



PRIME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu and his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, are seen meeting together in 2018. Netanyahu recently underscored India's centrality in Israel's strategy to counter the Iran-led axis and to embed Israel within a broader coalition of capable partners, the writer says. (Adnan Abidi/Reuters)

# India is vital to Israel's strategic architecture

• By EMMANUEL NAVON

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel this week is more than a diplomatic milestone. It signals a deeper strategic shift: India has become a central pillar of Israel's emerging foreign-policy architecture at a moment when the international order is being reorganized around connectivity, deterrence, and technological capacity rather than formal alliances alone.

This reality has been acknowledged at the highest level of Israel's leadership. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently underscored India's centrality in Israel's strategy to counter the Iran-led axis and to embed Israel within a broader coalition of capable partners. Such language reflects a change in doctrine. India is no longer

viewed in Jerusalem as a distant but important partner. It is now part of Israel's strategic core.

To understand why, one must look beyond bilateral diplomacy and focus on architecture. Power in the 21st century is increasingly exercised through corridors, supply chains, defense ecosystems, and technological standards. States that design and secure these systems shape outcomes far beyond their immediate regions. Those that merely react to them become dependent.

This is why the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC) matters. IMEC is not simply an infrastructure project. It is a geopolitical alternative to coercive connectivity models, particularly China's Belt and Road. Where Belt and Road

has created debt dependence and political leverage, IMEC seeks to embed trade and energy routes within a framework of transparency, security, and political alignment.

India provides the corridor's industrial gravity: scale, workforce, and long-term growth. Israel provides its indispensable hinge. As a secure and technologically sophisticated gateway to the Eastern Mediterranean, Israel offers IMEC what no other participant can: corridor security, advanced logistics, and the technological resilience required to protect physical and digital infrastructure in an era of hybrid threats. Without India, IMEC lacks mass. Without Israel, it lacks credibility.

Security cooperation reinforces this architecture. Israel has emerged as one of India's

most consequential defense partners – not merely as a supplier but as an integrator of capabilities. Jointly developed air and missile defense systems, advanced sensors and battle-management technologies, unmanned platforms, and loitering munitions have materially strengthened India's deterrence posture.

These are not abstract partnerships. They are combat-tested systems and doctrines shaped by Israel's long experience confronting missile threats and proxy warfare.

Crucially, this cooperation aligns with India's strategic autonomy. Through joint ventures and defense self-reliance, Israeli technology is embedded within India's own defense-industrial base rather than imposed from outside. The result is resilience, not depen-

dency – a model increasingly prized in a world where supply chains and defense production are themselves instruments of power.

This convergence fits squarely within the United States' evolving grand strategy. Washington is no longer seeking allies defined primarily by declaratory alignment. It is seeking partners that contribute tangible capabilities to collective strength.

This logic – sometimes described as "Pax Silica" – prioritizes production, technological sovereignty, and credible deterrence. India brings scale and manufacturing potential. Israel brings innovation density and operational experience. Together, they enhance American and allied security by adding capacity rather than consuming it.

Europe, too, has a direct stake in this configuration. A corridor anchored by India and Israel offers Europe diversified access to Indo-Pacific markets, reduced exposure to coercive dependencies, and integration into a security framework that treats connectivity and deterrence as inseparable. IMEC is therefore not an American or Asian project with European participation; it is a shared strategic asset.

Finally, Modi's visit highlights a broader shift in Israel's engagement with Asia. Just as Washington and Berlin anchor Israel's strategic posture in the West, New Delhi and Tokyo now function as Israel's two decisive capitals in Asia. India anchors the continental and industrial dimension of Asian power; Japan anchors its maritime, financial, and technolog-

ical core.

Israel is not merely aligning with these powers. It is contributing to their strength through security expertise, innovation under pressure, and integration capacity.

The emerging international order will not be shaped by states that wait on the sidelines or rely on ambiguity as a strategy. It will be shaped by states that build corridors, capabilities, and coalitions. India and Israel are doing exactly that. Modi's visit underscores that India and Israel are no longer reacting to the emerging order. They are shaping it.

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