

INDIA WATCH

No. 27

April 2012

POLITICAL ISSUES

EGYPT

1. SM Krishna heads to Egypt, Syria on agenda

New Delhi, Friday, 2 March 2012

During the three day visit to Egypt which is the first high profile visit from India in the aftermath of the Arab Spring that toppled Egypt's longstanding ruler Hosni Mubarak, India's External Affairs Minister S M Krishna will meet Nabil El Araby, secretary general of the Arab League and its troika of representatives Qatar, Libya and Iraq in Cairo on Saturday, 3 March 2012.

Source: DNA, Mumbai

http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_sm-krishna-heads-to-egypt-syria-on-agenda_1657480

Also see:

http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/sm-krishna-on-a-three-day-visit-to-egypt_761731.html

2. Krishna in Egypt, meets Muslim Brotherhood leader

Cairo, Sunday, 4 March 2012

External Affairs Minister SM Krishna met the Egyptian leadership and established first contacts with Mohamed Morsy, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood's political arm the Freedom and Justice Party that has emerged as the largest force in the first post-Mubarak Egyptian parliament.

Source: Zee News, New Delhi

http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/krishna-in-egypt-meets-muslim-brotherhood-leader_762129.html

Also see:

The Outlook, New Delhi, <http://news.outlookindia.com/items.aspx?artid=754151>

3. S M Krishna meets top Egyptian leaders

Cairo, Monday, 5 March 2012

During his three-day visit, India's External Affairs Minister S M Krishna and his Egyptian counterpart Mohamed Kamel Amr reviewed the bilateral relations and accepted recommendations of sub-committees on trade and economic co-operation, scientific and technical cooperation, cultural cooperation and information technology.

Source: news.worldsnap.com, Bangalore

<http://news.worldsnap.com/international/africa/s-m-krishna-meets-top-egyptian-leaders-121369.html>

4. India, Egypt pledge to build afresh

Cairo, Monday, 5 March 2012

During his visit, India's External Affairs Minister S M Krishna said that the two countries had identified Information Technology as a thrust area for joint forays.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2961098.ece>

IRAN

5. India, Iran have shared information about attack on Israeli diplomat

New Delhi, Saturday, 24 March 2012

According to official spokesperson in the MEA, Syed Akbaruddin, India has informed the Iranian Ambassador of the involvement of Iranians in an attack on an Israel diplomat on Tuesday, 14 February 2012, to seek the cooperation of the Iranian authorities in bringing those involved in this attack to justice.

Source: newstrackindia.com, New Delhi

<http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/2012/03/24/263-India-Iran-have-shared-information-about-attack-on-Israeli-diplomat.html>

6. Iran may help Delhi car blast investigation

Saturday, 24 March 2012

According to a senior government official, the Iranian government has promised assistance in the investigation into the attack on the Israeli diplomat in New Delhi last month on Tuesday, 13 February 2012.

Source: Rediff.com, Mumbai

<http://www.rediff.com/news/report/iran-may-help-delhi-car-blast-investigation/20120324.htm>

7. India in touch with Iran to get access to accused Iranians

New Delhi, Saturday, 31 March 2012

India is in touch with Iran to get access to three Iranians wanted in connection with the bomb attack on an Israeli diplomat on Tuesday, 13 February 2012 in Delhi

Source: IBNLive.com, Noida

<http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/india-in-touch-with-iran-to-get-access-to-accused-iranians/981527.html>

Also See:

India Today, New Delhi, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/india-israel-embassy-car-blast-access-to-accused-iranians/1/182525.html>

ISRAEL

8. Israeli diplomat attack: Indian journalist with Iran link held

New Delhi, Wednesday, 7 March 2012

The arrest of an Indian journalist reportedly working for an Iranian publication has been connected with an attack on an Israeli diplomat on Tuesday, 13 February 2012.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-07/india/31131770_1_india-iran-iranian-oil-deep-convergence

9. India blacklists Israel Military Industries for 10 years

Wednesday, 7 March 2012

India has barred Israel Military Industries, as well as five other foreign defence contractors, from bidding for defence contracts in the country for 10 years.

