

# [***How Business Leaders Handle Politics From Xi And Netanyahu To Trump And The J6 Band***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67V2-D791-JBCM-F4BD-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Ian Bremmer sees an increasingly perilous landscape for U.S. companies. As leaders navigate strongman ***politics*** in India, Israel, Russia and China among others they're nervous, too.

**Body**

**Here s an excerpt from this week s CxO newsletter. To get it to your inbox, .**

Now that Donald J. Trump and the J6 Prison Choir have catapulted ahead of Miley Cyrus withtheir new song Justice For All and the world waits to see whether the former President will be arrested it seems like a good time to contemplate how business leaders navigate this strange new world of ***politics***. (**Stay alert to all those .**)

Balancing political preferences and professional priorities is an easier task when everyone agrees on common principles like freedom of choice and the rule of law. But what happens when the party that s preaching all those tax breaks and business-friendly policies is also descending into populist rhetoric and anti-democratic actions?

**A Mixed Bag In Modi s India**

That s what we re seeing right now from leaders like Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose Bharatiya Janata Party has been dubbed the most important foreign political party in the world byacademic Walter Russell Mead, Modi s vigorous pursuit of economic and structural reform has been matched by rhetoric and policies that undermine India s longstanding reputation as a secular, pluralist society especially for its Muslim and Christian minorities.

As a result, when I speak to business leaders about India a country that I love and have visited many times over my career they more often voice concerns about rising Hindu nationalism than curiosity about the structural improvements that should be drawing them to this young and diverse nation of 1.4 billion people. The fraudallegations against billionaire Gautam Adanihave also put his close ties to Modi in a negative light, though contributor William Pesek thinks it could ultimatelyhelp the country s reform process.

**Israelis Battle Netanyahu**

For a glimpse of what can happen when a national leader facing corruption charges manages to squeak into office, look to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The four-time national leader formed a right-wing coalition government while still facing charges of fraud and breach of trust. One of his first moves: overhaul the country s judicial system, essentially stripping the Supreme Court of any real power. The proposal was so audaciously self-serving and anti-democratic that even thecountry s elite air force pilots joined in the mass protests. (Netanyahu has apparently softened some of the strongman tactics amid the outrage and pressure from allies.)

I recently spoke with Gong.io CEO and cofounder Amit Bendov, who believes the legislation would undermine Israel s democracy and the economic future. He likened it to having two wolves and a sheep deciding what to eat for lunch. (**Hint: the sheep loses.**) I really believe this could destroy the country, It s beyond ***politics***, Bendov says. ***Politics*** is like, should we be in the West Bank? This is changing the game: changing the constitution.

All innovation, science or technology, comes from casting a doubt, asking a question, from questioning authority, he adds. When you have an environment that supports authority and loyalty and do as I say, that s when you lose innovation. Click here for more on his views about Israel, AI, and the future of innovation in our interview for Forbes Talks.

**The Latest On Maximum Xi And Rogue Russia**

In terms of immediate geopolitical risk, the biggest external threats to U.S. business remain Russia and China. In addition to the human tragedy and disruption from the war in Ukraine, there are thesigns of a growing alliance and animosity against all things American. With China stepping in to broker a deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran, it s no wonder U.S. companies are racing to build their supply chains in other parts of the world.

I can t think of a better person to make sense of what s happening on that front than Ian Bremmer, the noted political scientist and head of the Eurasia Group. Click on the interview above for his thoughts.

**America s Missing Middle**

The toughest challenge, for U.S. companies big and small, may be navigating the polarized political climate at home. The nuance of neaders who gravitate towards the center, like New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu, doesn t spark passions in the same way as angry and blunt points of view. (Here s an interview with Sununu about the state of ***politics*** and his interest in being GOP nominee.) Moreover, in an age of loyalty ***politics***, throwing darts at both parties can make both sides think you re not on their team.

So what s a business leader to do? Some have taken a stance on hot-button issues, such assupporting abortion coverage for employeesor vowing to hire refugees andeven pair them with military veterans.

Others have chosen to double down on their own beliefs, and even seek out like-minded employees and customers who share their views. (Red Balloon CEO Andrew Crapuchettes has created a site where Trump supporters can go to find jobs, although he insists that his approach is aimed at people on either end of the political spectrum.)

Is that the answer to rising extremism and political anger? Let s hope not. Necessity may be the mother of invention, but fear is the father that can hold it back. Let s continue the conversation and have a great week.

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