

INDIA WATCH

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POLITICAL ISSUES

BAHRAIN

1. Bahrain eyes Indian investments; King to visit India next month

New Delhi, Wednesday, 22 January 2014

Presenting itself as a gateway to the Gulf region, Bahrain has sought huge investments from Indian firms across sectors and a high-profile delegation led by its King would visit India next month.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/bahrain-eyes-indian-investments-king-to-visit-india-next-month-114012200470_1.html

IRAN

2. Iran requests India to allow open accounts in multiple banks

New Delhi, Thursday, 16 January 2014

Iran has requested the Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of India to allow it to open accounts in multiple banks to facilitate better non-oil trade between the two nations. At present, only UCO Bank facilitates transactions with Iran.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/iran-requests-india-to-allow-open-accounts-in-multiple-banks-114011600756_1.html

3. India gets favourable international ruling on ship detention by Iran

New Delhi, Sunday, 5 January 2014

Vindicating India's stand, an international review panel ruled that its crude tanker MT Desh Shanti, which was detained by Iranian authorities in August 2013, did not violate maritime rules. The ruling by Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding (IOMOU), a grouping of 17 maritime nations, came on India's appeal against the 26-day detention of the vessel by Iran.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-gets-favourable-international-ruling-on-ship-detention-by-iran-114010500118_1.html

ISRAEL

4. India, Israel to set up US\$40 million fund for joint ventures

Jerusalem, Wednesday, 22 January 2014

India and Israel have agreed to set up a US\$40 million fund to support joint technological ventures for consolidating and strengthening economic ties. Both the countries will be contributing US\$20 million each to the fund over a period of five years. Israel's Economic Minister Naftali Bennett, who last year visited India, announced that it is aimed at consolidating and strengthening economic ties with strategic partners.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-01-22/news/46462912_1_india-and-israel-rd-fund-economic-minister-naftali-bennett

OMAN

5. Indian embassy in Oman issues 59,000 visas

Muscat, Tuesday, 28 January 2014

The Indian embassy in Oman issued a record number of 59,000 visas to Omani nationals in 2013, signifying a robust flow of tourists to India, India's Ambassador to Oman J S Mukul has said.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2014-01-28/india/46733842_1_indian-embassy-medical-tourism-oman-j-s-mukul

SAUDI ARABIA

6. India seeks Saudi investment in petro projects

New Delhi, Thursday, 30 January 2014

Finance minister P Chidambaram has urged Saudi businesses to invest more in India, especially in sectors such as petrochemicals and infrastructure, so as to double trade between the two countries over the next five years.

Source: The Indian Express, Chennai

<http://indianexpress.com/article/business/business-others/india-seeks-saudi-investment-in-petro-projects/>

UAE

7. India, UAE to cooperate for solar, wind energy

Abu Dhabi, Sunday, 19 January 2014

India and UAE have signed an agreement to enhance cooperation in renewable energy, especially in the areas of solar and wind power. India's Minister of New and Renewable Energy Farooq Abdullah and Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of State and the UAE's special envoy for energy and climate change, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/environment/developmental-issues/India-UAE-to-cooperate-for-solar-wind-energy/articleshow/29063947.cms>

ECONOMIC ISSUES

IRAN

8. Iran looking at exporting natural gas to India via deep sea

New Delhi, Friday, 17 January 2014

Iran is focusing on exporting natural gas to India along a deep-sea route, Iranian ambassador to India Gholam Reza Ansari said.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/politics/iran-looking-at-exporting-natural-gas-to-india-via-deep-sea-114011700922_1.html

KUWAIT

9. ONGC, Kuwait Petroleum sign deal for strategic partnership

New Delhi, Tuesday, 14 January, 2014

State-run ONGC Ltd signed a memorandum of understanding with Kuwait Petroleum Corporation for upstream, downstream and mid-stream ventures. The deal is the first step towards a strategic partnership for ONGC Petro additions and ONGC Mangalore Petrochemicals.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/ongc-kuwait-petroleum-sign-deal-for-strategic-partnership-114011400190_1.html

