



INDIA-ISRAEL RELATIONS: PAST TO PRESENT

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Abstract-

India and Israel have been sharing cordial relations in the present time. India recognized Israel in 1950 and full diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1992. Israel has invested in agriculture, irrigation and renewable energy in India and is exploring investment opportunities in manufacturing in India. India's foreign policy is clear that it needs strategic and defence partners and as Israel has got a trusted and time-tested strategic partner. The special thing is that there is no interference of any external element in the relationship between the two countries. This study tries to explore the areas of bonhomie between India and Israel relations.

Key Words: Strategic, Partnership, Cooperation, Relations.

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Introduction

Israel and Independent India were born in the same year 1947. However, Israel officially gained Independence in 1948. The initial relations between the two countries were not satisfactory. It was only in 1947 that India voted against the recognition of Israel as a nation. Similarly, in 1949, India once again voted in the United Nations against making Israel a member country. Israel became independent in 1948 and did not have good relations with India in the initial stages. In the first two years with the rise of Israel, India's favour was always against Israel. For the first time in 1950, India recognized Israel as an Independent nation. Along with this, India appointed Israel's Counsel in 1951 in a local Jewish colony in Mumbai. It was upgraded in 1953 to the status of Counsel. In 1956, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sherrat visited India amid the ongoing controversy over the Suez Canal. The Suez Canal dispute was between Egypt and Israel.



After initial mistrust, Israel helped India with arms during the China war. Bilateral relations began to develop between Israel and India in the 1990. Many feared that India-Israel relations could be affected by the growing relations between India and Israel, but India has made it clear that there has been no major change in its stand. Despite differences in the past relationship, in 1992, India and Israel formally established relations. India recognized Israel in 1950 and full diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1992. Be it the Sino War or the 1971 and 1999 war with Pakistan, Israel helped India with sophisticated weapons. Israel has invested in agriculture, irrigation and renewable energy in India and is exploring investment possibilities in manufacturing in India. Relations between Israel and India have reached a new phase. India voted in the UN in support of Israel for the first time. However, in the past also, Israel helped India through all difficult times. Since 2015, India and Israel have openly called each other allied nations. Israel has demanded Reform, Perform and Transform, which India has tried to meet to a large extent. In the current global situation, economies of both countries can complement each other, but both countries need to take more steps to exploit bilateral possibilities and trade and investment.

New Bonhomie in Bilateral Relationship

India did not hold diplomatic relations with Israel for long after Independence, making it clear that India supported Palestine's demands, but India had formal diplomatic relations with Israel in the year 1992, and now changed to strategic relations at their highest level. Bilateral cooperation between the two countries continues to increase over time. Political understanding, security cooperation and technology partnerships are the main pillars of the strategic relationship between India and Israel. In addition, both countries are exploring possibilities in new areas such as space, cyber security and innovation.

The rapprochement between Israel and India in recent years has been brought about at the expense of the Palestinians' standing in India's regional policy. This marginalization could be seen in India's abstentions at the UNHCR votes on the Gaza conflict in 2014 and the



challenges to Jewish historical links to Jerusalem at UNESCO in 2016. It was even more clearly visible when PM Modi avoided making any reference in 2017 to East Jerusalem being the capital of the future Palestinian state – with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas standing by his side.

India needs technology, innovation, defence equipment, cooperation in counter-terrorism, training in intelligence gathering etc. from Israel, all of which are required to make India a secure, stable and prosperous nation with a better standard of living for its people. For Israel, in addition to the huge market for its technology as well as defense products that India represents, the enormous intangible benefit is also the acceptance it receives from the largest democracy. More than 30 countries of the UN do not recognize Israel. Hence, being accepted as a friend by India holds special value and significance for Israel. It is a win-win partnership for both the countries.

Conclusion

The broader Indian Ocean region, critical to the Indo-Pacific, has always been India's strategic sphere of influence. This is expected to be a fixture of India's strategy going forward even despite the significant challenges posed to the existing Indo-Pacific balance of power by Chinese geopolitical and geoeconomic clout and bellicose incursions. The flight route between Delhi and Tel Aviv through Saudi airspace is indicative of just how an engaged Indian approach to the greater Middle East region can be a critical component of the country's renewed approach to the entire Indo-Pacific.

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