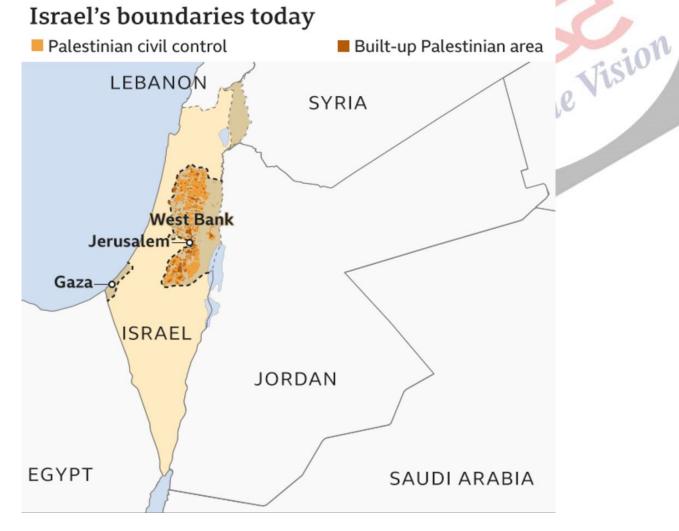


India's De-Hyphenated Policy: Israel and Palestine

Why in News

Recently, on the sidelines of the <u>COP26 summit in Glasgow</u>, the Prime Minister of Palestine called for India's support to play a **stabilising role in West Asia** by maintaining cooperation with **all related parties.**

- This statement is significant in the context of India's External Affairs Minister visit to Israel, whereby he **excluded a trip to the Palestinian territory.**
- India in the recent year has been following a <u>dehyphenation policy</u> between Israel and Palestine.



Key Points

India's Policy Towards Israel and Palestine:

- The <u>Israeli-Palestinian conflict</u> dates back to the end of the nineteenth century. It is linked to the **age-old tussle over identity and land** starting with Jerusalem.
 - In 1947, the <u>United Nations (UN)</u> adopted **Resolution 181**, known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide the **British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states.**
 - This led to unresolved conflict between Israel and Palestine.
- Traditionally, India's foreign policy towards Israel and Palestine has been a hyphenated foreign policy.
 - However, hyphenating the ties with Israel linking them to ties with the Palestinian Authority - essentially prevented India from pursuing a pragmatic policy of what was in India's best interests.
 - In recent times, India is being seen shifted towards a **Dehyphenation of Policy.**

Dehyphenation of Policy:

- India's policy on the longest running conflict in the world has gone from being unequivocally pro-Palestine for the first four decades, to a tense balancing act with its three-decade-old friendly ties with Israel.
 - In recent years, India's position has also been perceived as pro-Israel.
- In 2017, in an unprecedented move, India's PM visited only Israel and not Palestine.
 - Then, the recent visit of the Prime Minister to Palestine, Oman and the UAE is again a continuation of similar policy.
- This departure from earlier policy and endorsing an independent policy towards these two rivals is called the **de-hyphenation in India's foreign policy.**
 - It means India's relationship with Israel would stand on its own merits, independent and separate from India's relationship with the Palestinians.
 - The de-hypenhation is **actually a careful balancing act**, with India shifting from one side to another as the situation demands.
- As India moves towards becoming a larger player in global politics and economics, these pre-existing policies are increasingly in need of review, and de-hyphenating Israel and Palestine was a process long past its due date.
- In recent years, India has broken the tradition of supporting Palestine at the UN.
 - In 2019, India voted in favour of Israel at the **ECOSOC** (**Economic and Social Council**) to deny observer status to a Palestinian organisation named Shahed.
 - Further, India abstained during the voting on a resolution calling for investigation into Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip at the <u>Human Rights Council</u>.

Palestine Call For India:

- India had a historic tradition of supporting the rights of the Palestinian people. Palestine
 wants India's technical support to be "parallel to the political support".
- It wants India to reaffirm supporting the Palestinian people's right to selfdetermination and the establishment of an independent State of Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital.

Way Forward

- India's role in multilateral organisations requires "strenuous efforts in cooperation with all related parties to achieve security and stability in the Middle East and West Asia".
- India is currently serving as a non-permanent member of the <u>United Nations Security Council</u> for 2021-22 and was re-elected to the **Human Rights Council for the 2022-24**. India should use these multilateral forums to act as a mediator to resolve the Israel-Palestine issue.

Source: TH

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