

# Indo-Israel Relations and the Iranian Factor

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## Abstract

India and Israel share many common characteristics such as having emerged from a colonial past of the British Empire, and having a parliamentary system which encompasses moderate and radical forces. In spite of this shared background, for nearly four decades, India did not show interest in establishing complete diplomatic relations with Israel, and in general supported and voted for defense of the Palestinians and the Arab Middle-Eastern governments and for condemnation of Israel in world bodies such as the United Nations. However the broad changes in the world stage arising in the 1990's such as the break-up of the Soviet Union, the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq and the subsequent crisis in the Middle-East, the rise of the price of oil, the reduction in the remittances sent back to India by the returning Indian workers from Arab countries, and also the change of the political climate in India, the increase in support for the right wing (B J P) all changed the direction of the attitudes of most Indian politicians towards Israel. But developing Indo-Israel relations does not affect Indo- Iran's relations.

**Keywords:** International System, Security, Terrorism, Weaponry, Technology, Free Market Economy

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## **Introduction**

India and Israel became nations within a fairly short lapse (August of 1947 and May of 1948). They both emerged from the rule by the British Empire and they both are administered by a democratic parliamentary system. However they could not establish open and regular diplomatic relations for four decades. This is so as India and Israel took two different ideological approaches (secularism and religious-based) from their emergence on to the world scene. The thoughts and the opinions of most of the leaders and champions of Indian independence were in favour of secularism or the separation of the church and the state and strongly against the organization of the country along religious lines. The break-up of the former colony (into Pakistan and India) had taken place along religious lines which was painful to the leadership of India. The existence of hundreds of millions of Muslims, a significant minority in India, and also the Indian workers in the Arab Middle-Eastern countries and the oil imports (70% ) from Arab and non-Arab Middle-Eastern countries led to tremendous caution in the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel. For these reasons for four decades after the creation of Israel the Indian leadership showed no interest towards the creation of full relations with this state.

The break-up of the former Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War created significant changes in international scene. The security issues in Moscow arising out of the break-up of the Soviet Union led to the reduction of the clout of Russia in the world scene and along internal and external economic problems led to the

reduction or termination of Russian aid both financial and military and along with its arms exports to the allies and friends like India for some time. The start of the Madrid Peace Conference between Arabs and Israelis and the desire of some Arab Middle-Eastern countries to have peace with Israel, the power of the Jewish lobby in the U.S. Congress<sup>1</sup>, the need in India for scientific exchange, modern technology, and defense cooperation with other nations, the ability to procure modern and advanced arms, the cooperation in intelligence and security matters countering the terrorist threat to India, cooperation and assistance in the nuclear sector, and also the increase in the power of the Hindu party (BJP)<sup>2</sup> with respect to the ruling Congress party all led to the economic reforms of the Narasimha Rao's (the head of the Congress party). Economic reforms aimed at attracting foreign investment from the West and to a re-evaluation of the Indian foreign policy towards Israel. This re-evaluation in the economic policy and foreign policy of India could have created significant improvement in the areas of military strength, internal security and the economic clout of India in the South-East Asia and on a worldwide level. Also the advantageous geographical position of India, its economy and the large size of its population, its advancements in aero-space and its role in the non-aligned movements, which enabled India to aid Israel vis a vis the Arab countries, was of major interest to the Israeli leadership. For Israel expanded relations with India could yield a strategic alliance between the two nations, the increase in cooperation within the peripheries of the Middle-East region, improving its stature on a world level and within the Islamic nations, the expansion of commercial relations with a rapidly developing – tiger and BRIC – economies, informational exchanges and cooperation in space research, and improvements in cultural exchanges specially in regards to tourism, and other such fields. We intend to show in this paper that the goal in the expansion of the relations between India and Israel is to benefit Indian national interest and that India's aims at fulfilling part of its

needs. For Israel it is our conclusion that its policy is part of a peripheral plan notwithstanding Israel's assertion of the creation of a strategic alliance between the two countries.

### **I. Conceptual and Historical Framework**

Strategy is derived from the Greek Stratagem which means military leader or commander. Ancient Greece made use of deception in warfare, and such actions and maneuvers were name Stratagem. Clausewitz, in his work "on warfare" describes strategy as "the art of assimilating the forces in support of the goals of the warfare". Strategy also means a plan or algorithm that puts together the goals, policies, and the chain of operations into one plan. The design of a strategy is according to the capabilities and limitations both internal and external so that it could be implemented. Strategy in its modern usage also envisages other fields such as economic and national power and politics in addition to the military arena (Yousefi: 2013, 51). Alliance is an open or secret agreement drawn up between several nations which bind them to military or economic cooperation in the event of hostilities or threats. Alliances can be long-term, short-term, simple or complicated. An alliance can be formed in response to a victory in war or as an attempt to prevent one. It may be instructive to repeat the proverb that "peace can easily be understood with only one person being in the world and that competition and hostility is understood with at least two people and alliance occurs with at least three persons in the world". Therefore alliances are phenomena that in the course of world history have existed to alter international relations and societies. The governments being the main players in the stage of world relations, in order to achieve their goals make use of various strategies such as neutrality, non-alliance, isolationism (which eliminates any military obligations) and the strategy of alliance building and commitments. With regards to choosing a strategy of alliance-building in foreign policy, many variables such as foreign threats, internal needs, the appropriate level of the use of power,

