

THE EVOLVING INDO-ISRAEL PARTNERSHIP: Security Implications for Pakistan

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Abstract:

The evolving Indo-Israel relationship has assumed the level of strategic partnership of varying dimensions. However, Israeli cooperation in the field of defense and military related activities and technology has given boost to India's high tech defense operatus including the long range missiles, missile defense and air defense systems. The partnership has substantially disturbed the South Asian balance of power against Pakistan, thereby presenting serious challenges to its survival. This paper attempts to synthesize different events of cooperation in order to comprehend its security implications to Pakistan.

Defense and Security Cooperation

India gained independence from the British colonial rule in 1947, a year before the State of Israel was planted as a foreign body on Arab soil especially the Palestinian's homeland. At the time of its inception, India wasn't a very staunch supporter of Israel, in fact, shortly after the Balfour Declaration, Indian nationalists began to support the Arab position on Palestine and were reluctant to endorse Zionist's aspirations in the Middle East.¹ So much so that the first Indian Prime Minister, Jawahar Lal Nehru, and Indian mass leader Mahatma Gandhi, opposed the creation of Israel.² India's recognition³ of Israel in 1950 was not followed by formalization of diplomatic relations. Israel soon opened a trade office in Bombay that gradually acquired status of a consular mission and occupied by its first consul took in June 1953. For over four decades interstate relations remained unfriendly to outright hostility that

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reached its crescendo on November 10, 1975 when India voted for the infamous U.N. resolution No. 3379 that equated Zionism with racism.⁴ Most of the time until the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992, India seems to be preoccupied with the idea of not annoying the Muslim world on Palestine issue and thereby lose the opportunity of continued flow of Persian Gulf oil and remittance from India's expatriate community in the Gulf; resultantly shunning any possibility of forging ties with Israel.⁵ However, traces of the contacts between Indian and Israeli diplomats indicate that absence of diplomatic relations did not inhibit both these countries from getting closer. A host of places such as Washington, New York and Ottawa in North America, London in Europe, Ankara in the Middle East and Rangoon in Asia often witnessed intense diplomatic dialogue between the two countries. Number of Israeli leaders, including former foreign ministers Moshe Sharett (1956)⁶ and Yigol Allon (1959 and 1964) visited India. Indian Education Minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, met Israeli diplomat Eliahu Sasson in Ankara in June 1951 during his state visit to Turkey.⁷ Bowing to Arab pressures, India opted to exclude Israel from the Bandung conference of 1955 and from the subsequent Afro-Asian and 3rd World assembly.⁸ However, despite, India's overt anti- Israel stance to counter Pakistan's influence in the Arab World, India covertly succeeded in cultivating deep-rooted relations with Israel. This hidden state of their interstate relations is visible once one reads comments from Harsh Pant's article that:

"Israel also never hesitated to come to India's defense, publicly and vigorously, in most of India's major conflicts. While India got tacit help and support from Israel during its 1962 war with China and 1965 war with Pakistan, India's relations with Israel went downhill in the early seventies with the worsening of the Arab-Israeli dispute after the 1967 war".⁹

Towards the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, the international environment changed most drastically. With the changing international scenario particularly on the face of challenging nature of Kashmiri freedom movement commenced in late 80s, disintegration of USSR and the military escalation with Pakistan influenced India to look politically & diplomatically towards Israel. This changing reality of real politic resulted in the establishment of relations between India and Israel in 1992. Since then the two countries have moved ahead without looking back and have surged forward in every sphere of activity. The ouster of the Indian National Congress in the general elections and the coming of the Bharatiya Janata Party having concerns about Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent also contributed towards strengthening of bilateral relations.¹⁰ Furthermore, there was a sense in Indian leadership that road to Washington passes through Israel, thus establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel was also a step taken to strengthen relationships with the United States¹¹ However, the slow and steady buildup of bilateral relations gained its momentum to its apex in September 2003 when India gave a red carpet welcome to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. The visit came in the midst of the sky rocketed criticism of international community on Israel's mishandling of the Palestinian intifada and Sharon's own isolation from the international community because of excessive abuse of human rights violations. Despite that all, these relations were grown so rapidly that today Israel has become India's second largest defense supplier (after Russia). According to unconfirmed media reports, Israel's defense transactions exceeding \$3 billion have been signed or in the pipeline between the two countries, and Israel may soon overtake Russia, the current leading exporter to the Indian market. All the indicators point

out that Indo-Israeli strategic ties are zooming full-steam ahead, with India buying Israeli military equipment worth a shopping \$1.6 billion just in 2006 alone.¹² Relations have since grown leaps and bounds with the two countries today working together in counter-terrorism strategy, intelligence sharing, supplying defense equipment and undertaking joint defense-related research. The level of mutual trust has risen to such an extent that former Mossad (Israel's foreign intelligence service) chief, Shabtai Shavit, during a trilateral conference early this year expressed an interest in promoting an India-US-Israel "strategic triad", and proposed intelligence sharing in "real time" between the three countries in order to counter the threat of terrorism. However, it would be wrong to view Indo-Israel relations solely through the prism of defense and security. Relations between the two states are based on much wider spheres of cooperation and affinity, especially in agriculture, scientific cooperation, hi-tech, communications, trade, defense matters and various other fields.

