

Israel-Hezbollah Ceasefire Deal



US-FRANCE BROKERED ISRAEL & HEZB CEASEFIRE: WHAT'S IN IT?

Context:

- **The Israeli cabinet** has finally approved a **ceasefire deal** between **Israel and Hezbollah**.
- The deal, which came into effect on **November 27**, brought relief to the people in **southern Lebanon** who have been on the receiving end of intense Israeli airstrikes for almost **two months now**.

1. What is the Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire deal?

- A ceasefire between Israel and the Lebanese group Hezbollah has taken effect hours after United States President Joe Biden said a proposal to end the “devastating” conflict had been reached, promising to halt nearly 14 months of cross-border fighting that has killed thousands of people.
- The U.S.- and France-brokered deal, approved by Israel, calls for an initial two-month halt to fighting and requires Hezbollah to end its armed presence in southern Lebanon, while Israeli troops are to return to their side of the border.
- Nabih Berri, long-time speaker of Lebanon’s parliament and leader of the powerful Shia Amal Movement, have mediated on behalf of Hezbollah

ISRAEL ATTACKS LEBANON

Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire agreement

A ceasefire between Israel and the Lebanese group Hezbollah came into effect at 4am local time (02:00 GMT). It will be implemented over 60 days.



- As part of the ceasefire agreement, **Israel will gradually withdraw its forces from southern Lebanon over the next 60 days**, and the **Lebanese army will deploy to the territory**.
- **US president Joe Biden** released a joint statement with **French President Emmanuel Macron**, emphasising that both countries **will work with Israel and Lebanon to ensure this arrangement is fully implemented and enforced**.
- The **US and France** also committed to **lead and support international efforts for capacity-building of the Lebanese Armed Forces** as well as **economic development** throughout **Lebanon** to advance **stability and prosperity** in the region.
- **Lebanon began striking Israel on October 8, 2023, in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza**.
- At least **3,823 people have been killed** and 15,859 wounded in Israeli attacks in Lebanon since the **war on Gaza began in October last year**.

2. What are the key terms of the Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire deal?

Here is the key terms of the ceasefire deal:

The agreement is based on the terms of UNSC resolution 1701, which ended the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah.

The Israel Defense Forces to gradually withdraw to *Blue Line*, the de facto border between Lebanon and Israel, (see the graphic below) over 60 days

No foreign forces or supply of arms without consent of government

U.S and France to join existing tripartite mechanism between UNIFIL, Israel, and Lebanon, which will be monitoring violations



The agreement outlines a 60-day ceasefire

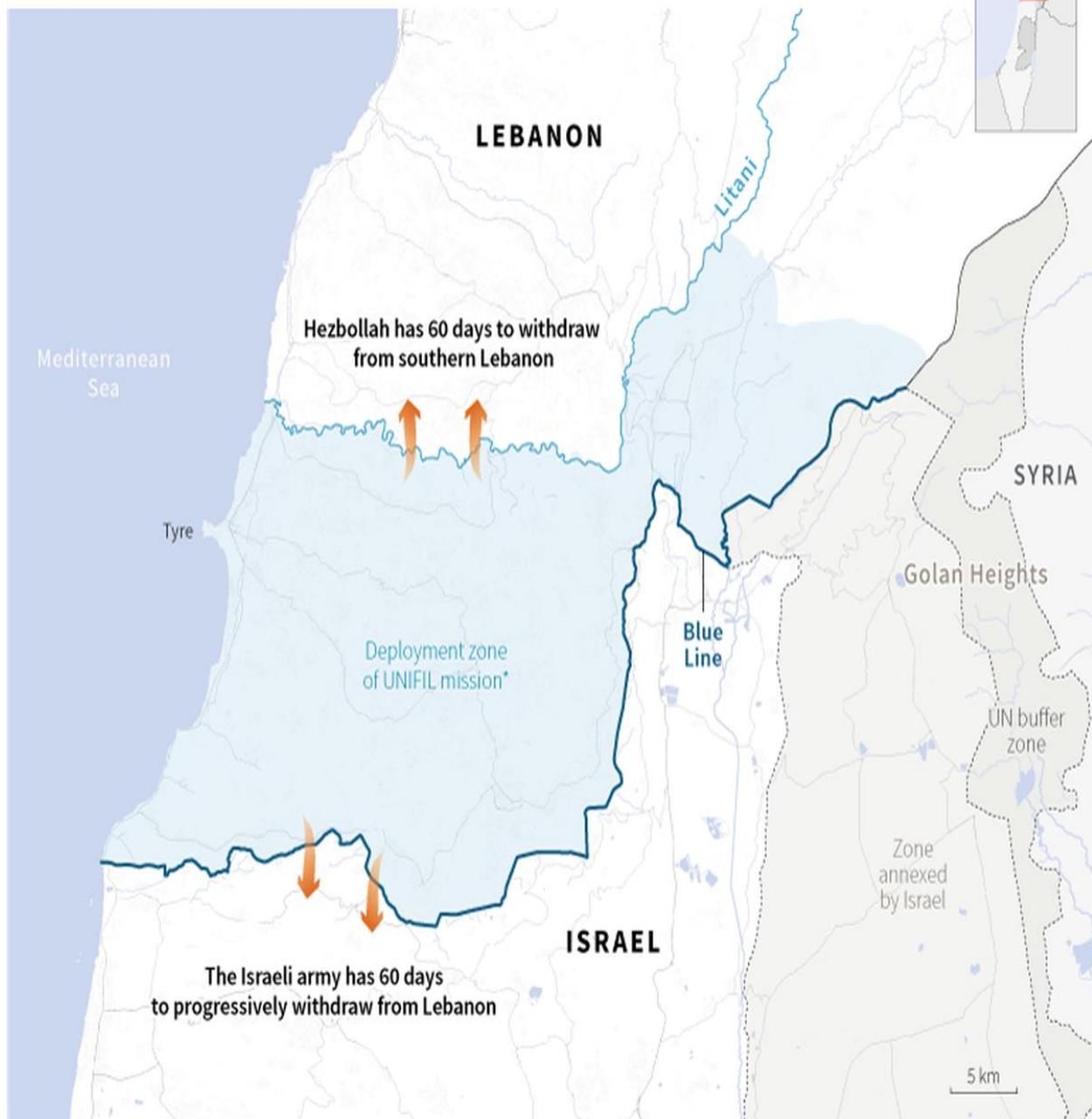
Lebanese Army to deploy at least 5,000 troops to replace IDF and Hezbollah in south Lebanon.

Hezbollah to remove all fighters and weapons from south of Litani River (see the graphic below)

- The **Blue Line** was set by the **UN in 2000** after the **end of Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon** and now serves as a **de facto border between the two countries**.

