

# INDIA WATCH

No. 62

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## POLITICAL ISSUES

### BAHRAIN

#### 1. Bahrain keen to deepen ties with India in counter-terrorism

New Delhi, Monday, 23 February 2015

Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, in his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his country's commitment to deepen ties with India in counter-terrorism, security, and defence.

*Source: DNA, Mumbai*

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-bahrain-keen-to-deepen-ties-with-india-in-counter-terrorism-2063460>

#### 2. India to sign deal on security with Bahrain

New Delhi, Tuesday, 24 February 2015

India and Bahrain pledged to sign an agreement on internal security and launch talks on defence deals as an attempt to enhance ties in various areas, including counter-terrorism.

*Source: The Indian Express, Mumbai*

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/india-to-sign-deal-on-security-with-bahrain/>

### ISRAEL

#### 3. Israel says security ties with India out of the closet

New Delhi, Thursday, 19 February 2015

According to Israel's Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon security relationship with India is out in the open after years of being under wraps and his country vows to play a bigger role in Prime Minister Modi's drive to build an industrial base.

*Source: Reuters, UK*

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/02/19/india-israel-idINKBN0LN14S20150219>

*See also: NDTV, New Delhi*

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/israel-says-security-ties-with-india-are-out-of-the-closet-740991>

*See also: Dawn.com, Karachi*

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1164704/ties-with-india-out-of-closet-says-israel>

*See also: The Hindu, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/indiaisrael-ties-out-in-the-open-says-yaalon/article6910516.ece>

#### **4. Israel offers top-notch military technologies for 'Make in India' endeavour**

**New Delhi, Friday, 20 February 2015**

Israel has offered India all help with top-notch military technologies like the Iron Dome interceptor to facilitate Modi's 'Make in India' policy, which includes indigenous defence production as a key thrust area.

*Source: The Times of India, New Delhi*

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Israel-offers-top-notch-military-technologies-for-Make-in-India-endeavour/articleshow/46307051.cms>

*See also: The New Indian Express, Chennai*

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/Israel-Vows-Support-for-Make-in-India/2015/02/20/article2677544.ece>

*See also: The Indian Express, Mumbai*

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/israel-ready-to-share-expertise-tech-with-india/>

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### **KUWAIT**

#### **5. Modi Greets Kuwait on its National Day**

**New Delhi, Wednesday, 25 February 2015**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his greetings to Kuwait on its National Day and said he looks forward to strengthening the ties further.

*Source: The New Indian Express, Chennai*

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/Modi-Greets-Kuwait-on-its-National-Day/2015/02/25/article2686595.ece>

*See also: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/pm-modi-greets-people-of-kuwait-on-their-national-day-115022500202\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/pm-modi-greets-people-of-kuwait-on-their-national-day-115022500202_1.html)

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### **OMAN**

#### **6. Swaraj Arrives in Oman for Talks with Key Gulf Nation**

**Muscat, Tuesday, 17 February 2015**

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj reached Muscat on her first official visit to Oman for talks with the oil-rich Gulf nation's top leadership and review bilateral political, economic, defence and security issues as well as the regional situation.

*Source: The New Indian Express, Chennai*

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/Swaraj-Arrives-in-Oman-for-Talks-With-Key-Gulf-Nation/2015/02/17/article2673362.ece>

*See also: DNA, Mumbai*

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-sushma-swaraj-visits-oman-for-talks-with-key-gulf-nation-2061863>

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### **TURKEY**

#### **7. Nine Indians held while trying to cross Turkey border to Syria, probe on to ascertain ISIS link**

**Bengaluru, Sunday, 1 February 2015**

Nine persons who had gone to Istanbul on tourist visas from Bangalore were detained by Turkish authorities while they were trying to cross over to Syria and were deported to India. They were to be probed for any possible connections with ISIS.

*Source: The Indian Express, Mumbai*

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/nine-indians-held-on-syria-border-deported/>

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## UAE

### 8. UAE gives a US\$2 billion investment boost to India

Abu Dhabi, Wednesday, 18 February 2015

UAE will invest US\$2 billion in India as part of a pioneering initiative that goes beyond bilateralism and explores joint opportunities in Asia and Africa.

*Source: The Hindu, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/uae-gives-a-2-billion-investment-boost-to-india/article4428162.ece>

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## ECONOMIC ISSUES

## IRAN

### 9. India to maintain oil ties with Iran at current level

New Delhi, Sunday, 1 February 2015

India has conveyed to the US that its policy on sanction-hit countries like Russia and Iran is independent of its relations with Washington.

*Source: The Hindu Business Line, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-to-maintain-oil-ties-with-iran-at-current-level/article6845526.ece>

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### 10. India slashes Iran oil imports in January: Trade sources

New Delhi, Thursday, 12 February 2015

According to data obtained from trade sources and ship tracking data on the Thomson Reuters terminal, India slashed imports of Iranian oil in January as New Delhi scrambled to bring its purchases from the Oil Producing and Exporting Countries (OPEC) member in line with 2013 levels.

*Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-slashes-iran-oil-imports-in-january-trade-sources/articleshow/46213519.cms>

*See also: Reuters, UK*

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/02/12/india-iran-oil-idINL4N0VK58Q20150212>

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## ISRAEL

### 11. Indian, Israeli officials to meet next week on free trade pact

New Delhi, Thursday, 5 February 2015

Indian and Israeli officials are to discuss the proposed free trade agreement between the countries, which is aimed at further strengthening economic ties between the countries.

*Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indian-israeli-officials-to-meet-next-week-on-free-trade-pact/articleshow/46134611.cms>

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## LEBANON

### 12. India keen to export sugar, wheat, veggies to Lebanon

New Delhi, Friday, 6 February 2015

India asked Lebanon to explore the possibility of importing sugar, wheat, and vegetables like potato and tomato from India.

*Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-keen-to-export-sugar-wheat-veggies-to-lebanon/articleshow/46146667.cms>

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### **13. Lebanon extends support to India to boost trade and business**

**Faridabad, Saturday, 7 February 2015**

India and Lebanon have joined hands in hosting the Surajkund Craft Mela 2015. "This partnership in hosting the Mela will go further and would lead to a strong bonding between the two countries. This would also enhance the possibilities in business and trade," said Akram Shuhaib, Finance and Agriculture minister of Lebanon.

*Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/lebanon-extends-support-to-india-to-boost-trade-and-business/articleshow/46152220.cms>

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## **MOROCCO**

### **14. India, Morocco to boost economic cooperation**

**Marrakesh, Sunday, 1 February 2015**

India and Morocco are keen to boost bilateral economic cooperation in areas like pharmaceuticals, agriculture and renewable energy besides holding Foreign Office Consultations later this year.

*Source: The Hindu Business Line, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-morocco-to-boost-economic-cooperation/article5643376.ece>

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## **OMAN**

### **15. Oman keen to boost trade with India to cement strategic ties**

**Muscat, Sunday, 22 February 2015**

Oman is keen to bolster its strategic ties with India and invited Indian industries to establish more joint ventures in sectors like finance, insurance, engineering and telecom as it sought to diversify its economy.

*Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/oman-keen-to-boost-trade-with-india-to-cement-strategic-ties/articleshow/46331617.cms>

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## **DEFENSE ISSUES**

## **ISRAEL**

### **16. 'Handshake in the open' may see US\$1.5 billion defence deals with Israel**

**New Delhi, Tuesday, 17 February 2015**

India is close to finalizing several major defence deals with Israel, including the ones for two additional Phalcon AWACS (airborne warning and control systems) and four aerostat radars, estimated at well over US\$1.5 billion.

*Source: The Times of India, New Delhi*

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Handshake-in-the-open-may-see-1-5-billion-defence-deals-with-Israel/articleshow/46269643.cms>

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### **17. Ya'alon visits India in high-level bid to boost ties, arms sales**

**Bengaluru, Wednesday, 18 February 2015**

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon meets his Indian counterpart at Bengaluru air show, where Israeli firms are hoping to ink arms deals worth billions.

*Source: The Times of Israel, Jerusalem*

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/yaalon-visits-india-in-high-level-bid-to-boost-ties-arms-sales/>

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*See also: The Hindu, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/israel-defence-minister-to-visit-india-this-week/article6899645.ece>

*See also: The Indian Express, Mumbai*

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/israel-defence-minister-to-visit-india/>

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### **18. Israel, India 'open' to joint production of military hardware**

**Bengaluru, Wednesday, 18 February 2015**

India and Israel are ready for joint production of military hardware. Prime Minister Modi, who vowed to end India's status as the world's number one defence importer and wants 70 percent of hardware to be manufactured domestically by the turn of the decade, expressed his views to Israeli Defence Minister.

*Source: i24 News, New Delhi*

<http://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/diplomacy-defense/61555-150218-israel-india-open-to-joint-production-of-military-hardware>

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### **19. Defence Ties with Israel in India's Self-Interest**

**New Delhi, Thursday, 26 February 2015**

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon offered defence technology towards the 'Make in India' initiative that India seeks.

*Source: The New Indian Express, Chennai*

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/editorials/Defence-Ties-with-Israel-in-Indias-Self-Interest/2015/02/26/article2686965.ece>

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### **20. India scouted for Israeli arms in South Africa: Spy Cables**

**New Delhi, Thursday, 26 February 2015**

According to South African intelligence documents obtained by *The Guardian* and *Al-Jazeera*, India was looking to buy Israeli weapons "covertly" through "a parallel procurement system" via South Africa from front- companies managed by former Mossad agents.

*Source: The Indian Express, Mumbai*

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/india-scouted-for-israeli-arms-in-south-africa-spy-cables/>

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## **MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES**

### **UAE**

#### **21. India, UAE Discuss Possible Cooperation in Space Technologies**

**Dubai, Wednesday, 25 February 2015**

India and the UAE discussed possible cooperation in the field of space and related areas to strengthen and diversify their bilateral relations.

*Source: The New Indian Express, Chennai*

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/world/India-UAE-Discuss-Possible-Cooperation-in-Space-Technologies/2015/02/25/article2686370.ece>

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