

# INDIA WATCH

No. 26

March 2012

## POLITICAL ISSUES

### EGYPT

**1. Krishna to undertake three-day visit to Egypt**

New Delhi, Wednesday, 29 February 2012

A number of agreements are likely to be inked during the visit of External Affairs Minister S M Krishna to Egypt beginning Friday, the first high-level Indian visit to the country after the popular uprising. Krishna will co-chair the Sixth Meeting of the Joint Commission with his Egyptian counterpart Mohamed Kamel Amr on Sunday.

**Source:** *IBNLive, New Delhi*

<http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/krishna-to-undertake-threeday-visit-to-egypt/969102.html>

### IRAN

**2. India to step up ties with Tehran; unfazed by US sanctions**

New Delhi, Tuesday, 14 February 2012

Unfazed by US sanctions and Israel linking Tehran to the attack on an Israeli Embassy car here, India is set to ramp up its energy and business ties with Iran, with a commerce ministry team heading to Tehran to explore fresh business opportunities.

**Source:** *The Economic Times, Mumbai*

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-14/news/31059418\\_1\\_chababar-port-iranian-oil-tehran](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-14/news/31059418_1_chababar-port-iranian-oil-tehran)

**3. New Delhi to go ahead with trade team visit to Iran**

New Delhi, Friday, 17 February 2012

Not letting the recent bomb blast in front of the Israeli Embassy in Delhi hamper its relationship, India is firm on sending a high-level business and official delegation to Iran this month-end to explore trade and export potential after imposition of sanctions by the US and European Union.

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

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/article2903969.ece>

### ISRAEL

**4. India, Israel to step up fight against terror**

Tel Aviv, Tuesday, 14 February 2012

Undeterred by the attack against its diplomat in New Delhi on 13 February, Israel vowed to step up ties with India to jointly fight against the menace of terrorism.

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

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2892788.ece>

---

**5. India, Israel working in tandem to probe New Delhi blast**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 15 February 2012**

India is working closely with Israel "at all levels" to get to the bottom of Monday's explosion. However, India is yet to openly name Iran as the perpetrator of the attack.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-15/india/31062614\\_1\\_india-iran-iranian-oil-iran-india](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-15/india/31062614_1_india-iran-iranian-oil-iran-india)

---

**6. Terror Cells are Active in India: Israel Minister**

**Jerusalem, Thursday, 16 February 2012**

Terror cells are "active" in India, a senior Israeli minister has said, underlining that the recent attack on a diplomat in New Delhi should spur the two nations to step up counter-terrorism cooperation.

**Source:** *Outlook*, New Delhi

<http://news.outlookindia.com/items.aspx?artid=751601>

---

**7. Israel wants India to back UN resolution on 'Iran attacks'**

**New Delhi, Friday, 17 February 2012**

In what may put New Delhi in a spot, Israel has asked India to help sponsor a resolution against Iran in the United Nations Security Council condemning Monday's attack on one of its diplomats in Delhi, as well as the incidents in Tblisi and Bangkok.

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

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/israel-wants-india-to-back-un-resolution-on-iran-attacks/913168/>

---

**8. India joins US, Israel at UN to slam Delhi attack**

**New York, Saturday, 25 February 2012**

India joined a diplomatic initiative by the US and Israel in the Security Council to issue a statement condemning the recent terror attack on an Israeli diplomat in New Delhi, after others came around to heed its insistence not to mention Iran.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-25/india/31100277\\_1\\_israeli-diplomat-alon-ushpiz-israeli-envoy](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-25/india/31100277_1_israeli-diplomat-alon-ushpiz-israeli-envoy)

---

**9. Embassy car bombing: India has 'considerable evidence' against Iran, says Israel**

**Jerusalem, Sunday, 26 February 2012**

Indian intelligence agencies have "considerable evidence" of Iran's involvement in the February 13 attack on an Israeli diplomat but are not releasing it in a bid to avoid public confrontation with Tehran, a top Israeli security official has claimed.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-26/india/31100862\\_1\\_wife-of-israeli-defence-israeli-diplomat-indian-agencies](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-26/india/31100862_1_wife-of-israeli-defence-israeli-diplomat-indian-agencies)

---

**10. Army chief's visit to Israel cancelled**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 28 February 2012**

Army Chief General V K Singh's visit to Israel in March has been cancelled because of "instability" in West Asian region, particularly Syria, Government said.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-28/india/31107100\\_1\\_india-and-israel-](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-28/india/31107100_1_india-and-israel-)

[israeli-counterpart-defence-cooperation](#)

---

**OMAN**

**11. Attestation by ministry is must, Indian expats told**

Muscat, Tuesday, 21 February 2012

It is mandatory for all Indian expatriates currently residing in Oman or planning residence in the sultanate to get documents issued in India attested by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi or its designated authority in the states.

