Chapter-3

Indo-Israel Military Cooperation
**India and the Regional Military Pacts:**

Many military alliances under the umbrella of western powers were formed in the region. The Middle Eastern Defense Organization, MEDO, in 1952, the South East Asian Treaty Organization SEATO, the Central Treaty Organization CENTO, the Turko-Iraq Pact, and the Baghdad Pact in 1955 came into being. Nehru strongly opposed the MEDO. He also showed strong reaction to Baghdad Pact of 1955. India strongly opposed the creation of this military alliance on several grounds. First it aggravated political tension in the Arab World. Secondly it unwillingly encouraged and helped the very forces that it intended to restrain or suppress. In other words, it provoked the Soviet Union to enter the region in a big way with offers of massive arms and economic aid to anti-pact Arab states. But the reasons of the opposition to the pact from India was the inclusion of Pakistan in the pact. India considered Pakistan's inclusion in the pact as a serious threat to its (India's) security. Nehru argued that, 'the Baghdad Pact would affect India if not Today then Tomorrow or the day after'. India was strongly opposed to these alliances as they divided the Asian nations extending imperialist influence. In this regard Nehru commented, "I fail to understand what good these little pacts and alliances can do in war or peace. One thing they certainly do is to vitiate the atmosphere and to bring conflict and bitterness"
To Him, the creation of the regional military pacts were unfortunate and did not help the cause of peace and security. The purpose behind the creation of such pacts, as he saw it, was an attempt by the Western Powers to not only “keep out the Communist Countries” from the region but also to secure for themselves the economic resources of the region, especially oil.

As India was the advocate of ‘non-alignment’, so its reaction to these pacts or alliances was obvious. But it is the same India which is now very close to Israel—a controversial state in the region, as far as security or military cooperation is concerned. Though its relations with the Jewish State remained cool for several years, especially before 1990’s. But the changes in the international geo-strategic environment, Gulf War 1990-91, disintegration of Soviet Union—a traditional friend and partner of the India especially in the military fields, emergence of USA as a lone super power, moreover, an unimaginative Indian leadership throwing principled strands of foreign policy to wind and hiding itself behind the curtain of ‘pragmatism’, pushed India to move towards West particularly Israel and the USA. Israel has since then looming large on Indian scene and has then been selling arms under the pretext of helping India in combating terrorism. Here, some of our pro-Israeli friends call it a military cooperation and partnership.
Building up of close relations with USA and Israel means India’s drift not only from the Arab countries of the region but also from ‘non-alignment’ which is being adhered by India almost since her Independence.

Jawaharlal Nehru was the architect of the Indian foreign policy. Regarding the foreign policy he stated, “We, in India, have endeavoured to follow a foreign policy which we feel is not only in the interests of World peace but is particularly indicated for the countries of Asia. That policy is an independent one and on non-alignment with any power bloc”. Anti-colonialism, anti-racialism, Asianism and solidarity, self-determination and non-alignment were the corner stone of his foreign policy. India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, kept the relations on a low key in deference to the value he attached to India’s relation with the Arab countries. the Israeli authorities, nevertheless, tried from time to time to upgrade the relationship. All the successive governments in India were courteous to the visiting Israeli officials, without upgrading the level of diplomatic representation and sought Israeli help in military matters. Before the two countries established diplomatic relations, they cooperated clandestinely on military and intelligence matters. It was January 1963, a few months after the Indo-China conflict, that the government of India consulted the Israeli specialists in military
matters. It was then the Israeli chief of Army Staff and Chief of Military intelligence visited India for an exchange of views with some of the India’s military top brass, including the chief of the Army Staff\textsuperscript{6}. In the subsequent years, Israeli dignitaries visited India from time to time, for instance Yigal Alon, a member of the Israeli cabinet visited in 1965\textsuperscript{7} and Moshe Dayan in 1977\textsuperscript{8}.

Secrets arms deals have been negotiated also between India and Israel. It was an open secret that Rajeev Gandhi’s bodyguards used the legendary Israeli Uzi machine guns\textsuperscript{9}. Similarly, on two separate occasions, Israel sent emergency shipments of arms to India during the times of war. The first was during the Sino-India war of 1962 when Israel responded to Nehru’s urgent written communication and dispatched a shipload of automatic rifles, mortars, grenades and so on. Nine years latter, during the Bangladesh war, various weapons were imported from Israel\textsuperscript{10}. There was also prolonged cooperation between India’s Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and its Israeli counterpart, Mossad (the Israeli secret agency). Such cooperation existed even during the premierships of Indira Gandhi (1966-77) and (1980-84) and Rajeev Gandhi (1984-1989)\textsuperscript{11}. India’s secret contacts with Israel were also substantiated by other sources. According to a controversial book, ‘By Way Of Deception’, written by Victor Ostrovsky, a formal Israeli agent and a weapons testing expert,
recruited by Mossad, India sent a secret mission to Israel, comprising of top nuclear scientists in 1984. According to him, the Indian delegation came secretly to Israel to exchange information\textsuperscript{12}.

**Military cooperation between India and Israel Since 1992 to 1997:**

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992, there have been several visits related to the military field, contacts and consultations between Israel and India. While Israel was more eager to enter into a collaborative partnership with India in defense production and anti-terrorist measures, the Indian government was reluctant to respond. According to S. Krishna Kumar, minister of state for defense, "there was no proposal, no initiative and no offer for any kind of defense ties with that country- the subject had not been even formally discussed in the defense ministry"\textsuperscript{13}.

India’s traditional Arab policy had been mainly responsible for this, and was dictated by altogether different considerations. First, the Arab countries being the largest suppliers of oil to India and the sources of hard currency remittances from NRIS, India did not want to antagonize them by entering into diplomatic relations with a country hostile to them\textsuperscript{14}. Further Indian policy vis-à-vis West Asia was governed by a combination of many other variables such as, support for non-alignment, pan-Arabism, Secularism and broadly conceived south-south cooperation. Of these, the policy of non-
alignment brought India closer not only to several West Asian states like Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia, but also to the masses at large who were opposed to the policy of joining Pro-Western alliances pursued by some of the regional powers, since non-alignment was seen by them as a positive assertion of the ethos of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism. There were others who believed that India’s policy towards the Arabs and Palestinians was to appease the Muslim minority in India and also the Arab states. But they perhaps forgot that India’s unequivocal support to the Palestinian cause since the very beginning was not based on Islamic solidarity but on the broad principles of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, anti-Zionism, justice, non-alignment and third world solidarity.15

