

## **INDIA WATCH**

**No. 25**

**February 2012**

### **POLITICAL ISSUES**

#### **BAHRAIN**

**1. India's envoy urges countrymen to help Bahrain's growth**

**Manama, Friday, 27 January 2012**

Addressing the Indian community in the Kingdom of Bahrain, on the 63rd Republic Day of India, the Ambassador of India to Bahrain, Mohan Kumar urged them to contribute to the well-being and socio-economic development of the nation.

**Source: Bahrain News Agency, Manama**

<http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/491169>

**2. Solid Bahraini-Indian Ties Hailed by Bahrain Labour Minister**

**Manama, Saturday, 28 January 2012**

Labour Minister Jameel bin Mohammed Ali Humaidan has hailed the solid deep-rooted Bahraini-Indian ties in all fields.

**Source: Bahrain News Agency, Manama**

<http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/491334>

#### **JORDAN**

**3. SM Krishna to boost ties with Middle East, Israel**

**New Delhi, Saturday, 7 January 2012**

External Affairs Minister of India SM Krishna begins a whirlwind four-day visit of Jordan, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Palestine.

**Source: Economic Times, Mumbai**

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-01-07/news/30601835\\_1\\_second-largest-defence-supplier-indo-israeli-economic-ties](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-01-07/news/30601835_1_second-largest-defence-supplier-indo-israeli-economic-ties)

**4. Jordan, India discuss cooperation**

**Amman, Sunday, 8 January 2012**

Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh and External Affairs Minister of India S.M. Krishna discussed means to foster bilateral relations, the latest regional developments and efforts to push the Middle East peace process forward.

**Source: The Jordan Times, Amman**

<http://jordantimes.com/search/result?q=SM+krishna%27s+visit>

## ISRAEL

### **5. Krishna leaves for Israel, Palestine on 9 January**

**New Delhi, Friday, 6 January 2012**

India opens its diplomatic engagements of the New Year with visits by foreign minister S.M. Krishna early next week to key partner Israel and old friend Palestine.

**Source: *Livemint.com***

<http://www.livemint.com/2012/01/06224847/Krishna-leaves-for-Israel-Pal.html>

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### **6. India, Israel agree to firm up anti-terror plan**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 10 January 2012**

India and Israel have decided to step up the counter-terrorism strategy besides boosting agriculture cooperation through technology.

**Source: *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi**

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/India-Israel-agree-to-firm-up-anti-terror-plan/Article1-794367.aspx>

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### **7. Israel backs India's bid for permanent UNSC membership**

**Jerusalem, Tuesday, 10 January 2012**

Describing India as the "greatest democracy on earth", Israel has said it wants New Delhi to become a permanent member of the expanded United Nations Security Council.

**Source: *The Times of India*, New Delhi**

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-10/middle-east/30611173\\_1\\_permanent-member-india-and-israel-israel-backs](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-10/middle-east/30611173_1_permanent-member-india-and-israel-israel-backs)

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### **8. India backs dialogue between Israel, Palestinians**

**Ramallah, Wednesday, 11 January 2012**

Pitching for continuation of dialogue between Israel and Palestinians, India reaffirmed its strong commitment to the Palestine cause and hoped that recent parleys held between the two sides will help find a permanent solution.

**Source: *Press Trust of India***

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/india-backs-dialogue-between-israel-palestinians/219984-2.html>

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### **9. India stays out of Gandhi statue row**

**New Delhi, Thursday, 12 January 2012**

India steered clear of a raging controversy between Israel and Palestine over building a Gandhi memorial in Jerusalem, even as External Affairs Minister S M Krishna was on a visit to the two countries from January 9 to 11.

**Source: *The Indian Express*, New Delhi**

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/India-stays-out-of-Gandhi-statue-row/898746/>

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### **10. Krishna's visit to Israel marks new high in ties**

**Jerusalem, Thursday, 12 January 2012**

External affairs minister SM Krishna's two-day visit to Israel marked a "new high" in bilateral ties when Israeli leaders bent standard procedures to extend gestures reserved for the closest of partners.

**Source: *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi**

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/News-Feed/World/Krishna-s-visit-to-Israel-marks-new-high-in-ties/Article1-796040.aspx>

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**11. 'Israel must stop settlement work'**

**New Delhi, Monday, 30 January 2012**

As India walks the tightrope between its growing ties with Israel and its support for the Palestinians, it has once again reiterated that Israel needs to stop all settlement activities in Palestinian territory.

**Source: *The Asian Age*, New Delhi**

<http://www.asianage.com/india/israel-must-stop-settlement-work-813>

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**PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY**

**12. Krishna arrives in Ramallah; to meet Palestinian leadership**

**Ramallah (West Bank), Wednesday, 11 January 2012**

External Affairs Minister of India S.M. Krishna arrived to meet top Palestinian Authority leadership during which he is expected to reaffirm India's strong support to the Palestinian cause.

