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# CURRENT AFFAIRS

**Date: 20 October 2023**

## GAZA STRIP AND RAFAH BORDER

*This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Gaza Strip and Rafah Border". This topic has relevance in the "Geography" section of the UPSC CSE exam.*

### For Prelims:

Where is Gaza Strip?

Where is Rafah Border?

### For Mains:

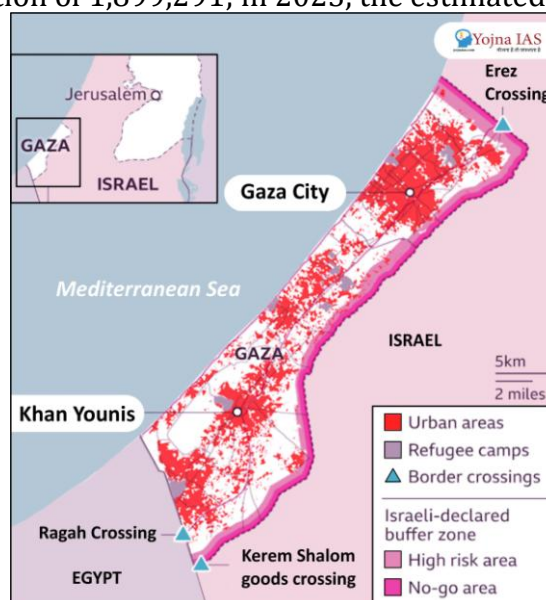
GS2: International Relations

### Why in the news?

The Gaza Strip has witnessed intense airstrikes for over a week following Israel's response to an unprecedented terror attack by the Palestinian militant group Hamas on October 7th.

### Gaza Strip Overview

- The Gaza Strip is a 140-square-mile (363 square km) territory along the Mediterranean Sea, positioned northeast of the Sinai Peninsula.
- It's densely populated but not officially recognised as part of any country.
- The region's population growth is among the highest globally, with nearly half in refugee camps.
- In 2017, it had a population of 1,899,291; in 2023, the estimated population is 2,226,544.



## Historical Context

- **1947 UN Partition Plan:** The Gaza Strip is one of two Palestinian territories, stemming from the UN's 1947 "Partition Plan for Palestine." It became a point of contention after Israel's creation in 1948 and the Arab-Israeli war.
- **Israeli Occupation:** After the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel took control of Gaza and the West Bank. The United Nations classifies Israel as an occupying state in Palestinian territories.
- **Hamas Control:** In 2006, Hamas won elections in Gaza and has maintained political control. Hamas, designated a terrorist organisation by the U.S., seeks an independent Islamic state but doesn't recognise Israel.

## Blockade and Humanitarian Crisis

- **Longstanding Blockade:** Since 2007, Israel has maintained an air, land, and sea blockade on Gaza, often called the "world's largest open-air prison." Palestinian movement is heavily restricted.
- **Economic Hardship:** The Gaza Strip's economy has been severely impacted by restrictions on the movement of people, leading to an unemployment rate exceeding 40%. Over 60% of Gazans face food insecurity, and around 80% rely on international aid.
- **Worsening Conditions:** Following Hamas' terror attack on October 7, Israel imposed a total siege, further cutting off vital supplies such as food, water, and electricity, pushing Gaza to the brink. The UN warned of water shortages and a fragile healthcare system.

## Recent Developments

- **Escalating Conflict:** Ongoing conflict between Israel and Gaza, along with Israeli airstrikes, has killed thousands of Palestinians over the years, resulting in displacement and destruction.
- **Humanitarian Consequences:** Recent hostilities have caused mass evacuations, impacting the population's well-being. The UN described movement on this scale as impossible without severe humanitarian repercussions.
- **Criticism on Both Sides:** The UN has condemned both Hamas' terror attacks and Israel's attacks on Palestinian civilians, as well as the tightening of the blockade.

## Rafah Border Crossing

- The Rafah Border Crossing is the only closing point between Egypt and the Gaza Strip.
- It gained significance due to Israel's complete blockade of Gaza.
- Egypt administers this crossing, providing a route that bypasses Israeli territory.
- This passage is vital for direct humanitarian aid access to Gaza from outside Israel.
- Recently, a deal between the US and Egypt was announced to reopen this border crossing, enabling aid to reach Palestine.

