

Today's Important Topic for UPSC CSE Aspirants (Dead Sea)

Inside Story of the News (Dead Sea) :

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- Iran-backed 'Islamic Resistance in Iraq' recently claimed an attack against Israeli target on the Dead Sea Coastline.
- The attack is the first against an Israeli target since Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, and adds to a series of attacks by the Islamic Resistance in Iraq against U.S. bases and targets in Syria and Iraq, launched as a response to U.S. support of Israel in its war against Hamas and other Palestinian factions in the Gaza Strip.

Terrorist Organizations	Headquarter	Foundation	Designators	Active Regions	Founder
Houthi Movement/ Al-Hūthiyūn/ Ansar Allah means Supporters of God/ Houthis	Saada and Sanaa, Yemen	1994	Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates	Yemen (includes Saudi Arabia– Yemen border)	Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi & Abdul-Malik al-Houthi
Hamass/ Islamic Resistance Movement / Ḥarakat al-Muqāwamah al-'Islāmiyyah	Gaza City, Gaza Strip (Palestine)	December 10, 1987 (Palestinian Sunni Islamist political and military organization)	European Union, Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, Paraguay, United Kingdom, United States, Organization of American States	Gaza City, Gaza Strip & West Bank	Sheikh Ahmed Ismail Hassan Yassin & Abdel Aziz Ali Abdul Majid al-Rantisi (Nick name- Lion of Palestine)
Hezbollah (Ḥizbu 'Ilāh, literary means 'Party of Allah' or 'Party of God'	Beirut, Lebanon	1985 (Lebanese Shia Islamist political party and militant group)	Arab League, Gulf Cooperation Council, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Colombia, Germany, Honduras, Israel, Malaysia, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States		Subhi al-Tufayli, Sayyed Abbas Al-Musawi
The Society of the Muslim Brothers (Jamā'at al-Ikhwān al-	Cairo, Egypt	22 March 1928 (Transnational Sunni Islamist Organization)	Collective Security Treaty Organization, Bahrain, Egypt, Libya (House of		Hassan al-Banna

Muslimīn)/ Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwān al- Muslimūn)			Representatives), Kazakhstan, Russia, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, United Arab Emirates		
Boko Haram (Jamā'at Ahl as- Sunnah lid- Da'wah wa'l- Jihād; literary means Group of the People of Sunnah for Dawah and Jihad)	Gwoza, Borno, Nigeria	2002 (Islamist Militant Organization based in Northeastern Nigeria)	United Nations, Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States	Nigeria, Northern Cameroon, Niger, Chad, Mali	Mohammed Yusuf
Islamic State (IS)/ Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) /' Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)/ Daesh	Iraq & Syria	2004 (AQI) & Oct. 15, 2006 (ISIS) (Sunni Jihadist Group)			Abu Musab al- Zarqawi (Founder al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI).); Abu Ayyub al Masri & Abu Omar al Baghdadi (ISIS)

Some Differences between Israel & Palestine :

Segments	Palestine (After Herodotus, the term `Palestine' came to be used for the entire region which was formerly known as Canaan)	Israel
Capital	Jerusalem (It is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions— Judaism, Christianity, and Islam)	Jerusalem (It is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam)
Language	Arabic	Hebrew (Which is written from right to left.)
President	Mahmoud Abbas	Isaac "Bougie" Herzog
Prime Minister	Mohammad Ibrahim Shtayyeh	Benjamin Netanyahu
Currency	Egyptian pound (EGP), Israeli new shekel (ILS)& Jordanian dinar (JOD)	Shekel
Parliament	Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)	Knesset
Religion	Islam	Jews
House of Worship Place	Mosque	Synagogue

Intelligence Agencies	-	Mossad

The Most Powerful Intelligence Agencies of The World :

Intelligence Agencies	Country	Headquarters	Founded
Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)	India	New Delhi	1968
Mossad	Israel	Tel Aviv	1949
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)	USA	Fairfax	1947
Military Intelligence Section 6 (MIS 6)/ Secret Intelligence Service (SIS)	UK	London	1909
Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS)	Australia	Canberra, Australian Capital Territory	1952
Directorate General for External Security (DGSE)	France	Paris	1982
The Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND)	Germany	Berlin	1956
Ministry of State Security (MSS)	China	Beijing	1983
Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB)	Russia	Lubyanka Square	1995
Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS)	Canada	Ottawa	1984
Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)	Pakistan	Islamabad	1948

Kahani Ander Ki : After the above-mentioned incidents, it becomes necessary for us to get detailed information about **Dead Sea** . Since this matter is also related to Israel , then it becomes necessary for us to know about **Israel** also.