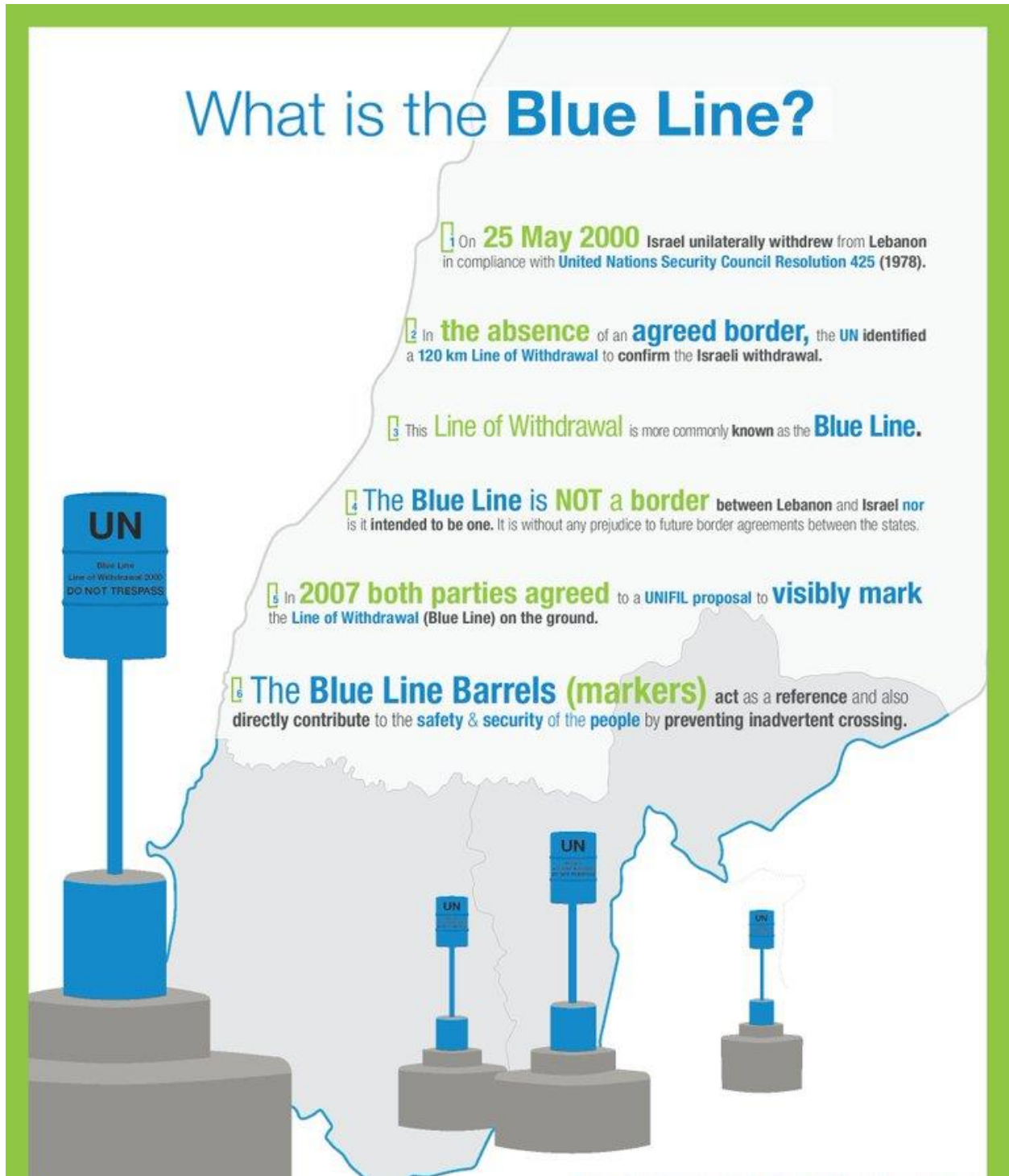
Lebanon: ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah

The agreement began on Wednesday, November 27, at 0400 in Lebanon (0200 GMT)



3. What is the Blue Line?





- The **border between Israel and Lebanon**, known as the "**Blue Line**," was set by the **United Nations in 2000** after **Israel withdrew its military from southern Lebanon**.
- It's **not an official international border** but a **demarkation line**.

- Based on various historical maps, some dating back almost a century, the **Blue Line is not a border, but a temporary “line of withdrawal” set by the UN in 2000** for the practical purpose of confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon.
- Whenever **Israeli or Lebanese authorities** wish to undertake any **activities close to the Blue Line**, **UNIFIL requests** that they provide advance notice, allowing the **UN mission to keep authorities on all sides informed, to minimise any misunderstandings** that could lead to **increased tensions**.



4. What is UNSC resolution 1701?



- The **UN Security Council resolution 1701** is the agreement that ended the **Israel-Hezbollah war of 2006** and it stipulates that the **only armed groups in the area south of Lebanon's Litani River** should be the **Lebanese army and UN peacekeeping forces** (UN Interim Force in Lebanon – UNIFIL).
- It also **prohibits Israel from encroaching on Lebanese territory by land, sea or air.**
- By the resolution, the **Council decided to take** steps to ensure peace, among them authorising an increase of force strength of the **UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to a maximum of 15,000 troops** that would, among other things, monitor the cessation of hostilities, **support Lebanese armed forces as Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon** and ensure the safe return of displaced persons.

5. Why did Israel agree to the ceasefire?



- **Israel has not agreed** to a ceasefire from a **position of strength**.
- Over the past 57 days, its **ground offensive into southern Lebanon had failed** to break through **Hezbollah's defences**, all the while incurring huge losses itself.
- The **Israeli forces** appear to be stretched thin and there has been **pressure from the US and France**.
- **Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** has outlined **three reasons** for the ceasefire.

Reason	Analysis
<p>Focus on the Iranian threat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has evidently been at least a mild fracture in Israel's civil-military framework. • Former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant (along with the IDF Chief of Staff) had been pressing for a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon. • Israel now seems to focus more on Iran which poses a serious threat to the IDF after getting support from Russia. 

<p>Give IDF time to breathe and replenish stocks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Israel’s experience of fighting in Lebanon has always been tactically effective but strategically bitter. • A long-term military presence in Lebanon would severely wear down the IDF. • Continued Israeli presence in South Lebanon would also enable a stronger re-consolidation of support for Hezbollah within Lebanon (which had been facing significant popular domestic resistance by mid-2023).
<p>Separate the Hamas and Hezbollah fronts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite the loss of its entire senior leadership and significant loss of infrastructure, Hezbollah evidently maintained the ability to strike Israel until the end. • Its most extensive bombardment of Israel with 250 rockets occurred less than two days before the ceasefire. • With Hezbollah out of the picture, Hamas is left on its own. • Israel can now increase pressure on Hamas that will help them in their sacred mission of releasing their hostages.

6. Will Hezbollah abide by the ceasefire deal?



- While the war was being fought between Israel and Hezbollah, the deal was agreed upon by Israel and Lebanon.
- It is a well-known fact that the Lebanese government does not have much hold over Hezbollah.
- Therefore, how much (if at all) will Hezbollah abide by the deal is a big question.
- In fairness, the Lebanese government had interlocutors consulting Hezbollah.
- But the final acceptance remains unclear, especially due to a clause that says Israel retains the right to strike back in case of violation.
- Also, this deal does not specify a permanent end to hostilities.
- Mahmoud Qamati, deputy chair of Hezbollah's political council, spoke soon after the announcement of the deal and stated that they want an end to the aggression, of course, but not at the expense of the sovereignty of the state referring to Israel's demand for freedom of action.

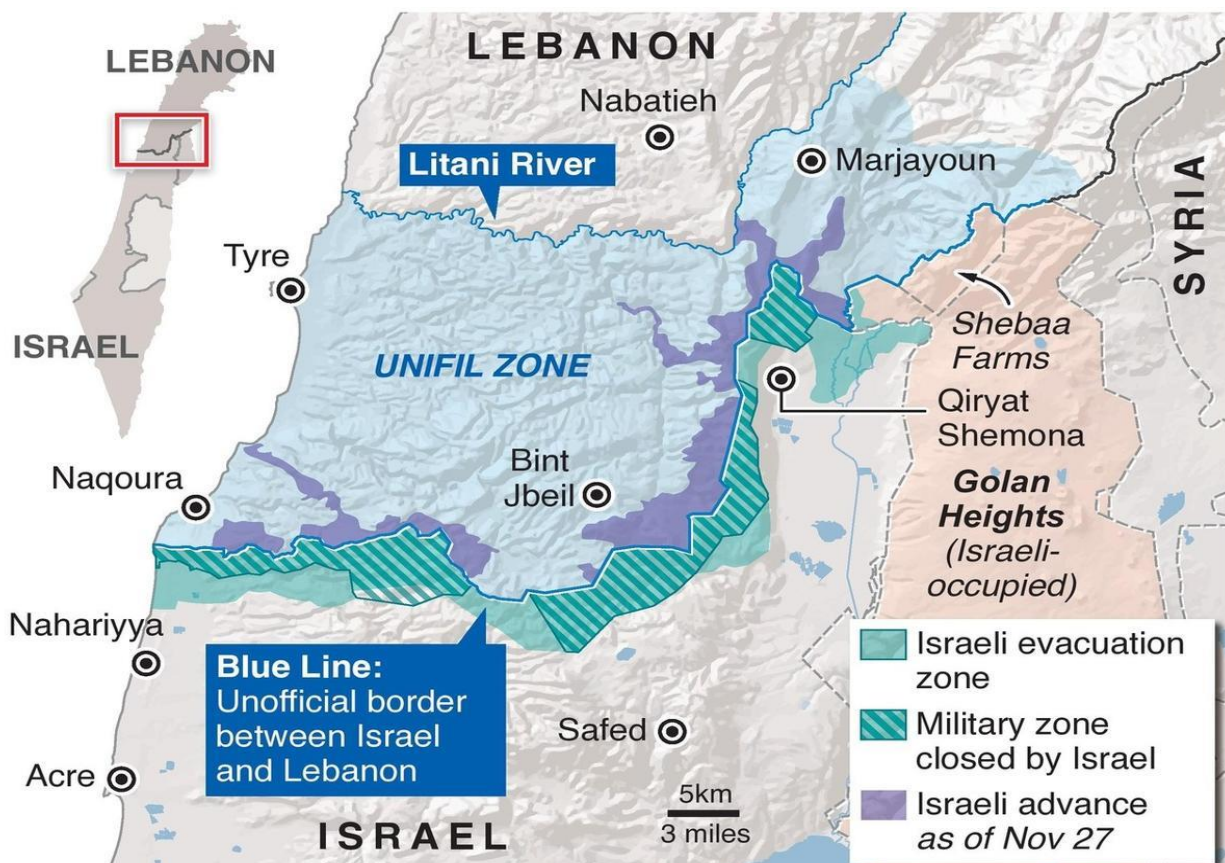
7. Can the US ensure implementation of the deal?



