



Date – 10 August 2022

Israel and Palestine



- Israel and Palestine recently ended a ceasefire after three days of violence that killed dozens of people in both countries.
- Earlier this year, tensions escalated between Palestinians and Israeli police at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
- These recurring conflicts are part of the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict.

Current Conflict:

Reason for conflict:

- Israeli planes hit targets (leaders of Islamic Jihad) in Gaza.
- In response, the Iranian-backed Palestinian Jihad terrorist group fired hundreds of rockets at Israel.

- Islamic Jihad has fewer fighters and supporters than Hamas.

Israeli Action:

- Israel began its campaign with an attack on an Islamic Jihad leader and another prominent leader with the intent to attack followed.

Gaza Action:

- According to the Israeli army, terrorists fired about 580 rockets towards Israel in Gaza.
- Israel intercepted many of them and killed two who were fired towards Jerusalem.

UNSC meeting:

- The UN Security Council scheduled an emergency meeting over the violence.
- China, which will preside over the council for August 2022, scheduled the session in response to a request from the United Arab Emirates, which represents Arab countries in the council, as well as China, France, Ireland and Norway.

Disputes between Israel and Palestine:

The dispute over Jerusalem:

- Jerusalem has been at the center of the Israel-Palestine conflict.
- According to the United Nations (UN) original partition plan of 1947, Jerusalem was proposed as an international city.
- However, in the First Arab-Israeli War of 1948, the Israelis occupied the western half of the city, and the eastern part, including the ancient city, where Haram al-Sharif is located, was occupied by Jordan.
- After the Six-Day War in 1967, there was an armed conflict between Israel and a coalition of Arab states that mainly included Jordan, Syria and Egypt, the Jordanian Ministry of Waqf, which until then controlled the Al-Aqsa Mosque, stopped taking care of this mosque.

- Israel annexed Jordan-controlled East Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War.
- Israel expanded settlements in East Jerusalem after the annexation.
- Israel views the entire city as its “unified, eternal capital”, while the Palestinian leadership has maintained that it will not accept any settlement for a future Palestinian state unless East Jerusalem is recognized as its capital. It is not recognized as the capital.

Recent Activity:

Al-Aqsa Mosque and Sheikh Jarrah:

- In May 2021 the Israeli armed forces attacked the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem’s Haram al-Sharif, before a march to commemorate Israel’s occupation of the eastern part of the city in 1967 by Zionist nationalists.
- Sheikh Jarrah’s threat to evict dozens of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem added to the crisis.

West Bank Settlement:

- Israel’s Supreme Court has dismissed a petition against the eviction of more than 1,000 Palestinian residents from rural parts of the occupied West Bank in an area Israel has selected for military exercises.
- The decision paved the way for the demolition of eight small villages in a rocky, dry area near Hebron known as Masfar Yatta by the Palestinians and the South Hebron Hills to the Israelis.

India’s stand on the crisis:

- India has been following a de-hyphenation policy in recent years to maintain relations between Israel and Palestine.
- India’s policy towards the longest-running conflict in the world was clearly pro-Palestinian for the first four decades but relations with Palestine have been strained due to over three decades of friendly relations with Israel.

- In an unprecedented move in 2017, the Prime Minister of India visited only Israel and not Palestine.
- The recent visit of the Prime Minister to Palestine (2018), Oman and the United Arab Emirates is again a continuation of a similar policy.

Swadeep Kumar

India's renewable energy



- The Government of India has set a target to expand India's renewable energy installed capacity to 500 GW by 2030.
- India has set a target of reducing the country's total estimated carbon emissions by 1 billion tonnes by 2030, reducing the carbon intensity of the country's economy by 45% by the end of the decade, achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2070.
- India has achieved significant photovoltaic capacity over the past decade, from less than 10 MW in 2010 to over 50 GW in 2022.
- The total installed renewable energy capacity in India is 151.4 GW.

The following are the details of the total installed capacity for renewable energy:

- **Wind Power:**08 GW
- **Solar Power:**34 GW
- **Biopower:**61 GW
- **Small Hydro Power:**83 GW
- **Large Hydro:**51 GW

Current Solar Power Capacity:

- 45 solar parks with a total capacity of 37 GW have been approved in India.
- Solar parks at Pavagadh (2 GW), Kurnool (1 GW) and Bhadla-II (648 MW) are among the top 5 operational solar parks in the country with a capacity of 7 GW.
- The world's largest renewable energy park of 30 GW solar-wind hybrid project is being set up in Gujarat.

Challenges:

Excessive dependence on imports:

- India does not have sufficient module and PV cell manufacturing capacity.
- Current solar module manufacturing capacity is limited to 15 GW per annum, while domestic production is only around 3.5 GW.
- Further, out of 15 GW of module manufacturing capacity, only 3-4 GW of modules are technically competitive and eligible for deployment in grid-based projects.

Size and technology:

- Most of the Indian industry is based on the M2 type of wafer size, approximately 156×156 mm², while the global industry is already moving to the M10 and M12 sizes, which are 182×182 mm² and 210×210 mm².
- Large size wafer is advantageous as it is cost effective and has low power loss.

Raw Material Supply:

- The most expensive raw material silicon wafer is not manufactured in India.
- It currently imports 100% silicon wafers and about 80% cells.
- Apart from this, almost 100% of the other major raw materials like silver and aluminum metal pastes are also imported for establishing electrical connectivity.

Government Initiatives:

PLI Scheme to Support Manufacturing:

- The scheme has provisions to support setting up of integrated manufacturing units of high efficiency solar PV modules by providing Production Linked Incentives (PLIs) on the sale of such solar PV modules.

Household Material Requirement (DCR):

- Some of the existing schemes of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) include Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSU) Scheme Phase-II, PM-KUSUM, and Grid Connected Rooftop Solar Program Phase-II, with government subsidies. It has been made mandatory to source solar PV cells and modules from domestic sources.
- In addition, the government has made it mandatory for grid connected state/central government projects to procure modules only from the approved list of manufacturers (ALMM).

Imposition of Basic Customs Duty on Import of Solar PV Cells and Modules:

- The government has announced imposition of Basic Custom Duty (BCD) on the import of solar PV cells and modules.
- In addition, it has imposed a duty of 40% on import of modules and 25% on import of SAIL.
- Basic customs duty is a duty levied on the value of the commodity at a specified rate.

Revised Special Incentive Package Scheme (M-SIPS):

- It is a scheme of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- The scheme mainly provides subsidy for capital expenditure on PV cells and modules – 20% for investment in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and 25% in non-SEZs.

Swadeep Kumar