### Sources:

**Palestinians report heavy shelling in south Gaza towns where civilians are seeking refuge – The Hindu**

## Q1. With reference Gaza Strip, consider the following statements:

1. The Gaza Strip is a territory located south of the Sinai Peninsula along the Mediterranean Sea.
2. It is officially recognised as part of Israel but contested by the state of Palestine.
3. Hamas has political control over the Gaza.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) None

**Answer: (c)**

**Q2. Consider the following:**

**Border Crossings – Countries/ Regions**

1. San Ysidro – US – Canada
2. Panmunjom – North Korea- South Korea
3. Rafah – Gaza- Israel
4. Allenby Bridge – West Bank – Jordan

**How many of the abovementioned pairs are correct?**

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All Four

**Answer: (b)**

Gaurav Nikumbh

## **DELHI-MEERUT REGIONAL RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM (RRTS)**

*This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “ Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)”. This topic has relevance in the Infrastructure section of the UPSC CSE exam.*

**For Mains:**

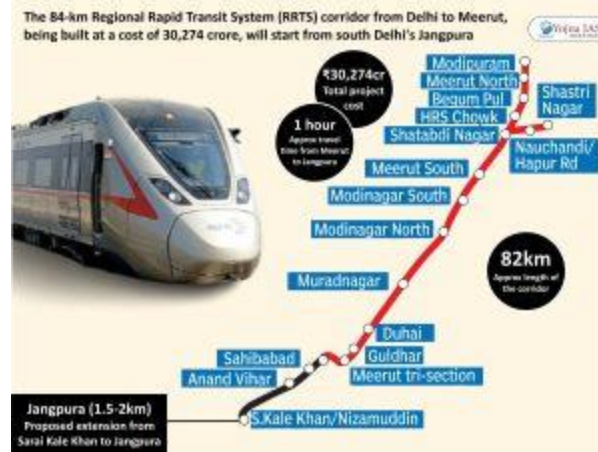
*GS 2: Infrastructure*

**Why in the news?**

In a recent development, the Prime Minister has officially launched the Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS), known as ‘RapidX,’ featuring contemporary conveniences and comprehensive infrastructure.

• **Delhi-Meerut RRTS Stretch:**

- The RapidX (Also Known as NaMo Bharat) Train is slated to operate on a 17-kilometer segment of the Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS).
- The overall length of the RRTS extends to 84 kilometers.
- The RapidX Train is anticipated to maintain an average speed of 100 kilometers per hour.



### Stations and Route:

- The train will halt at five stations, each adorned with turquoise and beige colors: Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Guldhar, Duhai, and Duhai Depot.
- This stretch is part of the larger 82-kilometer Delhi-Meerut corridor.

### Train Composition:

- The RapidX Train comprises five standard coaches, with one dedicated to women, along with a premium coach.
- Passengers can purchase QR code-based paper tickets using currency notes, bank cards, or the unified payments interface (UPI) at station ticket counters or ticket vending machines (TVMs).

### Key Features of the RapidX Train

- **Platform Screen Doors (PSDs):** Each station is equipped with platform screen doors integrated with the train doors and signaling systems.
- **Safety Mechanism:** The train's departure from the station is contingent on ensuring that both the main doors and PSDs are securely closed.
- **Manual Door Locks:** Notably, all doors on the train incorporate unique manual locks that passengers can engage to open the doors at a station should they fail to open automatically.

**Source:**

PM flags off first train of Delhi-Meerut RRTS service – The Hindu

**Q.1** Regarding the 'RapidX' train and the Delhi-Meerut RRTS, Consider the following statements:

1. The 'RapidX' train is expected to maintain an average speed of 200 kilometers per hour.
2. Passengers can purchase paper tickets using currency notes, bank cards, and UPI at station ticket counters, but QR codes are not yet accepted.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**ANSWER: C**

**Q.2 Explain the pivotal role of modern rapid transit systems in promoting sustainable urban development, reducing congestion, and fostering economic growth in metropolitan regions.**

**Rishabh**



**Yojna IAS**  
योजना है तो सफलता है