geographic and geo-political situation of the country, international pressures and structures are considered. An alliance need not be limited by physical proximity (Jaffari: 2010, 28). States may appeal to alliances and unions for military, economic or security related reasons. The states become allies or united in a strategy where they make commitments and in turn require commitments to fulfill their needs. Such nations are of the opinion that without accepting or attracting such commitments and in particular military assurances from their respective allies they are unable to repel foreign threats or fulfill their national security needs and interests. This view makes it implicit that the need for an alliance arises mainly from foreign threats, common security needs, ideological, economic or technological needs and geographical or geo-political situations. For example the expansion of the Soviet Union and its perceived threats to Western European countries which led to the Cold War military alliance between the U.S. and Western Europe and NATO was formed. It should be noted that the geographical separation among the NATO member states did not prevent it from being formed. Also the common economic, ideological and security interests between many European nations led to the creation of the European Union (Naghizade: 2003, 24-40). Therefore the only consideration in forming an alliance is not the military one. There are other national interests that can be achieved only with such alliances. We could state that among the main reason of such national commitments among nations are augmenting of military prowess, maintaining security, mutual economic aid (Ghavam: 1991, 163-64). Since the reasons leading to an alliance and coalition are varied and based on temporal need, it is natural that with the passage of time some of these commitments may be left un-met thus dissolving the alliance. There are various reasons for a commitment to be not acted upon: The satisfaction of the goals of one side, differences among the sides, a change in the world or regional political situation, or a change in the administrations of countries that have different approaches and world-views. These all

can bring an end to a coalition or alliance between countries.

When a country is surrounded by enemies it cannot establish normal relations with its neighbors due to the hostilities. This is the reason that a country surrounded thusly will try and put significant effort in establishing relations with countries outside of its region to satisfy its national needs. Israel with its small territory from inception has been surrounded by hostile Arab states big and small and has fought multiple wars with its neighbors without producing a stable and long-term peace (Sajedi: 2005, 48-49). From the beginning, the Israelis have been aware and have experienced Arab and even non-Arab Islamic concern and aroused sensibilities to the creation of a non-Muslim state in the Middle-East (first Arab-Israeli war). To establish understanding and development of relations with other nation, Israeli strategists such as Ben Gurion (Israel's first PM) in the early 1950's along with other senior politicians of the time proposed a peripheral or sideline plan to escape the geo-strategic choke-hold (Alarz Institute: 1998, 207-13). These Israeli strategists remarked that as Israel was an island in the sea of Arab Muslim Middle-Eastern states, Israel must find friends and allies among the non-Arab nations. This led to the creation of a peripheral (non-Arab) plan in the 1950's which brought Iran, Ethiopia and Israel together (obcit, 211-235). This peripheral strategic plan lasted some two decades and came to a swift end with the downfall of the Shah in 1979 and the victory of the Islamic Revolution which made Iran Israel most important enemy (Razavi: 2000, 80-115). This peripheral strategy was continued by Israel from then to include the Korean peninsula from the East, to the Gibraltar in the west, to the gulf of Aden in the South and the Black sea to the north (Taghipor: 2005, 429).

The two countries, India and Israel, were administrated by the British Empire before their independence and creation. Both became nations declared independence within a short span of time (India August 1947 and Israel May 1948). In the 1920's Indian leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaher Lal Nehru opposed the creation of

a Jewish nation in the Palestine. This opposition was due to their secular viewpoint and their anger at the separation of India into two states from the mother nation of India which took place along religious lines between the Muslims and Hindus in 1947. This formed the basis of their opposition to a country being based on religious ideology. They believed that a country must be governed by the totality of groups and sects in the country and that a system that is based on a unique religious ideology cannot bring happiness to all the populace. They believed this happiness can only be accomplished under a secular ideology. There are many different religious groups in India and among them we have: Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and Buddhists and others. The Indian leaders could and did appreciate that leaning to one particular ideology would not contribute to a coexistent and peaceful relationship among all the sects and groups. This was proven to them in the separation of India in 1947 (which was forced upon them by the empirical and exploitive politics of the British) and which had taken hundreds of thousands of lives. Mahatma Gandhi, being totally aware of the machinations of the British in the lands under its exploitation, could not accept that this story would be repeated in Palestine, as it had happened before his eyes in India. For this reason, the leaders of Indian would state publicly that the consensus of the Muslim majority of Palestine is a necessary condition for the creation of a Jewish state (The Institute for political and scientific research: 2010, 288). The United Nations General Assembly put together a committee composed of eleven neutral members (Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, Holland, Sweden, Peru, Uruguay, India, Iran, and Yugoslavia) in 1947 to solve the Palestinian issue and thereby suggested a compromise among the Jews and the Palestinians. The representatives of Iran, India, and Yugoslavia (so called minority group) were opposed to the plan of the majority presented by other states. The minority plan would have created a federal government composed of an Arab and a Jewish state and would have kept Jerusalem under the control of a