Commonality of Interests

The people of India, and Israel have a long history of civilizational contacts and cooperation on issues ranging from defense cooperation and counter terrorism to trade and cultural exchanges. According to a senior Israeli official, "From the moment we established diplomatic relations, we found a common language".³⁸ Pakistani Ambassador to the United Nations Munir Akram once rightly commented about the Indo- Israel relations when remarked, "the states which were suppressing the right of peoples to self-determination in the Middle East and South Asia are now joining together in what is advertised as an alliance against terrorism, but which is more likely to emerge as an axis of oppression."¹³ These remarks mirror growing worries in Pakistan at the warming ties between

India and Israel—one its archrival and one that it considers as an illegitimate state.

Convergence of Approach: India and Israel are very strange types of democracies that have been pursuing their hegemonic policies aimed on reviving their ancient Empires. Both have plans to carve out territories and control resources of the Muslim neighbors and to redraw their boundaries at the pattern of their biblical time. Both have been most oppressive to their minorities and neighbors and both are defaulters of number of a UNO resolutions ordering vacation of occupied areas since 1948.¹⁴ Both have the record of forcing wars upon their neighbors in connivance with Super Powers like USA and USSR, in nearly every decade of their existence. Both have the infamous/ shameful record of disrespecting international law and norms, violation of human rights of their minorities, excessive and barbaric use of force against struggler of independence in occupied areas.¹⁵ The most striking commonality is their perception of Islam as their common enemy. Their common target is to thrive on the illegal acquisition of wealth and resources of the Muslim World. Both are working under the tutelage of the United States who is working on a similar agenda for the realization of its global imperialism.¹⁶

Producer & Consumer Relationship in the Field of Defense: During the last sixty years or so Israel with the help of USA and the West has remarkably developed its armed industry complex and succeeded not only in self reliance rather acquired a capacity to export. The industrial complex holds a long list of production facilities however, the worth mentioning items besides light arms, ammunition and communications devices, includes remotely piloted vehicles, electronic and anti electronic

warfare systems, night vision devices, and naval equipment ranging from command and control systems, missiles and anti missile systems to a variety of patrol boats. Today Israeli companies are ranked among world leaders in radar, avionics and command and control systems and crafted scores of technologically advanced components that give 20 or 30 year old weapon systems new life and a qualitative edge and improves the capabilities of fighter aircraft, helicopters, combat vehicles, and command, control, communication, and intelligence systems.¹⁷ In order to maintain the well being of its defense industries without any foreign help, Israel has to bank upon export of these weapons. Export to some reliable country that has commonality of interests will help in souring up its economy and facilitate continuity of its Research and Development that enables Israel to maintain a leading edge in weapons technology.¹⁸ Owing to these reasons Israel is seeking broader and deeper engagement with New Delhi and considers India one of Israel's important markets. Israel is looking for linkages with Indian firms not only for marketing Israeli products, but also to design jointly and evolve new software and technologies for export to other third world countries.¹⁹ On the other hand, disintegration of USSR compelled India to look for a reliable source of sophisticated weapons and the USA and Israel were the obvious choices. In forging these new relations Israel was not only interested in getting an access to a huge market for its defense industry but also a way of containing Pakistan that was avowedly committed to help the Middle Eastern states against Tel Aviv. Over time, India has also been able to hone its military intelligence agencies with the help of Israel's surveillance technology, including airborne warning and control system. The intense and diverse nature of overt contacts between India and Israel since 1992 was based on covert relations since 1952 when

India accepted Israel as a sovereign state. Their mutual concerns and commonality of interests, despite prolonged absence of overt political relations have not prohibited them from seeking mutual security cooperation between the two countries. The apparent threats confronting both these countries seem dissimilar; but the strategic orientation of their ambitions points towards common goals like:

- They underscore a search for qualitative weapons, modernization, cooperation in naval patrol and anti-terrorism, arms buildup, exports and technological independence as a source of national power and as the tools for furthering national interests.
- Both are pursuing their respective hegemonic agendas of Greater Israel and *Akhand Bharat*, since their inception as modern states.
- The main rivals or obstacles, impeding the realization of their ambitions, are the Muslim states or Islamic civilization.
- Notwithstanding Pakistan's present status of non-NATO ally or US partner of war against terrorism and apparently favorable intentions of the current US administration, India and Israel are termed as strategic partners and recipients of US economic, military aid, including access to nuclear and conventional technologies and research.
- Pakistan's hostile relationship with India impinges on both short- and- long-term American interests as America has hopes for wider strategic cooperation and stronger economic ties with India.²⁰
- During the last three years, not only has Israel become the second largest exporter of defense hardware to India, New Delhi

has also secured extensive Israeli cooperation in non-defense sectors—such as agriculture, as Tel Aviv is a world leader in drip irrigation.²¹

- Both nations are focusing on military collaboration, identifying Islam as a common foe. Americans focusing on the issue of Islamic terrorism as the most striking shared interest between India, Israeli and the US. In a relatively short span of fifteen years of formal diplomatic relations, India and Israel have established a vibrant partnership, strengthening their defense and security apparatus.
- The two states are also making concerted attempts to diversify this relationship. The emergence of India and Israel, as industrialized and technologically advanced states, makes their cooperation on a range of fields meaningful and mutually beneficial.
- India has become Israel's second-largest trading partner in Asia in non-military goods and services reaching trade to \$1.27 billion in 2002 from just \$202 million in 1992.²²
- During his visit to India, Ariel Sharon was accompanied by a large delegation of about 30 influential businessmen, eager to forge new contracts and open new markets in India. This bears witness to Israel's commitment to intensify its economic and trade relations with India.²³ The range and extent of developing Indo-Israeli relationship can be judged by the six agreements, signed during Sharon's visit to India, covering the fields of environment; health; combating illicit trafficking of drugs; visa waivers for diplomatic service, and official passport holders; education; and an exchange program for cultural education.²⁴

- Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, during his September 2004 visit to USA, met top leaders of the American Jewish community and complemented their contribution to the Indo-US, as well as, Indo-Israeli friendships. The Jewish organizations in the US share a very close relationship with the Indian-American community and together they have been instrumental in shaping Indo-Israeli ties.²⁵
- Given India's strong scientific and technological base, Israel is keen on strengthening scientific and technological ties with India.²⁶ Both nations are planning to double the investment under the ongoing science and technology collaboration from \$0.5 million in 2003 to about \$1 million by 2005.²⁷
- During their visit to India in December 2004, Israel's Finance Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu and Minister of Industries, Trade, Employment, and Communications, Ehud Olmert decided to expand trade ties and to set up a joint fund for research and development with the aim of promoting technology-based trade and collaboration in tapping the global market together.

Defense and Security Relations

The commonality of interests stated above have pushed them to come closer, support each other in the global politics, cooperate militarily and develop relations encompassing all fields of defence cooperation. Though the initial phase of the relations starting from Nehru apparently remained dormant and covert, but all the successive governments in New Delhi showed the courtesies to the visiting officials without upgrading the level of diplomatic representations and sought Israeli help in military

matters covertly. Some of the clandestine incidents of cooperation on military and intelligence matters are:

In January 1963, just after Sino-Indo War the government of India sought military consultation from the Israeli specialists and in turn Israeli Chief of Army Staff and the Chief of Military Intelligence were welcomed to New Delhi for an exchange of views with some of India's military top brass²⁸, including the Indian Chief of Army Staff General J N Chaudhri.²⁹

Amber Jameel Kalyal stresses in her article "Changing Nature Of Indo-Israeli Relations" that during the 1967 Middle East war India covertly shipped military hardware to Israel.³⁰ Quoting the Washington Times, 'the relationship has been kept quiet at the request of India, which has more than one million expatriate workers in the Arab world'.³¹

There was a long history of cooperation between India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and its Israeli counterpart, the Mossad (Israeli secret agency) that existed even during the premiership of Indira Gandhi, (1966-77 and 1980-84) and Rajiv Gandhi (1984-1989).³² Story of other secret contacts between India and Israel can be found in Victor Ostrovsky's³³ book, "By Way of Deception" who also discloses, India sent a secret mission to Israel comprising top flight nuclear scientists in 1984.³⁴

Despite India's unwillingness to establish diplomatic relations with the country, Israel helped India during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 in the form of gathering intelligence and providing military equipment. The Indian military extensively used Israeli 166 mm mortar and ammunition during the war.³⁵

Cooperation between India and Israel has increased manifolds in military and intelligence fields since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992. By mid 1992, India and Israel had made considerable progress on the possibilities of cooperation in military matters. A six member Israeli defence team visited India and had meetings with several ministry officials.¹⁹ This visit within five months of establishing full diplomatic relations between the two countries was a significant indicator of the rapid progress in Indo-Israel ties. Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin in an interview showed his resolve that Israel is more than ready to cooperate with India in the field of defence whatever suits to India.³⁶

In May 1993, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres visited India. Peres too dealt with the issues of terrorism and India's territorial integrity. He also supported India's stand on Kashmir. "We support fully and completely the territorial integrity of India and agree with the Shimla Agreement."³⁷ Israeli General Helz Bodinger in his April 1995 visit to India offered a generous package deal, that included Airborne Warning and Control Systems, Remotely Piloted Vehicles, access to an air platform for anti detection and anti jamming maneuver and specialized weapons.³⁸ To reciprocate the visit, a high level Indian team, led by Defense Secretary, K.A. Nambiar, visited Israel in July 1995 to identify the avionics and weapons systems for the up gradation of MIG-21. Though the Israeli package was expensive but she on the technical superiority of their package over the Russian one.³⁹ India showed its interest in Remotely Piloted Vehicles.⁴⁰ Negotiations reportedly are in advanced stages for Israel to provide state-of-the-art fire control systems and thermal imagers for the Indian Army's Russian-made T-72 tank fleet.

During the Israeli President Ezer Weizman made a historic visit to India. In January 1997 visit to India the two countries decided to exchange military attaches and India's top defence ministry scientists visited Israel secretly and toured satellite and missile programmes. The visit is a vital step in boosting trade and bolstering the strategic military relationship between the two countries. In, what is to be the first ever weapons deal between the two countries in 1997, India made a bid for the purchase of Barak-1 vertically launched surface-to-air (SAM) missiles from Israel.⁴¹ Owing to the Barak's ability to intercept anti-ship cruise missiles such as the Harpoon, Indian Navy considered it to be a best option to counter Pakistan's three recently obtained P3-C II Orion maritime strike aircraft and 27 Harpoon sea-skimming anti-ship missiles. A few days after Indian nuclear explosion of May 1998, a team of the IAI (Israeli Aircrafts Industry) toured India to hasten the sale of Israeli RPVs and anti-ship missiles.⁴² Same year, the IAI finalized a large-scale deal with India to sell Advanced Electronic Equipment (AEE) made of purely from Israeli technology. Reportedly, Israel sold advanced electronic warfare system to India overruling US objections that sought to block the deal in the wake of Indian nuclear tests in May 1998.⁴³ India's National Security Adviser Mr. Brajesh Mishra's along with the Services Chiefs in 1998 expedited the growing strategic cooperation with Israel and Ministers of Urban Affairs, Health and Welfare and the Attorney General's visits in 1998 – 99 to Israel helped in non-strategic terms.⁴⁴ Israel responded positively to India's request for provision of sophisticated technology during the Kargil war in 1999 against Pakistan. Jason F Isaacson, International Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, acknowledged this in an exclusive interview with the newspaper's News Editor Suman Guha-Mozumder, that the help that