Source: Ha'aretz Tel Aviv

<http://www.haaretz.com/business/india-blacklists-israel-military-industries-for-10-years-1.416993>

Also See:

The Jerusalem Post, <http://www.jpost.com/Defense/Article.aspx?id=260725>; Defence News, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120306/DEFREG04/303060004/Israel-8216-Surprised-8217-By-Indian-Sanctions-IMI> and *The Economic Times*, New Delhi http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-07/news/31132114_1_israeli-weapons-israel-military-industries-defense

10. Iranian link to Delhi car blast established

New Delhi, Thursday, 8 March 2012

The Iranian link to the recent blast in an Israel embassy car unravelled on Wednesday, 7 March 2012, with the Delhi Police arresting an Indian freelance journalist Syed Mohammed Kazmi allegedly working for Iranian media outlets

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-08/news/31135983_1_israel-embassy-car-israeli-embassy-car-blast

11. India probing Iran's Quds Force link to Israel Embassy car blast

New Delhi, Friday, 9 March 2012

A day after an Indian Freelance journalist Sayed Mohammed Ahmed Kazmi was arrested for his alleged link to the attack, investigators said on Thursday, 8 March 2012, that either the Quds Force or Lebanese Shia militia Hezbollah might have schemed the terror bombing on an Israeli embassy car on Tuesday, 13 February 2012.

Source: India Today, New Delhi

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/india-probing-iran-quds-force-link-to-attack-on-israelis/1/177000.html>

12. India issues arrest warrants for three Iranians in Israeli bombing

New Delhi, Friday, 16 March 2012

According to officials, India has issued arrest warrants for three Iranian suspects who reportedly fled the country shortly after last month's bomb attack on an Israeli diplomatic vehicle and it is seeking Interpol's assistance to apprehend them.

Source: Los Angeles Times

http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/03/india-issues-warrants-for-3-iranians-in-israeli-bombing-.html

13. Indian police make Iran link to New Delhi bomb and Bangkok explosions

New Delhi, Saturday, 17 March 2012

Indian police have said a bomb attack that wounded an Israeli diplomat's wife in New Delhi on Tuesday, 13 March 2012, is connected to a series of explosions in Bangkok on the same day

Source: The Guardian, London

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/mar/17/india-link-iran-delhi-bangkok-explosions>

14. Mossad didn't question Kazmi: Delhi cops to court

New Delhi, Tuesday, 20 March 2012

In the wake of allegations by Syed Mohammed Ahmad Kazmi that Mossad was interrogating him, Delhi Police told a local court in New Delhi that Israeli intelligence agency Mossad has not questioned Syed Mohammed Ahmad Kazmi, arrested in connection with Israeli diplomat's car bombing on Tuesday, 13 February 2012.

Source: The Hindustan Times, New Delhi

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Mossad-didn-t-question-Kazmi-Delhi-cops-to-court/Article1-828471.aspx>

15. Israeli diplomat attack case: Bombers used many passports, police say

New Delhi, Tuesday, 20 March 2012

Police say Houshang Afshar Irani and his co-conspirators, Seyed Ali Mahdiansadr and Mohammad Reza Abolghasemi, possibly used many passports to enter the country.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-20/delhi/31214715_1_delhi-blast-mohammad-reza-abolghasemi-car-bombing-case

16. Israel Embassy car blast: Iranian SIM card retrieved from journalist's phone, say sources

New Delhi, Wednesday, 21 March 2012

According to sources, the Delhi police have retrieved an Iranian phone SIM card from the mobile phone of Syed Mohammed Kazmi, the Indian journalist who is being held in connection with the terror plot to kill members of the Israeli Embassy in New Delhi.

Source: NDTV, New Delhi

<http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/israel-embassy-car-blast-iranian-sim-card-retrieved-from-journalists-phone-say-sources-188543>

17. Israeli diplomat attack: Other agency not to Question Kazmi: Court

Wednesday, 21 March 2012

In the wake of allegations that Israel's intelligence agency Mossad was interrogating him, the Delhi Police was specifically told today by a Special Cell in Delhi not to permit any other probe agency to interrogate journalist Syed Mohammed Ahmad Kazmi, arrested for his alleged role in the February 13 bombing of an Israeli diplomat car.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-21/news/31220083_1_mossad-israeli-diplomat-police-custody

18. Israeli hit: Iranian suspect had Indian, Thai visa

New Delhi, Saturday, 22 March 2012

Investigators in Delhi have obtained a copy of the visa granted to Seyed Ali Mahdiansadr by the Royal Thai Embassy in Tehran on April 12, 2011

Source: The Indian Express, New Delhi

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/israeli-hit-iranian-suspect-had-indian-thai-visa/926798/1>

19. Israeli car blast: Red Corner notice issued against 4 Iranians

New Delhi, Friday, 23 March 2012

A week after the request made by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to arrest the four suspects- Houshang Afshar Irani, Seyed Ali Mahdiansadr, Mohammadreza Abolghasemi and Sedaghatzadeh Masoud- for their involvement in the 13 February 2012 Israeli Embassy car attack, red corner notice was issued.