U.N. mandate (Ahmadi: 2000, 240). This plan was not accepted by the General Assembly. This led to the India's vote against the majority plan and against the partition of Israel under the U.N. resolution (Neff: 2002, 242; Ovendale: 1999, 113-119).

After the assassination of Gandhi in 1950 and an increase in internal pressure in India (Hindu radicals) as well as from the West, the Indian position towards Israel changed in a slight but noticeable manner. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India recognized Israel on a consular level and a commercial office for Israeli citizens in the Indian port of Bombay was created which in three years became a consular office. The Indian government in the 1950's and later supported an independent Palestinian state and condemned the occupation by Israel of the Arab lands captured in the various wars. The creation of the Non-aligned movement with Nehru of India, Sukarno of Indonesia, Jamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt, and Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia did not change the Indian policy towards Israel and the friendly relations between Nehru and Nasser was itself an obstacle for normalization or expansion of ties with Israel. The relations between India and Israel remained limited to the consular level until the 1980's with no major improvement. Some of the reasons that limited the level of diplomatic relations were: the Muslim minority in India which is a significant power base for the Congress Party limited its options towards improvements of relations as Congress counted heavily on their votes. This party until the early 1990's, save a short period, retained power in India with the votes of the Indian Muslims, the friendly relations of India with the Arab Middle-Eastern nations, the Indian imports of Middle-eastern crude oil which accounted for 70% of its total imports.

The weakening of the influence of Moscow on a worldwide level beginning in the 1990's and the subsequent increase of the American strength, the conflict between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir issue, the closeness of Israel to the United States as well as the strength of the Jewish lobby in the U.S., a number of terrorist

attacks in India, and its needs related to technology transfer, economic assistance, and military and security issues all created the necessary framework for the improvement in Indo-Israeli relations starting in 1992. This increase in the level of diplomatic relations between India and Israel created major co-operations in the military, security, commercial and technological levels between Tel-Aviv and New Delhi.

India, though an important non-aligned nation, had a very close relationship with the Soviet Union up to the end of 1980s and to which it attached much importance. Many factors led the Nehru's government as well as later governments to maintain a policy of friendship and closeness with the Soviet Union. The physical proximity between the Soviet Union and India which at one time were separated only by a sliver of land extending through Afghanistan and Kashmir was an important reason for this closeness. This was removed from the Indian Territory by the wars over Kashmir with Pakistan. The close relation of Nehru and the Soviet Union which led to the attendance of Nehru at the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution in 1927, and which affected him, was another reason for the closeness with the Soviet Union and its policies towards the U.S., notwithstanding its key role in the non-aligned movement. The close relations with the Eastern bloc in a polarized world composed of two superpowers left the Indian military a client of the Russian arms and the leftist movements in India exerted much power. This position allowed the Indian armed forces to purchase the Sukhoi 7 fighter jet and later to produce the Mig 21 under Russian license (Arnet: 2000, 305). The Russian government not only armed its military but also supported India during all its conflicts with Pakistan. The Indian foreign policy until the end of the 80's in addition to its closeness to the Soviet Union emphasized its opposition to imperialism and exploitation, opposition to racial discrimination, the quest for world peace, non-aligned protocols, non-aggression with regards to other nation's borders, noninterference in the internal affairs of other

nation's and sought peaceful co-existence with all other nations (Malkute and Raou: 1989, 247-255).

The American military defeat of Iraq in 1990, in which the Russians did not defend their former close ally Saddam Hussien, dismayed the Soviet Union's other friends. The simultaneous disintegration of the Eastern block and the Soviet Union in 1991 not only ended the two super-power world but created an upheaval in the relations between the former Soviet Union (Russia) and its close allies and friends such as India. The declaration of one-polar political stage (one super power), past the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the marginalization of other powers such as Europe and China from the world political stage for a few years, the distance between Russia and India (due to the Central Asian now independent former Soviet Republics creative being in between the two countries), the reduction of Russian power on a worldwide level, the discontinuation of Russian military support of India (due to economic and political problems of Russia in the 1990s), and India's need for modern weapons and advanced technology which the Russians could no longer support were important in the development of Indo-Israeli political relations.

