

# INDIA WATCH

No. 74

March 2016

## POLITICAL ISSUES

### a. BAHRAIN

#### 1. Air force, DRDO, pleased with Tejas performance at Bahrain

New Delhi, Sunday, 22 February 2016

Two Tejas light-combat aircraft fighters travelled from India to performed aerobatics at the Bahrain International Air Show (BIAS-2016) from 21-23 January.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/air-force-drdo-pleased-with-tejas-performance-at-bahrain-116022200321\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/air-force-drdo-pleased-with-tejas-performance-at-bahrain-116022200321_1.html)

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

New Delhi, Monday, 23 February 2016

Foreign Minister of Bahrain Shaikh Khalid Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi and expressed his feeling to deepen ties with India in many sectors especially in counter-terrorism and defence.

*Source: DNA, Mumbai*

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

### b. IRAN

#### 3. India, Iran hold talks on “re-energizing” ties

New Delhi, Friday, 5 February 2016

India and Iran held extensive discussions on bilateral and regional issues such as security, energy, and connectivity as New Delhi looked at “re-energizing” its ties with Tehran after the lifting of sanctions by the Western countries against it.

*Source: The Statesman, Kolkata*

<http://www.thestatesman.com/mobi/news/latest-headlines/india-iran-hold-talks-on-re-energising-ties/121332.html#>

### c. ISRAEL

#### 4. India close to signing US\$ 3 Billion Defence Deal with Israel

New Delhi, Wednesday, 10 February 2016

India’s Cabinet Committee of Security (CCS), a government body headed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi which is responsible for military procurements, is ready for a final vote on India-Israel defence contracts and projects totalling US\$ 3 billion.

*Source: The Diplomat, Tokyo*

<http://thediplomat.com/2016/02/revealed-india-close-to-signing-3-billion-defense-deal-with-israel/>

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**5. India, Israel to explore joint defence equipment manufacturing, R&D**

**Singapore, Saturday, 13 February 2016**

India will send a business delegation to Tel Aviv to participate in a defence and security seminar that is to be held from 21 to 25 February in order to explore investment and manufacturing opportunities in collaboration with Israeli companies.

*Source: International Business Times, New York*

<http://www.ibtimes.co.in/india-israel-explore-joint-defence-equipment-manufacturing-rd-666865#>

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**d. OMAN**

**6. India, Oman to expand defence, maritime ties**

**Muscat, Thursday, 19 February 2016**

India and Oman reviewed their strategic ties and decided to expand defence and maritime cooperation in maintaining the stability and security of the Indian Ocean region.

*Source: The Pioneer, Delhi*

<http://www.dailypioneer.com/nation/india-oman-to-expand-defence-maritime-ties.html#>

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**e. SAUDI ARABIA**

**7. PM Modi to visit Belgium, US, Saudi Arabia next month**

**New Delhi, Sunday, 28 February 2016**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Saudi Arabia as part of his three-nation trip from 30 March during which he will also visit Washington to attend Nuclear Security Summit, where his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif is also scheduled to be present.

*Source: The Tribune, Chandigarh*

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/modi-to-go-to-saudi-arabia-us-as-part-of-3-nation-visit-next-month/202318.html>

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**f. UAE**

**8. India, UAE Sign 7 Agreements across various sectors**

**New Delhi, Thursday, 11 February 2016**

India and UAE signed seven agreements across various sectors, during the visit of Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Commander of the UAE Armed Forces to India.

*Source: NDTV, New Delhi*

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/india-uae-sign-7-agreements-across-various-sectors-1276448>

*See also: The Indian Express, Mumbai*

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/al-nahyan-al-nahyan-in-delhi-focus-on-india-uae-security-ties-as-crown-prince-arrives/>

*See also: DNA, Mumbai*

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-india-uae-to-discuss-ways-to-expand-bilateral-tradeinvestments-2176470#>

*See also: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-uae-sign-7-agreements-to-step-up-bilateral-cooperation-116021101217\\_1.html#](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-uae-sign-7-agreements-to-step-up-bilateral-cooperation-116021101217_1.html#)

*See also: The Hindu, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/abu-dhabi-prince-arrives-ndeal-not-on-agenda/article8219692.ece>

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## ECONOMIC ISSUES

### g. IRAN

#### 9. India's Iran oil imports fall in Jan, but Feb arrivals to surge-shipping data

New Delhi, Tuesday, 2 February 2016

India's oil imports from Iran fell more than a quarter in January from the previous month, although incoming shipments are expected to pick up in February as post-sanctions crude starts arriving, preliminary tanker data obtained by Reuters shows.

*Source: Reuters, New York*

<http://in.reuters.com/article/india-iran-crude-idINKCN0VB00T#>

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#### 10. As US lifts sanctions, Iran wants India to pay oil dues in Euros

New Delhi, Sunday, 7 February 2016

Iran has asked Indian refiners such as Essar Oil and Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) to clear its past oil dues amounting to over US\$ 6 billion in Euros within six months.