Israel was really able to give to India at the time of the Kargil crisis-1999 as a friend and ally, had not taken place before."⁴⁵

A number of ongoing programs in India are not radically different from their Israeli counterparts. They include the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) (Israel's Lavi), Arjun (Merkava), Prithvi (Jericho I), and Agni (Jericho II). The same can be said about a number of other Indian programs such as Remotely Piloted Vehicles, Airborne Early Warning System, and anti-ballistic missile systems.⁴⁶ In this, India can benefit from Israel as Israeli weapons are more advanced and battle tested.

According to *Jerusalem Post* Israel trained nearly 3,000 Indian soldiers for specialized anti-insurgency strikes, and to stop infiltration by Pakistani terrorists into India via Kashmir region.⁴⁷ Reportedly, India concluded \$30 million deal with Israel Tavor assault rifles, Galil sniper rifles, night vision and laser range finding and targeting equipment for these soldiers.

Real time Intelligence and Surveillance Capability: Owing to the capability of sending real time intelligence/ data and photographs from deep inside the enemy territory, Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAVs)/ Remotely Piloted Vehicles (RPVs) are viewed as strategic force multipliers. These real time intelligence/ pictures could include enemy defences layout, preparedness, weapon deployment along borders. Israel has earned world fame in developing smaller, lighter and maneuverable UAVs.⁴⁸ Keeping in view the intelligence failure and importance of real time intelligence in Kargil fiasco, possession of UAVs has become all the more important for India and its urgent need can not be ignored at any level. This is the reason that Indian Air Force had asked for immediate induction of the UAVs for intelligence of the 140 km long

high altitude ranges along the line of control in Kargil sector.⁴⁹ To boost India's air surveillance capability against Pakistan and in Kashmir⁵⁰, India and Israel have signed a contract for UAVs⁵¹ and negotiations for joint production of the 'heron'⁵² UAV for the Indian Navy are on final stages.⁵³ In December 2002 Defense Minister George Fernandes announced in the Indian parliament that India and Israel are planning to jointly produce and market an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH). Overall, contracts of over U.S. \$3 billion for the supply of military equipment and know-how are said to be in the pipeline.⁵⁴

Israel is also ticked from different quarters for helping India in its nuclear explosions of 1998, though the Indian diplomats denied the charges for such alleged assistance.⁵⁵ However, Israel's Foreign Ministry never condemn India's nuclear weapons test rather refused to say whether Israel would impose sanctions on India or re-examine the close military ties between the two countries.⁵⁶ There were also reports that Israel spy satellite was providing India with intelligence on Pakistan and Israel was allowed by India to undertake missions on Indian territory (probably in Kashmir) to monitor points of interest.⁵⁷

Missiles Technology: India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Program involved in design and development of ICBM Surya, Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) Agni, surface to surface missile, Prithvi, short range surface to air missile, Trishul, medium range surface to air missile Aakash and the anti tank missile, Nag is found very slow with unpredictable results. On the other hand Israel has a very impressive record of indigenous missiles development including ship-to-ship missile Gabriel, air-to-air missile Python, air to surface missile, Popeye, surface-to-surface missile, Jericho I and IRBM Jericho II. Israeli

missiles are not only developed only, they are rather battle tested by now.⁵⁸ Reportedly, India is looking for Israeli missile technology to perfect the launching and guidance systems of the Prithvi, and electronics for its submarine launched Sagarika missile. Israel is also helping India in developing state-of-the-art air-to-air missiles to counter the threat from Pakistani missiles like M-11.⁵⁹ The Indian Air Force has reportedly purchased the Python 4 air-to-air missile. The missile produced by Rafael, is considered one of the most advanced short distance missiles in the world.

Israel has much to offer India in defence and security related technology and equipment. Israel's Harpy missile capable of counter electronic measures has lot of attraction for Indian Air Force (IAF). IAF has expressed keen interest including Delilah II bombs, crystal maze bombs, Pechora III, surface-to-air missiles, Popeye beyond-visual-range air-to-air missiles, and Harpy missile capable of counter-counter electronic measures i.e. silencing enemy radars.⁶⁰ Delivery of Israel's Phalcon Airborne Warning & Controlling Systems (AWACS) to India has also been approved by the USA after initial reluctance and first five AWACS were scheduled in India by 2007.⁶¹ India's AWACS project involves the integration of the "Phalcon" radar and communication system with the Russian Ilyushin-76 heavy transport military aircraft.⁶² The other vital deal between India and Israel is about the sale of the Arrow-II anti-ballistic missile defense system to India, which will strengthen its air defense capabilities against Pakistan and China.⁶³ India has also acquired from Israel the "Green Pine" fire control radars,⁶⁴ which forms a crucial component of the Arrow system and can detect and track incoming missiles from up to 500km away.⁶⁵

Relations on Naval side between both the states are also flourishing like other areas. Some of the incidents of cooperation with Indian navy are:

