



West Bank Settlements

Why in News

The United States has declared that it does not consider Israeli settlements on the West Bank a violation of international law.

- The U.S.A.'s stand is different from that of most countries on the issue.
 - Even the USA considered the West Bank settlements as **illegitimate since 1978**. However in 2016, the US did not veto a resolution that called for an end to Israeli settlements.
- The current stand of the USA **reverses four decades of U.S. policy**.

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- West Bank (about one and a half times the size of Goa) is a **landlocked territory** in West Asia. It also contains a **significant section of the western dead sea**.
- It was captured by Jordan after the [Arab-Israeli War \(1948\)](#) but Israel snatched it back during the **Six-Day War of 1967** and **has occupied it ever since**.
- At present, **there are around 130 formal Israeli settlements** along with **26 lakh Palestinians** at West Bank.

Global Stand over West Bank Settlements

- **Majority of the countries'** consider West Bank settlements **illegal** and an **occupied territory**.
- The [United Nations General Assembly](#), the [UN Security Council](#), and the [International Court of Justice](#) have declared that the West Bank settlements are violative of the **Fourth Geneva Convention**.
- Under the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949), an occupying power **"shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies"**.

Way Forward

- Under the Oslo Accords of the 1990s, both Israel and the Palestinians agreed that the status of settlements would be decided by negotiations. But the negotiations process has been all but dead for several years now. Thus the world at large needs to come together for a peaceful solution for Israel-Palestine conflict.

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