**Source: *The Hindu*, Chennai**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2792617.ece>

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**SAUDI ARABIA**

**13. Vast Indian community behind flourishing Indo-Saudi relations**

**Jeddah, Thursday, 26 January 2012**

The Indian consulate general in Jeddah, Faiz Ahmad Kidwai, believes that the presence of over 2 million Indians in Saudi Arabia has given an important dimension to the Indo-Saudi relationship.

**Source: *The Times of India*, New Delhi**

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-26/middle-east-news/30666095\\_1\\_indo-saudi-indian-consulate-saudi-arabian](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-26/middle-east-news/30666095_1_indo-saudi-indian-consulate-saudi-arabian)

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**SYRIA**

**14. Turmoil in Syria, India asks citizens to avoid travel there**

**New Delhi, Saturday, 7 January 2012**

"In view of the situation prevailing in parts of Syria, Indian nationals are advised to avoid all non-essential travel to Syria for the present," said the advisory issued by the External Affairs Ministry.

**Source: *The Deccan Herald*, Hyderabad**

<http://www.deccanherald.com/content/217388/turmoil-syria-india-asks-citizens.html>

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**15. India keeps watch on Syria, wants stability**

**New Delhi, Saturday, 21 January 2012**

As New Delhi awaits the next step of the Arab League, it re-emphasizes the need for stability to return to that country and for all sides to return to the negotiating table.

**Source: *The Asian Age*, New Delhi**

<http://www.asianage.com/india/india-keeps-watch-syria-wants-stability-829>

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**YEMEN**

**16. India & Yemen share old bond"**

**New Delhi, Thursday, 28 January 2012**

Ali Abdullah Saleh, from his temporary abode in Oman, congratulated President Pratibha Patil on Republic Day and hailed Indo-Yemeni ties.

**Source: *The Times of India*, New Delhi**

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-28/hyderabad/30673138\\_1\\_general-s-people-s-congress-president-ali-abdullah-saleh-aden](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-28/hyderabad/30673138_1_general-s-people-s-congress-president-ali-abdullah-saleh-aden)

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## ECONOMIC ISSUES

### ISRAEL

#### 17. India, Israel to hold another round of talks on Free Trade Agreement

New Delhi, Tuesday, 31 January 2012

India and Israel will hold another round of negotiations by the end of March on signing the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to achieve a bilateral trade figure of US\$ 10-15 billion per year.

Source: *The Economic Times*, Mumbai

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-01-31/news/31010559\\_1\\_fta-bilateral-trade-trade-figure](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-01-31/news/31010559_1_fta-bilateral-trade-trade-figure)

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#### 18. Israeli farm companies see opportunities in Vidarbha

Nagpur, Tuesday, 31 January 2012

As Israel extends its cooperation on agriculture with India, its companies have begun seeking opportunities in horticulture technologies and irrigation systems in Vidarbha too.

Source: *The Times of India*, New Delhi

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-31/nagpur/31009150\\_1\\_excellence-centre-indo-israel-fruits](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-31/nagpur/31009150_1_excellence-centre-indo-israel-fruits)

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### KUWAIT

#### 19. Kuwait's \$1-billion India Portfolio: Five local fund houses to manage

Mumbai, Monday, 23 January 2012

Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), the Gulf state's sovereign wealth fund, has selected five domestic mutual fund houses to manage its India equity portfolio.

Source: *The Economic Times*, Mumbai

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-01-23/news/30655704\\_1\\_fund-manager-sovereign-wealth-sovereign-funds](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-01-23/news/30655704_1_fund-manager-sovereign-wealth-sovereign-funds)

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#### 20. 'Realty India 2012' opens in Kuwait

Kuwait, Saturday, 21 January 2012

Realty India 2012, the premier exhibition of properties from across India is showcasing more than 200 distinguished projects from over 70 leading and reputable Indian builders.

Source: *Kuwait Times*, Kuwait City

<http://new.kuwaittimes.net/2012/01/21/realty-india-2012-opens-in-kuwait/>

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### SAUDI ARABIA

#### 21. Pranab calls for top priority to India-Saudi investment fund

New Delhi, Friday, 6 January 2012

With India eyeing an investment of nearly US\$1 trillion over the next 5-7 years, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee pitched for focusing on the proposed US\$ 750-million fund to be set up in cooperation with Saudi Arabia for development of infrastructure, promotion of joint exploration and production of hydrocarbons.

Source: *The Hindu*, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2778359.ece>

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#### 22. Saudi Arabia thanks India for lifting anti-dumping duty

Jeddah, Wednesday, 4 January 2012

Saudi Arabia has expressed "happiness" over India's decision to lift the 6.5 per cent anti-dumping duty it had imposed on the export of its polypropylene.