Defense minister Sharad Pawar visited Israel in February in 1992. He indicated that the formal establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Israel had paved the way for drawing upon Israel’s successful experience in curbing terrorism. And that India would like to benefit from the Israeli experience in Anti-terrorist operations.16 Firstly the Indian defense minister willfully ignored that Palestinian struggle for Liberation was not an act of terrorism. Secondly even if it was Israel till now had been an alter failure to curb it. Weapons certainly are no solution to suppress a struggling people. Israel should have realized that political process was the only solution for curbing
‘terrorism’. Krishna Kumar too said, ‘technically no country could be excluded in such matters and Israel had certain defense capabilities worth nothing’17. By mid-1992, India and Israel had made considerable progress on the possibilities of cooperation in key defense areas. A six member Israeli defense team came to India and had meetings with several defense ministry officials18. The team had come at the invitation of the ministry of defense. This visit within the five months of establishing of diplomatic relations between India and Israel was a significant indicator of the rapid progress in Indo-Israeli military relations. In an interview, Prime minister of Israel Yitzhak Rabin talked very positively of defense ties with India. “I believe if there is interest on the part of India, I believe there is room for it. We are more than ready to cooperate with India in the field of defense whenever and wherever it suits India”19. Regarding fundamentalism and terrorism, he said that Israel had been a victim of this for a long time and emphasized that the same had been the concern of India20. Raising the bogey of fundamentalism and terrorism has always served Israel’s clandestine purpose. This victimizer was calling herself victim and Indian leadership was ready to be duped. J.N.Dixit’s visit to Tel Aviv in the wake of Bombay blasts added to the speculation that cooperation in combating terrorism was a possible area of common interest21. In May 1993,
Israeli foreign Minister Shimon Peres visited India. He 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'.

Earlier Shimon Peres had emphasised Israel’s support to India on the Kashmir issue. In this context one must not forget the single contribution of the PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat bringing closer, through his untiring efforts both India and Pakistan which resulted in the signing of 'Shimla Agreement'. This agreement till now forms the basis of Indo-Pak negotiations. Arafat who called the iron lady of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi sister proved to be a harbinger of peace and goodwill in the region.

In contrast the Zionist leader Shimon Peres had different designs. He suggested the changing of the demographic character of the valley of Kashmir on the pattern of Palestine. This suggestion by Peres speaks volume of the Zionist mindset. Peres was trying to sow permanent seed of discord as he and his friends in Israel had done vis-à-vis the poor Palestinians. It was a colonial solution by a colonialist. Moreover Israeli supply of arms can be seen as catalyst of arms race in the region.
General Herlz Bodinger from Israel visited India in 1995. During his visit, India was offered a package deal, which included airborne warning and control systems, remotely piloted vehicles, access to an air platform for an anti-detection and anti-jamming maneuvers and specialized weapons. In July 1995, a high level Indian defense team led by defense secretary K. A. Nambiar went to Israel. The defense secretary's trip was necessitated by the urgency to identity the avionics and weapons systems for the Mig-21, which was being upgraded for India under an Indo-Russian Joint Venture. The talks on the upgradation of the Russian T-72 tank too were part of agenda at that time. India showed interest in remotely piloted vehicles too.

President Ezer Weizman visited India in January 1997. He underlined India as a potential partner in the area of aircraft industry. One of his aims was to push for an increase in 'defense cooperation' an euphemism for the selling arms to India under one pretext or another. During his visit the two countries decided to exchange military attaches. Following the visit, Senior Indian officials visited Israel and inspected defense systems. India's top defense ministry scientists too visited the state of Israel secretly and toured satellite and missile programmes.
Bhartiya Janta Party and Its Military Collaboration with Israel:

A few days after India tested its nuclear devices in May 1998, a top ranking delegation from the Israel Arms Industry (IAI) toured India. The purpose was to accelerate the sale of Israeli made pilot less aircraft and anti-ship missiles. India's defense secretary T.K. Banerjee led a high level military delegation to Israel in February 1997. Chief of the Army Staff General V.P. Malik toured Israel in 1998. According to India's military attaché, Col. Brown, it was a goodwill visit, 'we are looking forward to building a long lasting defense relationship'. The principal secretary to the prime minister, Brajesh Mishra met with Israeli Prime minister Ehud Barak. This meeting was regarded as part of the ongoing diplomatic dialogue. The dialogue between India and Israel touched on strategic, political and economic issues.

In 1998, the IAI finalized a large-scale deal with India to sell advanced electronic Equipment. The equipment was developed and manufactured in Israel and comprised no American technology. But the US was against the deal because of India's Nuclear Tests of May 1998 and demanded Israel for halting the deal. US pressure on Israel came after the India's nuclear tests which were carried by India in May 1998. US argued that the deal can violate an international arms control treaty. However, Israel did not agree and resisted the US
pressure to cancel the sale of Advanced Electronic Equipment. AEE to India. It is reported that Israel sold the advanced electronic warfare system to India despite the strong objections from the U.S.\textsuperscript{36}. The nuclear tests carried out by India under BJP rule in 1998 started arm race in the region. Pakistan became nuclear. This was a god send opportunity for the Israelis to take advantage of the situation. During the Kargil Incidents in Kashmir in 1999, Israel agreed to speedup shipments of arms and military equipment to India on the request of the Indian government to accelerate the arms orders, which had been submitted earlier. The Israeli defense establishments responded favorably\textsuperscript{37}. Kargil war of 1999 was a tremendous opportune moment for Israelis to market their military products when India was reeling under the sanctions.

To expand their cooperation in the area of defense, India and Israel, in September 1999 negotiated a fresh conventional arms deal estimated at about 150-200 million dollars a year\textsuperscript{38}. In April 2000, an Israeli company, Soltam Systems Ltd. won a crucial contract worth 47.5 million dollars to upgrade Indian artillery out competing its French, Swedish, Czech and South African Competitors\textsuperscript{38}.

The signing of a two billion dollar arms agreement between India and Israel in July 2001\textsuperscript{39} was considered an important step in the field of defense cooperation. Under the agreement Israel Aircraft
Industry could deliver to India aircraft, radar systems and surface-to-surface missiles via Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL). The IAI will also deliver surface to surface naval Barak missiles, worth 280 million dollars, pilot-less planes valued at 300 million dollars, and Green pine radar systems, estimated at 250 million dollars. In addition, the IAI will develop super Barak missile for India, which will have twice the capability of the original Barak surface-to-surface missiles. Potential deals withal included the upgrading of Russian built Indian warplanes-MIG-21s, MIG-29s and sukhois. As well as Mil-8s and Mil-17 helicopters and T-72 tanks.