Source: India Today, New Delhi

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/embassy-car-bombing-interpol-red-corner-alert-iranians/1/178979.html>

20. Israeli embassy attack: India to seek Iran help in probe

New Delhi, Wednesday, 28 March 2012

During the investigations, Delhi Police will send letter rogatories to three countries - Iran, Thailand and Malaysia.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-28/india/31248916_1_delhi-police-israeli-diplomat-bangkok

JORDAN

21. CEC leads delegation to Jordan

New Delhi, Saturday, 17 March 2012

On Jordanian Prime Minister's invitation, Chief Election Commissioner of India S Y Quraishi led a delegation to Amman wherein accompanying the CEC as part of the delegation are EC's Director General Akshay Rout, Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh Umesh Sinha, and EC's legal adviser S K Mendiratta.

Source: Zee News, New Delhi

http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/cec-leads-delegation-to-jordan_764384.html

Also See: Islamic Republic News Agency, Tehran

<http://www.irna.ir/News/Politic/Indian-Chief-Election-Commissioner-leaves-for-Jordan/8004452>

SAUDI ARABIA

22. India, Saudi Arabia finalize Annual Hajj Agreement

New Delhi, Wednesday, 14 March 2012

Under the Annual Hajj Agreement finalized by Minister of State for External Affairs E Ahamed and by Dr. Bandar Bin Mohammed Bin Hamzah Asad Hajjar, Minister for Hajj of Saudi Arabia, more than 170,000 pilgrims from India will perform the Hajj this year

Source: India Times, indiatimes.com/2012-03-15/middle-east-news/31196284_1_indian-haj-pilgrims-saudi-Arabia and See also Zee News, http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/india-seeks-additional-haj-quota-of-10-000_763808.html

SYRIA

23. India is too influential to be neutral, says rights body

New Delhi, Saturday, 24 March 2012

India joined 40 countries to condemn "sharply escalating" and widespread violations committed by government forces in Syria on Friday.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-24/india/31233689_1_rights-body-UNSC-ltce

UAE

24. Indian MPs lobby for crew of hijacked Dubai tanker

Dubai, Tuesday, 27 March 2012

Politicians in India are pressuring their government to intervene on behalf of crewmembers of the hijacked MT Royal Grace.

Source: The National, Abu Dhabi

<http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/indian-mps-lobby-for-crew-of-hijacked-dubai-tanker>

YEMEN

25. President Hadi invited to visit India

Sana'a, Sunday, 25 March 2012

Indian ambassador to Yemen Ausaf Sayeed handed over a letter to President Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi from Indian president Pratibha Patil which included Patil's invitation to Hadi to visit India and her congratulations on his winning in the presidential election held on 21 February 2012

Source: Yemen News Agency (SABA), Sana'a
<http://www.sabanews.net/en/news264168.htm>

ECONOMIC ISSUES

BAHRAIN

26. BKIC-ICICI in insurance deal

Manama, Thursday, 8 March 2012

Bahrain Kuwait Insurance Company (BKIC) has signed an agreement with ICICI Bank (Bahrain branch), India's largest private sector bank, for the distribution of its general insurance products targeting primarily the Indian expatriate community in the kingdom.

Source: Gulf Daily News, Manama

<http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=325336>

27. Indian budget proposals are reviewed

Manama, Wednesday, 21 March 2012

At a meeting of the Bahrain Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (BCICAI), tax expert GP Kapadia & Company Chartered Accountants partner Kirit Mehta claimed that the recent Indian budget changes were in line with the proposed direct tax code but with a token reduction in tax liability.

Source: Gulf Daily News, Manama

<http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=326243>

IRAN

28. More Iran-India trade would boost ties: FIEO president

Tehran, Saturday, 10 March 2012

At the start of a five-day visit, Rafeeq Ahmed, president of the government-backed Federation of Indian Export Organizations, told a Tehran meeting of Iranian businessmen that New Delhi is seeking to increase its exports to Iran and sees the increase in trade as a sign of deepening relations.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/more-iran-india-trade-would-boost-ties-fieo-president/articleshow/12210867.cms>

29. Amid sanctions, Indian business delegation heads to Iran

New Delhi, Saturday, 10 March 2012

An Indian trade delegation comprising around 70 businesspersons and exporters and led by Arvind Mehta, joint secretary in the commerce ministry, and M Rafeeq Ahmed, president of the Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) left for Tehran to explore business opportunities in the oil-rich country.

Source: IBNLive.com, Noida

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/amid-sanctions-indian-delegation-heads-to-iran/237704-3.html>

30. India keen to boost Iran trade despite U.S.-led sanctions

Tehran, Sunday, 11 March 2012

According to Press TV, the Indian officials have expressed their country's willingness to boost trade dealings with Iran despite recent Western sanctions imposed against the Iran.