- Israel attaches a significant strategic value in an alliance with the Indian Navy, given India's dominance of South Asian waters. It would be advantageous to the Israeli Navy to establish a logistical infrastructure in the Indian Ocean with the cooperation of the Indian Navy. In 2000, Israeli submarines reportedly conducted test launches of cruise missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads in the waters of the Indian Ocean, off the Sri Lanka coast.⁶⁶ The Indian Navy plans to acquire about ten more Israeli Barak anti-missile defense systems, in addition to the seven already procured for its major warships. This system would provide India with a close-in point defense system against the Harpoon and Exocet missiles acquired by Pakistan.⁶⁷
- India plans of purchasing a \$97 million Israeli electronic warfare system for its naval ships has been finalized.⁶⁸ Further, India plans to launch joint programs with Israel in the field of electronic warfare. With Israel's strength being sensors and packaging, and India's being fiber optic gyros and micro-electromechanical systems, both Israel and India can neatly complement each other in this area.⁶⁹
- On the face of modern weaponry with its enemy Israel considers most of its land based strategic installations vulnerable to a long-range first strike. Thus, the deployment of sea-borne second-strike capability - an essential factor for effective

deterrence of such a possible first strike - is emerging as a strategic imperative for Israel.⁷⁰ In this regard, the Indian Ocean, as location for a logistic infrastructure, facilitating the deployment and maintenance of this capability could well assume vital importance. Therefore, it is talked about in various quarters that that Israel is likely to set up its logistical bases in the Indian Ocean for its navy.⁷¹

- India has decided to launch joint programs with Israel in the field of electronic warfare. With Israel's strength being sensors and packaging, and India's being fiber optic gyros and micro-electromechanical systems, both Israel and India can neatly complement each other in this area.⁷²
- An alliance between India and Israel, openly endorsed by the US, would create a potent destabilizing force in the region, and India is likely to switch the focus of this alliance towards Pakistan on the pretext of facing hunting the forces of radical extremism so hostile to American interests in south, western and central Asia and beyond.
- Several weeks after 9/11, prominent Washington post columnist Jim Hoagland wrote in an article, "a test of true allies": "India and Israel are the most vibrant democracies in a vast swath of countries from north Africa through the Himalayas that should now be seen as a single strategic region. Jerusalem and new Delhi are also end points of the u.s. campaign [against terror]."⁷³ India's Home Minister and deputy Prime Minister L. K. Advani echoed this view. On a FOX Television interview he stated: "terrorism insofar as we've seen it on 11th September ... has a

common source, and that common source has described the United States, Israel and India as its three main enemies.”⁷⁴

Presumably the nuclear co-operation between the two states began in 1962 with the visit of the Chairman of the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission to India followed by the dispatch of two Indian scientists to Israel on Israeli scholarships.⁷⁵ There were speculations in the media that the Indian nuclear test of May 1998 was actually done to test the Israeli nuclear technology, as there are no testing grounds available in the Israeli territory.⁷⁶ As the Financial Times of London stated, there was ‘hard evidence of Israeli Indian nuclear co-operation’ following disclosures in Tel Aviv newspapers that APJ Abdul Kalam, head of India’s nuclear program, had visited Israel twice in 1996 and in 1997.⁷⁷ These indicators tick Israel for helping India in its nuclear explosions of 1998, though the Indian diplomats for such alleged assistance denied the charges.⁷⁸ However, Israel’s Foreign Ministry never condemn India’s nuclear weapons test rather refused to say whether Israel would impose sanctions on India or re-examine the close military ties between the two countries.⁷⁹ Reportedly Israel went a step further to support India by sending its six high tech aircrafts fully loaded with sophisticated missiles that landed on different air bases in the Indian-held Kashmir to neutralize Pakistan’s electronic network at its nuclear facilities, particularly at the Kahuta plant.⁸⁰ To counter such naked design forced Pakistan to place more than 125 surveillance planes over Kahuta round the clock.⁸¹ There were also reports that Israel spy satellite was providing India with intelligence on Pakistan and Israel was allowed by India to undertake missions on Indian territory (probably Kashmir) to monitor points of interest.⁸² The Civil Aviation of India and the Civil Aviation Authority of Israel signed an arrangement in February 2007 to cooperate in order to

promote aviation safety and preservation of the environment. Reportedly India plans to jointly build a futuristic long-range surface-to-air missile with Israel and New Delhi had approved the 625-million-dollar joint venture with the Jewish state to build the anti-aircraft missiles for the Indian navy.⁸³ The missile system development is an extension of a \$480 million Israel Aerospace Industries project, launched in January 2006, to develop a supersonic 60-kilometer missile defense system for the Indian navy.⁸⁴ According to media reports, a deal worth USD 1.5 billion between Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and India is in offing to setup defence system using innovative long-range missiles with a range of more than 100 kilometers.⁸⁵

Implications

Without undermining the overall adverse effect on Pakistan's security of this close defense relationship between India and Israel, the most telling worry can be seen in fast tilting strategic balance in the subcontinent against Pakistan. If these relations supplemented by US continues with the same speed and vigor then Pakistan finds it difficult to match the conventional military capability of Israel-India combined.⁸⁶ Some of the serious irritants emerging for Pakistan's security and capable of seriously affecting the existing balance of power in the region against Pakistan are:

- Israel's state-of-the-art weapon systems will help India in restructuring its armed forces to meet the defense requirements of the twenty-first century.
- The acquisition of Phalcon early-warning system will enable India to look deep into Pakistan and detect Pakistani warplanes at the start of their move.