It is noteworthy that Israel agreed to sell its arms to India despite American objections. The US tried to block Israeli-Indian military cooperation after India conducted five nuclear test explosions in May 1998. In the earlier part of 1999, Israel sold an advanced electronic warfare system to India over objections from the US. Israeli officials defended the sale by saying the Weapons system was defensive in nature and wholly developed in Israel with no US funding or technology. Although the Phalcon surveillance aircraft owes nothing to US technology. But combines Israeli technology with a Russian airframe, the US was opposed to the Phalcon deal between India and Israel arguing that some of the avionics were American made and hence could not be transferred to a third country.
especially one like India which was under the US sanctions. Israel was also forced to terminate a potential 1 billion dollar early warning phalcon deal with China in July 2000. The termination happened only after the intense pressure by US. Israel undermined the US pressure on Indo-Israeli phalcon deal. ‘Israel and India have good and developing defense ties. These have no connection to the existing dialogue between Israel and the US relating to technological issues’ were the words of deputy spokesperson of the Israeli defense ministry. ‘The dialogue between the US and Israel in aspects of technology is ongoing and no change has occurred in the situation relating to the Phalcon’ he pointed. Moreover up till now the military cooperation was unilaterally benefiting Israel at the cost of Indian taxpayer.

An important dimension of the growing Indo-Israel military relations has been in the field of establishing joint ventures to manufacture defense hardware in India, ranging from missiles to armoured vehicles and their selling to third world countries. According to Doran Suslik, director of corporate communication for IAI, the proposal could cover the transfer of sophisticated technology and production techniques developed by Israel’s state owned defense industries. ‘Israel’s policy is to involve clients in local defense production and manufacture of Israeli equipment in cooperation with
local defense industries through transfer of production, techniques and technologies to industrial counterparts in the client country were the words of Doran Suslik. The decision would depend on the volume of the bilateral trade and licensing production approvals given by both Indian and Israeli governments. Israel has already established similar relationship with defense industries and defense Organization in the Switzerland, Belgium and Finland. The issue of joint production was discussed when India’s defense secretary Yogendra Narian, accompanied by senior military and civil officials paid a four day visit to Israel in May 2001. According to an Israeli defense ministry official, Joint production of defense equipment is possible because of the quality of India’s high-tech manpower, its considerably lower production costs, high industrial capability and its solid and reliable experience. The official further argued, because of our close strategic understanding, a formal agreement or a memorandum of understanding is unnecessary and actual co-production can be decided between India and Israeli military industries on an item-by-item basis.

Among the Israeli hardware that can be jointly produced with India are the Popeye missile and all-terrain Merkava tank. Neither has been discussed but we are certainly open to Indian proposals, the Israeli official said. Earlier, in 1998, India and Israel were
negotiating on potential joint production in India of Israeli unmanned aerial vehicles and fast patrol boat projects. Israel’s interest, however, of selling its Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to India could be traced as far as back as 1992 when in the middle of that year, soon after the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Israel, the former was offered the UAV by Israel when a team of Israeli experts from Malat, a subsidiary of the State-owned IAI visited New Delhi.

Yogendra Narian’s visit to Israel in 2001, of course, reciprocated a trip to India earlier in 2001 by a high level Israeli military team led by General Yaron to examine India’s defense production capabilities. Narian’s visit also came close on the heels of a trip by Indian Navy Chief Admiral Sushil Kumar to Israel earlier in the same month, reflecting the rapidly growing defense ties between the two countries. Israel, besides selling arms to India, at the same time, has also expressed its desire to buy arms from India. Israel is eager to buy the pilot less target aircraft Lakshya from India.

Israel’s defense source said ‘while we are intending to sell one weapon to India, we want to buy another from them’. It is a matter of interest how far India has been successful in selling some of its indigenous military products to Israel-data so far are missing or there is nothing to mention what. Stating that there are several other
defense equipment that Israel wanted to acquire from India, the sources said, the issue had come up in various meetings between officials of the two countries and ‘negotiations are going on’.

India is currently Israel’s second largest market, after China, for military hardware. India is one of the 39 countries with which Israel has signed ‘secret cooperative agreements’ to prevent information leaks from Joint security projects\(^5\). As per the agreement, in the event of an information leak or transfer of sensitive information to a third party by a spy, both countries must work together to investigate the matter. It is indicative of the rapidly growing defense ties between India and Israel that since of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992 until the middle of the 2000, there had been more than fifty military related visits, contacts and consultations between the two countries\(^6\).

**L.K. Advani and Jaswant Singh's Visits to Israel:**

The visits in the middle of 2000 by the Indian Home minister, L.K. Advani and the foreign minister, Jaswant Singh to Israel have given fresh impetus to bilateral ties between India and Israel. Before their visits to the Jewish state India organized its first-ever trade fair in Israel in May 2000 and following its success, India and Israel have agreed to increase cooperation in high-tech sector, especially in software, telecommunications and information technology sectors.
L.K. Advani visited Israel in the middle of June 2000. He was the first senior Indian Minister to visit Israel since the establishment of the diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1992. Besides, Israel Advani's foreign tour included France and U.K and he was accompanied by a galaxy of security officials including Union home secretary Kamal Pande, intelligence Bureau chief Shyamal Dutta, Director General of BSF-E.N.Rammohan and CBI head B.K.Raghavan. The main agenda of the team was to get the counter-insurgency tactics of Mossad and the study of the security systems of France and the U.K. In fact, the issue of counter terrorism has been widely considered as an area in which both India and Israel used to have identical concern. Israelis are generally understood to have extensive experience and expertise in counter terrorism. India's defense minister Sharad Pawar when visited Israel on 23 February 1992 said, 'the new Indian move had paved the way for drawing on Israel's successful experience to curb terrorism'. This statement on the part of Sharad Pawar must, at best, be construed as his personal viewpoint and many in India disagreed with it. Pawar conveniently forgot that Israel was not curbing terrorism but a people's movement, which over the years had become militant on account of brutal suppression of the genuine demands of Palestinians. He also said that such an exchange would be of mutual advantage to the two states,
adding that India would also like to get acquainted with Israeli experience in developing technology for anti-terrorist operations\textsuperscript{58}. Pawar in his capacity as defense minister miserably failed to see that military technology has no answer to insurgency. Israel up till now has failed in this regard. During his visit to Israel, India’s Home minister L.K. Advani discussed with top Israeli police brass various techniques employed by them to curb terrorism. He also had, after visiting the Israeli side of the border with Lebanon, first-hand knowledge of Israel’s border management techniques and said that it would help India in effectively managing the Indo-Pak border to tackle ‘cross border terrorism’. Obviously home minister’s visit to Israel had attracted attention because of the apparent consultations on terrorism and sharing of intelligence. Israel is well known for its exceptionally professional intelligence apparatus. Leading defense expert Jasjit Singh observed that, \textit{“Israel is a great deal’ for India to learn from the principles and practices followed by Israel but he further said that,’ we need to constantly bear in mind the structural and situational differences between the two countries”\textsuperscript{59}}. Advani’s visit was followed by external affairs minister Jaswant Singh’s visit to Israel in June 2000. Jaswant became the first external affairs minister who visited Israel after both the countries established the diplomatic relations in 1992, Signalled another step, which would
further strengthen ties between the two countries. In his dialogue with the Israeli leadership Singh was able to score an assurance that Tel Aviv would keep New Delhi's security concerned in mind while selling arms to Beijing and would not encourage any deal that jeopardize Indo-Israel relations. On account of India's obsession with Pakistan in recent years the one factor that has been ignored is Israel's arms sales to China. China is a major concern for India in terms of defense and security and Israel's supply of arms to it should be seen in this context. As part of newfound bonhomie, the two countries agreed on a structured dialogue to broaden and strengthen relations in the political, economic, and security spheres. They decided to set up a Joint ministerial commission to have regular dialogue on security and counter-terrorism and on substantial cooperation on information technology. The ministerial commission will meet twice a year, alternately in the two capitals, to give India and Israel an opportunity to discuss all political issues at the bilateral, regional, and global levels.

