



DAILY EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

TOPIC

**GAZA PEACE PLAN AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA**

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Context

- Recently, US President Donald Trump unveiled a **20-point peace proposal**, dubbed as '**Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict**' aimed at ending the protracted war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

About Gaza Conflict

- Gaza, a **narrow coastal strip in West Asia**, often referred to as the Middle East.
 - It was once a thriving mosaic of **Arab, Turkish, Persian, and Jewish cultures**.
- The **Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916)** and the **Balfour Declaration by Britain (1917)** laid the **groundwork for territorial fragmentation** and **Zionist settlement in Palestine**.
- Gaza became a **focal point of resistance** following Israel's establishment in 1948 and subsequent wars, and has **witnessed multiple wars** with thousands of casualties and widespread destruction.
- The current crisis escalated on October 7, 2023, when **Hamas, the Palestinian militant group governing Gaza**, launched a surprise attack on Israel, killing over 1,200 people and taking 250 hostages.
 - It has drawn in actors like **Hezbollah (Lebanon), Iran, and the US**, turning Gaza into a geopolitical battleground.



Core Elements of the Gaza Peace Plan Announced By Trump

- Hamas Disarmament and Amnesty:** The Plan demands **disarmament and surrender of Hamas** and relinquish control of Gaza.
 - Members pledging peaceful coexistence will be granted amnesty, while those wishing to leave Gaza will receive safe passage to countries such as Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, or Iran.
- International Stabilization Force (ISF):** A temporary **International Stabilization Force (ISF)**, supported by the **US, Arab partners, Jordan, and Egypt**, will **replace Israeli troops in Gaza**.
 - The ISF aims to secure borders, prevent arms smuggling, and train vetted Palestinian police. The **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** will **gradually withdraw**, maintaining only a 'security perimeter presence' until full stability is ensured.
- Transitional Governance:** Governance of Gaza will shift to a **technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee**, supervised by an **international 'Board of Peace'** led by Trump himself.
- Humanitarian Relief and Reconstruction:** The plan allows unrestricted humanitarian aid, focusing on **infrastructure rehabilitation, hospitals, food supply chains, and road clearance**.
 - Aid will be delivered via the **UN and Red Crescent** without interference.
- Hostage-Prisoner Exchange:** All hostages must be returned within 72 hours of Israel's acceptance.
 - In exchange, Israel will release **250 life-term prisoners and 1,700 Gazans detained post-October 7, including all women and children**.
 - Remains of hostages will be exchanged at a ratio of 1 Israeli to 15 Palestinians.
- Regional and International Guarantees:** Eight countries — Qatar, Jordan, UAE, Indonesia, Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt — have welcomed the plan.
 - China and Russia expressed support.
 - Guarantees will be provided to ensure Gaza remains free from future militant threats.

Challenges to Implementing Trump's Gaza Peace Plan

- Hamas's Reluctance to Disarm and Cede Power:** Hamas's deep-rooted presence, ideological stance and role in armed resistance in the region are seen as the most formidable hurdle.

- **Regional Opposition to Forced Resettlement:** Trump's suggestion that Palestinians could be relocated outside Gaza was **swiftly rejected by key regional players like Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia**.
 - ♦ These nations emphasized the right of Palestinians to remain in Gaza, opposing any form of displacement.
- **Security and Sovereignty Concerns:** The **proposed plan** for **International Stabilization Force (ISF)** until Gaza is deemed safe could be interpreted as a **de facto Israeli occupation**, undermining Palestinian sovereignty and fueling distrust.
- **Clarity and Operational Details:** The plan lacks timelines, maps, and enforcement mechanisms, raising doubts about its feasibility.
 - ♦ Trump did not take questions during the announcement, leaving many aspects of the plan ambiguous.

Political Implications of Trump's Gaza Peace Plan

- **Israel's Political Calculus:** The plan demands Hamas's complete disarmament and exclusion from Gaza's future governance, a stance that could deepen internal Israeli debates over long-term strategy.
- **Palestinian Governance Shift:** Gaza would be **governed by an apolitical Palestinian committee** under international oversight, **sidelining both Hamas and the Palestinian Authority** until reforms are complete.
 - ♦ The plan hints at a 'credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination', a politically sensitive proposition that could reignite debates over a two-state solution.
- **Regional Diplomacy and Realignment:** Egypt, Jordan, and Qatar are expected to facilitate Hamas's safe exit and support reconstruction, signaling a shift toward more active Arab mediation.
 - ♦ The plan implicitly **sidelines Iran, which backs Hamas**, potentially altering the balance of influence in West Asia.
- **For Trump:** The plan could boost Trump's legacy and ambitions for a **Nobel Peace Prize**, reminiscent of the **Oslo Accords**, if successful.
 - ♦ However, it carries a **business dimension**, with **opportunities for large-scale reconstruction projects in Gaza**.

Implications on India

- **Diplomatic Alignment and Global Standing:** India welcomed the plan, calling it a 'viable pathway to long-term and sustainable peace' in West Asia.
 - ♦ India's endorsement reflects its balanced diplomacy—maintaining ties with both Israel and Arab nations like Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.
- **Strategic and Security Interests:** The plan's emphasis on **counterterrorism and deradicalization** aligns with **India's own security concerns**, especially regarding cross-border extremism.
 - ♦ Israel noted that the plan reflects **shared values between India and Israel**, including the fight against terrorism.
- **Economic and Infrastructure Opportunities:** India's expertise in infrastructure development could play a **key role in Gaza's reconstruction**.
 - ♦ **Peace in West Asia** would boost **India's ambitions for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor**, facilitating trade and connectivity.
- **Regional Stability and Diaspora Welfare:** West Asia hosts over 9 million Indians, making regional stability crucial for their safety and economic well-being.
 - ♦ The region **supplies about 80% of India's oil**, so peace could stabilize energy prices and ensure uninterrupted supply chains.
 - ♦ However, **Pakistan's prominent role in the Gaza plan** raises concerns for India.

Source: IE

Daily Mains Practice Question

[Q] Evaluate the key components of the recent Gaza Peace Plan and discuss the potential political, humanitarian, and regional implications of its implementation.