

2. India-Israel Relation

India - Israel Joint Statement. The 2026 visit of the Indian Prime Minister to Israel has solidified the transition from a traditional "buyer-seller" relationship to a "Special Strategic Partnership." By adhering to a De-hyphenated West Asia Policy, India has successfully decoupled its ties with Israel from its historical stance on Palestine, allowing for deep cooperation in defence, technology, and labour mobility while maintaining strategic autonomy.

1. Strategic Elevation and Governance (2026)

Special Strategic Partnership- Ties were officially elevated, recognizing Israel as an "Innovation Powerhouse" and India as a "Global Talent & Manufacturing Hub."

Institutional Integration- * Launched G2G (Govt-to-Govt), B2B (Business-to-Business), and P2P (People-to-People) frameworks.

1. Constitution of the India-Israel Parliamentary Friendship Group to enhance legislative diplomacy.

2. Digital, Financial, and Frontier Technology

Fintech Diplomacy- * UPI-Masav Linkage- An MOU between NPCI International and Israel's Masav allows for seamless cross-border payments, benefiting tourists and traders.

1. Cyber Simulations- Joint national response teams conducting "cyber-warfare drills" to protect financial infrastructure.

iCET (Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology)- * Led by the National Security Advisors (NSAs).

1. Focus areas- Semiconductors, Quantum Computing, and Biotechnology.

Space & R&D- Integration of Israeli startups into India's commercial space sector.

1. I4F Fund- Joint research budget increased to \$1.5 million per call.

3. Defence, Security, and "Operation Sindoor"

Co-development Roadmap- Moving away from imports toward the co-production of advanced platforms.

Cyber Centre of Excellence- A new centre in India dedicated to "Security by Design" principles and capacity building.

Operation Sindoor (May 2025)- A landmark military validation where Indian forces utilized Israeli SkyStriker suicide drones and SPYDER air defence systems for real-time intelligence fusion and rapid response.

4. Comparative Analysis- Economic and Labor Pillars

Feature	Pre-2026 Status	Post-2026 Outcomes
Labor Mobility	Limited largely to caregiving and construction.	50,000 additional workers; expanded to Manufacturing, Restaurants, and High-Tech.
Investment Model	Traditional FDI routes.	Israel became the first OECD nation to adopt India's 2025 Bilateral Investment Agreement (BIA) model.
Trade Composition	Dominance of Diamonds and Defence.	Diversification into Green Energy, Semiconductors, and Fintech.
Connectivity	Standard maritime routes.	Commitment to IMEC (India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor) via Haifa Port.

5. Agriculture, Water, and Environment

1949 Armistice Lines

■ Jordanian occupied ■ Egyptian occupied □ Armistice lines



Villages of Excellence (VoE)– A successful model that has already trained one million Indian farmers in Israeli drip irrigation and canopy management.

Water Stewardship– Using Israeli recycling tech for the "Clean Ganga" mission and national desalination projects.

IINCA– The launch of the India-Israel Innovation Centre for Agriculture to focus on climate-resilient farming.

6. Historical Evolution of the Relationship

1950–1992 (The Era of Hesitation)– Recognition without full diplomatic ties due to the Cold War and the Palestinian cause. Covert help was provided by Israel in the 1962 and 1971 wars.

1992 (The Pivot)– Full diplomatic ties established under the PV Narasimha Rao government.

1999 (Kargil Support)– Israel acted as the "Lender of Last Resort," rushing laser-guided missile kits and UAVs to India.

2017 (De-hyphenation)– First-ever visit by an Indian PM to Israel, marking the official end of linking Israel ties to Palestine.

2021 (I2U2)– Formation of the "West Asian Quad" (India, Israel, UAE, USA).

7. Challenges and Strategic Balancing

The Iran-Israel Dilemma– India must balance its strategic partnership with Israel against its energy and connectivity interests in Iran (Chabahar Port).

Arab World Relations– Managing the safety and interests of 9 million Indian expats in the Gulf while deepening ties with Israel.

The China Factor– Concerns regarding Israel sharing sensitive high-tech components with Beijing, given India's border tensions with China.

Maritime Risks- Ongoing disruptions in the Red Sea impacting the \$10.77 billion merchandise trade trajectory.

8. Way Forward

Atmanirbhar Partnership- Shift from a customer-vendor relationship to Joint Manufacturing and co-creation of "Black Box" technologies.

Finalizing the FTA- Tasking teams to conclude the Free Trade Agreement by the end of 2026 to diversify the trade basket.

Knowledge Corridors- Linking IITs with Israeli research hubs for Quantum and AI leadership.

Conclusion

The 2026 visit signifies that India-Israel relations have entered a "Special Strategic Axis." By leveraging Israeli innovation for India's scale, both nations are building a partnership that is essential for India's goal of becoming a "Viksit Bharat" by 2047, while navigating the complex geopolitics of West Asia with pragmatic independence.

Source- <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2233228®=3&lang=2>

