



## India, Palestine Ties

### Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 3
- ✓ India's growing ties with Israel
- ✓ Why not full-fledged ties with Israel?
- ✓ India's stand

### Recently:

- ❖ PM's visit to Palestine signals India's strategy to grow ties with Israel and Palestine separately.
- ❖ It underlines the delicate balance New Delhi has adopted in this long-standing and seemingly intractable conflict.

### India's growing ties with Israel

- India, which has been a champion of the Palestinian people's national aspirations, has built strong ties with Israel in recent years.
- Last year Mr. Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Israel.
- Israel is a vital source of defense equipment and agricultural technology for India.
- Last year India voted along with a vast majority of member-states at the UN General Assembly against U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.
- PM reiterated India's support for the Palestinian cause during his recent visit.
- Both sides also signed a number of agreements for India-funded projects in the West Bank.

### Why not full-fledged ties with Israel?

- Israel faces political isolation internationally over its occupation of the Palestinian territories.
- Israel does not have diplomatic ties with most countries in West Asia.
- India, which has vital interests in the Gulf and enjoys good ties with the region's Muslim countries, cannot afford to be seen to be politically closer to Israel at the expense of ties with Palestinians.
- India has supported the creation of an independent Palestine within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.
- According to this line, Israel would have to withdraw from the West Bank and East Jerusalem and either pull out the Jewish settlements or do a land-swap with the Palestinians as part of a final agreement.
- India's support for the two-state solution remains, but it has now stopped short of the specifics related to borders.

### What is India's stand?

- India's policy objective is clear and rooted in political realism.
- It wants to maintain the balance in its relationship with both Palestine and Israel, and strengthen bilateral ties with each separately.



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## National Medical Commission Bill, 2017

### Relevancy:

- ✓ GS Prelims, GS Mains paper I,II
- ✓ Bills and Acts, governance, National Medical Commission Bill, 2017, Health

### Recently:

- ❖ The National Medical Commission Bill, 2017 was introduced in the Lok Sabha
- ❖ The Bill seeks to repeal the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956.
- ❖ It seeks to provide for a medical education system which ensures:
  - Availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals,
  - Adoption of the latest medical research by medical professionals,
  - Periodic assessment of medical institutions, and
  - An effective grievance redressal mechanism.

### Key provisions of the Bill are discussed as below:

1. **Constitution of the National Medical Commission (NMC):** NMC shall be established under the Act. There will be 25 members of the NMC with a term of 4 years for each member, and they shall be recommended by a search committee. Search Committee will consist of seven members including the Cabinet Secretary and three experts nominated by the central government (of which two will have experience in the medical field). Within three years of the passage of the Bill, state governments will establish State Medical Councils at the state level. The.
2. **Members of the NMC will include:** (i) the Chairperson, (ii) the President of the Under-Graduate Medical Education Board, (iii) the President of the Post-Graduate Medical Education Board, (iv) the Director General of Health Services, Directorate General of Health Services, (v) the Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, and (vi) five members (part-time) to be elected by the registered medical practitioners from amongst themselves from the prescribed regional constituencies under the Bill.
3. **Functions of the National Medical Commission:** (i) framing policies for regulating medical institutions and medical professionals, (ii) assessing the requirements of healthcare related human resources and infrastructure, (iii) ensuring compliance by the State Medical Councils of the regulations made under the Bill, (iv) framing guidelines for determination of fees for up to 40% of the seats in the private medical institutions and deemed universities which are regulated as per the Bill.
4. **Medical Advisory Council:** The central government will constitute a Medical Advisory Council. The Council will be the primary platform through which the states/union territories can put forth their views and concerns before the NMC. Further, the Council will advise the NMC on measures to enable equitable access to medical education.
5. **Autonomous boards:** The Bill sets up certain autonomous boards under the supervision of the NMC. Each autonomous board will consist of a President and two members, appointed by the central government. These boards are: (i) the Under-Graduate Medical Education Board (UGMEB) and the Post-Graduate Medical Education Board (PGMEB): These Boards will be responsible for formulating standards, curriculum, guidelines, and granting recognition to medical qualifications at the undergraduate and post graduate levels respectively, (ii) the Medical Assessment and Rating Board (MARB): The MARB will have the power to levy monetary penalties on medical institutions which fail to maintain the minimum standards as laid down by the UGMEB and the PGMEB. The MARB will also grant permission for establishing a new medical college, and (iii) the Ethics and Medical Registration Board: This Board will maintain a National Register of all licensed medical practitioners, and regulate professional conduct. Only those included in the Register will be allowed to practice medicine.
6. **Entrance examinations:** There will be a uniform National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to under-graduate medical education in all medical institutions regulated by the Bill. The NMC will specify the manner of conducting common counselling for admission in all such medical institutions. There will be a National Licentiate Examination for the students graduating from medical institutions to obtain the license for practice. The National Licentiate Examination will also serve as the basis for admission into post-graduate courses at medical institutions.