- The intended sale of the Arrow anti-missile system would enhance Indian Nuclear Defence system by neutralizing Pakistan's nuclear warheads by affecting its ballistic missile capability.
- The Barak anti-missile system will protect the Indian Navy ships from Pakistan's missiles, giving the Indian Navy huge maneuver advantages vis-à-vis Pakistan.
- Collaboration between the Indian intelligence agency , RAW (Research and Analysis Wing), and Mossad is a dangerous move against Muslim World in general and Pakistan in particular.
- An alliance between India and Israel, openly endorsed by the US, would create a potent destabilizing force in the region, and India is likely to switch the focus of this alliance towards Pakistan on the pretext of facing down the forces of radical extremism so hostile to American interests in south, western and central Asia and beyond. Israel has even gone to the extent of saying that an “unwritten and abstract” axis with India and the United States has been created to combat international terrorism.⁸⁷
- Israeli setting up of its naval bases in Indian Ocean along with India and US will seriously aggravate the chances of Pakistan to preserve its life line along Indian Ocean and put its fragile security situation in fix.

- Over the years, the Indian government has gradually toned down her reaction on Israeli atrocities, maltreatment meted out to Palestinians. Rather, India has started denouncing Palestinian resistance of rockets and suicide attacks.
- India is no more active in initiation of UN resolutions against Israel.

Pakistan has also to be conscious of the fact that the growing defence and security relationship between India and Israel has largely been nurtured with the help of the US. These concerns are further strengthened by the Indo-America nuclear deal and other agreements that would lift U.S. restrictions on high-technology trade with India. This agreement covers cutting-edge technology pertaining to civilian nuclear energy, space, missile defense, and hi-tech commerce. This Indo-US-Israel nexus speaks of a larger design, which Pakistan has to worry seriously.

The exchange of intelligence information between India, Israel and the US has not been restricted to AL-Qaida only but Israel is also helping India to fight freedom movement in Kashmir by providing important logistical support such as specialized surveillance equipment, cooperation in intelligence gathering, joint exercises, and cooperation to stop money laundering and terror funding.⁸⁸ India can learn to adopt Israeli expertise / matured tactics of guerilla and built up warfare acquired while fighting against Palestinian in the West Bank and employ the same against Kashmiries and other insurgent movements to counter. These tactics have even been found useful by the U.S. forces in Iraq who had to learn IDF strategy of urban warfare to tackle growing insurgency there.⁸⁹

Indian security forces need to be trained, equipped, and operate in towns and villages to acquire intelligence, locate targets, and neutralize the insurgents snipers fighting for their freedom in different parts of India including Kashmir and Assam. Owing to its confrontation of similar situation, IDF has perfected its drills, equipment and procedures to fight Palestinians in their towns and villages. Therefore, the IDF can be very useful in training, and equipping the Indian forces in this regard. Other areas where Israeli know-how can be incorporated by India include tactics aimed at lowering the risk of ambush, use of infantry and commando units seeking out and destroying arms caches and terrorist bomb-making capabilities, and the use of dogs, robotics, and specially trained sappers to detect hidden roadside mines.⁹⁰

Conclusion

To meet its growing military needs of up gradation and modernization of its defense muscles India seems determined in achieving self-reliance/self sufficiency in its surveillance capabilities, missiles, and air fleet. On the face of heavy cost of conducting research and development, India is relying on import of components and collaboration. India's attempts to improve its defense system with the aim to counter its nuclear-armed adversary, Pakistan, have been greatly supported by Israeli weaponry that includes surface-to-air missiles, avionics, and sophisticated sensors to monitor cross-border infiltration, remotely piloted drones, and artillery. This research reveals that India is gradually moving to self-reliance from the import of arms via licensed production towards indigenous development and production of arms. India's huge and lucrative defense market is offering a golden opportunity for Israel to exploit it for economic gains as well as political benefits. Israel has been forthcoming in supplying India with state-of-the-art defense related

equipment and technologies. Israel's provision of equipment and technology in the areas of electronics, missile technology and intelligence has been hallmark in their bilateral relations so far. India is also determined to benefit from Israel's expertise in fighting against insurgency and freedom movement. In essence, Indo-Israel relations have grown in importance because it is based on very practical considerations. In joining hands with India, Israel would not be doing it a favor. With a shirking defense budget, exploration of collaborative ventures with India makes economic as well as strategic sense for Israel. Even if third party exports are ruled out, India still presents a large market for Israel. For instance, within the next decade India has to replace most of its over 2,000 Main Battle Tanks and has no other option either to upgrade or replace around 400 MiGs. Any meaningful relationship between India and Israel is more likely to cover joint research, joint production and technology transfer.

End Notes:

- ¹ For details and historical development of Indo-Israel bilateral relations see: *India and Palestine: The Evolution of Policy* (New Delhi, India, Ministry of External Affairs); M.S. Agwani, "The Palestine Conflict in Asian Perspective," in *The Transformation of Palestine*, ed. Ibrahim Abu-Laghod (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1971), pp. 443-62; and Leonard Gordon, "Indian Nationalist Ideas about Palestine and Israel," *Jewish Social Studies* 37 (Summer-Fall 1975): nos. 3-4, pp. 221-34.
- ² Dr. Subhash Kapila, "India – Israel Relations: The Imperatives For Enhanced Strategic Cooperation", *South Asia Analysis Group*. Available at: <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/papers2/paper131.html>
- ³ P.R. Kumaraswamy, "India's Recognition of Israel, September 1950," *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 31, no. 1 (January 1995), pp. 124-138.