Source: Tehran Times, Tehran

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/economy-and-business/96276-india-keen-to-boost-iran-trade-despite-us-led-sanctions>

31. India, Iran look at \$25 billion trade by 2015

Dubai, Monday, 12 March 2012

According to Commerce Ministry of India, India and Iran plan to reach US \$25 billion in annual bilateral trade in the next four years while the current bilateral trade is around US \$15 billion.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-12/news/31153405_1_bilateral-trade-iran-plan-tehran-times-report

Also See: The Hindu Business Line,

http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/economy/article2988140.ece?ref=wl_industry-and-economy

32. India Shipping Corp seeks local insurance cover for Iran imports

Wednesday, 14 March 2012

According to S. Hajara, Chairman of Shipping Corp of India, the country's largest shipping company is in talks with local insurance firms seeking cover for cargoes and vessels for imports from Iran.

Source: Reuters, US

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/14/india-ships-iran-idUSL4E8EE5NZ20120314>

33. India seals deals to export 60,000 tons sugar to Iran

New Delhi, Monday, 19 March 2012

According to three trade sources, Indian traders have struck deals to export 60,000 tons of raw sugar to Iran for March-April delivery, marking their first sales of the sweetener to Tehran since western sanctions were tightened at the start of 2012.

Source: Reuters, US

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/19/us-india-iran-sugar-idUSBRE82I0L120120319>

34. Iran Seeks to Import Farm Commodities From India, Group Says

Thursday, 22 March 2012

According to an exporters' group, Iran, facing international sanctions over its nuclear program, is seeking to buy more agricultural commodities from India after agreeing to import soybean meal used in livestock feed.

Source: Bloomberg

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-22/iran-seeking-to-import-farm-commodities-from-india-group-says.html>

Also See: Zee News, New Delhi

http://zeenews.india.com/business/news/international/iran-seeks-to-import-wheat-rice-sugar-and-tea-from-india_44398.html

35. India trade team draws blank in Iran for rupee deals

New Delhi, Thursday, 22 March 2012

A delegation of Indian traders, led by a senior trade ministry official, to sanctions-hit Iran has failed to clinch any deals, raising questions over the viability of a new mechanism to pay for 45 percent of oil imports in rupees and increase exports to redress the trade imbalance.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-22/news/31225265_1_nuclear-programme-iran-indian-exporters

36. Iran looks to import 3 million ton Indian wheat

New Delhi, Thursday, 22 March 2012

The sanction-struck Iranian firms such as Kengan Wheat Flour Factory, ALP Company and Magna Business Management have sent wheat import enquiries to the Indian government-run agency Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) for an import requirement of up to 3 million ton through the Indian embassy.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-22/news/31224999_1_opening-wheat-exports-wheat-production-indian-exporters

37. Indian exporters seek advance rupee payments from Iran

New Delhi, Friday, 23 March 2012

Indian Exporters are pressing the government to allow advance payments from Iran in rupees to them under a new mechanism set up to facilitate trade with the sanctions-hit Iran which is its second largest oil supplier.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-23/news/31230218_1_indian-exporters-asian-clearing-union-rupee-payments

Also see: Business Standard, New Delhi

<http://business-standard.com/india/news/allow-advance-paymentsiran-exporters/468885/>

38. Anand Sharma says "can't just rupture" ties with Iran

Wednesday, 28 March 2012

Commerce and Trade Minister of India Mr. Anand Sharma said that India "cannot just rupture" ties with Iran, adding that New Delhi will discuss oil imports from Tehran at a meeting of emerging world powerhouses.

Source: Reuters, India

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/03/28/india-iran-trade-idINDEE82R02L20120328>

ISRAEL

39. Indo-Israel FTA likely to be concluded this year

Hyderabad, Monday, 19 March 2012

An Indo-Israel Free Trade Agreement is expected to be concluded this year, paving the way for further expansion in bilateral trade between the two countries.

Source: The Hindu Business Line, Chennai

http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and_economy/economy/article3013405.ece

TUNISIA

40. Tunisia: Indian delegation in Tunisia to explore cooperation in Textiles

Friday, 2 March 2012

An Indian delegation paid recently a visit to Tunisia in order to check opportunities of cooperation in textiles

Source: www.africanmanager.com

http://www.africanmanager.com/site_eng/detail_article.php?art_id=13467

41. Tunisia: BSNL gives up bidding for Tunisia Telecom license

Saturday, 10 March 2012

According to a senior company executive, India's state-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. is unlikely to bid for a telecommunication license in Tunisia.