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

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2012/February/middleeast\\_February601.xml&section=middleeast&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2012/February/middleeast_February601.xml&section=middleeast&col=)

---

**SAUDI ARABIA**

**12. Antony's visit: India, Saudi Arabia seek stronger ties**

Riyadh, Wednesday, 15 February 2012

India and Saudi Arabia have looked at ways to enhance bilateral ties during the two-day visit of Indian defence minister A K Antony to Saudi Arabia.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-15/india/31062351\\_1\\_prince-salman-abdulaziz-al-saud-indian-defence-minister](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-15/india/31062351_1_prince-salman-abdulaziz-al-saud-indian-defence-minister)

---

**SYRIA**

**13. India voted on Syria resolution after getting draft amended**

Washington, Monday, 6 February 2012

India and other like-minded countries in the UNSC decided to support a Western-backed draft resolution on Syria only after it was agreed to explicitly remove provisions of regime change, threat of sanctions and military intervention.

**Source:** *The Economic Times, Mumbai*

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-06/news/31030546\\_1\\_syria-resolution-draft-resolution-unsc](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-06/news/31030546_1_syria-resolution-draft-resolution-unsc)

---

**14. India votes for Syria resolution in UN General Assembly**

New York, Friday, 17 February 2012

The UN General Assembly has voted in favour of a resolution that condemned the violent crackdown in Syria and urged Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to step down. India supported the Arab League-backed resolution, but made it clear that it was opposed to use of force.

**Source:** *The Economic Times, Mumbai*

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-17/news/31071606\\_1\\_resolution-president-bashar-syrian-people](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-17/news/31071606_1_resolution-president-bashar-syrian-people)

---

**15. India to join 'Friends of Syria' in Tunisia**

New Delhi, Friday, 24 February 2012

Indicating a change in Indian position vis-à-vis Syria, New Delhi has decided to send a senior diplomat to attend the 'Friends of Syria' conference scheduled to be held in Tunis.

**Source:** *Zee News, New Delhi*

[http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/india-to-join-friends-of-syria-in-tunisia\\_760341.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/india-to-join-friends-of-syria-in-tunisia_760341.html)

---

**ECONOMIC ISSUES**

**BAHRAIN**

**16. Bahrain's Batelco says India stake sale to lift 2012 profit**

Dubai, Wednesday, 22 February 2012

Bahrain Telecommunications Co's (Batelco) sale of its stake in Indian affiliate S Tel will help it achieve double-digit profit growth in 2012, the former monopoly said on Wednesday.

**Source:** *Moneycontrol*, New Delhi

[http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/wire-news/bahrains-batelco-says-india-stake-sale-to-lift-2012-profit\\_672241.html](http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/wire-news/bahrains-batelco-says-india-stake-sale-to-lift-2012-profit_672241.html)

---

## **IRAN**

### **17. Indian trade delegation to Iran may put Indo-US ties under strain**

**New Delhi, Saturday, 11 February 2012**

India's announcement of sending a huge trade delegation to Iran may put the Indo-US ties under strain at a time when Washington is seeking international cooperation to put maximum economic pressure on Tehran to give up its nuclear programme.

**Source:** *The Economic Times*, Mumbai

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-11/news/31050038\\_1\\_trade-delegation-major-new-irritant-tehran](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-11/news/31050038_1_trade-delegation-major-new-irritant-tehran)

---

### **18. India-Iran trade can touch \$30 billion by 2015- Assocham**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 15 February 2012**

An influential Indian trade body on Wednesday said the recent attack on Israeli targets, blamed by Israel on Iran, will not affect India's growing trade and business ties with Iran, which can grow to US\$ 30 billion by 2015.

**Source:** *The Economic Times*, Mumbai

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-15/news/31063286\\_1\\_india-iran-trade-trade-body-eu-sanctions](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-15/news/31063286_1_india-iran-trade-trade-body-eu-sanctions)

---

## **IRAQ**

### **19. Diversify trade basket to increase commerce: Iraq to India**

**New Delhi, Monday, 27 February 2012**

War-torn Iraq invited Indian investments and sought diversification of the trade basket to enhance economic cooperation between the countries.