About the Dead Sea:

- **Formation of the Dead Sea :**
 - There are two main theories that explain the genesis of the Dead Sea, which dates back around four million years.
 - **According to one theory, the lake originated on the Red Sea Rift's Jordan Rift Valley.**
 - **From the Dead Sea Transform fault system to the point where it meets the East African and Aden ridges, the Red Sea Rift is a mid-ocean ridge.**

- According to the second idea, the Dead Sea Transform's step-over discontinuity formed the crust, which subsided after the lake was formed.
- During the Cretaceous and Jurassic periods (over 66 million years ago), before the graben occupied by the Dead Sea was created, the Mediterranean Sea flooded the lake region, including Palestine and Syria.
- However, the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Rift Valley uplifted such that the seawater could not flood the area again.
- Thus, the Sedom Lagoon, formed by the flooding Mediterranean Sea, became an enclosed lake, known as Lake Amora.
- Lake Amora later became Lake Lisan and finally the Dead Sea.
- **Naming of the Dead Sea :**
 - The Dead Sea features prominently in religious books like the Bible, but with different names.
 - In Hebrew, the lake is called “Yam ha-Melah,” meaning “the Salt Sea.”
 - In some Hebrew prose, the water body is referred to as “Yam ha-Mavet,” meaning “the Sea of Death” because of the lack of aquatic life in the Dead Sea.
 - The Arabic name for the Dead Sea is “al-Bahr al-Mayyit.”
 - The hypersaline lake was named “Dead” because of the high saline level unfavorable for macroscopic organisms like plants and fish.

Geographical Surroundings of the Dead Sea :

- **Location:**
 - The Dead Sea, also called the Salt Sea, is a Salt Lake bordering Jordan to the east and Israel to the west.
 - The Dead Sea is a Salt Lake located in the Judean desert of southern Israel, bordered by Jordan to the East.
 - The Dead Sea is a saline lake in southwestern Asia, located on the Jordan-Israel border. Its eastern shore is in Jordan, and the western shore is in Israel.
 - However, the western shore’s southern half belongs to Israel, while the shore’s northern half is in the West Bank, an area claimed by both Israel and Palestine.
 - It lies to the east of the Mediterranean Sea and south of the Sea of Galilee.
 - It is located within the Jordan Rift Valley, between Transjordanian plateaus and the hills of Judea.
 - The nearest towns include Jerusalem, Arad, and Tel Aviv.
- **Physical Feature :**
 - Its arid desert climate features year-round sunny skies, and relatively high temperatures, with little precipitation.
 - It lies in the Jordan Rift Valley, and its main tributary is the Jordan River.
 - It is fed mainly by the Jordan River, which enters the lake from the north. Several smaller streams also enter the sea, chiefly from the east.
 - It has one main inlet (the Jordan River) .
 - It doesn’t have an outlet, and the heavy inflow of fresh water is carried off solely by evaporation, which is rapid in the hot desert climate.
 - This salinity makes for a harsh environment in which animals cannot flourish, hence its name.
 - It is 50 kilometres long and 15 kilometres wide at its widest point.

