Israel - India Bilateral

Why in news?

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- Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu’s concluded his visit recently.
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- This marks the full normalisation of bilateral ties between India and Israel.
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How has the ties been historically?

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- After much reluctance due to the internal and external pressure, India officially recognized Israel only in 1950 (3 years after its creation).
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- From 1950 to the early 1990s, the relationship remained informal in nature, with no scope for collaboration and engagement.
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- Also, India’s Non-Aligned Foreign policy outlook proved to be a major impediment as the NAM took a consistent pro–Palestine stand.
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- Official diplomatic ties were established only in 1992, and a decade later, in 2003 India hosted Israeli PM “Ariel Sharon” in a first of its kind bilateral.
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- Lately, President Pranab Mukherjee visited Israel in 2015, which was followed by PM Modi’s visit in 2017 and current 6 day visit of Mr. Netanyahu.
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What were the contours of the visit?

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- The joint statement made to the press drew on a futuristic 25-year timeline

to realise the full potential of Indo-Israel strategic partnership.
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- Mr. Netanyahu visited the Taj Mahal, and Chabad House, which was one of the sites of the 26/11 terror attacks where many Israeli citizens were killed.
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- On business, it was noted that “size and scale” of India and the “sharpness and edge” of Israel has immense potential for collaboration in industry.
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- Also, the joint statement reaffirmed commitment for early resumption of peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians.
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- This is indicative of India’s preparedness to have more open and honest conversations on the peace process.
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How does the future look?

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- Mr. Modi is expected to visit Palestine shortly.
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- Also, Jordan’s King Abdullah II, who is recognised in the Arab world as the official custodian of the holy sites in Jerusalem is scheduled to visit Delhi soon.
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- India’s willingness to further the peace process should also be seen in the backdrop of its recent vote against Israel in the Jerusalem resolution.
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- Importantly, any real success in this domain will require challenging the Israeli political belief in hard power and its “survival of the fittest” philosophy.
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- While Mr. Netanyahu openly asserted in Delhi that one makes peace and aligns with the strong, India needs to show that building friendships beyond mere strategic calculation is vital.
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Source: The Hindu

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