Emphasizing the importance of fighting terrorism, Singh even told David Levy, the Israeli foreign minister, about the need to set up a global mechanism against terrorism, and asked that there should be intelligence cooperation in between the governments of Israel and India. He suggested that the two countries should take the lead in
the fight against terrorism, saying that the two countries had much combined experience in this regard. Besides strengthening bilateral cooperation in various fields and bringing the two countries closer, Singh’s visit to Israel could be considered as significant in the political field. Israel officially acknowledged that the Singh’s visit had broken ‘a psychological barrier that had created a political gap in ties’ between India and Israel. Israel has stressed that despite establishment of full-fledged diplomatic relationship between the two countries and bilateral cooperation in various fields, a political gap had existed before Singh’s visit and the ‘gap’ has been bridged because of the Indian external affairs minister’s visit to Israel in June 2000. Aircraft, surveillance equipments, main battle tanks, missiles and the navy are the military fields in which both the countries have shown deep interest for cooperation. Indeed, India opened itself to Israeli military hardware benefiting Israeli arm sellers and triggering arms race in the region.

India has a complex history of military collaboration with a number of countries. Scrutiny of its defense collaboration initiatives with US, Russia, France and Israel is of high significance. For over a decade successive Israeli governments were trying to initiate and develop deeper and wide ranging cooperation and collaboration with India in economic and defense fields to serve their geo-economic and
geo-political interests. From the Indian side, L.K. Advani has always been a strong advocate of such relations with Israel; for, in any event Advani’s own political party and the other like minded radical Hindu parties saw in Israel a valuable strategic partner on the grounds of mutually common anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistan agenda. L.K. Advani and his BJP is fully in command of Indian decision-making process for the first time after independence, ‘the Vajpayee government has shifted its foreign policy focus from Arab nations to the Zionist State-Israel”

The recent major shift in India’s foreign policy and diplomacy relating to Israel, from a ‘quiet’ recognition to a very active collaboration, has received much media coverage both in India and Muslim countries. India and Israel are so far concentrating on interaction and cooperation in two fields; one, according to Kesava Menon, intelligence cooperation to help each other against the Muslims of various regions who according to the perceptions of these countries, are source of threat to their national security and second cooperation in the conventional and high tech military fields. Kesava Menon has further elaborated that Israelis perceive Muslim terrorist threat coming mainly from Syria and Iran, Whereas India obviously sees that threat coming from Pakistan, Afghanistan and its
connections in the Arab countries. However, what is important to note in this context is:

"the details of Advani's meetings with Israeli rulers, particularly the heads of the Israeli home ministry and its intelligence agencies Mossad and Sabak, reveal that the arrangements he had made for the Joint Indo-Israel espionage operations in key areas of the Muslim world make the Indian embassies in these Muslim countries the eyes and ears of the world wide cloak and dagger Israeli Spy network."

As for Israeli military assistance to India, Israeli equipment is certainly sold at an exorbitant price in comparison to similar equipments provided by US, France, UK. However, what is important is the fact, as asserted by Kesava Menon, that, 'Israel is also not likely to cut supplies on the grounds of secondary considerations on the political or human rights front'. Israelis are hardly concerned about the purpose of the use of arms purchased by them. as long as they go on pocketing profits and fomenting troubles in the region.

It is obvious that both India under BJP and Israel would try their utmost to carry through these new found deals, because they have some objectives which include induction of the controlled military high-tech of US/ Western origin through Israel and utilizing
the Israeli intelligence expertise in eliminating not only ongoing insurgencies in Muslim majority areas but other areas in India. On the Israeli side, their objective is the narrow self interest which include finding new avenues through India for their arms/intelligence expertise/commercial sales in the Asian and other third world regions, so as to rid Israel of its dependence on US and Europe, and utilizing Indian embassies, media leverage and lobbies etc in the Arab world and other Muslim countries for expanding the Mossad and Sabak network. A very dangerous game these two have started in the region.

After the nuclear explosion by India in May 1998 both India and Israel have come in for criticism and have been accused of cooperation in the nuclear field. A number of attempts were made to link Indian actions to Israel. New Delhi reported that Pakistan's foreign minister Gohar Ayub Khan claimed that for the nuclear tests Israel supplied the devices to India. Further the Centre reported that Pakistan government claimed that the Israeli F-16s were preparing to attack Pakistani nuclear facilities. The Arab league also showed anger to India and accused Israeli's military and nuclear cooperation with India and warned against its consequences to the Arab and Islamic world. The league's deputy secretary General Mohmmad Zakria Ismail said that the league had information to prove the
alleged nuclear cooperation. New Delhi claimed that Pakistan is spreading false information regarding Indo-Israeli nuclear cooperation. She further claimed that Pakistan is seeking to delegitimise and isolate India in the Arab world and looking for Iran and Arab for support after facing sanctions after its own nuclear tests.

Israel kept a low profile with respect to these events and showed no interest to involve her in India/Pakistan/China triangle. The Israeli deputy minister of defense declared in the Knesset that ‘Israel has nothing to do with the tension on the Indian subcontinent. Israel does not regard either India or Pakistan as an enemy and all the reports to the contrary have been false’. After fomenting problem Israel was conveniently lying low and denying the reports vehemently.

