

# INDIA WATCH

No. 51

APRIL 2014

## POLITICAL ISSUES

### IRAN

#### **1. Indian officials deny paying oil money to Iran**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 4 March 2014**

Dismissing media reports in Iran, Indian officials said they had not yet paid any oil money to Iran under a deal that provides Tehran some relief from Western sanctions.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/indian-officials-deny-paying-oil-money-to-iran-114030400571\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/indian-officials-deny-paying-oil-money-to-iran-114030400571_1.html)

#### **2. Iran not keen to dissolve Irano-Hind, India looks to exit**

**New Delhi, Saturday, 8 March 2014**

A year after the government announced the end of 39-year Indo-Iranian venture *Irano Hind Shipping Company*, both countries are still debating the issue.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/iran-not-keen-to-dissolve-irano-hind-india-looks-to-exit-114030600424\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/iran-not-keen-to-dissolve-irano-hind-india-looks-to-exit-114030600424_1.html)

#### **3. India will have to slash Iran oil imports to meet nuke-deal conditions; US warns of low tolerance**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 12 March 2014**

India shall have to reduce its oil imports from Iran by two-thirds from the first quarter after the US asked it to hold the shipments at end-2013 levels.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-will-have-to-slash-iran-oil-imports-to-meet-nuke-deal-conditions-us-warns-of-low-tolerance-114031101055\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-will-have-to-slash-iran-oil-imports-to-meet-nuke-deal-conditions-us-warns-of-low-tolerance-114031101055_1.html)

### QATAR

#### **4. India, Qatar discuss proposals of mutual interest**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 26 March 2014**

India and Qatar discussed issues and proposals of mutual interest in a number of sectors, including investment, banking, energy, petrochemicals and tourism. An 18-member high-level official delegation led by Qatar's under-secretary in the Ministry of Economy and Commerce Sultan bin Rashid Al Khater visited New Delhi to discuss the same.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/india-qatar-discuss-proposals-of-mutual-interest-114032600802\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/india-qatar-discuss-proposals-of-mutual-interest-114032600802_1.html)

---

## **SAUDI ARABIA**

### **5. After defence MoU, Saudi Arabia and India eye diverse areas for tie-ups**

**New Delhi, Saturday, 1 March 2014**

A joint statement released after talks between the visiting Saudi Arabian Deputy Prime Minister and Crown Prince Salman and the Indian leadership, including President Pranab Mukherjee, Vice-President Hamid Ansari and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, took note of the two high-level interactions over the past eight years that charted the relationship into new areas.

*Source: The Hindu, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/after-defence-mou-saudi-arabia-and-india-eye-diverse-areas-for-tieups/article5737390.ece>

---

### **6. Saudi Arabia to send back Indian prisoners in humanitarian move**

**Riyadh, Wednesday, 5 March 2014**

Steps are being taken to transfer Indian prisoners from jails in Saudi Arabia to Indian prisons, according to a joint communiqué issued at the end of the visit of Saudi Crown Prince Salman to India.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/saudi-arabia-to-send-back-indian-prisoners-in-humanitarian-move-114030500597\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/saudi-arabia-to-send-back-indian-prisoners-in-humanitarian-move-114030500597_1.html)

---

### **7. India, Saudi Arabia to deepen energy partnership**

**New Delhi, Sunday, 9 March 2014**

India and Saudi Arabia sought to transform the "buyer-seller" relationship in the oil sector to one of deeper partnership focusing on investments and joint ventures in third countries. The visit of Saudi Crown Prince Salman to New Delhi boosted strategic ties and the two countries agreed to explore ways and means to transform their buyer-seller relationship.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/india-saudi-arabia-to-deepen-energy-partnership-114030900258\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/india-saudi-arabia-to-deepen-energy-partnership-114030900258_1.html)

---

### **8. 14 lakh Indians in Saudi Arabia to benefit from social scheme**

**Riyadh, Thursday, 20 March 2014**

An estimated 1.4 million blue-collar Indian workers in Saudi Arabia shall benefit from a new social security scheme launched by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. The scheme is called the Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY) and launched by India's Consul General Faiz Ahmed.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/14-lakh-indians-in-saudi-arabia-to-benefit-from-social-scheme-114032000430\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/14-lakh-indians-in-saudi-arabia-to-benefit-from-social-scheme-114032000430_1.html)

---

## **UAE**

### **9. UAE-led group to buy two India power plants in deal worth US\$1.6 billion**

**Abu Dhabi, Sunday, 2 March 2014**

A consortium led by Abu Dhabi National Energy Co (TAQA) has agreed to buy two Indian hydroelectric power plants from Jaiprakash Power Ventures in a deal worth about US\$1.6 billion. The group will spend US\$616 million on equity in the plants, and in addition take over their non-recourse project debt.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/uae-led-group-to-buy-two-india-power-plants-in-deal-worth-1-6-bn-114030200194\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/uae-led-group-to-buy-two-india-power-plants-in-deal-worth-1-6-bn-114030200194_1.html)

