

India, Israel push industry, academic ties with new centre at IIMB

It will help business communities of both countries find common ground for collaboration; to focus on tech, business strategy, history, govt policies and culture

AVINASH BHAT@ Bengaluru

An Israel centre, which will seek to further academic and industry ties between India and Israel, was inaugurated by the Israeli ambassador to India Daniel Carmon at the Indian Institute of Management-Bengaluru on Sunday. The centre, described by Carmon as the 'first of its kind', will

also help the business communities of both countries find common ground for collaboration.

This is the 25th year of full diplomatic relations between the two countries which began in 1992 post the economic liberalisation that India witnessed in 1991. With collaboration in the field of agriculture, water technology, defence and academics, the centre is one of many projects that Israel is supporting in India.

"This centre will be a consolidation of many Israel-focused programmes at IIM-B," said said

IIM-B Director Professor G Raghuram.

"We are currently in collaboration with the Tel Aviv University and also have a jointly taught course. The mission of the centre will be to focus on technology, innovation, business strategy, history, government policies and culture," Raghuram added.

Ambassador Carmon also said that Karnataka and Bengaluru were a natural choice for setting up the centre as the start-up industry in the city is quite strong and is a natural partner for Israel

which has a booming start-up sector.

"In the last few years, we have established very direct contact with different states with strong encouragement of the Government of India. In Karnataka, we have three centres of excellence in agriculture," he said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to India, tentatively planned for January next year, will be the first since 2003, when Ariel Sharon, the then PM, had visited New Delhi. During his visit, top on Prime

Minister Netanyahu's agenda will have areas like agriculture, water technology, innovation ecosystem and science and technology.

Speaking about the visit, Carmon told Express that it will be more than a ceremonial one. "Visits play an important role in showcasing the ceremonial part but also in engaging the administration and private sector in both countries. During PM Modi's visit, joint challenges have been set and it is only natural that PM Netanyahu will visit India," he

said. Though Carmon did not commit to a date, he said the visit will be in the foreseeable future. However, reports in Israeli media attribute a statement by PM Netanyahu to the Israeli parliament in which he mentions that he will visit India in January.

"We should be focussing on the content and not the date. A report card of what we did since the last visit and how we did our homework to strengthen relations and prepare for the next 25 years of Indo-Israel relations is needed currently," Carmon said.



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Israeli ambassador to India

