29 November: Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

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News

Every year the United Nations observes 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People; in 2026 it falls on Sunday, 29 November. The day was established by UN General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977. The date was chosen because on 29 November 1947 the General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II) on Palestine. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) holds an annual special meeting at UN Headquarters, New York, addressed by the UN Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Security Council and others. A message from the Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and President of the Palestinian Authority is read out there. India's official position is support for a negotiated two-State solution, with a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine living in peace side by side with Israel.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Date	29 November (annual)
Established by	UNGA resolution 32/40 B (2 Dec 1977)
Why this date	29 Nov 1947 – resolution 181 (II)
UN status	Non-member observer State (29 Nov 2012, res. 67/19)

Point	Details
UNRWA	8 Dec 1949, res. 302 (IV); work began 1 May 1950
India – PLO	1974 – first non-Arab State to recognise it
India – State of Palestine	Among the first to recognise it (1988)
India's Representative Office	Gaza (1996) → Ramallah (2003)

Background

- History: after the First World War, Palestine was administered by Britain under a League of Nations Mandate. The 'Partition Resolution' 181 (II), adopted by the UN General Assembly on 29 November 1947, provided for a 'Jewish State' and an 'Arab State' in Palestine, with Jerusalem as a corpus separatum under a special international regime. Israel was established on 14 May 1948; the Arab State envisaged in the plan did not come into being then, and the State of Palestine was proclaimed later, in 1988.
- UN: the General Assembly created UNRWA by resolution 302 (IV) on 8 December 1949 to run direct relief and works programmes for Palestine refugees; it has operated since 1 May 1950. On 29 November 2012 the Assembly granted Palestine 'non-member observer State' status by 138 votes to 9, with 41 abstentions. Full UN membership needs a Security Council recommendation (UN Charter, Article 4).
- India's position: in 1974 India became the first non-Arab State to recognise the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and in 1988 it was among the first to recognise the State of Palestine. Its Representative Office, opened in Gaza in 1996, moved to Ramallah in 2003. India raised its annual UNRWA contribution from $1.25 million to $5 million in 2018.
- Geography: the Palestinian territories are the West Bank, lying west of the Jordan River, and the Gaza Strip on the Mediterranean coast next to Egypt. The Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea, the lowest body of water on Earth's surface.

Tamil Nadu link: This observance has no direct Tamil Nadu link. Closest fact: foreign affairs is in the Union List (Entry 10) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, so India's position on the issue is set by the Union Government alone; States, including Tamil Nadu, have no power in this field.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Date: 29 November (annual); Established by: UNGA resolution 32/40 B (2 Dec 1977); Why this date: 29 Nov 1947 – resolution 181 (II); UN status: Non-member observer State (29 Nov 2012, res. 67/19).

What is the background to this news?

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Practice questions (with answers)

1. What did UN General Assembly resolution 181 (II), adopted on 29 November 1947, provide for?

A) Partition into 2 States

B) A British Mandate

C) Full UN membership

D) One federal State

Answer: A – Explanation: Partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish States, with Jerusalem under an international regime. The British Mandate came from the League of Nations.

2. What status did the UN General Assembly grant Palestine on 29 November 2012?

A) Full member State

B) Trust Territory

C) Observer entity

D) Non-member observer State

Answer: D – Explanation: Non-member observer State – resolution 67/19 (138–9, 41 abstentions). Full membership needs a Security Council recommendation.

3. Which agency did the UN General Assembly create in 1949 to give direct relief to Palestine refugees?

A) UNHCR

B) UNRWA

C) UNICEF

D) OCHA

Answer: B – Explanation: UNRWA – resolution 302 (IV); operating since May 1950. India raised its annual contribution to $5 million in 2018.

4. In 1974 India became the first non-Arab State to recognise which body as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians?

A) Arab League

B) OIC

C) GCC

D) PLO

Answer: D – Explanation: The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In 1988 India was among the first to recognise the State of Palestine.

5. The Palestinian territory called the 'West Bank' takes its name from lying west of which river?

A) Nile

B) Euphrates

C) Jordan

D) Tigris

Answer: C – Explanation: The Jordan River – it flows into the Dead Sea, the lowest body of water on Earth's surface. The Euphrates and Tigris water Mesopotamia.