- It has attracted visitors from around the Mediterranean basin for thousands of years.
- **It was one of the world's first health resorts (for Herod the Great), and it has been the supplier of a wide variety of products, from balms for Egyptian mummification to potash for fertilizers.**
- People also use the salt and the minerals from the Dead Sea to create cosmetics and herbal sachets.
- The Dead Sea currently covers approximately 605 square kilometers, receding from 1,050 square kilometers in 1930.
- **The Tongue Peninsula (Al-Lisan) on the eastern shore divides the lake into two unequal basins: the northern basin, which covers three-quarters of the lake's surface, and the southern basin, which is much smaller, shallower, and highly dyked.**
- Before the recession began, the lake was 80 kilometers long from north to south and 18 kilometers wide from east to west.
- The northern basin at present has a maximum length of 50 kilometers, while the entire lake is 15 kilometers wide at the widest point.
- The Dead Sea is 304 meters deep, making it the world's deepest hypersaline lake, and has a shoreline of about 135 kilometers.
- It contains 114 cubic kilometers of water.
- The majority of the lake's water comes from the Jordan River, which is the lake's main intake.
- **In addition to the Jordan, the Mujib River supplies a substantial volume of water to the lake.**
- Wadi Hasa, Nahal Arugot, Nahal Dragot, and other perennial springs provide additional sources of water.
- The northern basin receives roughly 100 mm of rainfall, while the southern basin receives 50 mm.
- **The Dead Sea does not have an outlet and loses its water mainly through evaporation.**
- **Salinity :**
 - Oceans have a 3.5% salinity which is modest compared to some of the world's saline bodies of water.
 - The Dead Sea has extremely saline water, with the salt concentration increasing downwards, creating two different water masses in the lake for some time.
 - The lake has a salinity of 34.2%, making it one of the world's top ten saltiest water bodies.
 - It is one of the Earth's saltiest water bodies, 9.6 times saltier than ordinary seawaters.
 - The Dead Sea seawater has a density of 1.240 kg/L, which makes swimming in its waters similar to floating.
 - The high saline level and the harsh climate make the lake devoid of life, except for algae and other microorganisms.

Name of the Salinity Water Bodies	Region or Countries	Type	Salinity %
Don Juan Pond	McMurdo Dry Valleys in Antarctica	Salt Lake	44
Lake Retba	Senegal	Salt Lake	40
Lake Vanda	Antarctica	Salt Lake	35
Garabogazköl	Caspian Sea in Turkmenistan	Lagoon	35
Lake Assal	Djibouti	Salt Lake	34.8

Dead Sea	Israel, Jordan, Palestine	Salt Lake	34.2
Little Manitou Lake	Canada	Salt Lake	18
Lake Urmia	Iran	Salt Lake	8.5–28
Laguna Cejar	Chile	Salt Lake	5–28
Great Salt Lake	United States	Salt Lake	5–27

- **Composition of Dead Sea :**

- The mineral content of the Dead Sea is very different from that of ocean water.



The Dead Sea's mineral composition differs from that of ocean water, varying with season, rainfall, depth, and temperature.

- The exact composition of the Dead Sea water varies mainly with season, depth and temperature.
- In the early 1980s, the concentration of ionic species (in g/kg) of Dead Sea surface water was Cl⁻ (181.4), Br⁻ (4.2), SO₄²⁻ (0.4), HCO₃⁻ (0.2), Ca²⁺ (14.1), Na⁺ (32.5), K⁺ (6.2) and Mg²⁺ (35.2).
- The total salinity was 276 g/kg.
- These results show that the composition of the salt, as anhydrous chlorides on a weight percentage basis, was calcium chloride (CaCl₂) 14.4%, potassium chloride (KCl) 4.4%, magnesium chloride (MgCl₂) 50.8% and sodium chloride (common salt, NaCl) 30.4%.
- In comparison, the salt in the water of most oceans and seas is approximately 97% sodium chloride.
- The concentration of sulfate ions (SO₄²⁻) is very low, and the concentration of bromide ions (Br⁻) is the highest of all waters on Earth.
- **Economic Significance of the Dead Sea :**
- The Dead Sea is a popular destination for tourism and leisure, attracting thousands of visitors every year.
- One of the popular activities for most tourists is floating on the sea.
- Because of the high salt concentration, the lake's water is denser, making floating possible.
- The water also has healing properties, making the Dead Sea a health resort, especially for people suffering from skin diseases like acne, cellulite, and psoriasis.
- The Dead Sea also supports the chemical industry by providing minerals like potash, magnesium chloride, and carnallite.