Indian diplomats have denied allegations that Israel assisted India in the May 1998 tests and claimed that the speculation of Indo-Israel cooperation in the nuclear field is baseless. Indian ambassador to Israel Ranjin Mathai denied any cooperation with Israel in the nuclear field. External affairs ministry spokesperson stated that ‘India had nothing to do with its nuclear program’. Alon Ben David, Israeli army affairs correspondent said, ‘It is important to stress that the defense ties between India and Israel did not deal with
nuclear issues, only conventional arms export\textsuperscript{76}. So far as Israel's response to India's nuclear tests was concerned, Israel's foreign ministry did not condemn India's nuclear tests\textsuperscript{77}. There is however, a section in Israel, which brought forth the view that India's nuclear tests could indirectly pose a threat to Israel. Some of them also believe that these tests provide momentum to the Pakistani nuclear program and gave it more legitimacy and Pakistan's nuclear program was supposed to be the source of the so called Islamic bomb\textsuperscript{78}. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's spokesman said that, 'we worried that Pakistani tests will give boost to Tehran and the Baghdad to acquire nuclear weapons'\textsuperscript{79}.

\textit{Indo-Israeli military cooperation did not fade in the wake of nuclear tests by India. Israel was providing India with intelligence on Pakistan from its spy satellite and India gave permission for Israeli military intelligence experts to undertake missions on Indian Territory to monitor points of interest\textsuperscript{80}. The deal on the AEE too was made even after the nuclear tests carried by India in May-1998.}

\textit{Israel is heavily dependent on the US for military as well as political and economic support. Much of Israeli defense equipment has US components. For export of these items, Israel has to seek the consent of the US. In 1991, Israel was brought under the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and this seriously limited its}
ability to export sensitive technologies to India. For instance, the Arrow anti-missile project, developed by Israel and funded by the US, comes under the technology rights agreements between the US and Israel. US blocked the sale of many military types of equipment from Israel to India. Because of the poor relations of US with India. After the nuclear tests in 1998, the US imposed sanctions on India. But these sanctions could not stop the growing Indo-Israeli relations. Indian national security advisor Brajesh Mishra visited Israel in September 1999, gave a major boost to Indo-Israeli relations. Professor Sherman a strategic analyst and professor of international relations at Tel Aviv university during his visit to New Delhi in June 1999 remarked, "India can take maximum benefits from Israel's advanced technology in modern warfare. India and Israel seem to be compatible in numerous fields and all it requires is systematic efforts and identification of fields of common interest among both sides to provide greater mutual understanding". On security threats faced by both India and Israel his words were, 'India and Israel can become each other's strategic partner in a joint collaboration to counter the threats of terrorism'. Professor Sherman was clutching India with Israel since according to him both were facing security threats. How could Professor Sherman ignore the naked reality that Israel was offensively setting on the large chunk of Palestine territory
and talked of security for itself? As for Indian security her situation is entirely different from Israel.

According to professor Shermon, “Israel has a long experience of war which can be of help to India. It can take maximum benefit from Israel’s advanced technology in modern warfare. Its avionics and radar surveillance systems can be extremely helpful for India in patrolling its border areas”. Nevertheless Israel cooperated with Indian military establishment to design advanced aerial vehicles for surveillance, fast attack patrol boats and automated maneuvering combat instrumentation, an excellent training device for combat pilots. Israel also worked jointly with India to upgrade its Mig-21s and to equip them with Israeli electronic avionics. It is high time that Israel must also have some experience of peace making.

The potential of Indo-Israeli cooperation has assumed significances after the kargil crisis with avenues of cooperation in security, defense and technology sectors opening up. During the kargil conflict, Israel was one of the countries to extend a lot of backstage help to India on various aspects from information sharing to strategic consultations. During the kargil war, Israel responded magnificently, despite pressures from various quarters not to supply UAVs for high altitude surveillance, laser-guided system and many other items were supplied within twenty-four hours. Israel has also
emerged as India’s second largest defense supplier after Russia. It is expected that Israel may emerge as India’s number one defense supplier. A high level delegation of Israeli anti-terrorism experts traveled to India in September 2001. The delegation was led by officials from the counter-terrorism bureau of the prime minister’s office, included representatives of the Israeli police and military intelligence. The team also visited the Jammu and Kashmir state to assess the India’s security needs in Kashmir. Israel is also to train four battalions of nearly three thousand Indian soldiers for specialized anti-insurgency strikes, adding to their training in desert, mountain, jungle and counter-hijacking and hostage crisis situations. New Delhi’s turn to Jerusalem for combat soldier expertise is due, in part, to disappointing results in border clashes with Pakistani forces and to the December 13, 2001 suicide attack on Indian parliament house. Among the many tasks expected of them, the newly trained Indian troops are expected to stop infiltration from across the border into India via the contested Kashmir region. Bilateral defense relations had also been kept under wraps to prevent them from affecting India’s ties with the Arab states, including Palestine, on whom it is largely dependent for its energy needs. But the kargil conflict changed all that, for at that point Israel dug deep into its military equipment reserves to supply ordnance and unmanned aerial vehicles in order to
give the ill-prepared and ill equipped Indian army the edge over Pakistan in the 11-week long war of 1999. It is high time India should start political process since Israel is a major beneficiary on account of the disturbed conditions in the region.

The director general of Israeli defense military, Major general (retd.) Amos Yaron, made an unscheduled stopover in Delhi, while ostensibly on a trip to Bangkok in 2001, to meet Yogendra Narian, the then defense security, to establish a Joint Working Group for defense. Headed by the respective defense secretaries the Joint Working Group, which meets every year alternately in New Delhi and Tel Aviv, has prepared a road map to cement the military ties, deal with defense purchases and joint ventures and to coordinate intelligence and related security matters.

The Indian government is seeking enhanced Israeli cooperation to counter all potential threats including nuclear, from Pakistan and deals are already underway to acquire sophisticated weapons worth billions of dollars with a possibility of New Delhi buying Submarines capable of carrying nuclear warheads from Tel Aviv. In the last decade the two countries have built extensive military collaboration, involving arms sale, equipment upgrades, and the transfer of technology and joint weapons development programmes. The latest multi billion dollar defense agreements are seen as another watershed
in the Indo-Israel strategic partnership. Under these agreements the Israeli aircraft industry will supply India and latter build Jointly the Barak naval surface-to-surface missiles and a plan to develop the super Barak missile at a cost of approximately $250 million. Further shipments from Israel to India include Unmanned Aerial Vehicles worth approximately $300 million and the green pine radar system, which is an integral part of the Arrow anti-ballistic missile system worth $250 million. Military intelligence reports suggest Israel has also been given a contract to fence off areas in the volatile Kashmir region and is the probably only foreign state, which has access to sensitive installations in the border region. The two countries at several occasions were ready for joint military exercise in the region, if this were happen, it could have a significant impact on the security of the most volatile regions in the world i.e. South Asia and the Middle East. Israeli experts are training their Indian counterparts in checking infiltration along the borders, detecting explosives, defusing bombs and the use of many other devices and tactics developed by Israel.

\[ \text{Israel} \]

Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres visited India in January 2002. His visit was a clear indication of the Israeli desire to upgrade relations between the two countries. In his discussions with the Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, External Affairs Minister,
Jaswant Singh, Home Minister-L.K. Advani and Defense Minister George Fernandes, where 'terrorism' featured prominently. He offered India 'every possible help in every possible way' as India seeks to defend itself against external terrorism. According to Peres, India can benefit immensely in the area of defense as Israel has a highly military industry. At a press conference, he said that his country would be by India's side in the fight against terrorists in every possible way. Peres, like many of his ilk visiting India before him raised the bogey of 'terrorism' and under the pretext prepared ground for massive arms sales to India by Israel.

