The still-incomplete investigation into the networks that protected Amir could shed further light on what underlies Netanyahu's threats that the United States had better "fully support" Israel, or be hit with another assault of Sept. 11-style terrorism.

Netanyahu's inflammatory campaign of verbal terror was implicated time and again in setting up the conditions for Rabin's murder. For example, in his bloodthirsty drive to become Prime Minister of Israel, Netanyahu rushed to scene of a bus bombing in 1994, where TV cameras filmed him denouncing Labor Prime Minister Rabin as responsible for the terrorism, while the maimed victims were being carried out. Bibi said that Rabin preferred "Arafat and the residents of Gaza over the security of the residents of Israel." Just more than a year later, after months of covert cooperation between Bibi's Likud and the Yesha Council of the radical right-wing settlers, one of these pro-settler terrorists, working with the Council, killed Rabin, for "betraying" the Jews. After a few more bus bombings during the subsequent election campaign, Netanyahu became Prime Minister.

On April 15, 2002, Egyptian journalist Ibrahim Nafei, the former editor of the prestigious newspaper *Al Ahram*, warned that Israel may resort to instigating terrorist attacks in the Arab world and elsewhere. Speaking on the "Good Morning Egypt" TV program, a program which has also interviewed Lyndon LaRouche, Nafei said, although he was not a conspiracy-theory bug, there were indications that Israel might deploy terrorists, inside Arab nations, to destabilize their governments, and also in Europe and the United States. He referred back to the 1950s, when similar events occurred, and to the case of the Israeli spy Jonathan Jay Pollard, as an example of the extent of Israeli intelligence penetration in the United States.

An International Challenge

Netanyahu came to the United States in order to impose a "reign of terror" against any critics, especially Jewish critics, who speak out against the war crimes being carried out against Palestinians by the Sharon regime. But his power to terrorize critics is worldwide.

Returning to the courageous article by Australia's David Langsam in *The Age*, the author writes about the threats that he expects: "Is it 'breaking ranks' to be Jewish and to criticize Israel's terrible government now that Israel has unilaterally declared war on the Palestinian Authority? . . . I know that by this paragraph, somewhere a pro-Israel lobbyist will be reaching for his or her keyboard to accuse me of being an anti-Semite, or a self-hating Jew, or a traitor. Some will reach for their telephones to deliver hate messages to my 85-year-old father. . . . Am I to be intimidated by the pro-Israeli extreme right just because Israel is wrong?"

Netanyahu's success depends on silencing critics; but a fresh investigation into his dirty operations could topple him again.

Indian Silence on Israeli Genocide Raises Questions

by Ramtanu Maitra

Once a staunch backer of the Palestinian cause, India's silence on the ongoing Israeli invasion of the West Bank is a painful reminder that opportunism, and not human values, has come to dominate India's foreign policymaking process.

It is also remarkable that India, with about 150 million Muslims, a large number of whom are decidely pro-Palestine, and a vast array of left liberals, belonging to all religious groups, left over from bygone Soviet days, could maintain the silence of the graveyard at a time like this.

It is not that the Palestinians have failed to seek out India's support. Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat recently sent his personal emissary, Hani al-Hasan, to meet with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. Afterward, al-Hasan told reporters that Palestine "would like India to play a role in West Asia. . . . Politicians are generally balanced. We want a just equation."

Subsequently, Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, who is widely identified as a close ally of Washington, in a telephone conversation with the besieged Arafat on April 2, regretted Arafat's confinement and assured him that India continues to see him as the symbol of the Palestinian Authority. Singh also expressed concern for Arafat's safety and well-being. Singh made the usual noise, telling Arafat that India wants implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1402, which calls on both parties to implement a meaningful cease-fire and to cease all acts of violence immediately. And, that India also wants both sides to fully cooperate with U.S. special envoy Anthony Zinni.

Singh, careful not to tip the balance in favor of the Palestinians, also spoke to Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres (a frequent visitor to India). He told Peres that by "incarcerating" Arafat, by "virtually imprisoning him," Israel is compounding difficulties. The strongest pro-Palestine statement by India was issued from New York by the Indian Ambassador to the United Nations. But, it was widely noted that no statement of significance has been issued from the Prime Minister's office.

In the Old Days

India became the first non-Arab state to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as "the sole legiti-

mate representative of the Palestinian people." India allowed the PLO to open offices in New Delhi in January 1975, and the office was accorded full diplomatic recognition in March 1980.