Source: www.africanmanger.com

http://www.africanmanager.com/site_eng/detail_article.php?art_id=13254

TURKEY

42. Turkey awaiting Indian govt's nod for FTA negotiations

Hyderabad, Sunday, 18 March 2012

Turkish Government is awaiting word from its Indian counterpart over initiating negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement aimed at boosting the bilateral trade, Turkish Ambassador to India Burak Akcapar said on the sidelines of a function.

Source: IBN Live, Noida

<http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/turkey-awaiting-indian-govts-nod-for-fta-negotiations/976729.html>

43. Turkish court rejects Redington unit's plea

Mumbai, Monday, 19 March 2012

A Turkish court has rejected Redington subsidiary Redington International Holdings' (RIHL) plea seeking a stay on market regulator CMB's directive with regard to a mandatory offer post its acquisition of Arena, a listed company in Istanbul.

Source: Business Standard, New Delhi

<http://www.business-standard.com/india/news/turkish-court-rejects-redington-units-plea/160919/on>

44. India, Turkey to hold talks on cotton yarn dispute next month

New Delhi, Thursday, 22 March 2012

India and Turkey will negotiate in Ankara in April 2012, to resolve their trade dispute over imposition of special import duties on Indian cotton yarn.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-22/news/31225237_1_cotton-yarn-turkey-ankara

45. Turkey keen to buy Indian wheat

New Delhi, Wednesday, 28 March 2012

According to an official at the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, a Central government agency, a Turkish company, Tarimex, has shown interest in importing wheat, which is likely to pace up India's wheat export that stands at around 600,000 ton.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-28/news/31249853_1_wheat-flour-tonne-wheat-indian-wheat

UAE

46. UAE charity sends five tons of dates to India

Abu Dhabi, Saturday, 31 March 2012

The Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Charity Foundation of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has sent five tons of dates to India as part of an aid programme for needy people.

Source: Newstrack India, New Delhi

<http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/2012/03/31/314--UAE-charity-sends-five-tons-of-dates-to-India-.html>

ENERGY ISSUES

IRAN

47. India to continue Iran oil supplies, says S Jaipal Reddy

Hyderabad, Tuesday, 13 March 2012

In answer to queries by journalists on whether India was planning to suspend oil supplies from Iran due to pressure from the US, Petroleum Minister S. Jaipal Reddy said India will continue its oil supplies from Iran. He, however, refused to comment on hike in petrol prices.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-13/news/31159689_1_oil-prices-kg-basin-supplies

48. India not to tax rupee payments for Iranian oil

New Delhi, Saturday, 17 March 2012

India has exempted payment in rupees for oil imports from Iran from hefty local taxes, a move that would help refiners settle some of their oil trade with the sanctions-hit Iran if the current mechanism through Turkey folds under fresh sanctions.

Source: Reuters, India

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/03/17/india-iran-oil-idINDEE82G04D20120317>

49. Budget 2012: Exporters cheer move to exempt Re payment to Iranian oil companies

New Delhi, Tuesday, 20 March 2012

Exporters have given thumbs up to Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee's decision to exempt rupee payments made to Iranian Oil Companies from withholding tax, as it would help in full-fledged implementation of the rupee payment mechanism established for carrying out trade with Iran despite US sanctions.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-20/news/31215008_1_oil-import-pool-oil-exports-indian-exporters

50. India pushes refiners to cut imports from Iran

New Delhi, Thursday, 22 March 2012

India has been left off a list of nations given a US waiver from the measures, but is privately pushing its refiners for substantial cuts in imports from Iran

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/India-pushes-refiners-to-cut-imports-from-Iran/articleshow/12364584.cms>

Also See: Reuters

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/03/22/india-iran-idINDEE82K09A20120322>

51. India min: "systematic" plan for Iranian oil imports

Friday, 23 March 2012

At the Asia Gas Partnership Summit, Indian Oil Minister Jaipal Reddy said that India will continue to import oil from Iran without violating any international law and has requested the United States and the European Union to take into account the country's oil needs.

Source: Reuters, US

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/23/india-iran-oil-idUSL3E8EN2DJ20120323>

52. India 2012/13 Iran crude imports could plunge 25 pct

New Delhi/Mumbai, Thursday, 29 March 2012

According to Reuters' calculations, India's annual crude imports from Iran could plunge by about a quarter in 2012/13 as Essar Oil (ESRO.NS) joins its state-run refinery peers in cutting purchases from the sanctions-hit country.

