



India's De-Hyphenated Policy: Israel and Palestine

Why in News

Recently, on the sidelines of the [COP26 summit in Glasgow](#), 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 [dehyphenation policy](#) between Israel and Palestine.

Israel's boundaries today

■ Palestinian civil control

■ Built-up Palestinian area



Key Points

- **India's Policy Towards Israel and Palestine:**

- The [Israeli-Palestinian conflict](#) 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 [United Nations \(UN\)](#) 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-hyphenation 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 [Human Rights Council](#).

- **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 self-determination 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 [United Nations Security Council 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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