India recognized the State of Palestine in November 1988, and the PLO office in New Delhi started functioning as the embassy of the State of Palestine. In the wake of the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), India opened its Representative Office in Gaza on June 5, 1996, to ensure effective coordination with the PNA.

On paper, India supports the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to a state, and the imperative need for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the principle of "Land for Peace."

India has maintained high-level political contacts with the PLO, and with Arafat in particular. Arafat was in India in August on his way to Beijing. At the time, India had already become an ally of Israel, but nonetheless Arafat met with Prime Minister Vajpayee.

However, long before Arafat's arrival, India had come to the conclusion that Israel's friendship is materially more important, that it is materially more beneficial to listen to Tel Aviv and Washington, than to Arafat.

A New Friend

Although India recognized Israel in 1950 and permitted it to open a consular mission in Bombay (now, Mumbai) in 1953, normalization of relations stalled after Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser established political relations in 1956. Despite these ties, India reportedly made small arms purchases from Israel during the Indo-Chinese conflict in 1962 and the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. Cooperation was also developed between India's intelligence agency, Research and Analysis Wing, and Israel's Mossad, and among senior armed forces officers of the two countries. One factor that promoted this connection on the Indian side was the anti-Pakistan, anti-Muslim fervor, particularly among Indian Army personnel. However, Indian leaders close to the Soviet outlook on the world during the Cold War, prevented the pro-Israeli officers from playing a significant role in India's foreign policymaking process. This changed in 1992, when India granted Israel full diplomatic relations.

Thereafter, rapid progress was made on the Indo-Israeli military front. Israel's arms industries launched an aggressive campaign in India, concluding deals for sales, joint projects, and technology transfers worth billions of U.S. dollars. In addition to the $1 billion Phalcon early warning system deal, which is still in the works, Israel Aircraft Industries last year concluded contracts for naval surface-to-air missiles ($280 million), unmanned aerial vehicles or drones ($300 million), and the Green Pine radar system ($250 million). Projects under discussion include upgrading India's aircraft avionics and T-72 Russian-manufactured battle tanks and developing a truck-borne howitzer. India also seems interested in Israel's Arrow antiballistic-missile defense system. *Al-Ahram Weekly* quoted a high-level Indian source: "None of these deals bolsters Israel's military power against the Arabs. Israel gets money; India, weapons and technology. All agreements we sign provide for the creation of domestic production." Israel is now India's number-two arms supplier, after Russia.

At the governmental level, India and Israel have signed a number of agreements that provide a legal framework for trade and economic cooperation. An agreement now exists which provides for Most-Favored Nation status between the two countries, and it has cleared the way for the import of Indian goods to Israel without import permits (except for goods where such permits are required from all countries under Israeli customs' regulations).

In January 1996, memorandums of understanding (MOUs) on Standards Cooperation and Cooperation in Industrial Research and Development, and agreements on the Avoidance of Double Taxation, Bilateral Investment Protection, and Customs Cooperation, were signed. Surface transportation links between India and Israel were established, with Shipping Corporation of India vessels stopping over at the port of Haifa, and the Israeli Shipping Line, ZIM, providing direct shipping services between India and Israel. In January 1997, a final agreement on cooperation in the field of industrial research was signed during the visit of Israeli President Ezer Weizman to India.

The financial infrastructure is also being developed to facilitate trade and economic ties. Banks in both countries have approved suitable limits for confirmation of letters of credit and bank guarantees issued for import and export. The State Bank of India, the largest commercial bank in India, has correspondent banking relations with eight major Israeli banks. India has also invited Israeli banks to open branches in India. A joint insurance agreement has been signed between the Export Credit and Guarantee Corporation of India and the Israel Foreign Trade Risk Insurance Company Ltd. In June 2000, the Indian EXIM (Export-Import) Bank signed MOUs with three leading Israeli banks and it is expected that this will lead to the establishment of direct lines of credit for trade between India and Israel.

Pro-Israel Apologists

The growing economic and military interaction with Israel has brought to the fore a large number of powerful members of the Israeli lobby. India's Home Minister L.K. Advani, and many of the Hindutva-chanting Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) officials, are unabashed promoters of Israel. They are also, in effect, the most powerful anti-Palestine lobby in India.

There are others as well. They point out that in terms of India-Israel relations, it is payback time now for India. Israel today, they say, is under severe attack by Palestinian terrorist

organizations and other Islamic Jihadi organizations. Suicide bombings have already resulted in the death or wounding of hundreds of innocent Israeli civilians. These attacks are similar to those against Indian security forces engaged in combatting Pakistan-sponsored Islamic Jihadi terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the apologists point out. One pro-Israeli observer said recently that there also exists a similarity between Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who condemns terrorism but does little to curb cross-border terrorism, and Palestinian Authority President Arafat, who has "resisted all efforts to condemn the terrorist and suicide bombers operating against Israel."