- The US has assured Israel and agreed to give a letter of assurances that includes support for Israeli military action against threats from Lebanese territory "according to international law."
- However, President Biden has clarified that the assurance does not imply positioning of US troops in southern Lebanon but that the US and France will assist in implementing the agreement.
- As per the plan, the US will have senior military officials operating from the embassy in Beirut to monitor the ceasefire deal in close coordination with the UN peacekeepers.
- But since at the end of the day, letters of assurance and deals are only good if they are enforceable there are uncertainties whether the deal can be implemented in a successful manner.
- Since the US is unwilling to put boots on the ground and the Lebanese government or its military is not going to become so strong overnight that it can evict Hezbollah forcibly there are clouds of fear over the deal as per the media reports.

8. What is the present situation in southern Lebanon?

- **Lebanon's army**, entrusted with ensuring the ceasefire lasts, said it had **begun deploying additional troops south of the Litani River into a region heavily bombarded by Israel.**
- The river meets the sea about 30 km (20 miles) north of the Israeli border.
- **Israel also struck eastern cities** and towns and the southern suburbs of Beirut, and **Israeli troops pushed around 6 km (4 miles) into Lebanon** in ground incursions launched in September.
- Under the ceasefire terms, **Israeli forces can remain in Lebanon for 60 days.**
- **Lebanese people** displaced from their homes due to attacks by Israeli forces have **started returning to the south of the country**, hoping that the **embryonic ceasefire deal between Hezbollah and Israel will hold.**




9. How did the world react to the Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire deal?



- The **peace deal** has been greeted with **relief in Lebanon**, where thousands of people were making their way home to the south, defying a warning from the **Israeli military** to stay away from previously evacuated areas.
- Here are some key reactions:

Countries	Reaction
Lebanon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lebanon caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati called for unity after what he said was the “most cruel phase in Lebanese history”. • He stressed the jurisdiction of the Lebanese army to provide security in the south of the country and said Israel must stay committed to the deal.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri called for all displaced Lebanese, including those abroad, to return home.
Hezbollah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lebanese armed group said it had achieved “victory” over Israel and that it would continue resistance and stand alongside Palestinian fighters. • Hezbollah did not participate in any direct talks on the ceasefire. • Berri mediated on the group’s behalf.
Israel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu thanked Biden for his “involvement in securing the ceasefire agreement”, saying also that he appreciated the US president’s “understanding that Israel will maintain its freedom of action in enforcing it”.
United Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the ceasefire is “the first ray of hope” in the regional conflict after months of escalation.
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India welcomed the Israel-Lebanon ceasefire that took effect on Wednesday, expressing hope it would lead to peace and stability in the wider region and recalling it had always advocated return to dialogue and diplomacy.

	 <p>INDIA WELCOMES ISRAEL-HEZBOLLAH CEASEFIRE DEAL</p>
<p>Iran</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed news of the end of Israel’s “aggression against Lebanon”. • Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei reaffirmed Iran’s “firm support for the Lebanese government, nation and resistance”.
<p>United States</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcing the deal on Tuesday night, President Joe Biden said it was “designed to be a permanent cessation of hostilities.” • The outgoing president described the agreement as “good news” and said the US would lead a new effort to secure a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

	
<p>Russia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it looks positively on any agreement that would put an end to the violence in Lebanon. • It said Russia hoped for a solution that would ensure equal security for all involved parties.
<p>United Kingdom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime Minister Keir Starmer praised a “long overdue” ceasefire that would “provide some measure of relief to the civilian populations” of both Israel and Lebanon.
<p>China</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed the ceasefire. • “We support all efforts conducive to easing tensions and achieving peace and welcome the agreement reached by relevant parties on a ceasefire,” said ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning.
<p>Cyprus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President Nikos Christodoulides said his country would support Lebanon “in fostering its state institutions, including the Lebanese Armed Forces”, describing the “mediating role” of the US and France as “invaluable”

European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen hailed the “very encouraging news” of the ceasefire, saying it would increase Lebanon’s “internal security and stability””.
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot underlined his country’s role in brokering the ceasefire, saying a deal would not have been possible without France’s special relationship with its former protectorate.
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foreign Minister of Germany Annalena Baerbock called the deal “a ray of hope for the entire region”.

10. What Donald Trump's return to power could mean for West Asia?



- **Donald Trump's return to the White House** raises important questions about how **his administration would approach policies in West Asia.**
- **Examining Trump's historical stances, domestic lobbies, and the current regional dynamics** suggests that his approach to West Asia will likely **involve a blend of transactionalism, strategic detachment, and selective intervention,** influenced by the **major interest groups backing his administration.**
- A **fundamental aspect** of Trump's West Asia policy will be his **unwavering support for Israel,** a stance **he has emphasized in the past** and one that likely aligns with **influential pro-Israel lobbies.**
- **Trump has stated his desire to "end the killing" in Gaza,** yet his **strong alliance with Israel** could **impede genuine mediation.**
- **Far-right factions within Israel,** such as **Itamar Ben Gvir's settler movement,** view **Trump as a potential enabler** who might look the other way if **Israel intensifies its policies in Gaza and the West Bank.**
- **Trump's position on Iran** has historically been hostile, characterised by a **"maximum pressure" campaign of sanctions and diplomatic isolation** aimed at weakening **Iran's regional influence.**
- **His approach aims to curb the "Axis of Resistance,"** a coalition of **Iran-aligned groups,** including **Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon.**
- **Unlike Biden's administration,** which has sought to balance sanction enforcement with **broader diplomatic engagements,** a **Trump presidency could adopt a stricter, sanctions-focused policy** without concern for the **implications on regional stability.**
- However, this strategy could **provoke further Iranian responses,** pushing the region toward a **perpetual cycle of provocation and retaliation.**

11. What are the implications of the Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire deal?

Israel, Hezbollah accept ceasefire deal

Israel and Lebanon have accepted a US-backed proposal to end the 13-month border conflict that spiraled into an all-out war in September with Hezbollah.



Israel: *IDF* withdrawal to **Blue Line** within 60 days – no buffer zone



Hezbollah: To remove all fighters and weapons from south of **Litani River**





Lebanon: *Lebanese Army* and *UNIFIL* to replace *IDF* and Hezbollah in south Lebanon. No foreign forces or supply of arms without consent of government.



- The **ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah** marks a critical turning point for **Lebanon** and has significant implications for the broader **Middle East conflict**.
- While it **temporarily halts hostilities**, its **long-term impact depends** on the ability of the **involved parties to address underlying tensions** and enforce the **agreement effectively**.

Implication	Analysis
<p>Respite for Lebanon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ceasefire offers Lebanon an opportunity to recover from over a year of devastation caused by the conflict. <div data-bbox="610 785 1417 1283" data-label="Figure"> <p>Israeli airstrikes on Lebanon continue The death toll from Israel's attacks on Lebanon has risen to 3,100</p> <p>IN ISRAELI ATTACKS ON LEBANON SINCE OCT. 8, 2023</p> <p>Number of people killed: 3,100</p> <p>Number of injured: 13,658</p> <p>A migration wave from the southern regions to capital Beirut and further north persists</p> <p>According to Lebanese government data, over 550,000 Lebanese have migrated to Syria</p> <p>November 7, 2024</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 3,700 Lebanese, predominantly civilians, have been killed, and close to one million people have been displaced. • As the fighting stops, Lebanon can focus on rebuilding communities in the south and restoring basic infrastructure. • Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati acknowledged the agreement as a key step towards establishing calm and stability though the road to recovery will be steep.