10. Kuwait agrees to a longer credit period; will take equity in ONGC projects

New Delhi, Wednesday, 15 January 2014

Kuwait has agreed to extend the credit period on crude oil sales to India from the current 60 days to 90 days. This would help state-owned Indian refineries that face tight cash flow problems due to time lag in disbursement of government subsidy.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/kuwait-agrees-to-a-longer-credit-period-will-take-equity-in-ongc-projects-114011400860_1.html

OMAN

11. Oman's oil exports to India record high growth

Muscat, Friday, 3 January 2014

Oman's oil exports to Indian markets recorded a remarkable 177.2 per cent growth until the end of November 2013 as compared to the same period in the previous year.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/oman-s-oil-exports-to-india-record-high-growth-114010300290_1.html

TURKEY

12. Import of Turkish white poppy seeds threaten Opium farmers

New Delhi, Saturday, 18 January 2014

Opium cultivators, concentrated in Neemuch and Mandsaur districts on Madhya Pradesh's northwestern border with Rajasthan, are up in arms against imports of Turkish white poppy seeds known as *postadana* or *khus khus*. India is the world's single legal producer of raw opium in the form of gum. Approximately 50,000 farmers in 22 districts of MP, Rajasthan and UP raise the crop under license from the Narcotics Commissioner of India.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/import-of-turkish-white-poppy-seeds-threaten-opium-farmers/article5590674.ece>

UAE

13. Jet Airways to launch Abu Dhabi-Chennai flight from 16 Jan

Mumbai, 2 January 2014

Private carrier Jet Airways will launch a daily flight service from Abu Dhabi to Chennai from 16 January. The new service will connect Chennai to several global destinations across Europe and Africa via Abu Dhabi, spokesperson from Jet Airways said.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/jet-airways-to-launch-abu-dhabi-chennai-flight-from-jan-16-114010200473_1.html

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

EGYPT

14. Egypt turns away Indian Shiite pilgrims

Cairo, Thursday, 30 January 2014

Egyptian officials said that they have barred entrance to 52 Shiite pilgrims from India who came to visit historic Shiite Muslim shrines. The Indian passengers arrived with the intention of staying in the country for 24 hours to visit Cairo's famous Hussein Mosque, among other sites, before travelling to Iraq.

Source: The Business Standard, New Delhi

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/egypt-turns-away-indian-shiite-pilgrims-114013000069_1.html

OMAN

15. Mystery surrounds 'suicide' of Indian in Oman

Dubai, Wednesday, 8 January 2014

Relatives of a 38-year-old Indian man, who allegedly committed suicide in Oman, have demanded a probe into the incident as they refused to believe the sequence of events leading to his death.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2014-01-08/middle-east-news/45990831_1_indian-embassy-anil-kumar-oman

SAUDI ARABIA

16. Indian worker, convicted for murdering his sponsor, beheaded in Saudi Arabia

Riyadh, Friday, 31 January 2014

An Indian worker, convicted of murdering his Saudi sponsor, has been executed. Muhammad Latif was beheaded after being found guilty by a local court of killing his sponsor Dhafir Al-Dossari by hitting him with an iron rod during a dispute, according to the Interior Ministry.

Source: The Indian Express, Chennai

<http://indianexpress.com/article/world/indians-abroad/indian-worker-convicted-for-murdering-his-sponsor-beheaded-in-saudi-arabia/>

UAE

17. India is Dubai International Airport's largest destination

New Delhi, Friday, 31 January 2014

India has retained its position as largest destination country for Dubai International Airport in 2013, according to a report. India remains at the top with 8,401,253 passengers, a year on year growth of 14.3 per cent compared to 7,347,270 in 2012, the annual traffic report said.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-01-31/news/46870067_1_traffic-growth-dubai-international-airport-destination

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