510_1_arab-league-ahmed-al-khalifa-manama

22. India-Arab League talks: Sushma Swaraj in Bahrain, terror tops agenda

New Delhi, Sunday, 24 January 2016

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's meeting with Foreign Ministers of a number of Arab League countries would be focused on the issue of combating terrorism in the region.

Source: The Indian Express, New Delhi

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/sushma-swaraj-arrives-in-bahrain-for-1st-india-arab-ministerial-meeting/>

See also: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-01-24/news/70036581_1_little-india-security-cooperation-india-and-bahrain

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