



India and Israel Relations

For Prelims: Location of Israel

For Mains: India and Israel Relations, related issues and way ahead.

Why in News

- To mark the **30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties** between the two countries, **India and Israel launched a commemorative logo.**
- The logo features the **Star of David and the AshokaChakra**- the two symbols that adorn the national flags of both countries- and forms the numeral 30 depicting the 30th anniversary of bilateral relations.

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Key Points

- **Diplomatic Ties:**
 - Though India officially recognised Israel in 1950, the two countries established full diplomatic ties only on **29th January 1992**. As of December 2020, India was among 164 **United Nations (UN)** member states to have diplomatic ties with Israel.
- **Economic and Commercial Relations:**
 - From USD 200 million in 1992, bilateral merchandise trade stood at USD 4.14 billion (excluding defence) during the period April 2020 - February 2021 with the **balance of trade being in India's favour.**
 - **Trade in diamonds** constitutes about 50% of bilateral trade..
 - India is **Israel's third-largest trade partner in Asia** and seventh largest globally.
 - Israeli companies have invested in India in energy, renewable energy, telecom, real estate, water technologies, and are focusing on setting up R&D centers or production units in India.

- India is **also in dialogue with Israel for concluding a [Free Trade Agreement \(FTA\)](#).**
- **Defence:**
 - **India is the largest buyer of military equipment** from Israel, which, in turn, is the second-largest defence supplier to India, after Russia.
 - The Indian armed forces have **inducted a wide array of Israeli weapon systems** over the years, which range from **Phalcon AWACS (Airborne Warning And Control Systems)** and Heron, Searcher-II and Harop drones to Barak anti-missile defence systems and Spyder quick-reaction anti-aircraft missile systems.
 - The acquisitions also include a **host of Israeli missiles and precision-guided munitions**, from Python and Derby air-to-air missiles to Crystal Maze and Spice-2000 bombs.
 - At the **[15th Joint Working Group \(JWG 2021\)](#)** meeting on Bilateral Defence Cooperation, countries agreed to form a Task Force to formulate a comprehensive Ten-Year Roadmap to identify new areas of cooperation.
- **Cooperation in Agriculture:**
 - In May 2021, **[“a three-year work program agreement”](#)** for development in agriculture cooperation, was signed.
 - The programme aims to **grow existing Centres of Excellence, establish new centers, increase CoE’s value chain, bring the Centres of Excellence** into the self-sufficient mode, and encourage private sector companies and collaboration.
- **Science & Technology:**
 - Recently, experts from India and Israel deliberated on widening the scope of **India-Israel Industrial R&D and Technological Innovation Fund (I4F)** at its 8th Governing Body meeting.
 - They approved 3 joint R&D projects worth 5.5 million USD and suggested measures to create a broader India-Israel collaborative ecosystem.
 - I4F is a cooperation between the two countries to promote, facilitate and support joint industrial R&D projects between companies from India and Israel to address the challenges in the agreed ‘Focus Sectors’.
- **Others:**
 - Israel is also joining the **India-led [International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)](#)**, which aligns very well with the objectives of both countries to scale up their cooperation in **[renewable energy](#)** and partner in clean energy.



Way Forward

- The ties between the two nations have flourished since 1992, primarily due to **common strategic interests and security threats**.
- Indians are sympathetic towards Israel and the government is balancing and recalibrating its [West Asia policy](#) on the premise of its own national interest.
- India and Israel need to **overcome the vulnerability of their religious extremist neighbours** and work productively on global issues like **climate change, water scarcity, population explosion and food scarcity**.
- A more aggressive and proactive Middle Eastern policy is the need of the hour for India to reap the maximum benefit of the geopolitical realignments gradually being brought in by the [Abraham Accords](#).

[Source: ET](#)