- Some companies are also planning to manufacture and supply the lake salts to industries making skincare products.
- **Other Significance :**
- Biblically, it was a place of refuge for King David.
- Due to large-scale projects by Israel and Jordan to divert water from the Jordan River for irrigation and other water needs, the surface of the Dead Sea has been dropping dangerously for at least the past 50 years.
- Environmental groups, led by Friends of the Earth, launched a "Let the Dead Sea Live" campaign in 2001 to preserve the lake and its unique environmental qualities.
- In September 2002 Israel and Jordan agreed to construct a 320-km pipeline that would link the Dead Sea with the Gulf of Aqaba, to slow down the process of evaporation of the lake's waters.
- If the shrinkage is allowed to continue, it is likely that the Dead Sea might disappear altogether by 2050.

About Israel :

History of Israel :

- **Ancient History :**

- Jews are said to be descended from the biblical figure Abraham, who lived more than 3,500 years ago.
- Abraham fled from Mesopotamia (now the country of Iraq) to Canaan, which now includes



Jerusalem.

- There, he established a new religion among the Hebrew-speaking people who lived in the region.
- Those people became the Israelites.
- The Israelites fought for 200 years for control of Canaan.
- Eventually, King David conquered Jerusalem, a city in Canaan, around 1010 B.C.

- About 80 years later, the Israelites split in two small kingdoms: Israel, north of what is now Galilee and the West Bank; and Judah, the city of Jerusalem. Today both are considered modern-day Israel.
- Around 5 B.C., this land became known as Palestine; the people who called it home were known as Palestinians.
- Because so many ancient cultures and religious groups claimed this region as their own, many people have fought over the land for thousands of years.
- **Modern History :**
- Between 1920 and 1948, the United Kingdom controlled Palestine, which then had a population that was mostly Arab (people who speak Arabic).
- Many Jews, who believed that this was their homeland, moved to the region during this time.
- But Palestinians believed that this was their homeland, too.
- As more Jews came to the region, fighting between the two groups increased.
- During the Holocaust of World War II (1939-1945), when Nazi soldiers murdered six million Jewish people, Jews who could fled Europe.
- Many went to live with other Jews in British-controlled Palestine, where over one million Arabs were also living.
- Because so many Jews had been forced to leave Europe, they believed that they needed their own country.
- In 1948, the British withdrew, and—with the support of the United Nations—Jews living in Palestine created the State of Israel.
- But Palestinians believed that the region should be run by Arabs, and a year-long conflict erupted.
- Even though the Palestinians were backed by armies from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Syria, the Israelis won the war.
- In 1949, the territory was divided into the State of Israel for Jewish people, and the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip for Arabs. (At the time, the West Bank and East Jerusalem were controlled by Jordan, and Gaza by Egypt.)
- But dividing the region didn't lead to peace, and disputes over land boundaries and shipping routes escalated.
- In 1967—after a war between Israel and neighboring Arab countries that lasted just six days—Israel took control of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. (Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem remained citizens of Jordan until 1988, when Jordan cut all ties to those territories.) Israelis and Palestinians have been fighting over the areas ever since.
- In 2005, the country pulled Israeli troops and settlers out of the Gaza Strip, where they had been for 38 years, in an attempt to bring peace.
- But Israel still maintained control over the movement of people and goods through Gaza's borders, which angered Palestinians.
- Two years later, the political party Hamas—considered by many a terrorist group—won an election there and kicked out the more moderate group, Fatah.
- On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israelis. They took hundreds of Jews hostage and left about 1,400 people dead and around 3,400 injured.
- In retaliation, the Israeli government declared war on Hamas and launched its own strikes, killing and injuring many more.

Government :

- Israel is the only fully democratic country in the Middle East.
- Elections are held for seats in the Knesset, or parliament, every four years.
- If a party wins two percent of the votes, the party gets one or more seats in parliament.
- No one party has control, so all groups must work together.
- The leader of the largest party becomes prime minister.
- The prime minister appoints a cabinet of ministers that runs the country.
- The 120 members of the Knesset elect a president, who is the head of state.
- Even though Israel controls access to the Occupied Territories, the people living there are still governed by Palestinian political organizations: Fatah, part of the Palestine Liberation Organization; and Hamas, which is considered a terrorist group by countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

People & Culture :