Source: Reuters, India

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/03/29/india-iran-idINDEE82S0D920120329>

ISRAEL

53. India's ONGC Plans Israel Visit For Gas Exploration Talks – Report

New Delhi, Tuesday, 27 March 2012

According to energy news portal Indianpetro.com, ONGC Videsh Ltd., the overseas exploration unit of Oil & Natural Gas Corporation will send several top executives to Israel in April for talks on business opportunities, including gas exploration and production possibilities

Source: Fox Business, Manhattan

<http://www.foxbusiness.com/news/2012/03/27/indias-ongc-plans-israel-visit-for-gas-exploration-talks-report/>

OMAN

54. Oman government's hike in gas price to Ominfco will cost Rs 60 billion

New Delhi, Thursday, 15 March 2012

The decision by the government of Oman to increase the price of natural gas supplied to urea producer Ominfco, an India-Oman joint venture company, will lead to cost escalation of about US \$ 120 million (about Rs 60 billion) for the company

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-15/news/31196983_1_estimates-and-street-protests-india-oman-oman-government

QATAR

55. India Petronet eyes extra 2-3 mln t/yr Qatar LNG

New Delhi, Saturday, 24 March 2012

According to Chief Executive A.K. Balyan, India's Petronet LNG is looking at sourcing 2-3 million tons of additional liquefied natural gas annually from the world's top exporter Qatar.

Source: Reuters, US

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/24/india-qatar-gas-idUSL3E8EO05T20120324>

Also see: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-24/news/31233919_1_balyan-petronet-lng-australia-s-gorgon

SOUTH SUDAN

56. India South Sudan in Oil infra talks

New Delhi, Tuesday, 27 March 2012

India's state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp. Ltd (ONGC) is in talks with South Sudan to help it build oil pipelines, crude oil stores and refineries in South Sudan.

Source: Livemint.com

<http://www.livemint.com/2012/03/27000444/India-South-Sudan-in-oil-infr.html>

SYRIA

57. India refuses government guarantee on Syria oil imports-sources

New Delhi, Friday, 2 March 2012

India has refused to provide its sovereign guarantee for oil imports from Syria, two government sources said, frustrating refiners looking for alternative sources of crude to hedge against possible supply disruptions from sanctions-hit Iran.

Source: Reuters, UK

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/03/02/india-syria-oil-idUKL4E8E24AE20120302>

REGIONAL ISSUES

58. Now, India to back Arab League's stand on Syria

New Delhi, Thursday, 1 March 2012

With India having switched its stance on Syria to being more critical of the regime, New Delhi is ready to lend its considerable diplomatic influence to support the Arab League, which is driving the international community's response to the ongoing unrest in Syria.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-01/india/31113371_1_arab-countries-nuclear-programme-iranian-oil

59. Tata Comm launches TGN-Gulf cable system connecting India to the world

Thursday, 22 March 2012

Tata Communications has launched its TGN-Gulf subsea cable system that will connect the Gulf to Mumbai, India and onward to the rest of the Tata Global Network (TGN)

Source: moneylife.in

<http://www.moneylife.in/article/tata-comm-launches-tgn-gulf-cable-system-connecting-india-to-the-world/24442.html>

Also See: Gulf Times,

http://www.gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu_no=2&item_no=494672&version=1&template_id=36&parent_id=16

60. More Air India flights to Gulf countries soon

Jeddah, Saturday, 24 March 2012

Air India recently planned to increase the frequency of flights to Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Saudi Arabia operating from the home country.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-24/middle-east-news/31233335_1_air-india-flights-direct-flights-hyderabad-dubai-route

MULTILATERAL ISSUES

61. Iran sanctions: India for resumption of talks

New Delhi, Friday, 23 March 2012

While supporting full implementation of "relevant" UNSC resolutions on the Iranian nuclear programme, India has said all efforts should be made to ensure that legitimate trade and economic activities with the nation do not suffer.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-23/india/31229672_1_exclusively-peaceful-nature-iran-sanctions-p5

62. India may win Iran sanctions waiver -IEA exec

New Delhi, Friday, 23 March 2012

According to International Energy Agency's executive director Maria van der Hoeven, India could yet be exempted from tighter U.S. sanctions on buyers of Iranian crude, and New Delhi would like to be judged sanctions because on the size of term deals with Tehran which begin in April, 2012.

