



India-Israel Relations

For Prelims: [India-Israel Relations](#), [CSIR](#), [AI](#), [Sustainable Energy](#), [FTA](#), [I4F](#), [AWACS](#), [ISA](#), Abraham Accords.

For Mains: India-Israel Relations.

Why in News?

Recently, India's [Council of Scientific and Industrial Research \(CSIR\)](#) and Israel's Defense Research and Development (DDR&D) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on **Industrial Research and Development Cooperation**.

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What are the Key Highlights of the MoU?

- It aims to work together on **research and development projects in various fields** such as **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, **Quantum** and **semiconductors, synthetic biology, Sustainable Energy, Healthcare, and Agriculture**. They will focus on implementing specific projects in mutually agreeable areas.
- The collaboration will include important industrial sectors such as **aerospace, chemicals, and infrastructure**.
- The MoU will be monitored by a **Joint Steering Committee** led by the heads of the CSIR and DDR&D for taking forward mutually benefiting Industrial and technology cooperation.

How has the India-Israel Relations been So Far?

- **Diplomatic:**
 - Though India officially **recognized Israel in 1950**, both 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:**
 - Trade between India and Israel has increased from USD 5 billion before the **Covid-19**

pandemic to about USD 7.5 billion till 2023 January.

- 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 one of the **largest importers of weapons from Israel**, contributing to about 40% of its annual arms exports.
 - 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.
 - 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.
- **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 (CoE), 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:**
- In recent years, multiple MoUs have been signed between Israel's Start-Up National Central and Indian entrepreneurship centres like [**iCreate and TiE \(Technology Business Incubators\)**](#).
 - In 2022, the two countries recently widened the scope of the [**India-Israel Industrial R&D and Innovation Fund \(I4F\)**](#) to include sectors like renewable energy and [**ICT \(Information and Communication Technology\)**](#) through increased participation of academia and business entities.
 - 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

- 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**](#).

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. The term “two-state solution” is sometimes mentioned in the news in the context of the affairs of (2018)

- (a) China
(b) Israel

- (c) Iraq
(d) Yemen

Ans: (b)

- “Two-State Solution” is related to Israel-Palestine conflict. It aims at the resolution of this conflict via creation of two independent states – Israel and Palestine. It gained traction post Oslo Accord 1993, and is seen by many as the only viable solution to this impending crisis.
- The framework of the solution is set out in the UN resolution on the “Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine”, going back to 1974.
- **Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Mains:

Q. “India’s relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back.” Discuss **(2018)**

Source: PIB

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