## The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Second Amendment) Bill, 2017

### Relevancy:

- ✓ GS Prelims, GS Mains paper I,II
- ✓ Bills and Acts, governance, education, right to education, detention, child rights, amendments in RTE

### Recently:

- ❖ The government has introduced a Bill regarding amendment of Right to Education Act.

### Highlights of the Bill:

- The Right to Education Act, 2009 prohibits detention of children till they complete elementary education i.e., class 8.
- The Bill amends this provision to state that a regular examination will be held in class 5 and class 8 at the end of every academic year.
- If a child fails the exam, he will be given additional instruction, and take a re-examination.
- If he fails in the re-examination, the relevant central or state government may decide to allow schools to detain the child.

### Critical analysis of the Bill:

- There are differing views on whether children should be detained for failing examinations in elementary school.
- Some argue that automatic promotion reduces incentive for children to learn and for teachers to teach.
- Others argue that detaining a child leads to drop outs and does not focus on the systemic factors that affect learning such as quality of teachers, schools, and assessment.
- Provisions of the Bill regarding assessment and detention are at variance with what most states have demanded.
- In this context, the question is whether these decisions should be taken by Parliament or left to state legislatures.
- It is unclear as to who will conduct the examination (which may lead to detention): centre, state, or the school.



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## The Story Of Public Spending On Education

### Relevancy

- ✓ G.S. Paper 2
- ✓ What is the public spending on education?
- ✓ What were the conditions when Kothari commission's recommendation came out?
- ✓ What have been the Budgets take on Education over the years?

### Recently:

- ❖ Despite favorable social climate, education has failed to become a matter of national concern.
- ❖ This year's Budget is no different than the previous budgets.
- ❖ It offers a marginal increase on different routine expenses and reduction on some.
- ❖ There is no sign of funds to enable institutional recovery after a prolonged period of damage caused by financial cuts in higher education.
- ❖ In elementary education, supply of funds for improvement in quality is no more certain.
- ❖ No funds are in sight to sustain the bold dream of making the Right to Education a sustainable reality.

### What is the public spending on education?

- In 1966, the Kothari Commission had said in its voluminous report that India should aim at spending 6% of its GDP on education.
- We are currently spending less than 3% of our GDP on education.

### What were the conditions when Kothari commission's recommendation came out?

- At the time the commission chaired by D.S. Kothari was drafting its report, India was passing through a difficult period.
- Famines, wars and political uncertainty were taking their toll.
- The economy was stuck in sluggish growth, and the idealism of the freedom struggle was waning.

### What are the present conditions?

- India is more prosperous today and people's aspirations are higher.
- Education is valued across different sections and strata.
- Despite having favorable social climate, education has failed to become a matter of national concern.

### What have been the Budgets take on Education over the years?

- Budgets have been offering a marginal increase in different routine expenses.
- There is no sign of funds to enable institutional recovery after a prolonged period of damage caused by financial cuts in higher education.
- No funds are in sight to sustain the bold dream of making the Right to Education a sustainable reality.

### Focus on teachers training

- In this year's budget, the Finance Minister referred to the importance of teacher education.
- Teacher training constitutes a relatively invisible, low-status sector of the system.
- It seldom receives high-level attention.
- A few prestigious colleges that were set up under British rule a century ago have lost their sheen,

### What did JS Verma commission focus on?

- A commission was appointed by the Supreme Court under the chairpersonship of the late Chief Justice of India, J.S. Verma.
- The report of this commission brought to public attention the dismal state of teacher education.
- Rampant commercialisation and rigid bureaucratic control combined to stifle any possibility of academic growth in teacher education.

### Achieving quality in teacher training

- The Finance Minister made a special mention of the four-year integrated B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) programme as a way forward for achieving quality in teacher training.
- National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has been running such courses at regional level.

### Why India is not worried about its educational crisis?

- In the first few decades following Independence, resources were limited and they were used for other, more immediate needs.



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- Then, for a little while, it seemed as if education might become a priority because social demand for it had increased.
- However, before this demand could acquire a political voice, the state got seduced by the option to privatize education.

## **What could be the outcome of this deepening crisis?**

- The damage our institutional apparatus has suffered over the last three decades has begun to hurt our long-term national economic interests and social goals.
- The United Nations discourse of sustainable development should remind us that our national aspirations might get a jolt if we fail to prioritise education.



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