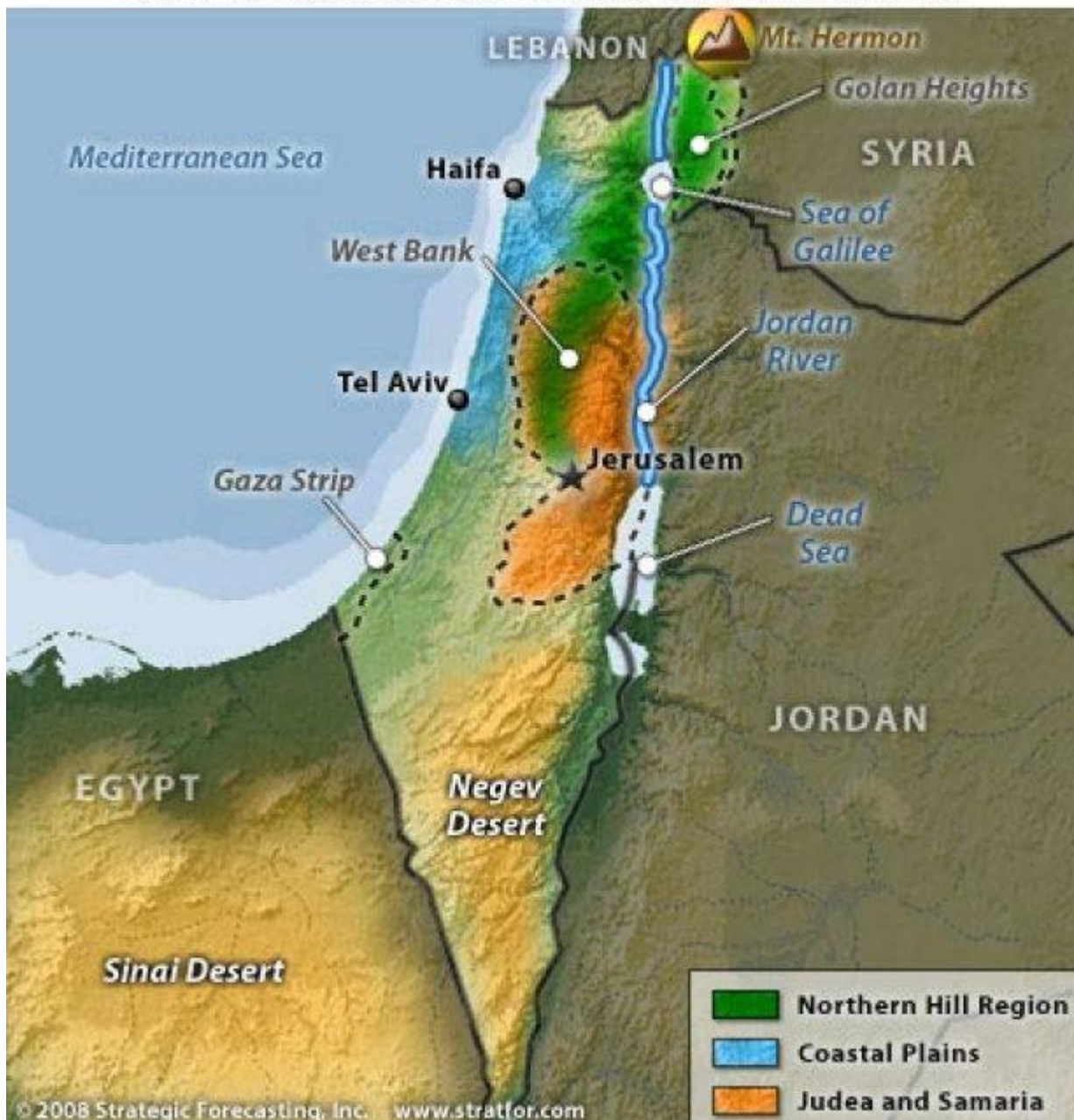
- **One rule state that Jews can eat only kosher food, which is prepared and certified according to the religious laws.** For instance, pork and shellfish are not considered kosher; kosher rules also mean that meat and dairy products can't be mixed together. So, pepperoni-and-cheese pizza and cheeseburgers are not kosher.
- **Traditional Jewish people take off Shabbat, or a day of rest, which begins on Friday at sundown and continues through Saturday evening.** Stores are closed and work isn't permitted on Shabbat.
- When Jewish boys turn 13, they have a large celebration called a bar mitzvah. Girls turning 12 celebrate their own version of this rite of passage, called bat mitzvah.
- **Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, is considered a holy city by Jews, Muslims, and Christians alike.**
- This city is the historical center of all three religions. Jews believe the Messiah (their savior) will one day appear here, Muslims believe that their prophet, Muhammad, ascended to heaven from here, and Christians believe that this is where Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