	
<p>For Israel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● According to experts, the deal has benefited Israel more than any other nation. ● As a result of this deal, Israel will be able to operationalize its third offshore natural gas field. ● It will not only ensure energy security for Israel but also enable it to boost its revenue through gas exports. ● The fruitful prospects of the deal for Israel are quite evident from the words of its Prime Minister, Yasir Lapid. ● In a recent statement, he said that <i>“This is a historic achievement that will strengthen Israel’s security, inject billions into Israel’s economy, and ensure the stability of our northern border.”</i>
<p>Containment of Immediate Hostilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The ceasefire helps avert a second front in Israel’s ongoing war with Hamas in Gaza.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, it does not address the unresolved conflict in Gaza, where over 44,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli airstrikes. • Hezbollah’s initial involvement was tied to Hamas’ October 2023 attack on Israel, and future violations of the ceasefire could reignite cross-border violence, particularly if the Gaza conflict remains unresolved.
<p>Revival of UN Resolution 1701</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ceasefire reactivates the framework of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which aims to establish a weapons-free zone south of the Litani River and enhance Lebanese state authority. • UN peacekeepers, whose mandate has eroded over time, will play a central role in monitoring compliance alongside an international panel led by the US and France. 
<p>A Diplomatic Victory for the United States</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ceasefire underscores the Biden administration’s active role in Middle Eastern diplomacy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By brokering this deal, the US aims to reinforce regional stability, counter Iran’s influence via Hezbollah, and prevent the conflict from escalating into a broader war. • President Joe Biden described the agreement as a "permanent cessation of hostilities," emphasizing its importance in securing Israel’s borders and supporting Lebanon’s sovereignty.
<p>Restore peace in Middle east region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire deal can help in restoring peace in the entire middle east region.
<p>Impact on Iran</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hezbollah’s retreat from southern Lebanon is a setback for Iran, which has used the group as a proxy to challenge Israel’s security. • Nevertheless, Iran may use this pause to recalibrate its strategy and strengthen its network of regional allies, including in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. • The ceasefire represents a tactical loss but not a strategic defeat for Tehran, as Hezbollah’s extensive missile arsenal and political influence remain intact.

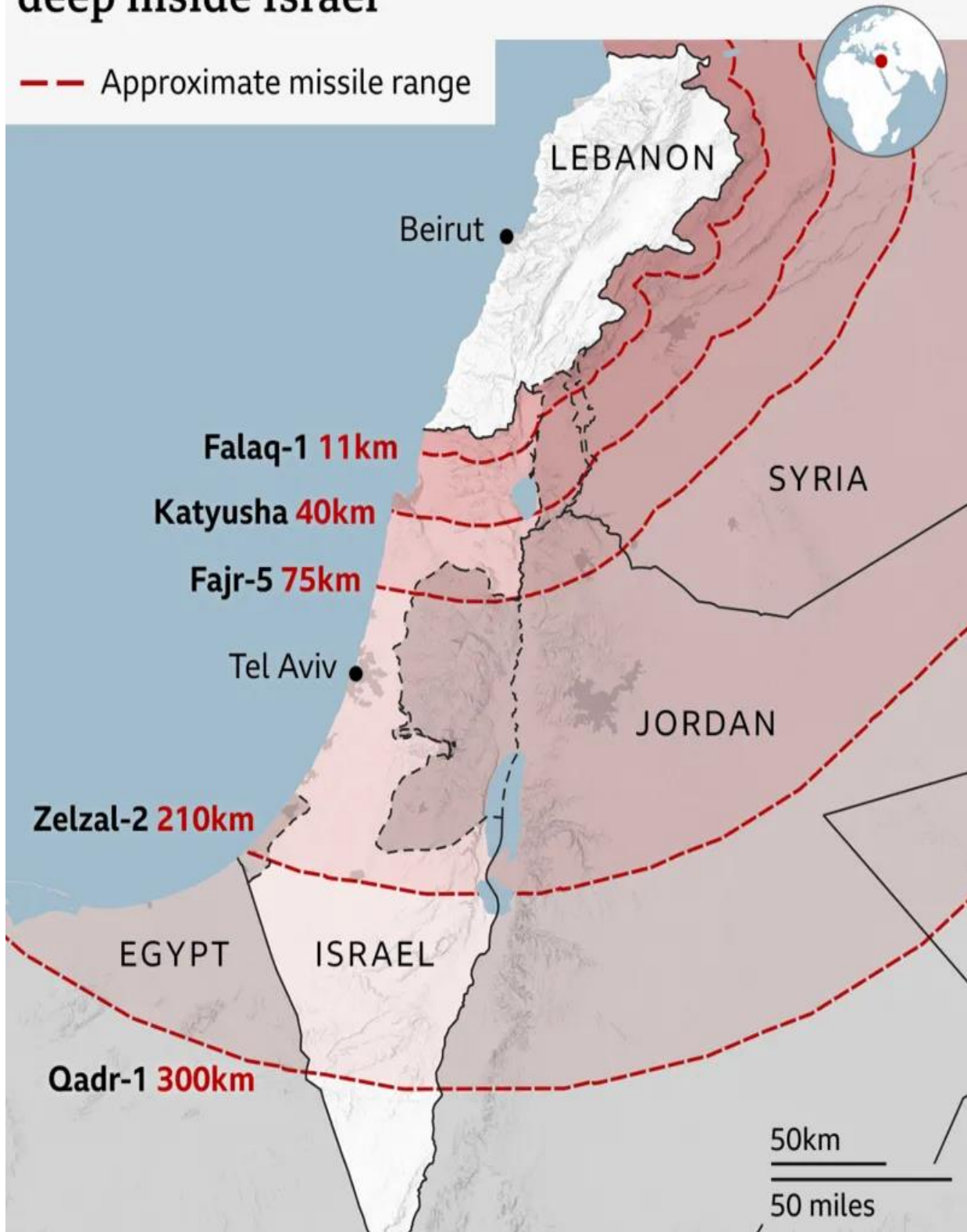
12. What is Hezbollah and has it fought Israel before?



- **Hezbollah is a Shiite Muslim** political party and militant group based in **Lebanon**, where it has fostered a reputation as “**a state within a state.**”
- It is an **Iran-backed group** founded during the **chaos of the fifteen-year Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990)** and is driven by its **violent opposition to Israel** and its resistance to **Western influence in the Middle East.**
- **Hezbollah is considered a terrorist organization by the United States** and many other countries, and has deep-rooted military alliances with repressive, anti-Israel regimes in Iran and Syria.
- **Cross-border clashes between Hezbollah and Israel have escalated in recent years**, particularly amid Israel’s ongoing war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

- **In 2006, a full-blown war broke out between Hezbollah and Israel, triggered by a deadly cross-border raid by Hezbollah.**
- **The U.S. State Department has estimated that there are tens of thousands of Hezbollah members and other supporters worldwide.**
- **Hezbollah controls much of Lebanon's Shiite-majority areas, including parts of Beirut, southern Lebanon, and the eastern Bekaa Valley region.**
- **It manages a vast network of social services that include infrastructure, health-care facilities, schools, and youth programs, all of which have been instrumental in garnering support for Hezbollah from Shiite and non-Shiite Lebanese alike.**
- **Under the 1989 Taif Agreement, which was brokered by Saudi Arabia and Syria and ended Lebanon's civil war, Hezbollah was the only militia allowed to keep its arms.**
- **Hezbollah was led by Hassan Nasrallah for more than thirty years, until he was killed in an Israeli airstrike in September 2024.**
- **The organisation has claimed it has 100,000 fighters, although independent estimates put the number between 20,000 and 50,000.**
- **Hezbollah has an estimated 120,000-200,000 rockets and missiles, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank.**