Sources: Reuters, Africa

<http://af.reuters.com/article/libyaNews/idAFL6E8EQ01420120326?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=0>

MISCELLANEOUS

BAHRAIN

63. Bahrain Air starts four flights from capital city

Thiruvananthapuram, Wednesday, 21 March 2012

While announcing the Bahrain Air's expansion plans in Thiruvananthapuram, CEO Mr. Richard Nuttall said that the airline is likely to introduce daily flights during the summer months.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-21/thiruvananthapuram/31219896_1_daily-flights-kochi-thiruvananthapuram

Also See: The Hindu Business Line, Chennai

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/logistics/article3020957.ece>

64. P V Radhakrishna Pillai gets Pravasi Bharatiya Samman

Manama, Wednesday, 21 March 2012

Receiving the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman awardee Mr. P V Radhakrishan Pillai, Indian Community in Bahrain held a grand reception in his honour on Saturday, 10 February 2012 at the Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam's Diamond Jubilee Hall in Bahrain.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/nri/contributors/contributions/joel-indrupati/P-V-Radhakrishna-Pillai-gets-Pravasi-Bharatiya-Samman/articleshow/12358155.cms>

65. Bahrain Air hoping for tie-up with an Indian carrier

Dubai, Tuesday, 27 March 2012

In an Interview to Arabian Business, Mr. Richard Nuttall, CEO of Bahrain Air, said that the airline has been in talks with five Indian Airlines on the possibility of a deal, which it could sign before the end of the year.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-27/news/31244976_1_indian-carrier-bahrain-air-indian-airlines

66. Bahrain team 'to visit India for talks on flights dispute'

Manama, Saturday, 31 March 2012

A Bahrain delegation, comprising representatives of the Transportation Ministry and Bahrain Air, will visit India for talks on ways to resolve a dispute over flights to Kerala.

Source: Gulf Daily News, Manama

<http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=326962>

IRAQ

67. Iraq resumes flights to India after 20 years

Mumbai, Thursday, 15 March 2012

After nearly two decades, Iraqi Airways will restart its flights to India, starting with Mumbai. Direct flights between India and Iraq were stopped during the first Gulf War in 1990-91.

Source: Real Time News India, New Delhi

http://rtn.asia/1117_iraq-resumes-flights-india-after-20-years

ISRAEL

68. India expels Chabad rabbi over alleged attempt to hide conversion efforts

Tuesday, 13 March 2012

Indian authorities accused Rabbi Zalman Bernstein, living in Cochin, of failing to declare on his visa application that he would be conducting religious activities and of trying to convert foreigners and hence was expelled to Israel.

Source: The Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv

<http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/india-expels-chabad-rabbi-over-alleged-attempt-to-hide-conversion-efforts-1.418317>

69. Israel water industry keen to tap Kerala market

Thiruvananthapuram, Wednesday, 14 March 2012

The thriving water industry in Israel is keen on tapping the potential of Kerala water sector and 17 Israeli water technology companies are in the state for exploring the possibilities.

Source: IBN Live, Noida

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/israel-water-industry-keen-to-tap-kerala-market/239078-62-126.html>

70. Israel's agri hi-tech to help India bloom

Chennai, Wednesday, 21 March 2012

Israel offered to assist India in general and Tamil Nadu in particular to increase agricultural output by integrating technology with traditional wisdom.

Source: DNA, Mumbai

http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_israels-agri-hi-tech-to-help-india-bloom_1665162

71. Israel to set up 3 agricultural excellence centres in state

Vadodara, Friday, 23 March 2012

The Israeli government is planning to set up three agricultural excellence centres in Gujarat with the help of Gujarat government.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-23/vadodara/31229614_1_centres-cultivation-orna-sagiv

KUWAIT

72. Kuwait Ambassador in India joins ceremony for launching Global March to Jerusalem

New Delhi, Saturday, 10 March 2012

Kuwait Ambassador to India Sami Mohammad Suleiman has taken part in a ceremony held at Palestinian Embassy at Delhi to prepare for the launch of Indian leg of the Global March to Jerusalem scheduled to start from Sunday, 11 March 2012.

Source: Kuwait News Agency, Kuwait

<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2226285&language=en>

MOROCCO

73. Ranbaxy Laboratories opens Morocco unit

Monday, 12 March 2012

Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd, India's top drug maker by sales, said its Moroccan unit has started functioning, giving it direct access to a US \$ 1 billion pharmaceuticals market.

Source: Reuters, India

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/03/12/india-ranbaxy-africa-morocco-idINDEE82B06E20120312>

OMAN

74. 3-day Oman-India cultural event begins today

Muscat, Wednesday, 21 March 2012

The three-day mega event “Oman-India Cultural Fiesta” organized by Indian Social Club in collaboration with Al Noor Association for the Blind will be formally inaugurated by Dr Abdullah al Harrasi, Minister for the Public Authority for Oman Television and Radio, Sultanate of Oman and Her Highness Sayyidah Aliya bint Thuwaini al Said, in the presence of various dignitaries from Oman.

