



Mains Practice Question

Q. Despite the goodwill that exists between India and Israel, consider the significant contribution that India made to the cause of Palestine. Elucidate (250 words)

20 Dec, 2022 GS Paper 2 International Relations

Approach

- Start your answer by briefly describing recent Indo-Israel initiatives.
- Discuss the contribution made by India to the Palestinian cause.
- Conclude accordingly.

Introduction

India's support for the Palestinian cause is an integral part of the nation's foreign policy, despite having strong relations with Israel, India has always played an active role in extending support for the Palestinian cause across various multilateral fora.

Body

Recently the defense ties between India and Israel had strengthened significantly in recent years like as follows:

- **India-Israel initiatives:**
 - **Economic:** Israel is India's third largest trading Partner in Asia.
 - **Defense:** India is largest buyer of military equipment from Israel E.g., Phalon AWACS, Searcher-II (early warning systems).
 - **Science & Technology:** India-Israel Industrial R&D and Technological innovation Fund (IF) at its 8th Governing Body meeting.
 - Further, Israel has also joined India led International Solar alliance to Scale up Renewable Energy.

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Israel's boundaries today



▪ India Palestine Relations:

- **History:** India was one of the first countries to recognize the Palestine state in 1988.
 - India also voted in favor of Palestine for its acceptance full member of UNESCO.
- **Trade:** India-Palestine bilateral trade is accounted up to USD 40 million.
- **Indian Assistance:** One time project assistance worth USD 42.1 million for Palestinian Nation Building in Education, Health, Women Empowerment and capacity building.
 - **Education:** Apart from the strong political support to the Palestinian cause at bilateral and international levels, India has been extending various forms of economic assistance to the Palestinian people. Government of India supported the construction of **Jawaharlal Nehru Library at the Al Azhar University in Gaza city and the Mahatma Gandhi Library-cum-Student Activity Centre** at the Palestine Technical College at Deir Al Balah in the Gaza Strip.
 - **Financial:** So far, India has extended budgetary support of US\$ 30 million to Palestine.
 - India enhanced its annual contribution towards UN Relief and Works Agency in the Near East (UNRWA) from USD 1.25 Million to USD 5 Million in the backdrop of financial crisis being faced by UNRWA.
 - **Diplomatic:** In the 1970s, India rallied behind the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its leader Yasser Arafat as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.
 - Further, in 1975, India became the first non-Arab country to recognize the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and invited it to open an office in Delhi.
- 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.
- Though India Share multi-mode of ethnicity and sympathy with people of Palestine, but in the recent past Israel-Palestine conflict had compelled India to de-hyphenate its foreign policy related to Israel-Palestine and this helped India in maintaining relations with both the

countries separately on their merits.

Conclusion

India's role in multilateral organizations requires "strenuous efforts in cooperation with all related parties to achieve security and stability in the Middle East and West Asia".

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