Israel – Palestine: Two-state solution is dead

Why in news?

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U.S. new administration has refused to endorse the two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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Why Israel and Palestine are fighting?

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- Though both Jews and Arab Muslims date their claims to the land back a couple thousand years, the current political conflict began in the early 20th century.
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- Jews fleeing holocaust in Europe wanted to establish a national homeland in what was then an Arab and Muslim majority territory in the Ottoman Empire.
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- The Arabs resisted, seeing the land as rightfully theirs. An early **United Nations plan** to give each group part of the land failed, and Israel and the surrounding Arab nations fought several wars over the territory.
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- Today's lines largely reflect the outcomes of two of the **wars waged in 1948 and in 1967.**
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- The 1967 war is particularly important for today's conflict, as it left Israel in control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, two territories home to large Palestinian populations.
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What is the two-state solution?

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- The two-state solution would create an independent Israel and Palestine, and is the mainstream approach to resolving the conflict.
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- The **1993 Oslo Accords** marked the first time that the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) formally recognized one another and publicly committed to negotiate a solution to their decades-long conflict.
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- That two-state vision requires Israel to abandon its opposition of Palestinian claims (to national sovereignty).
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- Ever since the Oslo Accords, giving statehood to the Palestinians has been the bedrock of any proposal to solve the conflict as it is considered the internationally acknowledged solution.
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What is the U.S.' role?

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- For decades, the U.S. has played a partisan role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
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- After the failed **2000 Camp David summit,** Washington never made any meaningful attempt to push the Israelis to accept the two-state proposal.
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- The **2007 Annapolis conference** was a failure too. The previous U.S. administration launched a peace bid which also collapsed at an early stage.
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- Over the years, Israel steadily expanded the settlements in the West Bank, thus effectively killing the two-state solution.
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Would a Palestinian state ever come up?

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- Land grabbing has been a fundamental element of Israel's approach towards the Palestinians. They also used force against both Palestinian civilians and militants.
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- And, Israel **never came under significant international pressure** to revert this settlement policy.
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- International conferences were held to bring about a "peaceful two-state solution", but in reality the occupation only deepened.
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- So, for the average Palestinians, statehood remains elusive.
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What is the alternative?

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- One is to **retain the status quo.** That is, a militarized Jewish state permanently occupying the Palestinian territories, without giving full citizenship rights to the Palestinians.
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- The other one is to have a **single democratic federal state** with equal rights to Jews, Muslims, Christians and others.
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- It is time for international actors who care about the situation of the Palestinians and start pushing for the latter solution.
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Source: The Hindu

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