Hezbollah missiles are capable of striking deep inside Israel





13. How has the conflict between Hezbollah and Israel escalated?

Israel's war in Lebanon against Hezbollah

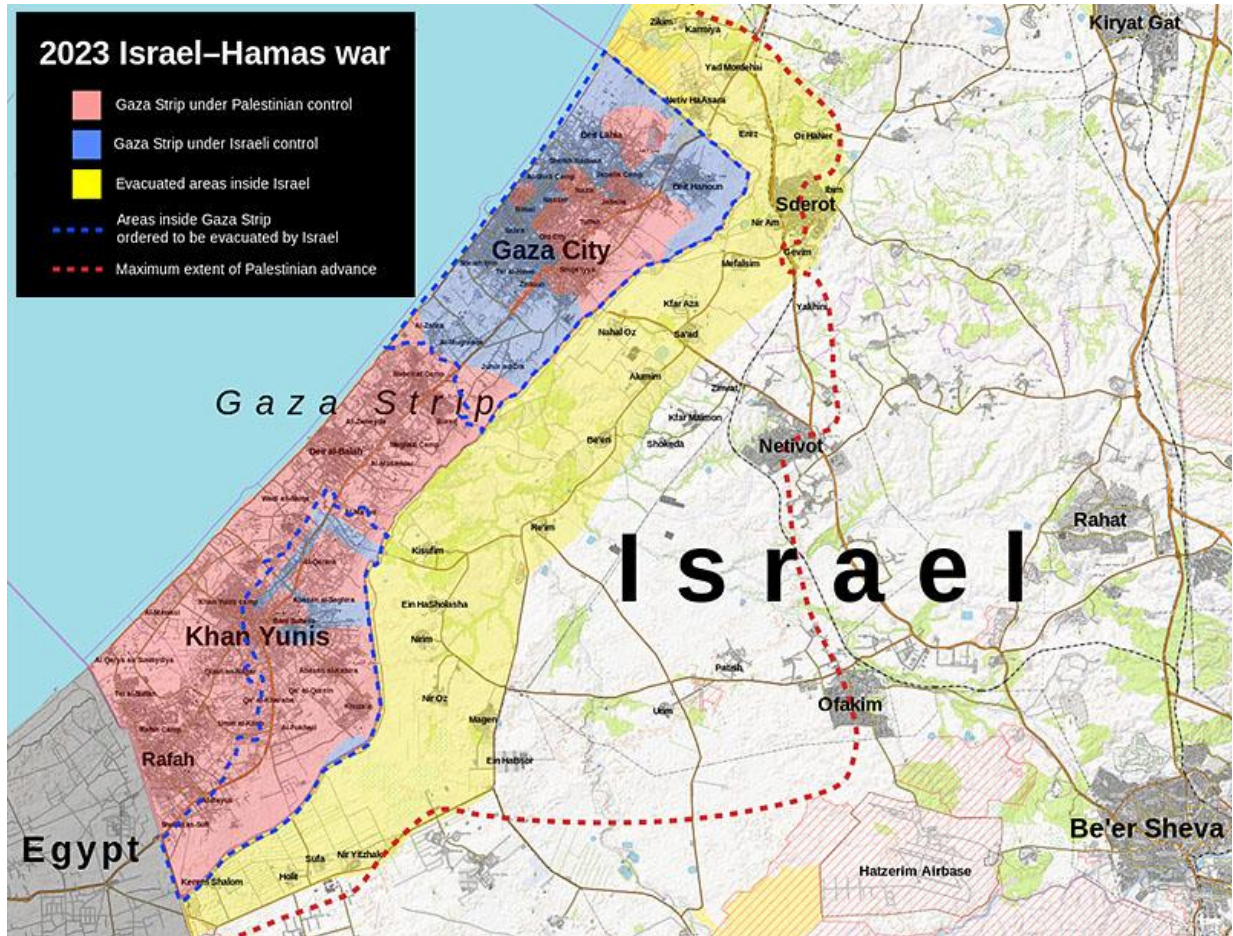
The war broke out following the Hamas-led attacks on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, and has been waged in parallel with the Gaza conflict. Here are some key events:



- **Israel** has gone on the **offensive** after almost a year of cross-border hostilities **sparked by the war in Gaza**.
- The war between **Hezbollah and Israel** broke out following the **Hamas-led attacks on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023**, and has been waged in parallel with the Gaza conflict.
- **Hezbollah** has since launched more than **8,000 rockets** at northern Israel and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.
- It has also fired **anti-tank missiles** at **armoured vehicles** and **attacked military targets** with explosive drones.
- The **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** retaliated with **air strikes and tank and artillery fire** against **Hezbollah** positions in Lebanon.
- On **September 17**, Israel wanted to ensure the **safe return of residents of border areas** who have been displaced by **Hezbollah attacks**.
- It **killed more than a dozen top Hezbollah commanders** and apparently **destroyed thousands of weapons** in air strikes.
- It was also **blamed for the exploding pager and walkie-talkie attacks** that left thousands of **Hezbollah members maimed, blinded or killed**.



14. What is the status of the Gaza-Israel conflict?



- The **Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire does not extend to Gaza**, where Israel’s military campaign continues.
- The war in **Gaza**, triggered by Hamas’ attack in **October 2023**, has resulted in over **44,000 Palestinian deaths**.
- Efforts to secure the **release of Israeli hostages held by Hamas** have yet to yield results.
- **Hamas** is likely to **continue to demand** a lasting truce and a **full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza** in any such deal.
- **Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas** urged the international community to address the underlying conflict, stating that **the only way to halt the dangerous escalation is to resolve the question of Palestine**.

15. What are Gaza and West Bank related issues?

Israel's boundaries today

■ Palestinian territories



West Bank:

- **West Bank** is a **landlocked territory in West Asia** which 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.
- Majority of the countries' consider **West Bank settlements illegal and an occupied territory**.
- The **United Nations General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and the International Court of Justice** have declared that the **West Bank settlements are violative of the Fourth Geneva Convention**.

How big is the occupied West Bank?

The occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has an area of 5,655sqkm (2,183sq miles) - about 15 times the size of the 365sq km (141sq miles) Gaza Strip.



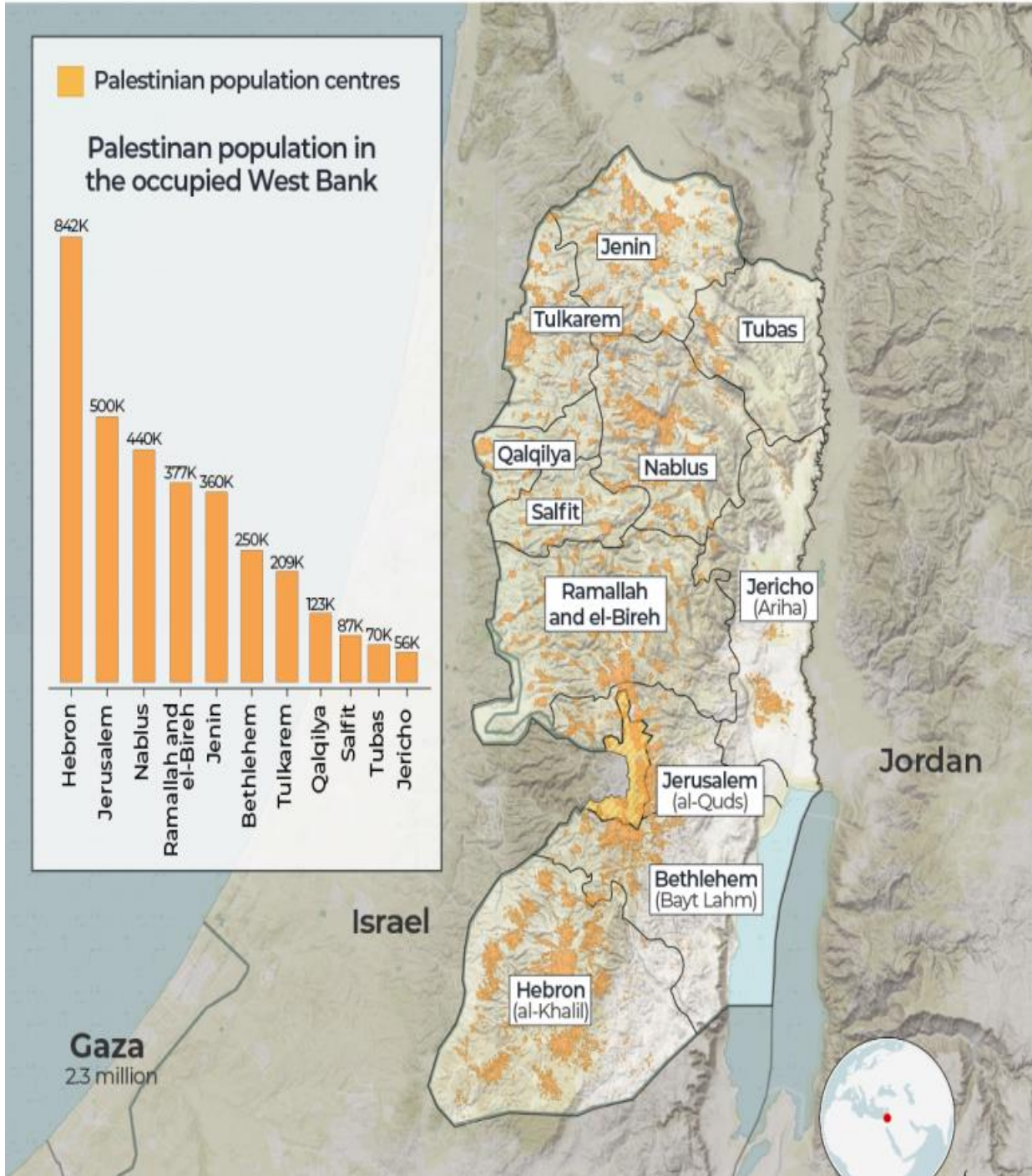
How did the West Bank get its name?