Right from its independence, India has been involved in war and skirmish with two of her neighbors, Pakistan and China. Pakistan was separated from India in 1947 which caused numerous issues the most important of which being territorial dispute over the strategic area of Kashmir which fostered many conflicts. The claim to Kashmir by both India and Pakistan in this area brought several wars between two countries over the years in 1947, 1965, 1999, and the war of Kargil. There has been no plan or solution presented with respect to Kashmir that has been accepted by both India and Pakistan that has led to lasting peace (Sajedi: 2005, 138-144). The tensions between the two countries was not limited to Kashmir and the claims by both countries in the areas of Siachen, Brasstacks, and Sir Creek, the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 and the terrorism issue have led

to much bitterness between the two neighbors in the Indian subcontinent. The competition and the nuclear threat between the two nations from 1974 (the Indian atomic tests of Pokhran 1 and Pokhran 2 and the kрана and Yom Takbir one and two by Pakistan) have exacerbated tensions in the indo-Pakistani relations. This has in addition increased the worries of atomic powers and the international community leading to both countries being sanctioned economically by world powers such as the United States.

The relations between India and China from the start of the 60's became prone to tensions. The border quarrels increased and in 1962 China attacked India. The loss of Indian Territory to the Chinese (Eksay China) in this war was the root cause for the border skirmishes between China and India in 1967, 1987 and the support given to Dalai Lama (the spiritual leader of Tibet who seeks autonomous of Tibet from China) by India (Panda: 2012, 1). Although the two nations starting with the visit of the Chinese president to India in 1990's embarked on a period of development of diplomatic and commercial relations and have tried to normalize their relations, there are still matters such as the border issues and the Chinese cooperation with Pakistan on military affairs which have caused concern among the Indian leaders (Farzin Nia:2009, 103-15). , An increase in the political relations with Israel served to reduce concerns over the tensions between India and Pakistan and China. The importation of advanced weapons, cooperation in the nuclear field, the use made of the advanced Israeli technology added to the alignment with the U.S. through the help of the Israeli lobby in the U.S. which has led to the reduction of U.S. aid to Pakistan and the removal of the nuclear related sanctions on India. This served to reduce the Indian concerns with respect to both its nuclear neighbors.

The actions of each player in the world stage itself a reflection of the changes in the international order and the reactions of other international players. In other words, the changes in the world order will cause a change in the actions of the countries on a worldwide

level. The center of power in the world during the two super-power eras was the Soviet Union and the United States and this affected world events greatly. The collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990's removed it from its exceptional position leaving the U.S. as the only superpower and the central influencer of world events. The Neo-conservatives aligned with the presidency of George W. Bush, which had an agenda based on a new world order and American exceptionalism were able to sideline powers such as Russia, the European Union and China and place U.S. front and center on the world stage. The Neo-cons echoing Hobbes, believed the U.S. to be the only power able to project its power and leadership in the world (Sajedi: 2009, 109). George W. Bush believed that in the new world order, only the U.S. could confront the increasing threats of religious extremists which were on the rise, the proliferation of the WMD's, and terrorist activities. He also believed that the only power that could create world peace was the United States (Sajedi: 2009, 192).

The downfall of the Soviet-Union and the transition to the one super-power world dynamic caused Indian leaders to change the Indian foreign policy in order to improve its national security. The reduction of the Soviet power and its military and political assistance to India could have created many difficulties for the Indian national security as its enemies no longer counted on a superpower's support in India's defense. India having received the most modern Soviet weapons for four decades, now had to procure advanced arms from sources other than Russia. India, considering the sanctions placed on it for its nuclear program by the U.S., the U.S. military client status of its Arch-enemy Pakistan and its overall close relations with the U.S. sought out a country that could supply it with military hardware and bring its relations closer to the U.S. Israel was the best option for India at that time even given the objections of its Islamic minority and the Arab world.

## II. Israeli Lobby and US-India Relations

As stated before, from its creation India had territorial disputes which were not resolved with either China or Pakistan and perceived them both as threats it had already lost some of its territories to them during wars. These wars clearly showed that India cannot match Chinese military strength on its own. This was the reason for the rapprochement with the Soviet-Union during the Cold War. The break-up of the Soviet-Union and the shifting of the power balance between it and Pakistan and the rise of the Chinese power convinced Indian policy makers that a closer relation with Washington should be achieved to improve Indian ability to counter external threats and swing the balance of power in its favor. Indian policy makers being keen on the influence of the Jewish lobby in the U.S. and its effect on its foreign policy sought to use its power and influence. They saw full recognition of Israel by New Delhi as a way to swing the opinions of American legislators and the administrations in the U.S. to its favor or at least to neutrality vis a vis Pakistan and to remove the sanctions placed on it for its nuclear program.