Source: Oman Daily Observer, Muscat
<http://main.omanobserver.om/node/87684>

75. Now, NRIs in Oman must get their documents attested by MEA in India

Muscat, Thursday, 22 March 2012

The Indian Embassy in Oman has advised all its citizens in the country to get their documents attested/apostilled by the ministry of external affairs, New Delhi as both Republic of India and Oman are member states of the Apostille Convention (1961).

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi
http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-22/middle-east-news/31224357_1_matriculation-and-secondary-level-apostille-convention-documents

76. Indian sailors without money stranded in Oman

Dubai, Thursday, 29 March 2012

According to a media report, five Indian sailors have been stranded for the last five months on an oil tanker without salary and basic amenities in Oman.

Source: Zeenews.com, Noida
http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/indian-sailors-without-money-stranded-in-oman_766958.html

77. Balaji Shipping Lines to start Oman service from India

Dubai, Friday, 30 March 2012

Balaji Shipping Lines (BSL), part of the Transworld Group of companies, said it will start their direct service to Sohar Port in Oman from Mundra Port in Gujarat beginning April 2012.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi
http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-30/news/31261268_1_oman-mundra-port-direct-service

QATAR

78. SKVC Qatar chapter community logo is formally unveiled

Sunday, 18 March 2012

The logo of the Sree Kerala Varma College (SKVC) Qatar community was unveiled at a function held at Bhavan's Public School on Friday

Source: Gulf Times, Doha
http://www.gulftimes.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu_no=2&item_no=493424&version=1&template_id=36&parent_id=16

79. Indian forum celebrates spring festival

Thursday, 29 March 2012

Karnataka Sangha Qatar (KSQ) has celebrated Vasantotsav, a cultural fiesta heralding the onset of spring season.

Source: Gulf Times, Doha
http://www.gulftimes.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu_no=2&item_no=495723&version=1&template_id=36&parent_id=16

SAUDI ARABIA

80. India's Jet Airways to launch more Saudi flights

Sunday, 18 March 2012

India's Jet Airways is set to launch direct flights between Dammam in Saudi Arabia and Delhi from Saturday, 24 March 2012.

Source: Arabiansupplychain.com, UAE

<http://www.arabiansupplychain.com/article-7272-indias-jet-airways-to-launch-more-saudi-flights/>

81. Youth delegation leaves for India to foster ICT cooperation

Wednesday, 21 March 2012

As part of a cultural and technical exchange initiative, a 45-member Saudi youth delegation will visit India for the first time, beginning from Wednesday, 21 March 2012. The Saudi youth mission, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will stay in India for 11 days, visiting different Indian cities and interacting with Indian youth leaders of different fields.

Source: arabnews.com, Jeddah

<http://arabnews.com/saudiarabia/article590157.ece>

82. Indian Embassy to host major catalogue exhibition in Hofuf

Monday, 26 March 2012

The Indian Embassy in association with Al-Ahsa Chamber of Commerce and Industry will hold India Caltex, a multi-sector catalogue exhibition of Indian companies, in the Saudi city of Hofuf on Tuesday, 27 March 2012

Source: Arabnews.com, Jeddah

<http://arabnews.com/saudiarabia/article596132.ece>

83. Saudi youth explore India's IT, education space

New Delhi, Thursday, 29 March 2012

A 40-member Saudi Arabian youth team is in India to promote interactions in the field of science and technology.

Source: Newstrack India, New Delhi

<http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/2012/03/29/336--Saudi-youth-explore-India-s-IT-education-space-.html>

Also see, Saudi Gazette

<http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=20120329120603>

84. Indian Christians against the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, who wants to eliminate all churches

Mumbai, Friday, 30 March 2012

The All India Christian Council (AICC) condemned the statement of the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah, who claims it necessary to destroy all the churches in the region.

Source: AsiaNews.it

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Indian-Christians-against-the-Grand-Mufti-of-Saudi-Arabia,-who-wants-to-eliminate-all-churches-24393.html>

TURKEY

85. Turkey to double flights from India

Hyderabad, Sunday, 18 March 2012

Turkey seeks to double flights from India, besides opening four more connecting points.

Source: The Hindu Business Line, Chennai

http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/logistics/article3013081.ece?ref=wl_industry-and-economy

86. Turkey to open consulate in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, Sunday, 18 March 2012

In a bid to strengthen its centuries old ties with Hyderabad, Turkish ambassador Dr Burak Akcapar said, Turkey plans to not only set up a consulate or appoint an honorary consul in Hyderabad but is also seeking direct air connectivity between Hyderabad and Istanbul.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-18/hyderabad/31207323_1_india-and-turkey-turkish-envoy-turkey-plans

Compiled by Aradhana Talwar

Aradhana Talwar is pursuing her M Phil degree in the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Email: aradhana88.talwar@gmail.com

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