The West Bank, called al-Daffah in Arabic, is located on the western side of the Jordan River, from which it derives its name.



How many people live in the West Bank?

About 3.3 million Palestinians live in 11 governorates throughout the West Bank. Additionally, about 700,000 Israelis live in illegal settlements on Palestinian land.



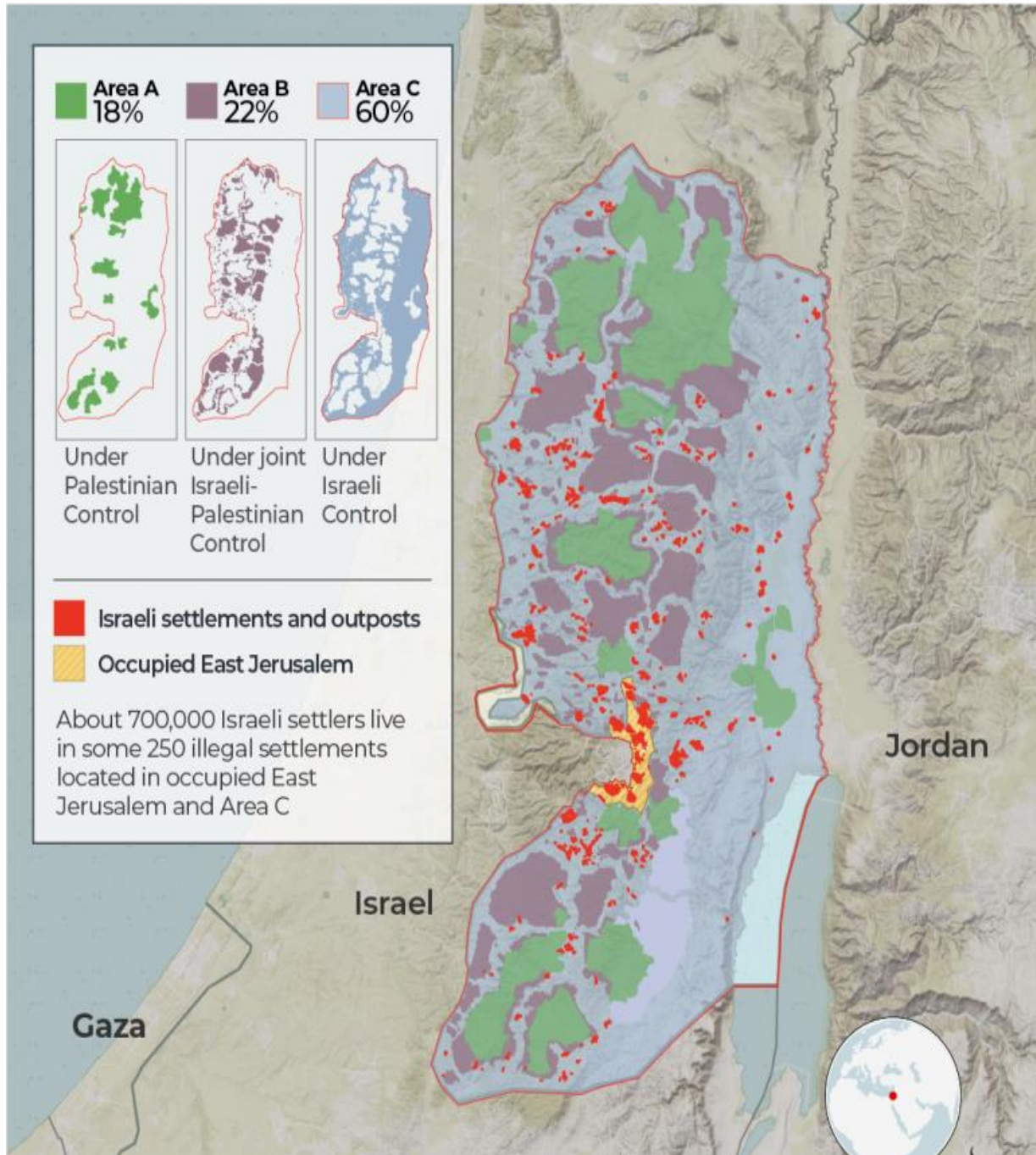
Israeli occupation of the West Bank

Since 1967, Israel has maintained a military occupation of the West Bank, involving arrests, checkpoints, home invasions, demolitions and frequent raids and assaults.



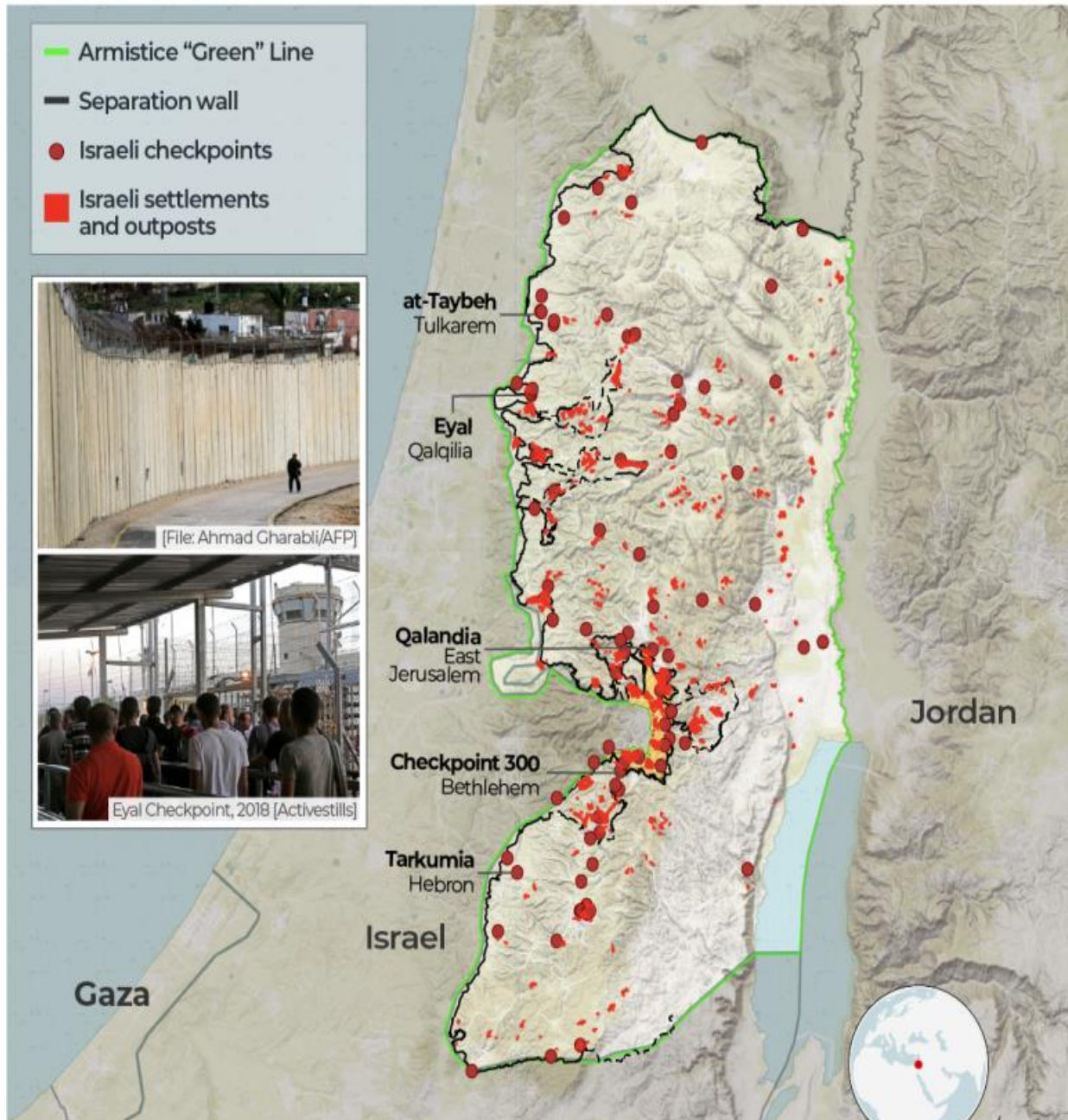
The differences between Areas A, B, and C