The development of the indo-Israeli relations and the influence of the powerful Jewish lobby in the U.S. eventually convinced the US congress to accept the status quo in Kashmir. It chose to challenge the rise of the Chinese and to create a suitable power balance in Asia by improving its relations with India. The U.S. at this stage had to reduce its nuclear sanctions on India or end them out right. In 2008 the US government signed an agreement with India over its nuclear program and pledged to provide part of its non-military atomic material under section 123 and article 1354 of the IAEA (Panda: 2012, 110). The official visit by Barack Obama to India in November of 2011 and its implied support of the Indian nuclear program and its adherence to the NPT as well as the American acceptance of the sale and export of some of its jointly produced modern military hard-ware (with Israel) to India where significant results of the rapprochement

towards the Jewish lobby and Israel (Sajjad: 2013).

Emerging full diplomatic relations with Israel and the potential of cooperation in different fields created opportunities for both India and Israel to cooperate in such technological disciplines as computer science, aviation, marine technology, missile and rocket electronics, communications equipment, technology, agriculture and etc. which enhanced the pace of military and security cooperation. New Delhi and Tel-Aviv very soon reached a conclusion that through military and security cooperation they can strengthen themselves against their neighbors. This was not only related to arms purchases and encompassed other research fields, joint military productions and informational exchanges. Israeli arms had found their way to India in small quantities during the war with Pakistan in 1961 and the war with China in 1962. However the break-up of the Soviet-Union along with the rise of Chinese power in South-East Asia and the radical Islamic threat in the area accelerated the military and security co-operation between India and Israel. The official visit of Ezer Weitzman to India in 1997 and the lengthy negotiations with president Shanker Dail Sharma and Prime Minister H. Deve Gowada showed that the potential for cooperation between the two countries in the fields of nanotechnology, Biotechnology, renewable energies and water management exists. After the long visit of General Hertzal Bandinger in 1995, Israel also obtained the right to use Indian airbases of Joodpoor and Yabooj for refueling and air exercises in return for the training of some of the Indian air-force personnel and related technology transfer (Avinash Singh: 1995). In 1996, India purchased some 32 drones and advanced electronic sensors which were used in the border areas along with other air-warfare equipment from Israel. In 1997, Weitzman in his meeting with the Indian Prime Minister discussed future arms deals with India agreeing to the sale of Barak 1 anti-ship missiles. These missiles afforded defenses against the Lockheed p3 and the Harpoon missiles in the Pakistani arsenal. Other areas of cooperation made possible were acquirement of military

hard-ware, exchange of intelligence and joint military research. Israel also aided India with the development of anti-aircraft missiles, radars for observation and intelligence gathering, ultra-fast boats, advanced sensors, laser guided bombs, drones, and upgrading of the Russian purchased Migs with technology transfer. The two countries in addition co-operated in the research for the creation and production of the anti-aircraft missiles and the long-range Barak missile. The Israeli research in the aerospace field which was limited due to its small territory benefited from the use of the Indian territory which was now made possible (Malazehi: 2013, 146). The Indian governments from 1996 to the present have shown a strong appetite for acquiring light military aircraft, drones, ballistic missiles, early warning systems and intelligence gathering equipment from Israel. The arms trade between the two nations totaled 9 billion dollars in 2009 and today India is the biggest purchaser of the Israeli arms totaling half of the Israeli arms exports. These countries also have co-operated in the fields of military training and joint military and aerospace projects. The rapprochement between Israel and India provided a window through which India could develop its relation with the U.S. India which previously had no access to the advanced American defense equipment now could request and receive some of its modern military equipment from the United States.

Technology takes its meaning from knowledge and applies to many fields such military equipment, agriculture, industry, technical skills of the people, means of production and others. Advanced technology is deployed to increase productivity which in turn improves the economic base of a country. Modern technology as applied to weapons of war and communications and its effects in heavy and light industry and also in agriculture is necessary to increase the national capability of a nation (Amery: 238). The use of the technology in communications and the increase in the accuracy of the Israeli armaments were quite important to Indian policy makers. The Indian government concluded in the 1990's that qualitative

advancement in obtaining, analysis and distribution of information can change the nature of military command and control. Israel due to its advanced technological infrastructure and scientific and technical training and also its co-operation with advanced research institutes in America and its experience in these fields could in the way of advancements in IT and communications cooperate effectively with India in the military and non-military fields and bring a revolution by virtue of its cooperation. The Government of Narasima Rao citing the importance of advanced technology in the areas such as military industries, agriculture and manufacturing convinced the Indian congress to accept cooperation with Israel in these fields after total evaluation and due consideration in the way of raising the position of India in the international arena. These co-operations picked up pace in the 1990's and some 73 agreements relating to technological co-operation between Indian and Israeli companies were adopted (a review of the relations of the Zionist regime: 2011, 295).

