

## The Abraham Accords: “The new dawn of a new Middle East”?



### Context:

- Has been signed recently by **the UAE, Bahrain and Israel**, under U.S. President Donald Trump’s mediation.
- It marks a new beginning in the relations between the Sunni-ruled Gulf kingdoms and the Jewish state.

### What is significance?

- Under the agreement, the UAE and Bahrain would normalise ties with Israel, leading to better economic, political and security engagement.
- The agreements have the backing of Saudi Arabia, arguably the most influential Arab power and a close ally of the UAE and Bahrain. More Arab countries are expected to follow suit.
- This is the first agreement between Israel and Arab countries since the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty.



## What are concerns?

- Though of historical and geopolitical significance, it is too early to say whether the accords will have any meaningful impact on West Asia's myriad conflicts.
- **The Palestinian question remains largely unaddressed:** With Arab countries signing diplomatic agreements with Israel bilaterally, the Arab collective support for the Palestinian movement for nationhood, which has been the basis of the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, is collapsing.
- **Shia-Sunni conflict:** A union of Israel, UAE, and Bahrain, alongside the US could be a move to contain Iran. With this deal, Israel has joined hands with the Gulf's Sunni Arab monarchies. Iran, on the other hand, is dominated by Shiites.
- For decades, one of the main sources of instability in West Asia has been the cold war between Saudi Arabia (Sunni) and Iran (Shia). This accord may make the rift wider and more violent.
- **Indian context:** India should use this opportunity to give itself a bigger role in a region which is its strategic backyard.
- Ramping up defence and security relations with the UAE. Israel is already a very close defence partner. India should restart joint exercises with the UAE, and even Saudi Arabia.
- India can ensure that any future deal on a regional security framework gives adequate space to Iran.
- The deal opens up new opportunities for India to play a much larger role in the regional security and stability in the Gulf, where New Delhi enjoys special relations with both Abu Dhabi and Jerusalem.

## Conclusion:

- In order to bring peace in the region as they have claimed, the signatories and the US should **address the more structural issues**, which include the unresolved question of Palestine.