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- ⁴ UN General Assembly, R-3379 (XXX). "Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination"
- ⁵ Harinder Mishra, "India walks Israeli-Palestinian tightrope", *Asia Time-Online*, Available at: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/FK04Df04.html (10-2-2008)
- ⁶ Neil Caplan, "The 1956 Sinai campaign viewed from Asia: Selections from Moshe Sharett's diaries," *Israel Studies* 7 (Spring 2002): no. 1, pp. 81-103. Also see: P.R. Kumaraswamy "India And Israel: The Diplomatic History", Jawaharlal Nehru University
- ⁷ See; P.R. Kumaraswamy "India And Israel: The Diplomatic History", Jawaharlal Nehru University
- ⁸ Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. II, p. 232. See also Michael Brecher, *The New States of Asia: A Political Analysis* (London: Oxford, 1968), pp. 210-11. Reprint.
- ⁹ Harsh V. Pant, "India-Israel Partnership: Convergence and Constraints", South Asia Analysis Group. <http://www.saag.org/papers13/paper1279.html>
- ¹⁰ *Financial Times*, "Indo-Israeli Ties: The Post-Arafat Shift- Power and Interest News Report"
- ¹¹ *Indo-Israeli Ties: The Post-Arafat Shift- Power and Interest News Report*
- ¹² See: "India, Israel to jointly develop \$2.47b. Missile system", Available at: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/881657.html>
- ¹³ Pakistani Ambassador to the United Nations Munir Akram, September 2004
- ¹⁴ A detailed examination of the Indo-Israeli relations in a historical context can be found in P.R. Kumaraswamy, "India and Israel: Emerging Partnership," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (December 2002), pp. 193-200.
- ¹⁵ Plenty of examples may be cited with regards to similarity in pattern of USA towards Muslims and Islam. Firstly President Bush declaration of "Crusade" against Afghanistan and Iraq, continued massacre of Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq, inhuman treatment with Muslim prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghareeb, etc
- ¹⁶ A national interest is a public good of concern to all or most Americans; a vital national interest is one, which they are willing to expend blood and treasure to defend. National interests usually combine security and material concerns, on the one hand, and moral and ethical concerns, on the other. See, Samuel Huntington, "The Erosion of American National Interests," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, no. 5 (September-October 1997)

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- ¹⁷ Jason Sherman, "Niche Carving: Subsystem Upgrades Catapult Israel Defence Industries to New Heights", *Armed Forces Journal*, vol. 134, no. 12, July 1997, p. 34.
- ¹⁸ Bishara Bahbah, *Israel and Latin America: The Military Connection*, (London: The Macmillan Press Limited, 1986), p. 7
- ¹⁹ "Special Focus: Indo-Israeli Defence Cooperation", *Indian Defence Year Book 1998-99*, (Dehradun: Natraj Publishers, 1998), p. 119.
- ²⁰ Cohen Stephen Philip, *The Idea of Pakistan*, 2005, Lahore, Vanguard Books, p.305
- ²¹ "Budding Israel India relationship bad for Pakistan", *Daily Times*, June 16, 2003
- ²² "We need more Business: Sharon," *Times of India*, September 11, 2003; Also see, "India, Israel aim to increase Bilateral Trade," *Associated Press*, September 9, 2003.
- ²³ Harsh, "India-Israel Partnership: Convergence and Constraints", op.cit.
- ²⁴ See the bilateral statement on friendship and cooperation signed between India and Israel during Ariel Sharon's visit to India in September 2003, <<http://meaindia.nic.in>>.
- ²⁵ On the close relationship between American-Jewish and American-Indian groups, see Indrani Bagchi, "Canny Friends," *India Today*, April 10, 2004
- ²⁶ P. Sunderarajan, "Israel plans thrust on science and technology collaboration," *The Hindu*, December 25, 2003.
- ²⁷ ibid
- ²⁸ *The Hindustan Times*, May 15, 1980
- ²⁹ Dr. Maqsood-ul-Hassan Nuri, 'Indo-Israeli Nexus', *Regional Studies*, Vol.XII. No 3, Summer 1994, pp 19-20
- ³⁰ *Amber Jameel Kalyal*, "Changing Nature Of Indo-Israeli Relations", *Strategic Studies Review*, The Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad.
- ³¹ ibid
- ³² P.R. Kumaraswamy, *India and Israel: Evolving Strategic Partnership, Security and Policy Studies* no. 40 (Quoted by Farah Naaz in her article "*Indo-Israel Military Cooperation*")