Counter insurgency and border management have been the areas where cooperation between the two countries was thought to be necessary. India finds it useful to learn from Israel's experience not only in counter insurgency but also night warfare and air surveillance. The background to all this has been provided by a growing understanding of the challenges facing both countries. In this direction there has been India-Israel strategic dialogue in September 2001, which discussed matters like the threat to both countries from terrorism, developments in south and west Asia and the future direction of their cooperation. While New Delhi and Tel Aviv have taken steps to further economic and cultural cooperation, defense and security have emerged as areas of primary importance. This became
clear in November 2001 when a seven member Israeli military delegation visited India under the leadership of Amos Yaron, director general of Israel’s defense ministry and met top Indian officials, including the defense secretary and discussed the matters related to security and closer military cooperation. Of immediate relevance, the post September 11, 2001 situation has resulted in increasing strategic cooperation between the two countries, defense and related interaction intensifying manifold from even the high levels reached in the post-Kargil days, ‘We continue to cooperate, collaborate and enhance the relations that already exist’, remarked Amos Yaron, director general in Israel’s defense ministry. How far this cooperation has resulted in benefiting India is yet to be seen. As for Israel any body can say that it has not been able to curb Palestinian militancy inspite of its sophisticated arms and ammunitions, used against them.

The quietly growing strategic cooperation between India and Israel is the result of shared perceptions and short sightedness of the two governments. Increasing convergence of Indo-Israeli strategic interests is leading to a wide-ranging partnership between New Delhi and Tel Aviv with intelligence sharing, counter insurgency operations and border management forming the core of this emerging relationship. Israel has rapidly emerged as India’s second largest
defense partner after Russia. While Russia provides the platforms to India tanks, aircraft and ships. Israel supplies the systems that go with them, including radar, electronic control measures and weapons. Israel defense projects with India have included avionics upgrades for Indian-built MiGs, unmanned aerial vehicles for reconnaissance and the transfer of the green pine fire control radar system\(^{92}\). The burgeoning military ties have been underlined by the flurry of visits to Israel by Indian top ministry and defense brass, including the chief of the naval staff, the army vice-chief and the secretary, defense production, in the last two decades. The two countries have also been collaborating on missile technology. India’s top missile scientist, now the president of the country, APJ Abdul Kalam also visited Israel twice before the 1998 nuclear tests carried by India in the same year\(^{93}\).

There are constant Indo-Israeli contacts on various levels, especially in the realm of cooperation in counter terrorism measures and purchase of Israeli arms. The second meeting of the Indo-Israel Joint Working Group on counter terrorism was held in New Delhi on 27-28 May 2002. The Israeli delegation was led by Zvi Gabay, deputy director general in the Israel ministry of foreign affairs and major general Uzi Dayan, the national-security advisor of Israel. The Indian delegation was led by Shri R.M.Abhyankar, special secretary (East) in the ministry of external affairs. This dialogue was held in the context
of India’s cooperation with the international community to counter the scourge of terrorism and to address this problem in light of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373. Israeli intelligence agencies have been intensifying their relations with India’s security apparatus and are involved militarily within the province of Kashmir.

After the September 11, 2001 attacks on New York and the pentagon, the United States lifted all the sanctions, which were imposed on India after its 1998 nuclear tests. This trend reached new heights when US has given the go-head to Israel for the sale of the Phalcon airborne radar system worth one billion dollars to India. While Israel sees India as a comrade in the fight against ‘Islamic militants’, the US has a somewhat broader agenda to pursue with New Delhi, particularly India as a counter-balance to China, which US hawks see as Washington’s strategic competitor in Asia. ‘India is the most overlooked of our potential allies in a strategy to contain china’ were the words of Lloyed Richardson of the Hudson Institute, a think tank very close to the administration.

Washington put on hold the Phalcon deal last year (2002) when Pakistan and India were mobilizing their forces along their common border. Tensions between the two countries have since eased considerably and there was hope that a new peace initiative by Indian
Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee may yield progress. But the fact that the deal was approved before any indication of serious forward movement in the bilateral talks suggests that more hawkish forces within the administration are winning the argument over the value of tilting evermore sharply in India’s direction. India is the biggest customer for Israel’s sophisticated military industry, which last year (2002) ranked 5th in the world among all arms exporters, after the US, the European Union, Russia and Japan. The Phalcon and Arrow deals are likely to propel Israel even higher in the ranking over the next few years, arms experts argued. Almost one half of Israel’s total military sales last year (2002) of $4.2 billion went to India. Before the Phalcon deal came up for consideration, Israel sold Green pine early warning stations to India for $400 million (US) and Barak missiles for $300 million (US). Israel is also refurbishing India’s fleet of MiG 21s, MiG 29s and T-72 tanks. Non state Israeli companies are also involved. Soltam has refitted Russian 133mm canon into 155mm howitzers, as well as bidding for a half billion dollars tender to fit the canons on trucks. Rafael, the state owned corporation for weapons development is hoping to provide Gil anti-tank missile systems. Meanwhile, the Indian air force is interested in Elisra Electronic Warfare systems.
Ariel Sharon’s Visit to India:

Indo-Israel defense relations were more strengthened when Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, the main culprit behind the innocent killings of Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon in 1982, visited India in September 2003. He was accompanied with a 150 member delegation of officials and business people, including chiefs of major arms firms. ‘We are very much interested in developing and strengthening relations with India’ were the words of Israeli prime minister to the media reporters at Rashtrapati Bhawan. ‘It is a historic visit and I am confident it will bring the two countries closer’ were the words of Indian prime minister-Atal Behari Vajpayee. A senior official in Sharon’s delegation, had the audacity to declare, ‘events like September 11, 2001 and the global campaign against world terrorism have created an opportunity to create a stronger ties between India, Israel and the US and also joining hands to combat terrorism in Asia, where we see a large rise in terror activity, particularly of the radical Islamic brand’. Nothing better could be expected from Sharon, a celebrated terrorist himself. He talking of combating terrorism was like a devil quoting scriptures. Again the BJP leadership was fooled when trade balance tilted heavily in favour of Israel.
During his visit to India Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon cleared the sale of the Phalcon Early Warning Radar System to India. The world’s most advanced AEWCC (airborne early warning command and control) system, the Phalcon, mounted on the Russian IL-76 air craft, costs $1 billion and will enable India to have mastery of the subcontinent’s skies. US have already given green signal to Israel for the sale of the Phalcon to India. ‘There is no major obstacle to the Phalcon deal as the US has given its approval’ argued the Israeli deputy prime minister Yosef Lapid when he was on a visit to India with Ariel Sharon, Israeli prime minister in September 2003. The Indian security and intelligence agencies with Shin Bet and Mossad personnel accompanied their prime minister did not show any negligence in the protection of Ariel Sharon when he was in India in September 2003. They also restricted his public exposure because of his threat perception. ‘It is much higher than even Clinton’s, when he visited India’ were the words of a top security official. India’s recent defense ties with Israel which has given the cutting edge to India has seriously affected Pakistani missile capability as affirmed by Kamal Matanudin the retired general. Officially Pakistan went with deep concerns regarding the India’s latest defense purchase from Israel. Major general Amos Yaron, the director general of Israel’s ministry of defense accompanied by Colonel Yoash Rubin regional
director of SIBAT, the Israeli defense export organization met the chief of Air staff, Deputy Air chief, Air Marshal Raghu Rajan, Dr.V.K.Aatre, Chief of the Defense Research and Development Organization, DRDO, during his visit to India in September 2003. DRDO is the agency with which Israel will have to work with for its major defense deals with India. The Phalcon radars, Arrow missile, Barak antimissile system were the latest defense deals of India with Israel. The Israeli announcement about the imminence of the Phalcon deal and their reference to the Arrow offer apart, the Indian navy and air force have indicated a marked preference for Israeli electronic warfare systems and surveillance radars. There is considerable interest in growing defense supply relationship between the two countries.

For upgrades of IAF and naval aircraft Israel appears to be the preferred destination. Besides the MiG-27 upgrade, India is looking towards Elta of Israel for the avionics renewal of the Russian made Kamov-25 and 28 anti-submarine helicopters. The navy is already using Elta radars for its Dornier fleet, which uses ELISRA electronic warfare systems. Rafael is also interesting to offer air to ground and air-to-air missiles to IAF. With these deals Israel is emerging as the main defense supplier to India. After getting an assurance from India that it will not leak sensitive defense technology to a third
country particularly Iran, Tel Aviv has offered New Delhi partnership in the development of a state-of-the-art attack submarine. A significant new proposal made by Israel during Sharon’s visit to India in September 2003 was the co-production of submarines. The two sides discussed the likelihood of partnership in producing a conventionally powered submarine. The other joint venture the two sides are pursuing is the co-production of unmanned aerial vehicles. Since 2001, India has purchased eight Searcher and four Heron UAVs from Israel for the navy while another squadron has been purchased for the IAF.

Ariel Sharon during his visit to India had the meetings with Indian Prime Minister, deputy prime minister, president, defense minister, external affairs minister, finance minister and other Indian officials to discuss the bilateral relations. Military cooperation between the two states and the measures for tackling the terrorism were the main issues discussed by Ariel Sharon with his counter part and other Indian officials during his visit to India.

A decade after New Delhi and Tel Aviv formally established diplomatic relations, the two countries set up a Joint defense cooperation group around end-2001. Ostensibly, this was to help India plug key gaps in its military capability and to improve its internal
security environment, but in reality it was intended to boost flagging Israeli military sales in an internationally depressed market.

Besides, the Hindu Nationalist BJP, which leads a coalition government at the centre, also considers Israel its ‘natural ally’ and strategic partner, ‘wholly dependable’ in times of conflict. ‘Russia delivers the hardware—tanks, aircraft and ships—and Israel provides the smaller weapon systems, the radar, the electronic control systems and other high-tech addons’ were the words of an Indian military official.\(^\text{108}\)

Many delegations from India and Israel visited each other’s country to boost the Indo-Israeli military relations. The recent delegation headed by The Israeli premier Ariel Sharon visited India in September 2003 also concluded some agreements in the military field. Ariel Sharon was the first Prime minister of Israel who tripped India in September 2003. Regarding his trip many raised some questions as to whom the trip was productive. It was more beneficial to the Israeli arms dealers who visited India with Sharon. Currently half of the Israel’s total military sales of $4.2 billion are purchased by India. Before Ariel Sharon’s arrival to India the Indian cabinet committee on security had approved a huge sum of $97 million worth Israel’s electronic warfare systems for ships.\(^\text{109}\)
The Indian budget, therefore, subsidizes the Israeli arms infrastructure and in effect the atrocities of the Israeli defense force. Even two generally conservative Indian analysts concur that the Indian military does not gain immensely from the arms deal. Uday Bhaskar of the Institute for Defense studies and Analysis, New Delhi noted regarding the arms deals as, 'Israel is not doing us any favors. They drive a hard bargain'. Brahma Chellaney of the centre for policy research, New Delhi, stated regarding the relationship as, 'It's a patron-client relationship rather than a relationship of equals'.

The context for this visit is very significant. For one, both countries are now ruled by coalition governments dominated by the hard right, the BJP in one and Likud in the other, while behind the curtain US state policy has been hijacked by a core of neo-conservatives who are far more reactionary than any previous ruling clique in Washington.

Second, the general tenor of the Global War on Terror has shifted conflict resolution from rational discussion into the use of force. The US invasion of Afghanistan, the occupation of Iraq, the renewal of plan Colombia, the insertion of troops into the Philippines, and the aggression on the Korean peninsula create a climate of legitimacy for Sharon's incursions into the Palestinian Authority territory or for Advani's dream of 'hot pursuit' into Pakistan.
Thirdly, the visit had perhaps more to do with the US’s Global War on Terror, GWOT, and of the Pentagon’s plans for the world than it did with the lives of ordinary Indians or Israelis. Prime Minister Vajpayee did not announce it in Parliament, nor did Ariel Sharon do so in the Knesset. Brajesh Mishra announced the visit in Washington, at a ‘tribute to US allies’, where he hoped for the creation of some kind of core alliance or triad. Sharon had intended to spend the second anniversary of 9/11 in Delhi, a day that now signals not only the suicide attacks, but also importantly fealty to the Bush-Pentagon interests and the manipulation of every conflict into an anti-Muslim campaign. The US continues to occupy Iraq, to label any act of resistance as terrorist and to finagle states such as India to send in troops to offer target practice for an enraged citizenry. US, state department spokesman, Richard Boucher stated regarding the visit of Ariel Sharon to India as, ‘we are always glad when our friends make friends with each other and work together’. Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Yosef Lapid stated the Indian Council of World Affairs during the visit as, ‘There is a mutual interest between the three countries in making the world a more secure place for all of us. There is American support for development of this unwritten axis’. While there is no ‘formal triangular agreement’, an axis had emerged ‘in an abstract sense and even the US department of state has been hoping
that Indo-Israeli relations flourish. The BJP led government in India and the Likud-led governments preen and look forward not only to more mutual participation, but also to the growth of a formal US-Israel- India entente against terror.