This argument has a mesmerizing effect in New Delhi nowadays. Any individual who is equated with the Pakistani President, is unquestionably considered pro-terrorist.

The pro-Israel lobby in India also points out that Israel has done more for India, although India accorded full diplomatic relations to Israel only in 1992, than the Palestinians. Israel, they point out, even when it did not have diplomatic relations with India, has always extended unreserved political, strategic, and military cooperation. In 1999, during the Kargil War, when the Indian Army was battling Pakistani infiltrators and regular Pakistani Army personnel at a very high altitude in the Indian part of Kashmir, Israel had flown in emergency military supplies.

Others point out that India and Israel are natural allies. They say, that India and Israel seek a "civilizational bonding" that can, as Israelis see it, encompass several areas of interaction. Of immediate relevance, the post-Sept. 11 situation has resulted in increasing strategic cooperation, including in defense and related interaction of intensifying manifold even compared to the high levels reached in the post-Kargil days. "We continue to cooperate, collaborate, and enhance relations that already exist," said Amos Yaron, Director General at the Israeli Ministry of Defense. Israeli enterprise in turning the desert green is one area, and more avenues are opening up. In Israel, the pro-Israel apologists claim, there exists a deep desire for closer relations with India going beyond the issues provoking today's conflicts in the Middle East.

Smelly Real-Politik?

The pro-Israeli lobby in India draws a parallel to the issue of Kashmir, which is nearly as highly charged on the Indian subcontinent as is the Palestinian problem in the Middle East. But the fact remains, that although there exists just one point of similarity between the two issues, differences are many. To begin with, both of the five-decades-old conflicts were results of the partitioning of a country (India in one case, Palestine on the other) by the British colonialists in 1947.

To summarize the differences: In the case of Palestine, Israel could not have come into being without a massive inflow of Jewish immigrants from Europe. In the case of India, there was no immigration from outside of the subcontinent, but a movement of the original population after partition, with Muslims migrating to Pakistan and Hindus to India. The ruler of Kashmir, a Hindu king in a state with a Muslim majority, chose to join India. Since then, Kashmir has remained an issue of contention between the two coutries.

India is deeply affected by the terrorism organized from Pakistan. During the Cold War, Pakistan was a "natural ally" of the United States. However, following the Cold War, and specifically following Sept. 11, India has been "assured" by the United States that all terrorism in the subcontinent will be fought with an equal zeal. Although the reality points to a somewhat different scenario, those who have committed themselves to the United States and its war against terrorism—some in India at very high levels switch from "terrorists" to "Islamic Jihadis" effortlessly—see benefits emerging at some time or other. They point out that a strategic relationship with the United States, and Israel, will strengthen and modernize India's military; it will encourage more exports to the West and foreign investments into India; with Washington and Tel Aviv on India's side, it will provide some control over Islamabad; and it may even help India to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. They also make it clear that a strategic relationship with the United States is not attainable unless India has a similar relationship with Israel.

A concommitant problem that India faces now, is the politics of religious hatred unleashed recently through the Gujarat riots. Although Gujarat continues to simmer a month and a half after Muslim mobs attacked a train carrying Hindu extremists, the anti-Muslim Hindus are using the train incident to provoke retaliation—a license to kill and bully Muslims into submissiveness.

Some Indian officials, especially the militant BJP members of the Indian Parliament, can barely suppress their sympathy with the vengeful sentiments of those who were involved in the killing of Muslims in Gujarat. India's hard-liner Home Minister L.K. Advani, whose parliamentary constituency is in Gujarat's commercial capital, Ahmedabad, stresses the need to track down members of the suspected Islamic groups which carried out the train massacre.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had also put up the pretext of "tracking down" the terrorists when he ordered the Israeli Defense Forces to use tanks to turn into rubble the refugee camps and make them mass graves of Palestinian Muslims. The thinking in certain New Delhi quarters is that "you do what you can get away with." If India gets the green, or even an amber, signal from the United States, it may carry out an operation similar to the one the Israelis are carrying out in the West Bank, in the Pakistan-occupied part of Jammu and Kashmir. But in order to get such a signal, many powerful people in New Delhi believe that India must not join the chorus against Israel—which has made it evident that use of raw power, ruthlessly and unthinkingly, is part and parcel of its foreign policy.