



West Bank Settlements: Israel

For Prelims: Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Golan Heights

For Mains: Arab-Israeli War (1948), Arab-Israeli conflict

Why in News?

Recently, the **Israel's Supreme Court** has rejected a petition against the eviction of more than **1,000 Palestinian inhabitants of a rural part** of the **occupied West Bank** in an area which Israel has **designated for military exercises**.

- Recently, tensions flared up again at [Jerusalem's al-Aqsa Mosque](#) between the Palestinians and Israeli police.



What was the Judgement?

- The judgment has paved the way for the demolition of **eight small villages in a rocky, arid area near Hebron** known to **Palestinians as Masafer Yatta** and to **Israelis as the South Hebron Hills**.
- Masafer Yatta residents and Israeli rights groups say that **many of the Palestinian families have been permanently residing in the 3,000 hectares area** since before Israel captured the West Bank, in the [1967 Six-Day War](#).

What is West Bank?

- West Bank 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.
- The **West Bank is sandwiched between Israel and Jordan.**
 - One of its major cities is **Ramallah, the de facto administrative capital of Palestine.**
- At present, there are around **130 formal Israeli settlements along with 26 lakh Palestinians at West Bank.**
- Masafer Yatta is in the **60% of the territory where the Palestinian Authority** is prohibited from operating.
- The Palestinians want the **West Bank to form the main part of their future state.**

What was the Six-Day War 1967?

- The Six-Day War was a **brief, but bloody conflict fought in June 1967 between Israel and the Arab states of Egypt, Syria and Jordan.**
- Israel seized the **Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria.**
- Since 1967, the lands Israel seized in the Six-Day War have been at the center of efforts to end the **Arab-Israeli conflict.**
- Even though Israel returned the **Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in 1982 and withdrew from Gaza in 2005,** the status of the **Golan Heights and the West Bank continues to be a stumbling block in Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.**

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. The area known as 'Golan Heights' sometimes appears in the news in the context of the events related to (2015)

- (a) Central Asia
- (b) Middle East
- (c) South-East Asia
- (d) Central Africa

Ans: (b)

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