The institute for research and analysis of India sent out some of its personnel for technical training in various fields to Israel. The institute reported that co-operation with Israel in the fields such as aeronautics science, military weapons, electronics, military concealment, naval capabilities, rocketry, electronics, computer, and robotics can improve the defense posture of India. Other Indian research institutes have seen the importance of the co-operation with Israel in fields such as Geology, natural sciences (agriculture in the high attitudes, physiology of the high areas and deserts, foodstuff), forecasting and control of the weather, labor statistics, nuclear medicine, informational analysis, intelligence and educational systems for the purpose of improvement of the Indian nation. The two countries after negotiations and research agreed on a bilateral agreement in the fields of IT, research fields, and the development and production of agricultural goods. The mutual technical co-operation in the field of light aircraft started in 1995 and reached test flights in 1998 and mass production in 2002 and are now used in the

Indian air-force. The Israelis in turn made use of the Indian know-how and expertise in the aero-space field and in September 2007 it launched via India's assistance a 300 kilogram satellite into space. Israel also successfully launched another high-technology satellite with the aid of an Indian rocket.

Changing public policy to allow freer economic activity regarding trade and investments, technological improvements in communications and IT, and the reduction of the cost of transportation and creation of emerging markets not only make international co-operation needed but essential (Yousefi: 2013, 45). India's economic opening in the late 1980s and the effects of major economic powers along with the changes that Mahan Singh, India's finance minister made in the business sector in 1991 had caused Indian foreign policy to have close relations with those states which are developed and have a free market economy.

India right from its independence till 1990s had expanded its economic and commercial relations with all Middle East states except Israel. Sending millions of skilled and unskilled workers to Persian Gulf states, which create a large source of foreign currency through their remittance, has always been considered an important source of earning foreign exchange which help the Indian economy. In the beginning of 1990s due to the occupation of Kuwait by Iraqi government, almost all Indian workers had to leave the Persian Gulf states and hence the Indian economy suffered badly. Increase in oil prices and the collapse of the Soviet Union (one of the India's biggest economic partner) in 1990, all caused a serious crisis in the economy of India. Therefore, to solve the economic crisis the Indian government had to look for other sources of income. During this time Israel and some of the Arab states participated in the international peace conference of the Middle East to pave the way for India to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel. Of course India at the same time tried to keep its good economic and commercial relations with the Arab states of the Middle East. Establishing full

diplomatic relations between the two states created opportunities for both Israeli and Indian companies to export their goods to each other's states.

The bilateral trade between India and Israel before the Indian recognition of Israel amounted to only 129 million dollars. The development of relations enabled the sides to increase and facilitate their trade reaching 430 million after five years and reaching 2.2 billion in 2005. The trade in 2009 amounted to 3.54 billion increasing to 7 billion dollars in 2012 making Israel India's third largest trading partner in Asia (Feile: 2012, 25). Both countries adhere to free trade ideas which made this possible. The increase in trade took place mainly in the precious stones and their cutting, industrial products, agriculture, medical equipment and chemicals. Some research has shown that in one decade after the recognition of Israel its trade with India passed 1 billion dollars thus indicating the hidden trade potential among the nations (Primor: 2013, 2). Both countries becoming aware of this potential and aimed to maximize their bilateral trade. An agreement in joint projects relating to construction of commercial and residential construction covering over 930,000 square meters with over 1 billion dollars in funding was signed in 2008. A commercial agreement between the two countries in 2010 gave the Indian companies access to the advanced Israeli technology in return for the Israeli access to Indian markets. These agreements can highlight the potential of the trade between the two countries. A visit by the Indian Minister of Trade Jitendra Prasad to Israel in February of 2010 produced a commercial agreement aimed at increasing the trade level to 12 billion dollars by 2015. The emphasis here was in technology, computers, science, communications, medicine, security, biotechnology and agriculture.

The majority (60%) of the work force in India is employed in agriculture which experiences chronic water shortage and draught. This sector consequently has lagged the other sectors of the Indian economy and noting its large population increase is one of the most

important and basic elements of the economic program of the Indian government. The high level of technology and experience of Israel in agriculture was well noted by Indian economists trained in agricultural economics and not hidden from the view of Indian policy makers. Indian concerns regarding a shortage of foodstuffs could be allayed by its co-operation with Israel and the Israeli help in that field. An agreement was reached with Israel in 1988 whereby the Israelis invested some 2 million dollars in India to improve through advanced techniques the planting, upkeep, and harvest of agricultural products. A letter of understanding in 2008 in the agricultural field was signed between the two states which intended to use advanced techniques in creating six packaging centers for the production of vegetables and fruits in the two Indian states of Haryana and Maharashtra as well as a project for using the saline water and also sprinkle type irrigation methods in the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan (Indian embassy; Sloman: 2013). The two governments agreed in 2011 to create a research center in the state of Kerala for raising the quality and quantity of the vegetables and to teach techniques for the increase in the production and reduction in the cost of production of agricultural products to Indian farmers (Israel-India agriculture-cooperation: 2012).

