

US's Recognition of Israel's West Bank Settlements - II

Click [here](#) for Part I

What is the issue?

- The U.S. administration recently declared that the Israeli settlements on the West Bank are not illegal. Click [here](#) to know more on West Bank settlements.
- It is essential now that any future solution must be one that rectifies past evils and offers democracy to all Palestinians.

What is the new challenge?

- The "Green Line" was the 1949 armistice line that separates Israel from the West Bank.
- It is an illusion of the imagination of those who support the two-state solution.
- [The two-state solution envisages Israel for the Jewish people and Palestine for the Palestinian people.]
- That was replaced by a greater Israel, ruled by the Israeli nationality law passed in 2018.
- It states that only the Jews have the right of self-determination all over historical Palestine.
- It thus sanctions the continued colonisation of the country and upholds its apartheid system.
- This new reality requires a different approach by anyone caring for the future of the Palestinians and respecting their basic rights.
- This is now a struggle for a regime change.
- It allows half of the population living between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean to have all the privileges.
- They would thus continue to rob the other half of its living space, lands, rights, dignity and life.
- In this regard, popular or armed resistance on the way to liberation would have not been needed if the international community had responded rightly.



What is the international community's approach?

- The international diplomacy should have bravely examined the origins of the conflict in Palestine and on its basis, support a just and lasting solution.
- But, the international community, and mainly western political elites, fully support Israel.
- It also remains silent in the face of continued dispossession of Palestinians.
- It adopted the two-state solution as its mantra for what should be done.
- This was supported by the Palestinian leadership which hoped to salvage at least part of Palestine (22%).
- This approach too has failed miserably.
- The recognition of the U.S. of the illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank is yet another indication that the two-state solution is dead.

What is Israel's stance?

- Israel has established that any sovereign Palestinian state is impossible.
- Moreover, now is the American administration's endorsement of Israel's wish to de-politicise the Palestinian question.
- It thus allows Israel to fully extend its sovereignty all over historical Palestine.
- It thereby rejects categorically the right of any Palestinian refugee to return.
- Notably, this was a right recognised by the UN in its Resolution 194 from December 11, 1948.
- Israel feels that it wasted 50 years in trying to push towards the two state solution.
- The end result of this effort was more Jewish settlements in the West Bank and a total separation between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

What does the Palestine's civil society feel?

- The civil society in Palestine and around the globe believes in a different way forward.
- Unlike its political elites, it frames the situation in Palestine not as a conflict but a struggle against settler colonialism.
- So, the first step forward suggested by Palestinian civil society was to call upon the international community to boycott and sanction Israel.
- This BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) campaign will continue until -
 - i. the people of the West Bank would be liberated from a military rule
 - ii. the people of Gaza would be liberated from the siege
 - iii. the refugees return from their exile
 - iv. the Palestinians in Israel would be recognised as equal citizens

What is the next Palestinian step?

- A clear alternative Palestinian call for the establishment of a one democratic state all over historical Palestine.
- It is now a vision that will soon become a clear Palestinian political programme.
- This could play a significant role in -
 - i. rectifying past evils by compensating and restituting lost land and property
 - ii. enabling the repatriation of the refugees
 - iii. offering democracy for all who live in historical Palestine, without any discrimination
- This vision has now a growing support in the international community, among young Palestinians and progressive Jews inside and outside Israel.
- However, privileged people like the Jews of Israel would not willingly give up their position.
- Nevertheless, pressure from the outside, a continued popular struggle from the inside and a clear Palestinian vision for the future can turn this vision into reality.

Source: The Hindu