Geographical Surroundings of Israel :

- **Location:**
 - **Israel is a small, narrow and semi-arid country lying at the junction of Europe, Asia and Africa on the southeastern coastline of the Mediterranean Sea.**
 - It is bordered by Lebanon in the north, Syria in the northeast, Jordan in the east, Egypt to the southwest and the Mediterranean Sea in the west.
 - It can be crossed in about 90 minutes by car, from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Dead Sea in the east; and in about six hours from Metulla in the north to Eilat in the south.
- **Physical Feature :**
 - 🚩 Israel is a sovereign nation that covers an area of about 20,770 sq. km in West Asia.
 - 🚩 It can be divided into four distinct physiographic regions.
 - **Coastal Plain region :**
 - It stretches from the Lebanese border in the north to Gaza (Aza in Hebrew) to the south, runs parallel to the Mediterranean Sea and is composed of a sandy shoreline, bordered by stretches of fertile farmland extending up to 40 km (25 miles) inland.

- More than half of the country's roughly 8 million residents live in this area, and it includes the country's major urban centers like Tel Aviv, as well as a large portion of industry and agriculture.
- Zichron Yaakov sits almost in the center of this region at the northern edge of the Sharon (commonly referred to as the Merkaz) and at the southern edge of the Carmel Beach region (Hof Hacarmel in Hebrew).
- A fertile (and mostly flat) coastal plain fronts the Mediterranean Sea coastline of Israel.
- **Central Hills region:**
 - It is inland (east) of the coastal plain.
 - **Mountain ranges dominate this area that run the length of the country.**

ISRAEL'S GEOGRAPHY AND BORDERLANDS



- The mountain ranges of the Upper and Lower Galilee in the North reaching a maximum height of 3963 feet at Mount Meron near Safed down to the Judean Hills south of Jerusalem and the West Bank.
- **Jordan Rift Valley region:**
 - It is inland (east) of the Central Hills.
 - The Jordan Valley is dominated by the Jordan River which runs a total of 322 km (200 miles) from the Mount Hermon in the North, down through the Hula Basin through the Sea of Galilee, then continues its course from the southern end of Sea of Galilee to the lowest place on Earth the Dead Sea.
 - South of the Dead Sea, the Rift Valley continues into the Arava River (Nahal HaArava in Hebrew) all the way to the Gulf of Eilat.
 - **The valley runs south to the Gulf of Aqaba along its southern border with Jordan.**
- **Negev region:**
 - This desert region in the southern part of the country comprises about half of Israel's land area but is sparsely populated.
 - The region is bordered by the town of Beersheba in the North all the way to Eilat in the South.
 - The topography parallels that of the rest of the country with lowlands in the West, mountainous region in the center, and a valley in the East.
 - The southeastern region of the desert is the most arid with less than 50 millimeters of rainfall annually.
 - **At the southern tip of the Negev are the Eilat Mountains with colorful layers of sandstone.**
 - The river Jordan is the most significant river, forming the natural border between Israel and Jordan.
 - Lake Tiberias and the Jordan River comprises the main drainage system in Israel. Several other rivers also flow through the country.

Do You Know about Israel ?

- The name Erez Israel (the Land of Israel) designates the land which, according to the Bible was promised as an inheritance to the Israelite tribes.
- In the course of time, it came to be regarded first by the Jews and then also by the Christian world as the national homeland of the Jews and the Holy Land.
- The concept of ha-Arez ("the land") had apparently become permanently rooted in the consciousness of the Jewish people by the end of the Second Temple period, at which time the term Erez Israel also became fixed and its usage widespread.

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