**Source:** *The Economic Times*, Mumbai

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-27/news/31104178\\_1\\_trade-basket-bilateral-trade-india-iraq-joint-business-council](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-27/news/31104178_1_trade-basket-bilateral-trade-india-iraq-joint-business-council)

---

## **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

### **20. Etisalat India mobile phone joint venture to shut down operations**

**Dubai, Wednesday, 22 February 2012**

United Arab Emirates telecom operator Etisalat on Wednesday said it would shut down the operations of its Indian joint venture, three weeks after an Indian court cancelled the affiliate's licence amid a corruption probe.

**Source:** *Reuters*

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/22/etisalat-india-idUSL4E8DM71W20120222>

---

### **21. UAE's Etisalat sues Indian joint venture partners for fraud**

**Dubai, Thursday, 23 February 2012**

UAE telecoms operator Etisalat on Thursday said it had launched legal proceedings against its Indian joint venture partners alleging fraud in an attempt to recover some of the losses arising from its scandal-hit investment in the country.

**Source:** *Reuters*

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/23/etisalat-india-idUSL5E8DN61520120223>

---

**22. UAE to set up centres in India to train unskilled workers**

**Dubai, Wednesday, 22 February 2012**

The UAE will set up training centres in India with an aim to control the flow of unskilled workers into the country's construction industry and bypass private recruitment agencies.

**Source: Business Standard, Mumbai**

<http://business-standard.com/india/news/uae-to-setcentres-in-india-to-train-unskilled-workers/158621/on>

---

**ENERGY ISSUES**

**IRAN**

**23. India largest importer of Iran oil for a month**

**New Delhi, Thursday, 16 February 2012**

India imported an estimated 2.2 million metric tonnes in January, a jump from the roughly 1.4 metric tonnes it imported on average per month last year.

**Source: Hindustan Times, New Delhi**

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/India-largest-importer-of-Iran-oil-for-a-month/Article1-812077.aspx>

---

**24. Iran offers extra oil, India not keen – sources**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 21 February 2012**

India is pushing refiners to reduce oil imports from Iran by at least 10 percent for 2012/13, sources at two of the companies said, as tighter Western sanctions impact Iran's trade.

**Source: Reuters India**

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/02/21/india-iran-crude-idINDEE81K09M20120221>

---

**ISRAEL**

**25. Israeli Minister in India to discuss energy tie-up**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 21 February 2012**

Minister for National Infrastructure Uzi Landau, who also holds the Energy & Water Resources portfolio, will take forward the interest expressed by External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna in the energy sector during his visit to Israel last month.

**Source: The Hindu, Chennai**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2913866.ece>

---

**QATAR**

**26. Oil Minister orders probe into Petronet LNG's Qatar contract**

**New Delhi, Monday, 20 February 2012**

Oil Minister S Jaipal Reddy has ordered a probe into changes made in a multi-billion dollar contract for import of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Qatar, following allegations of foul play.

**Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai**

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-20/news/31079486\\_1\\_petronet-lng-s-qatar-rich-gas-kochi-terminal](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-20/news/31079486_1_petronet-lng-s-qatar-rich-gas-kochi-terminal)

---

**SAUDI ARABIA**

**27. Saudi Arabia offers more crude supplies to India**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 14 February 2012**

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, has offered additional crude supplies to India, a move that could help Indian refiners replace supplies from sanctions-hit Iran.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-14/middle-east/31058424\\_1\\_crude-supplies-indian-refiners-saudi-crude](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-14/middle-east/31058424_1_crude-supplies-indian-refiners-saudi-crude)

---

**28. BPCL plans shift from Iran to Saudi oil, say sources**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 22 February 2012**

India's Bharat Petroleum has turned to Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, for higher supplies in 2012/13, fearing global sanctions may jeopardise trade with Iran, industry sources said.

**Source:** *The Economic Times, Mumbai*

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-22/news/31087088\\_1\\_bpd-india-and-iran-oil-trade](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-22/news/31087088_1_bpd-india-and-iran-oil-trade)

---

**29. India seeks extra oil, LPG from Saudi Arabia**

**New Delhi, Friday, 24 February 2012**

The government has sought to increase crude oil inflow from Saudi Arabia by five million tonnes from 27.33 million tonnes, as supplies from Iran is set to decline following US sanctions.