*Source: The Indian Express, Mumbai*

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/as-us-lifts-sanctions-iran-wants-india-to-pay-oil-dues-in-euros/#>

*See also: The Economic Times, Mumbai*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/iran-wants-india-to-pay-oil-dues-in-euros/articleshow/50887318.cms>

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#### 11. Iran to take SWIFT route to unblock US\$ 6 billion payment from India

New Delhi, Wednesday, 17 February 2016

Iran is likely to reconnect to SWIFT international payment system in a day or two, paving the way for getting about US\$ 6 billion of blocked oil payments from India.

*Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/iran-to-take-swift-route-to-unblock-6-billion-payment-from-india/articleshow/51026967.cms>

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#### 12. India and Iran hold talk on oil trade, explore ways to fix payment issues

New Delhi, Thursday, 18 February 2016

India and Iran are holding negotiations to revive Asian Clearing Union (ACU) mechanism to increase oil exports to Delhi and address the payments due from Indian refiners.

*Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai*

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-and-iran-hold-talk-on-oil-trade-explore-ways-to-fix-payment-issues/articleshow/51032759.cms#>

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### h. KUWAIT

#### 13. Indian firms to showcase products at Kuwait trade fair

Dubai, Thursday, 18 February 2016

Over ten leading companies from India will showcase their products like handicrafts and paintings at the first Kuwait International Trade Fair starting from 21-27 February.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/indian-firms-to-showcase-products-at-kuwait-trade-fair-116021800477\\_1.html#](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/indian-firms-to-showcase-products-at-kuwait-trade-fair-116021800477_1.html#)

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### i. LEBANON

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

**New Delhi, Sunday, 6 February 2016**

Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh met with the visiting Lebanon Agriculture Minister Akram Chehayeb and explored the possibility of importing sugar, wheat and vegetables like potato and tomato from India.

*Source: Business Line, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-keen-to-export-sugar-wheat-veggies-to-lebanon/article6865708.ece>

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## **j. QATAR**

**15. India's decision to auction air-traffic rights disappointing: Qatar Airways CEO Akbar Al-Baker**

**Singapore, Monday, 15 February 2016**

Disappointed at India's decision to auction air-traffic rights, Qatar Airways chief executive Akbar Al-Baker said that it was against the country's interest to restrict foreign carriers from operating freely in its air space.

*Source: The Economic Times, Mumbai*

[http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-02-15/news/70642134\\_1\\_qatar-airways-ceo-akbar-al-baker-air-traffic-rights](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2016-02-15/news/70642134_1_qatar-airways-ceo-akbar-al-baker-air-traffic-rights)

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## **k. TURKEY**

**16. Turkey keen to operate more flights in India**

**New Delhi, Thursday, 18 February 2016**

Turkish Ambassador to India Burak Akcapar said that Turkey is looking forward to renegotiate the out dated civil aviation agreement with India and operate more flights to the country.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/turkey-keen-to-operate-more-flights-in-india-116021800929\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/turkey-keen-to-operate-more-flights-in-india-116021800929_1.html)

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**17. Turkey offers infra support**

**Mumbai, Tuesday, 23 February 2016**

Turkish Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek suggested possibilities to enhance the annual volume of bilateral trade between India and Turkey, which currently stands at US\$ 7.5 billion.

*Source: Business Line, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/make-in-india-turkey-offers-infra-support/article6925893.ece>

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## **CULTURAL ISSUES**

### **i. EGYPT**

**18. 'Blinks of a Brush' depicts India-Egypt similarities**

**Cairo, Friday, 12 February 2016**

Murugaraj Dhamodaran, Third Secretary at Embassy of India in Cairo, organized a show having nearly 50 works of art at the Maulana Azad Centre for Indian Culture in an exhibition titled 'Blinks of a Brush'.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/blinks-of-a-brush-depicts-india-egypt-similarities-116021200870\\_1.html#](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/blinks-of-a-brush-depicts-india-egypt-similarities-116021200870_1.html#)

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## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **m. SAUDI ARABIA**

**19. One Indian killed, three injured in firing in Saudi Arabia: Swaraj**

**New Delhi, Friday, 26 February 2016**

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said that one Indian was killed and his three compatriots were injured when stray bullets hit them in Awamia in Saudi Arabia.

*Source: Business Standard, New Delhi*

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/1-indian-killed-3-injured-in-firing-in-saudi-arabia-swaraj-116022601313\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/1-indian-killed-3-injured-in-firing-in-saudi-arabia-swaraj-116022601313_1.html)

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**20. Saudi Arabia, Iraq ship more crude to India**

**New Delhi, Friday, 19 February 2016**

India's oil imports from Saudi Arabia and Iraq hit the highest in more than a decade last month.

*Source: The Hindu, Chennai*

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/saudi-arabia-iraq-ship-more-crude-to-india/article8258181.ece>

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