A review of the of the Indian GDP shows that India, with its decision to free its economy and develop its economic ties to other nations including Israel, has increased its GDP from 314,467 billion dollars in 1990 to 1.74 trillion in 2010. Trade accounted for 16% of GDP in 1990-1991 which was raised to 47% in 2008-2010 after the free market changes were incorporated. The statistics show that the Indian interactions with Israel in the fields of agriculture, technology and engineering, information and communications and satellites have been effective in raising India's GDP.

The word terror is derived from the Latin root meaning fear and intimidation. Encyclopedia Britannica defines terrorism as the systematic unpredictable use of violence and fear against a

government's people or peoples for attaining a political goal. The American Department of Defense in 1990 defined terrorism as "the illegal use or threat thereof of force or violence against people or property to force or scare governments or societies which is typically done to reach political, religious, or ideological purposes" (Taib: 2005, 22). As terrorism has no personal targets or benefactors and knows no boundaries and limits and causes damage to life and property, it only aims to scare and intimidation. Terrorism has multiple aspects some of which are criminal, nationalistic, governmental, ideological, revolutionary, economic, and others, and can be achieved using weapons ranging from ordinary arms to chemical weapons or computers. The U.N. in December of 1994 signed off on its largest document regarding the fight with terrorism with a consensus of the members. This document aimed to develop the cooperation of governments with regards to terrorism.

India has faced multiple terrorist threats since its independence. Terrorist attacks for the liberation of the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, and Assam took place for years and even continue in some areas in a limited fashion. The assassination of Indira Gandhi 1981, Rajiv Gandhi (India's PM) in 1988 and the attack on the Indian parliament in New Delhi in the December of 2001 which India's government attributed to the terrorist groups of the Teyebe army and Jaish Mohammed, both based in Pakistan, the attack on the commercial and trade center in Mumbai and the death of dozens by a radical Muslim group from Pakistan in 2008 are some of the most important terrorist incidents in India which has caused concern in India and has led it to increase its means of combatting such attacks.

The Indian leaders have seen it necessary to work with the governments of sufficient skill and expertise in combatting terrorism to reduce the terrorist threat on India through information and security related exchanges. Israel since its creation has been of the belief that due to its non-recognition by Arab and non-Arab Muslim nation in the Middle-East, it is and will remain a target of terrorist

attacks and for this reason has created organizations and advanced institutes to combat terrorism, the most important of which is the Mossad. These organizations have gained much expertise in the last 50 years and have the most advanced intelligence technology aimed at countering terrorism. Mossad's co-operation with other anti-terrorist organizations has increased its value to Indian leaders. With the development of relations with Israel, the road was paved for co-operation between the counter-terrorism agencies of the two nations. Israel trained some of the Indian anti-terrorist personnel supplying them with the most advanced counter-terrorism technology. This co-operation extended to the fields of informational exchanges regarding terrorists, their financial resources, infiltration and recruiting informants, terrorist methods of teaching and carrying out operations. The sale of advanced technology such as remote warning sensors at the borders and the equipment needed to infiltrate terrorist groups near the border areas such as Kashmir and the drones which can from great altitudes obtain information on the neighbor's troop deployments were effective in aiding Indian intelligence. In January of 2008 India succeeded in launching the Israeli spy satellite Tecsar into orbit and in 2009 another Israeli satellite Risat was launched with the aid of the Indian institute for space research which enabled Israel to gather information on movements in China, Iran and Pakistan. The two governments created a joint commission in 2012 in order to increase their co-operation on counter-terrorism. The Indians achieved great success in counter-terrorism after the start of their co-operations with Israel on this matter. The Indian counter-terrorist agencies discovered and neutralized many of the terrorist plots inside India and significantly reduced the capabilities of terrorist networks. Israel also through its satellites launched by India could now effectively monitor Iran and its nuclear and military capabilities and movements.

### **III. Iranian Factor**

India's relations with Iran have always been deep and its roots can be

traced back several thousand years. Considering the immigration of Iranian Zoroastrians to India about 14 centuries ago and subsequent adoption of the Persian language as the official language of India for quite some time, we may conclude that the two states have deep historical and cultural relations with each other. This sentiment was echoed by Jawaher Lal Nehru who said; “there is no country closer to India than Iran” (Nehru: 1982, 15). Even today most Indian policy makers, keeping in mind that India houses about 10-15% of the world’s Shia population, much of which is concentrated in electorally-significant areas, the largest Zoroastrian community living in India and a considerable Iranian student population studying in India, publicly tend to emphasize the deep historical and cultural ties between the two states.

As we know India is the fourth largest consumer of energy in the world, with oil and natural gas constituting nearly one-fourth of India’s energy consumption. While its economy continues to develop, its dependence of oil and gas increases. Since three-quarters of its oil comes from abroad, India’s need for foreign resources of crude oil and natural gas energy is a crucial element in Indian policy. Knowing this, Iranian policy makers have discussed providing India a long-term gas supply contract. For this, the Iranian government has suggested an Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline and named it as peace pipeline gas. This kind of deal can not only improve the economic relations among the three states but also deepen their cooperation in other fields and reduce their differences over some issues like security. Although with passage of several years this project has not yet been completed -due to various factors like Iran’s differences with the West over its nuclear program- this pipeline will be constructed because of the increasing dependency on natural gas for both India and Pakistan.