---

### **10. Indian, US, Japanese firms race for projects in the UAE**

**Dubai, Monday, 3 March 2014**

Over 116 companies from 15 countries, including India, are in the race for acquiring two high-profile utilities projects in Ras Al Khaimah emirate in the UAE.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/indian-us-japanese-firms-race-for-projects-in-the-uae-114030300311\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/indian-us-japanese-firms-race-for-projects-in-the-uae-114030300311_1.html)

---

### **11. UAE, India finalizing bilateral investment protection pact**

**Dubai, Wednesday, 26 March 2014**

India and the UAE are working towards giving the final shape to a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (Bippa) to enhance investments between the two countries. The agreement is aimed at driving investments into India from the UAE in different sectors, including construction, downstream manufacturing in the petroleum and natural gas, as well as agriculture and food processing.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/uae-india-finalising-bilateral-investment-protection-pact-114032600395\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/uae-india-finalising-bilateral-investment-protection-pact-114032600395_1.html)

---

## **ECONOMIC ISSUES**

### **BAHRAIN**

#### **12. Bank of Bahrain & Kuwait lays out plans for India**

**Mumbai, Saturday, 1 March 2014**

Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait (BBK) is planning to scale up its presence in India by opening a branch in New Delhi, its fourth in the country. It also plans to pump in more capital and scout for potential partners for its credit card unit and call centre.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/bank-of-bahrain-kuwait-lays-out-india-plans-114022601167\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/bank-of-bahrain-kuwait-lays-out-india-plans-114022601167_1.html)

---

### **KUWAIT**

#### **13. Kuwait Petroleum eyes stake in IOC's Paradip refinery**

**New Delhi, Monday, 10 March 2014**

Kuwait Petroleum Corp (KPC) is in talks with Indian Oil Corp (IOC) for taking a stake in the state-owned firm's Rs 29,777-crore Paradip refinery and a proposed petrochemical complex.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/kuwait-petroleum-eyes-stake-in-ioc-s-paradip-refinery-114031000597\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/kuwait-petroleum-eyes-stake-in-ioc-s-paradip-refinery-114031000597_1.html)

---

### **OMAN**

#### **14. Oman Refineries awards Engineers India contract for plastics project**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 25 March 2014**

Engineers India Limited (EIL) has been awarded a Project Management Consultancy (PMC) contract by Oman Refineries and Petroleum Industries Company (Orpic) for its Liwa Plastics Project in Sohar, Oman amidst international competitive bidding competition for an estimated value over US\$40 Million.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/content/b2b-chemicals/oman-refineries-awards-engineers-india-contract-for-plastics-project-114032600751\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/content/b2b-chemicals/oman-refineries-awards-engineers-india-contract-for-plastics-project-114032600751_1.html)

---

**15. Fifteen Indian companies to participate in Oman fair**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 25 March 2014**

Fifteen Indian IT companies would take part in an international exhibition in Oman next month to showcase their electronic products and solutions.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-03-25/news/48559162\\_1\\_companies-solutions-muscat](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-03-25/news/48559162_1_companies-solutions-muscat)

---

**QATAR**

**16. Qatar seeks Indian investment in infrastructure**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 26 March 2014**

Qatar needs Indian investment in infrastructure development and cooperation in its privatization process, Sultan bin Rashid Al Khatir, under secretary in Qatar's ministry of economy and commerce, said.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/qatar-seeks-indian-investment-in-infrastructure-114032600777\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/qatar-seeks-indian-investment-in-infrastructure-114032600777_1.html)

---

**17. Qatari business seeks to step up economic engagement with India**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 26 March 2014**

Qatar is seeking to step up its economic engagement with India and this was highlighted at the India-Qatar Business forum organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/qatari-business-seeks-to-step-up-economic-engagement-with-india-114032600412\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/qatari-business-seeks-to-step-up-economic-engagement-with-india-114032600412_1.html)

---

**MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES**

**IRAQ**

**18. Indian pilgrim shot dead in Iraq**

**Wednesday, 5 March 2014**

Unidentified gunmen killed an Indian pilgrim in trouble-torn Iraq. It was not known if the attackers were terrorists.

*Source: The Times of India, New Delhi*

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Indian-pilgrim-shot-dead-in-Iraq/articleshow/31439117.cms>

---

**SAUDI ARABIA**

**19. Indian women not paid salaries for 9 months in Saudi Arabia**

**Riyadh, Saturday, 22 March 2014**

A group of Indian women working as cleaners in Saudi Arabia went on strike, accusing their employer of discriminating against Indian workers and not paying them salaries for nine months.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/indian-women-not-paid-salaries-for-9-months-in-saudi-arabia-114032200616\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/indian-women-not-paid-salaries-for-9-months-in-saudi-arabia-114032200616_1.html)

---

**COMPILED BY MANJARI SINGH**

Manjari Singh is a doctoral candidate in School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Email: [manjari.jnu@gmail.com](mailto:manjari.jnu@gmail.com)

---

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**