**Source:** *Business Standard, Mumbai*

<http://business-standard.com/india/news/india-seeks-extra-oil-lpgsaudi-arabia/465714/>

---

**MULTILATERAL**

**30. Russia, China kill India-backed resolution on Syria**

**United Nations, Sunday, 5 February 2012**

As a UNSC draft resolution to pressure Syria failed after China and Russia voted against it, India said it backed the motion as it favoured resolving the crisis through a Syrian-led inclusive political process.

**Source:** *The Economic Times, Mumbai*

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-05/news/31027080\\_1\\_syrian-president-syrian-people-syrian-leadership](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-05/news/31027080_1_syrian-president-syrian-people-syrian-leadership)

---

**31. India drags Turkey, Egypt to WTO for import duties on Cotton yarn**

**New Delhi, Friday, 24 February 2012**

Striking against rising global protectionism, India has dragged both Turkey and Egypt to the World Trade Organisation for imposing special import duties on Indian cotton yarn, lowering competitiveness in these markets.

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

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-24/news/31095360\\_1\\_cotton-yarn-special-import-import-duties](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-02-24/news/31095360_1_cotton-yarn-special-import-import-duties)

---

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**BAHRAIN**

**32. Indian school in Bahrain to get 600 Aakash tablets**

**Dubai, Tuesday, 21 February 2012**

Students of an Indian school in Bahrain will soon get the world's cheapest tablet computer 'Aakash', developed by India's Human Resources Development Ministry.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-21/education/31082594\\_1\\_tablet-computer-indian-school-bahrain-students](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-21/education/31082594_1_tablet-computer-indian-school-bahrain-students)

---

**33. Bahrain Air opens daily flights to Thiruvananthapuram**

**Manama, Tuesday, 21 February 2012**

Bahrain Air said Monday it has finally won the rights to operate daily direct flights from Bahrain

to Thiruvananthapuram in south India. These flights, which will have ideal connection from Saudi Arabia, will commence from March 15.

**Source:** *Arab News, Jeddah*

<http://arabnews.com/economy/corporatenews/article578374.ece>

---

## **EGYPT**

### **34. Egypt aims for 1 million Indian tourists every year**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 15 February 2012**

Last year Egypt was rocked by demonstrations. And this year too, protests have taken place in Cairo's famous Tahrir Square. Nonetheless, Khaled El Bakly, ambassador of Egypt to India, is confident of getting one million Indian tourists in recent future.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-15/middle-east/31062666\\_1\\_aswan-india-and-egypt-indo-egypt](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-15/middle-east/31062666_1_aswan-india-and-egypt-indo-egypt)

---

## **KUWAIT**

### **35. Annual fest of Indian doctors held in Kuwait**

**Kuwait City, Friday, 17 February 2012**

Under the auspices of Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the state of Kuwait, the Indian Doctors Forum held their annual event 'Mausam 2012' at the Regency Hotel.

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

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/nri/contributors/contributions/deepika-nambiar/Annual-fest-of-Indian-doctors-held-in-Kuwait/articleshow/11923586.cms>

---

## **SAUDI ARABIA**

### **36. Indian's body flies home one year after death**

**Dubai, Monday, 27 February 2012**

The body of an Indian, who died in an accident in Saudi Arabia, is finally being flown back to his family in Kerala after a year of relentless efforts to overcome legal and bureaucratic hurdles.

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

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/RestOfAsia/Indian-s-body-flies-home-one-year-after-death/Article1-817690.aspx>

---

## **SYRIA**

### **37. Syria makes earnest bid to attract Indian travellers**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 29 February 2012**

In India to participate in the Outbound Travel Market 2012 that was over the weekend, Syria's tourism officials are "exploring" the market and have been surprised at the unexpected response. Despite queries on safety among walk-in visitors, Syria's tourism marketing and promotion director Bassam Barsik is upbeat.

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

[http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-29/india/31110222\\_1\\_indian-travellers-travel-mart-visa-fees](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-02-29/india/31110222_1_indian-travellers-travel-mart-visa-fees)

---

**Compiled by Saumya Sharma**

Saumya Sharma is an Intern at MEI@ND. Email: [saumyasharma19@gmail.com](mailto:saumyasharma19@gmail.com)

INDIA WATCH-26/SHARMA

**As part of its editorial policy, the MEI@ND standardizes spelling and date formats to make the text uniformly accessible and stylistically consistent. The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views/positions of the MEI@ND. Editor, MEI@ND: P R Kumaraswamy**