The potential development of non-energy bilateral economic ties between Iran and India is another factor. Iran’s import of agricultural goods like rice from India can be cited as a good example in their interdependency. Although, the U.S. economic sanctions on

Iran might have given some hindrances to the relations between Iran and India, Indian companies and traders are keen to explore economic opportunities in Iran which has a population of over 75 million.

Iran needs to develop its ties with India especially in bilateral trade and energy. The declarations of Tehran in 2001 and of New Delhi in 2003 concerning energy and trade jointly emphasize the desire of the two states in developing oil and commerce sectors in respective countries (Thohidi: 2008, 158). A considerable Iranian student population studying in India, as well as India's need for Iranian crude oil in particular and the desire for developing trade with Iran in general are the causes leading to the deepening of their relationship at the present times.

The Indo-Israeli relations could not effect Iran's relations with India. For example they have not always managed to brush over their differences on Iran's nuclear program. The differing reactions in Israel and India to the recent six-power agreement with Iran highlight the only point of strategic divergence between the two long-time partners. While Israel has not been satisfied with Geneva Action Plan and the potentially broader international rapprochement with Iran it signals, India has welcomed it with cautious optimism. More generally, while Israel perceives Iran's nuclear posture as an existential threat, India sees it more as a geopolitical hindrance to increasing New Delhi's strategic profile in Tehran. And even during the recent period of American financial sanctions on Iran, the Islamic Republic continued to be India's third-largest source of crude oil, a position that might be improved upon in the coming months due to Iraqi recent crisis which may destabilize its oil production.

The Iranian government knows that every state tries to achieve its own national interest and as such takes into consideration the fact that India's foreign policy like any other state is predicated on its national interest. This was made clear to the Iranian government during a visit to Iran by the Indian commerce secretary in 2002

when he said “India will support good relations with all the states including Israel” (Zargar; 2007, 173). Though the Iranian government has expressed its concern over the expansion of Indo–Israel ties, it has not shown a desire to cut or reduce its political and economic relations with India. The recent visit of the Iranian Foreign Minister, Javad Zarif, to India aiming to develop economic relations between the two states can be seen as a demonstration of that.

### Conclusion

A strategic alliance presupposes a series of common points of view on world politics and the long-term view on the international scene which is created on the basis of a long term commitment between the sides. The two nations of India and Israel have no common enemies and are not threatened by one or more nations simultaneously and are therefore not a strategic alliance against foreign powers. Israel from its inception has been surrounded by Arab nations and has been alienated by the Muslim nations in the Middle-East. This has led to the enactment of a peripheral plan by Israel since the early 1950’s which has been one of its most important foreign policy goals. This is the reason that Israel is seeking and has sought strategic and non-strategic allies outside of the Middle-East. The break-up of the Soviet Union in the early 1990’s brought a new order to the world and caused many important and significant changes in the world political relations. India as a result of these events undertook a great pivot in its foreign policy towards Israel. This created the means for co-operation between India and Israel in the fields of economy, technology, military, security and counter-terrorism. This however in spite of bringing the two nations closer has not created a strategic alliance between India and Israel. We can state that the mutual needs has created the rapprochement and the development of Israeli-Indian relations, however these are not permanent and stable and can change according to other conditions and variables. The goals of Israel are to gain economic benefit; change the Indian position with regard to the

Arab-Israeli issue in its favor and also monitor the territories of Pakistan and Iran. With its millions of skilled and un-skilled workers in the Middle-East which create a large source of foreign currency through their remittances and the importation of more than 70% of its needed crude oil from Islamic Middle-East nations and also with their extensive commercial and economic relation with the Middle-Eastern countries in general, India could not accept a strategic alliance with Israel. It has accepted its extensive relations with Israel on the basis of its economic, military, security, counter-terrorism related needs and has seen its rapprochement with Israel and its full recognition as the only channel leading to a close relationship with the U.S. and reducing the threat posed by its nuclear neighbors, China and Pakistan. Taking into consideration the above, even after defeating the Congress Party in May 2014 and capturing the Prime Minister's office by Narendra Modi (from the Hindu Nationalist Baharatyia Janata Party.), one cannot expect India to opt for a strategic alliance with Israel.

In regard to the development of Indo-Israeli relations and its effect on Iran, one can say there are many reasons including economic, cultural and educational ties between Iran and India that will cause them to continue their good cooperation even with the BJP government ruling India. The interdependency of the two states will make India seek a normal relationship with Israel in a way that does not affect its relations with Iran.

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