Source: *The Times of India*, New Delhi

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/Saudi-Arabia-thanks-India-for-lifting-anti-dumping-duty/articleshow/11366579.cms>

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**23. Saudi minister asks Indian firms to invest skills in kingdom**

**New Delhi, Thursday, 5 January 2012**

“Investment opportunities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) up to 2020 are valued at US\$ 625 billion and we welcome Indian companies with skills and talent to take part in our development projects”, said Tewfik Al-Rabiah, Saudi minister for commerce and industry.

**Source: *The Asia News Network***

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/01/05/saudi-minister-asks-indian-firms-invest-skills-kingdom.html>

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**UAE**

**24. UAE Exchange and UBI launch real-time account credit service**

**Dubai, Tuesday, 24 January 2012**

UAE Exchange, a leading global remittance and foreign exchange brand, and Union Bank of India, or UBI, announced the launch of the real-time account credit service called “Union Flash Remit.”

**Source: *Khaleej Times*, Dubai**

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/business/2012/January/business\\_January429.xml&section=business&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/business/2012/January/business_January429.xml&section=business&col=)

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**25. Krishna urges UAE investment in Karnataka**

**Bangalore, Friday, 20 January 2012**

External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna sought to impress upon the UAE to invest in infrastructure projects in Karnataka, particularly in ‘IT capital’ Bangalore.

**Source: *The Hindu*, Chennai**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/article2817626.ece>

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**ENERGY ISSUES**

**IRAN**

**26. India drawn to Iran's favourable oil terms – Reddy**

**New Delhi, Monday, 23 January 2012**

Oil Minister S. Jaipal Reddy said that India wants to take as much Iranian oil as it can because terms are "favourable", after talks between the two sides finalized on payment options for \$12 billion of crude a year following fresh U.S. sanctions.

**Source: *Reuters***

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/01/23/india-iran-idINDEE80M0ET20120123>

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**27. India says not seeking Iran oil waiver from U.S.**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 17 January 2012**

While New Delhi continues to import from Tehran, India is not seeking a waiver from the United States that would protect buyers of Iranian oil from a fresh round of sanctions.

**Source: *Reuters***

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/01/17/india-iran-idINDEE80G0E020120117>

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**28. India trying to find solution to pay for Iran oil: RBI**

**New Delhi, Saturday, 21 January 2012**

Reserve Bank of India deputy governor K C Chakrabarty said that efforts were being made to explore ways to pay for oil imported from Iran, which has been subjected to international sanctions.

Source: *The Economic Times*, Mumbai

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-01-21/news/30650695\\_1\\_iran-oil-iranian-central-bank-imports](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-01-21/news/30650695_1_iran-oil-iranian-central-bank-imports)

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## **SAUDI ARABIA**

### **29. Saudi Arabia and India to boost energy ties**

Riyadh, Thursday, 5 January 2012

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh held talks with Saudi Arabian Minister of Commerce and Industry Tawfiq Al-Rabiah in New Delhi and invited greater cooperation from Saudi Arabia in all fields, describing the Kingdom as a "valued partner".

Source: *Arab News*, Jeddah

<http://arabnews.com/economy/article559353.ece>

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## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **OMAN**

#### **30. Oman Tourism to conduct multi-city road show in India next month**

Mumbai, Friday, 20 January 2012

In a bid to increase awareness and acquaint the Indian travel trade with Oman's tourism products and offerings, Oman Tourism plans to conduct a four-city road show in February 2012.

Source: *Bernama*, Kuala Lumpur

<http://www.bernama.com.my/bernama/v6/newsindex.php?id=641299>

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#### **31. Indian schools in Oman plan infrastructure expansion**

Muscat, Saturday, 21 January 2012

Indian schools in Oman have planned a massive infrastructure expansion to meet the increasing demand for admissions.

Source: *News Track India*, New Delhi

<http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/2012/01/21/261756-Indian-schools-in-Oman-plan-infrastructure-expansion-to-meet-growing-admission-demands.html>

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### **UAE**

#### **32. Indian tourists, second largest in Abu Dhabi**

Dubai, Tuesday, 24 January 2012

The UAE capital of Abu Dhabi has recorded its most successful year ever in terms of hotel guest arrivals with India becoming its second largest international source market.

Source: *The Indian Express*, New Delhi

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/indian-tourists-log-secondlargest-presence-in-abu-dhabi/903480/>

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## **SAUDI ARABIA**

#### **33. Indian community condoles MOH Farook's death**

Jeddah, Tuesday, 31 January 2012

Various Indian cultural and social organizations have expressed grief over the demise of the former Indian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia MOH Farook.

Source: *The Times of India*, New Delhi

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/nri/middle-east-news/Indian-community-condoles-MOH-Farooks-death/articleshow/11700848.cms>

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INDIA WATCH-25/SHARMA

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