As part of the 1993 Oslo Accords, signed by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, the occupied West Bank was divided into three areas - A, B and C.



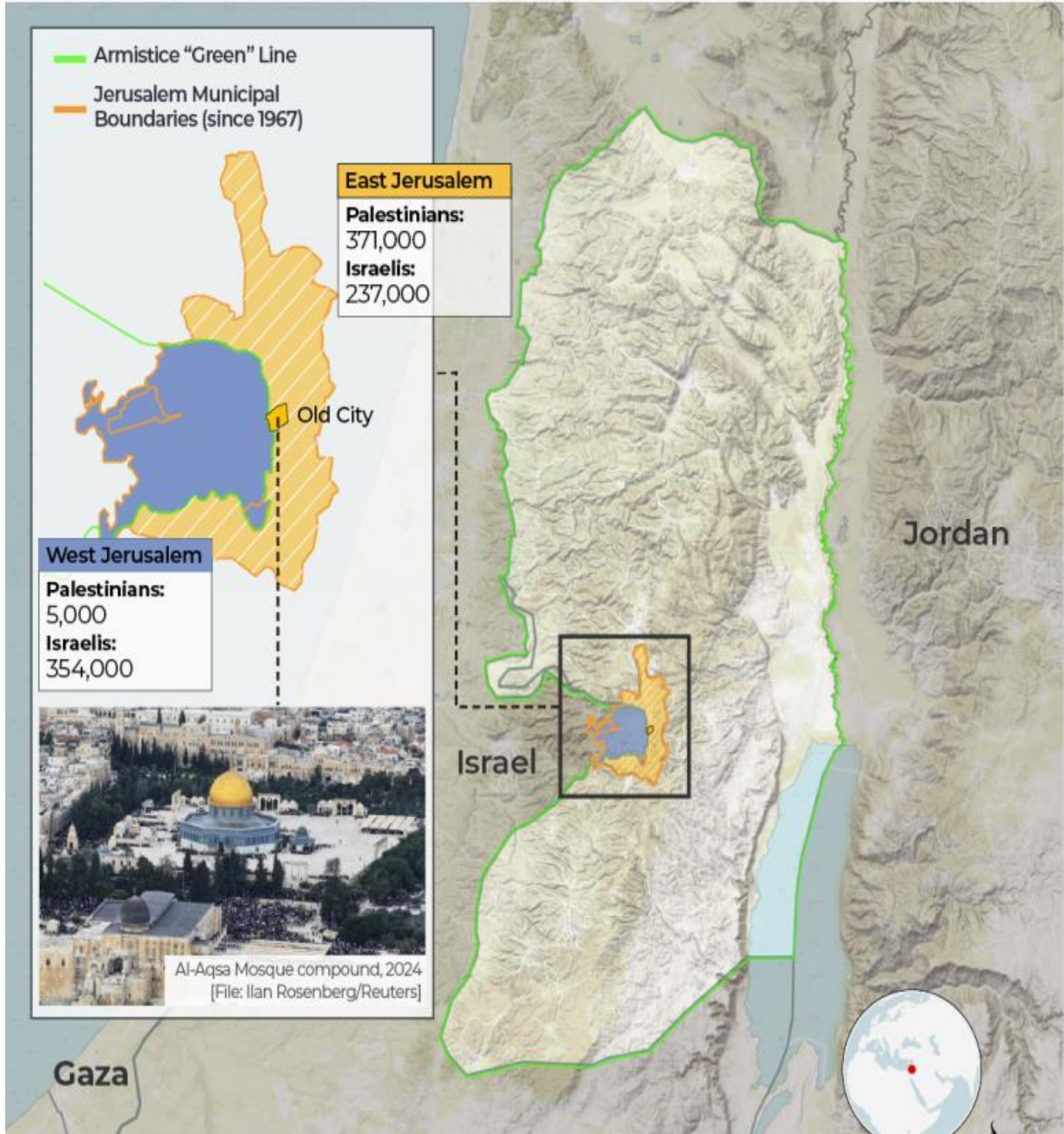
Israeli separation wall and checkpoints

Since 2002, Israel has been constructing a wall that stretches for more than 700km, cutting deep into Palestinian territory. Israel has also constructed hundreds of road obstacles and checkpoints, severely limiting Palestinian freedom of movement.



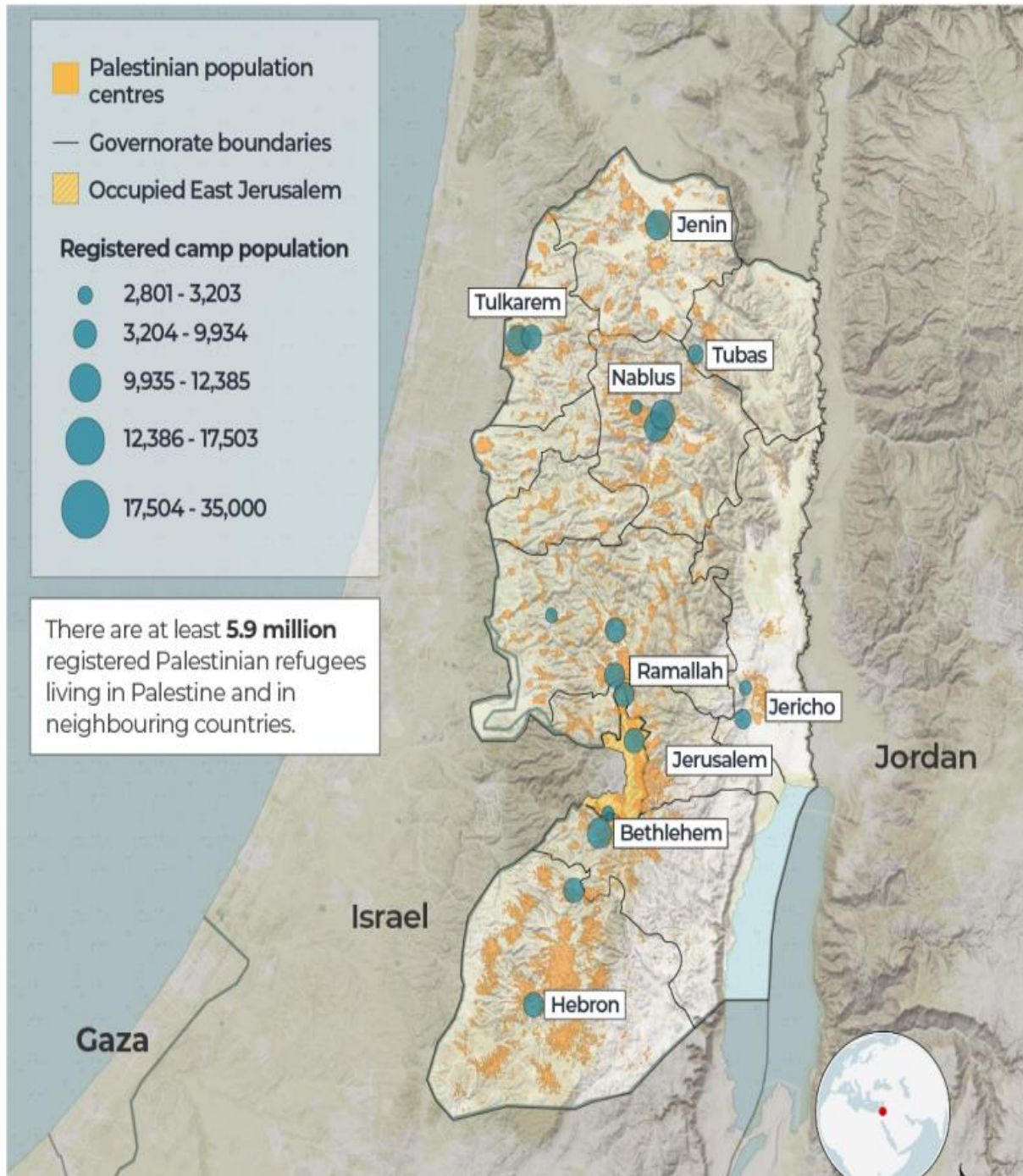
Occupied East Jerusalem and the Old City

Jerusalem, a city sacred to Muslims, Christians, and Jews, has had West Jerusalem under Israeli control since 1948, with a Jewish majority. East Jerusalem, including the Old City, has been under Israeli occupation since 1967 and is mostly Palestinian.



