Iran Israel Conflict

Why in news?

Iran launched drones and missiles towards Israel, in retaliation for an Israeli attack on its consulate that occurred in Damascus, Syria.

History of Iran and Israel relations
• Iran was one of the first countries in the region to recognise Israel after its formation in 1948. • **First Arab Israeli war**- In 1948, the opposition of Arab states to Israel led to the first Arab-Israeli war. Iran was not a part of that conflict, and after Israel won, it established ties with the Jewish state. It made Iran the second Muslim-majority country after Turkey to take such a step. • **Israel's diplomacy**- It was part of Israel's "periphery doctrine", a strategy that aims to build alliances with non-Arab countries in the Middle East. • **Pahlavi dynasty-** Under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Iran maintained close ties with the US and Israel, even selling oil to Israel during Arab economic boycott. • **Islamic Revolution, 1979**- The overthrow of the Shah led to the establishment of a religious state in Iran, altering its stance on Israel to view it as an occupier of Palestinian territories. • **Iran's regional ambitions**- Post revolution, Iran aimed to expand its influence, challenging regional powers like Saudi Arabia and Israel, both US allies. • **Iran Iraq accord, 1975**- Iran ceased support for Kurdish-Iraqi separatists, reduced hostilities and affected Israel's strategic value to Iran. • **Nuclear facility attack-** Israel periodically targeted Iran's nuclear facilities to hinder Iran's potential development of nuclear weapons. • **Stuxnet cyberattack, 2010** US and Israel reportedly created Stuxnet, a computer virus that disrupt Iran's *Natanz nuclear facility*, marking a significant moment in cyber warfare. • **Iran's proxy support**- Iran's support for militant groups like Hezbollah and Hamas, which oppose Israel and the US further escalate tensions between two countries.

What is the current issue?

- **Hamas attack**- On October 7, 2023 Hamas-led militants storm across the border into Israel, Hamas hopes that other regional adversaries of Israel would join the conflict.
- **Militants involvement**- Hezbollah, Houthi which are backed by Iran have involved in Israel-Hamas, they pressure Israel to cease war with Hamas.
- **Damascus strike**- Israeli war jets targeted an Iranian consulate in Syria, resulting in the death of senior Iranian military commanders.
- **Iran aerial assault**- Iran launched over 300 drones and missiles on Israel as a response to Damascus strike, a significant attack that was largely neutralized by Israel's defence system and international support.
- **Support from US-** US played a significant role in countering the attack, deploying air defence missiles and aircraft in the region.

What is India's stake in Iran Israel conflict?

- **Strategic balance-** India has managed to maintain diplomatic ties with both Iran and Israel, balancing its interests in the region for decades.

Israel	Iran
• India recognised Israel in 1950 and *full diplomatic relations* were established after the opening of embassies in 1992. • India has benefited from Israeli expertise and technologies in *agriculture* such as horticulture mechanization, protected cultivation etc., • The relationship with Israel is particularly strong in *defence and security*, with Israel being a major arms supplier to India. • India-Israel cooperation in *S&T* is overseen by the Joint Committe on S&T, established under the S&T Cooperation Agreement signed in 1993. • There are approximately 85,000 Jews of Indian-origin in Israel (with at least one Indian parent), who are all Israeli passport holders.	• India and Iran established *diplomatic links* in 1950. • Iran has been a significant supplier of *crude oil* to India, although this has been affected by international sanctions. • In 2018, India and Iran signed an *Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion* with respect to taxes on income. • Both India and Iran share concerns over *terrorism*, particularly from Pakistan and Afghanistan and the situation with Taliban. • India over the years has emerged as one of the favourite tourist destinations for Iranian tourists and every year around 40,000 Iranians visit India for various purposes. • Chabahar port project in Iran is backed by India, it is crucial for India's access to Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan.

What lies ahead?

- India's consistent call for calm and restraint underscores its desire to maintain peace and prevent the escalation of hostilities within its borders and in the region.
- India's stance is a reflection of its broader foreign policy approach, which seeks to navigate complex international relations while upholding its national interests.

Quick facts

Regional groups supported by Iran
• **Hamas-** It originated during the first Intifada in 1987 to establish a Palestinian state, it has governed the ***Gaza Strip*** since 2007. • **Palestine Islamic Jihad, 1979**- It is the second-largest militant group in the ***Gaza Strip and the West Bank***, it receives financial assistance and training from Iran. • **Hezbollah-** It means "Party of God" set up by Iran's Revolutionary Guards in 1982 to fight Israeli forces that had invaded ***Lebanon*** that year. • **Houthis-** They have been engaged in ***Yemen's civil war*** for over a decade, they attacked ships in the Red Sea during Israel Hamas conflict disrupting a major shipping route between Europe and Asia it is supported by Iran. • **Popular mobilisation Forces**- It is ***Iraq's state sanctioned coalition*** of paramilitary groups they maintain close ties with Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

References

1. Indian Express- History of Iran-Israel relations
2. Indian Express- Iran launches attack on Israel
3. Indian Express-India’s stake in Iran-Israel conflict