Sharon, Advani and Bush, the three faces of the new alliance, are eager to profit by the tragedy of the various suicide attacks, to bolster the global right and to ensure that their model of security by the fist becomes the common sense of the planet. These are the ‘Strategic delusions’.

The official visit of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon underlines the shift in India’s West Asia policy, which is bound to erode further the country’s standing in the Arab World. It was the Indian security advisor Mr. Brajesh Mishra who talked much about the bogey of terrorism and US-Israel -India triad to combat this bogey during a visit to Washington in 2003. External affairs minister Jaswant Singh and Home Minister L.K.Advani also had articulated the views similar to those of Mishra during their visits to Israel. Jaswant Singh went to the extent of saying that it was ‘vote bank policies’ which prevented the two countries from becoming natural allies.

Jaswant Singh has probably forgotten that India’s relations with the Arab World was neither a policy of vote bank nor to appease the
Arab countries and the Muslim minority in India but a policy which was based on the broad principles of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, non-alignment, anti-Zionism and justice.

The international community has been closely observing the growing defense and strategic cooperation between India and Israel, especially since the BJP-led government assumed office. In the last 4-5 years, Israel has emerged as the second biggest supplier of arms to India. It is doing more than a billion dollars of business annually. Indian officials say that they are particularly obliged to Tel Aviv for rushing in urgently needed military equipment during the Kargil conflict. They claim that Israel is a reliable supplier though the prices it charges are exorbitant, even by the standards of the international arms bazaar. Israel has in the last couple of years provided the Indian armed forces with sophisticated radar and border monitoring systems.

The opposition parties have protested strongly against the Indian government’s decision to invite Sharon. In a joint statement the leaders of the Communist party of India(Marxist), the Communist party of India, the Rashtriya Janta Dal, The Janta Dal(secular), the Samajwadi party and others described the invitation of the Vajpayee government to Sharon as ‘a most unfortunate decision’. The statement also remarked that to have such a person as an honoured guest is an
insult to India’s longstanding tradition of unequivocal support to the struggle of the Palestinian people for national liberation and an independent state. Others remarked the India–Israel alliance as against the national interest\textsuperscript{118}.

\textbf{Arab Response Towards Indo-Israel Military Cooperation:}

The growing strategic ties between India and Israel and their cooperation in the nuclear field have created serious concerns in the Arab World with the Indo-Israeli strategic collaboration gaining momentum in recent years; Arab leaders are becoming more vocal and critical of it\textsuperscript{119}. However the Arabs are positive towards the Indo-Israeli economic cooperation. On August 24, 1999 the Arab League for the first time has alleged that both India and Israel have ‘military and nuclear cooperation’ and warned against the consequences for the Arab world. Suspicions, about the ties were further reinforced after India’s Pokhran –II nuclear tests in May 1998. It was propagated that India and Israel clandestinely worked to develop India’s nuclear weaponry. The deputy secretary general of the Arab League, Mohammad Zakaria Ismail went to the extent of alleging that the ‘Organization has evidence to prove it’. Arab diplomats further alleged that Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam, the chief of the Defense Research and Development Organization visited Israel thrice in 1996-97. Indian officials, however, maintained that Dr.Kalam visited Israel only once
and rejected the allegation as 'baseless' and contradicted the Pakistani charges that India has acquired nuclear technology from Israel with the intention to destroy Pakistan's nuclear capabilities. Arab countries are worried about the growing defense cooperation between India and Israel and some Arab diplomats felt that Israel was trying to make an all-out bid to get lucrative defense projects by playing on India's security concerns and threat perceptions. The Arab countries feel that the defense ties between India and Israel would have an adverse impact on the region and jeopardize peace and security.

During his visit to Israel in May 2000, Indian home minister L.K. Advani assessed the prospects of Indo-Israeli nuclear cooperation positively: 'I support the expanded cooperation between India and Israel in all field including nuclear field'. This further increased Arab apprehensions. There were strong protests from the Arab Capitals against Advani's comment. The pro-Arab lobby in Delhi became active and demanded an explanation from the government. Some reports revealed that an Arab ambassador in Delhi went to the extent of openly warning India of the 'unpleasant consequences' of its new friendship with Israel.

An Arab diplomat viewed that the Sharon visit could have an adverse impact on Indian diplomacy in the Arab world. 'This visit will be construed as an anti-Muslim and anti-Arab'. Another
diplomat from the West Asia stated that it is not merely a question of India and Israel having good relations. 'India has a role to strengthen peace, security and human rights. Israel should at least implement the road map for peace. By receiving Sharon, India is now encouraging Israel in its aggressive policies and human rights violations', said the diplomat. He said that during the presence of the Palestinian Foreign Minister in New Delhi, India should have sent a strong message to Israel that it wanted peace and an end to bloodshed in West Asia.

When Yasser Arafat was asked to comment on the recent visit of Israeli Premier Ariel Sharon to India, he stated that Mr. Sharon can only escalate the situation and war between Pakistan and India.
REFERENCES


4. Farah Naaz, "Indo-Israel military cooperation" Strategic analysis, August 2000, Vol, xxiv, No.05, p. 969.


7. Ibid.


10. Ibid.


24. Frontline, June 18, 1993, p. 44.


28. Ibid.


37. Ha’aretz (Tel Aviv) August 12, 1999.


40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. The Times of India, April 28, 1999.

43. Ibid.


46. The Times of India, November 1, 2000.

47. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
53. The Times of India, August 17, 1992.
57. Manoj joshi, “Mossad, Interpol may not have all the answers” The Times of India, June 15, 2000.
61. Ibid.
64. The Asian Age, June 16, 2000.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.


70. Ibid.


72. Steinberg, No. 69, p. 74.

73. Ibid, p. 75.


76. Ibid.

77. No.56. p. 981.


91. The Hindu, 18-02-2002.


96. “US adds power to India’s Israeli links” www.atimes.com.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid.


102. Ibid

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid.


117. Ibid.

118. Ibid.


Also, John Cherian, “India, Israel and Arab Fears” Frontline September 24, 1999, pp. 46-48.

120. Frontline, No. 119.

121. Dr. Dinesh Kumar, “India, Israel dawn of new era” www.westerndefense.org.