Palestinian refugee camps

The occupied West Bank is home to at least 870,000 registered refugees, with about 25 percent living in 19 camps established after the 1948 Nakba.



Gaza Strip




- The **Gaza Strip** is a **25-mile-long** by **6-mile-wide** enclave, bounded by the **Mediterranean Sea** to the west, **Israel** to the north and east and **Egypt** to the south.
- In **1967**, **Israel**, **Egypt**, **Jordan**, and **Syria** were involved in a military struggle most commonly known as the **Six-Day War**.
- **Up until 1967**, the **Gaza Strip** had been under **Egypt's** control and the **West Bank** under **Jordan's**.
- However, **after the Six-Day War**, both the **Gaza Strip** and the **West Bank** were seized by **Israel**.

- The strip has been under a blockade by Israel and Egypt, restricting the movement of people and goods since Hamas seized control of the territory in 2007.
- Israel controls its airspace and shoreline, as well as what goods can cross Gaza's borders.
- Gaza is home to more than 2 million Palestinians — 1.7 million of whom are Palestinian refugees, according to UNRWA, the U.N. Palestinian relief agency.

16. What are the challenges in restoring peace in the West Asia region?

- The ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah represents a fragile step toward de-escalation but does not resolve the deeper tensions fueling conflict in the Middle East.
- While the ceasefire offers a temporary reprieve, it leaves several critical issues unresolved:

Issues	Analysis
<p>Israel’s Security Concerns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to maintain "full freedom of military action" if Hezbollah breaches the agreement, reinforcing Israel’s right to self-defense under international law. • The ceasefire does not explicitly disarm Hezbollah, leaving a potential flashpoint for future conflict.
<p>Lebanon’s Internal Divisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hezbollah’s political dominance complicates efforts to fully implement the ceasefire’s terms, particularly in a nation deeply divided along sectarian lines.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lebanon is deeply divided over Hezbollah. • Hezbollah enjoys substantial popular support, many opponents accuse it of involvement in political corruption and oppose its military capabilities, viewing them as a significant factor in the country's conflicts. 
<p>Gaza and the Palestinian Question</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ceasefire does not address the ongoing war in Gaza, which remains a significant driver of regional instability. • Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas emphasized that resolving the Palestinian issue is key to achieving long-term peace. • He stated that the only way to halt the dangerous escalation is to resolve the question of Palestine.



Iran's aggressive stance against Israel

- **Iran's Army Chief** has confirmed that **Iran will conduct a third strike on Israel very soon.**
- **Maj. Gen. Mohammad Bagheri** said that **Iran's retaliation to Israel's October 26 attack will be different and beyond the enemy's imagination.**






- Iran has promised **Operation True Promise 3** in response to **Israel's wave of strikes** on Iranian military targets near **Tehran**, top secret **nuclear research facility in Parchin** and **Russian S-300 defence system.**

- **Iran had earlier launched significant attacks on Israel, deploying over 300 projectiles, including drones, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles.**



17. What can be the possible way ahead for restoring peace in West Asia?



Way Forward	Analysis
<p>Adoption of the Arab Peace Initiative offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the Beirut Arab League Summit in 2002, 22 states unanimously adopted the Arab Peace Initiative – a historic document that offered a formula for ending not only the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but also the wider, lingering Arab–Israeli conflict, and to achieve a collective peace, security for all and normal relations with Israel. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>المبادرة العربية للسلام</p> <p>التي أقرتها القمة العربية الرابعة عشر في بيروت ، لبنان آذار 2002</p> <p>انتهاء الاحتلال وسلام شامل مقابل علاقات دبلوماسية وطبيعية بين الفلسطينيين والعالمين العربي والاسلامي واسرائيل</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Arab Peace Initiative</p> <p>Adopted by the 14th Arab Summit in Beirut , Lebanon March 2002</p> <p>57 Arab & Muslim Countries will Establish Full Diplomatic and Normal Relations with Israel in Return for Comprehensive Peace Agreement and Ending the Occupation</p>  </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>"Iran"</p>  </div>
<p>United Nations Role</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The United Nations and particularly UNSC must make efforts to bring peace in the region.
<p>Role of Global super power.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global superpowers like USA, RUSSIA, CHINA, EU, rather than fueling the tensions, should play decisive roles in brokering a peace talk between the two warring factions.
<p>Resort to Two-State Solution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two-state solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict proposes to resolve the conflict by establishing two nation states in former Mandatory Palestine.

- The implementation of a two-state solution would involve the **establishment** of an **independent State of Palestine** alongside the **State of Israel**.



18. What is the relevance of the topic for UPSC CSE?

For Prelims: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Iran, Israel, Middle East, 1979 Islamic Revolution, Stuxnet, Gaza Strip, Red Sea Crisis, Israeli air defense system, Two State Solution, Gulf Cooperation Council, European Union, United Nations, Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)

For Mains: Impact of recent conflict in West Asia in other regions of the world.

Some previous years prelims questions.

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. The Red Sea receives very little precipitation in any form.
2. No water enters the Red Sea from rivers.

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

Ans: (c)

Q2. The term “two-state solution” is sometimes mentioned in the news in the context of the affairs of (2018)

- (a) China
- (b) Israel
- (c) Iraq
- (d) Yemen

Ans: (b)

Q3. Which one of the following countries of South-West Asia does not open out to the Mediterranean Sea? (2015)

- (a) Syria
- (b) Jordan
- (c) Lebanon
- (d) Israel

Ans: (b)

Some previous years mains questions.

Q1. “India’s relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back.” Discuss. (2018)

Some questions from this year and previous years interview transcripts.

Board Dinesh Dasa sir (2024):

- What is unique about the India Middle east Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).
- How will the Israel-Gaza war affect IMEC?
- Will it be halted or delayed?

Board Sanjay Verma sir (2024):

- How is the climate changing in the Middle East?
- What steps are being taken in the Middle East to mitigate the impact of climate change?
- Are we going for mitigation or adaptation?
- What steps are involved in adaptation to climate change?
- In the context of the Middle East, how has the scenario changed post World War 1?
- In the present scenario what is the solution to the crisis in the Middle East?

Board Sanjay Verma sir (2024):

- Give an overview of the Israel Iran conflict. Its implications?

Board BB Swain sir (2024):

- After world war 2, there has been no such war but in recent times some war situations in the world. Can you list it out?
- What is the situation in the Israel-Hamas conflict and impact on India?
- What is India's stand in it?
- Which countries have suspended aid to Palestine and why
- Tell about Houthi attacks and its impact on India.

Board Suman Sharma mam (2024):

- Tell me something about Hamas?
- Why did Israel fail in the Hamas attack?

Some questions for QUIZ.

Q1. Consider the following countries

1. Syria
2. Israel
3. Jordan
4. Turkey
5. Cyprus

How many of the above countries do share a land border with Lebanon?

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) Only two
- (b) Only three
- (c) Only four
- (d) All five

Ans: (b)

Some questions for POLL.

Q1. Can Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire deal help in restoring peace in West Asia?

- (a) YES
- (b) NO
- (c) Can't say.

Q2. Can Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire deal have an impact on gaza?

- (a) YES
- (b) NO
- (c) Can't say.