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- ³³ Victor Ostrovsky was an Israeli agent and a weapons testing expert, recruited by Mosad
- ³⁴ Bidanda Chengappa, “Indo-Israel Relations: the Great Leap Forward”, *Indian Defence Review*, 1993, p. 108.
- ³⁵ Dr.Subhash Kapila, “India – Israel Relations”, *opcit*
- ³⁶ Strategic Digest, vol. 23, no. 12, December 1993, p. 2014. (Quoted by Farah Naaz in her article “*Indo-Israel Military Cooperation*”)
- ³⁷ The Hindu, May 19, 1993
- ³⁸ The Hindustan Times, April 8, 1995
- ³⁹ “Israel intensifies efforts to bag MiG-21 up gradation contract”, Strategic Digest, n. 20, pp. 2086-87 (Quoted by Farah Naaz in her article “*Indo-Israel Military Cooperation*”)
- ⁴⁰ The first Remotely Piloted Vehicle (RPVs) was small, pilot less aircraft controlled by command radio transmission. Most of these fell into one of two categories: extremely high-performance drones used to test new systems; and small, relatively inexpensive drones used for training. Both were typically reusable, being recovered by radio-controlled landing or, more commonly, by parachute. RPV is a term used by the USA Department of Defence during the 70's and 80's to describe a robotic aircraft flown by a pilot located in a Ground Control Station. The Unmanned Aircraft was used for reconnaissance and artillery spotting.
- ⁴¹ The Barak-1, in operation by the Israeli, Chilean and Singapore navies, is a joint product of the Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) and RAFAEL, the Israel Armament Development Authority. Traveling at Mach 1.7, it can intercept targets at a distance of 10 km. The lightweight missile's modular launch system fits onto existing warships.
- ⁴² International Herald Tribune, June 10, 1998. Also see Farah Naaz, “*Indo-Israel Military Cooperation*” *opcit*.
- ⁴³ Asian Recorder, vol. 45, no. 22, May 28-June 3, 1999, p. 28151. (Quoted by Farah Naaz in her article “*Indo-Israel Military Cooperation*”)
- ⁴⁴ Telegraph, May 29, 1992.
- ⁴⁵ URL: <http://www.rediff.com/news/2003/sep/08sharon2.htm>
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⁴⁹ *Newstime*, February 12, 2000. A UAV is ideal for surveillance on the 704 km long LoC, 140 km of which falls in high altitude ranging from 13,000 ft to 19,000 ft.

⁵⁰ *Newstime*, February 12, 2000. A UAV is ideal for surveillance on the 704 km long LoC, 140 km of which falls in high altitude ranging from 13,000 ft to 19,000 ft.

⁵¹ *Indian Defence Year Book 1998-99*, n. 9, p. 123

⁵² The “heron” is the most modern UAV made by the IAI and has a longer range and more sophisticated payload than the ‘searcher’ which India had first agreed to buy from Israel in 1996.

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⁵⁵ *The Statesman*, August 20, 1998.

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⁵⁷ *The Hindu*, June 13, 1998.

⁵⁸ P.R. Kumaraswamy, *India and Israel: Evolving Strategic Partnership*, *Security and Policy Studies* n. 14, pp. 29-31

⁵⁹ *The Hindustan Times*, February 13, 1997

⁶⁰ *Harsh V. Pant* “India, Israel Partnership: Convergence and Constraints”, *The Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Volume 8, No. 4, Article 6 - December 2004

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Guy Chazan and Jay Solomon, “Israel to Sell Radar to India”, *Wall Street Journal*, September 5, 2003.

⁶³ Harsh V. Pant *India, “Israel Partnership: Convergence and Constraints”*, *opcit*

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

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- ⁶⁵ Green Pine" fire control radars is a transportable phased-array radar which forms a crucial component of the Arrow system and can detect and track incoming missiles from up to 500km away.
- ⁶⁶ Martin Sherman, "India and Israel Forge a Solid Strategic Alliance", *The Jerusalem Post* Feb 28, 2003. Available at: <http://www.jinsa.org/articles/articles.html/function/view/categoryid/1948/documentid/1950/history/3,2360,1947,1948,1950>
- ⁶⁷ Pant, "India, Israel Partnership: Convergence and Constraints", opcit
- ⁶⁸ ibid.
- ⁶⁹ "India to tie up with Israel, Us for E warfare system", *Indian Express*, September, 2, 2004.
- ⁷⁰ Martin Sherman, "From Conflict To Convergence: *India And Israel Forge a Solid Strategic Alliance*" *The Jerusalem Post* Feb 28, 2003
- ⁷¹ Martin Sherman, "From Conflict to Convergence: India and Israel forge a solid relations", *Jerusalem Post*, February 28th, 2003
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- ⁷³ Quoted by Martin Sherman, "From Conflict To Convergence: *India And Israel Forge a Solid Strategic Alliance*" *The Jerusalem Post* Feb 28, 2003
- ⁷⁴ ibid.
- ⁷⁵ Dr. Maqsood-ul-Hassan Nuri, Op.cit. p.30.
- ⁷⁶ Amber Jameel Kalyal, "Changing Nature Of Indo-Israeli Relations". Available at: http://www.issi.org.pk/journal/2000_files/no_4/article/1a.htm
- ⁷⁷ 'Israel Helping India for last 20 Years, says UK Media', *The Nation*, June 5, 1998
- ⁷⁸ *The Statesman*, August 20, 1998.
- ⁷⁹ *The Hindu*, May 14, 1998.
- ⁸⁰ India, Israel launch electronic Attack on Pak Nuke Facilities', *The Muslim*, January 25, 1999
- ⁸¹ ibid
- ⁸² *The Hindu*, June 13, 1998.
- ⁸³ "India, Israel to jointly develop anti-aircraft missiles". Available at: <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5ipS5NJRqWjWuD32XXZ3fnNEwG3oA>
- ⁸⁴ See: "India, Israel to jointly develop \$2.47b. Missile system", Available at: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/881657.html>

- ⁸⁵ *The Indian Express*, “India, Israel in \$1.5 bn defence deal”, March 04, 2008
Available on line: <http://www.expressindia.com/latest-news/India-Israel-in-1-5-bn-defence-deal-Media/280067/>
- ⁸⁶ Haroon Habib, “Defence Deal aims at Upsetting the Balance of power: Kasuri”, *The Hindu*, September 11, 2003
- ⁸⁷ “Unwritten, Abstract US-India-Israel Axis to Fight Terror”, *Indian Express*, September 11, 2003
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