

Key Facts about Golan Heights

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About Golan Heights:

- It is a **hilly area overlooking** the **upper Jordan River** valley on the west.
- It is a **Syrian territory occupied by Israel** since 1967.

- The area's name is from the biblical city of refuge Golan in Bashan.
 - It is **bounded by** the **Jordan River** and the **Sea of Galilee on the west, Mount Hermon** on the north, the seasonal **Wadi Al-Ruqqād River** on the east, and the **Yarmūk River** on the south.
 - It extends about 71 km from north to south and about 43 km from east to west at its widest point.
 - It is **roughly boat-shaped** and has an area of 1,150 sq.km.
 - **History:**
 - The area **was part of** extreme southwestern **Syria until 1967**, when it **came under Israeli military occupation** in the **closing stages of the 1967 Six-Day War**.
 - **Most of the Syrian Arab inhabitants fled the area** during the conflict.
 - Syria tried to retake the Golan Heights during the 1973 Middle East war, but the attempt was thwarted.
 - Both countries signed an armistice in 1974, and a UN observer force has been in place on the ceasefire line since 1974.
 - In **December 1981, Israel unilaterally annexed** the part of the Golan it held.
 - It's **considered occupied territory under international law** and UN Security Council resolutions.
 - There are more than **30 Israeli settlements** in the Golan Heights, which are home to an estimated **20,000 people**.
 - They are **considered illegal under international law**, which Israel disputes.
 - The **settlers live alongside some 20,000 Syrians, most of them Druze Arabs** who did not flee when the area came under Israeli control.
 - **Strategic Importance:**
 - The **Syrian capital, Damascus**, can be **clearly seen from the top** of the Golan Hills.
 - It **overlooks northern Israel's Galilee region** and the **Sea of Galilee** and dominates the route to Damascus on the Syrian-controlled side.
 - Importantly, the Golan Heights **shares a border with Jordan and Lebanon**.
 - The area is also a **key source of water** for an arid region. Rainwater from the Golan's catchment feeds into the Jordan River.
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Q1: Where is the Sea of Galilee?

The Sea of Galilee is a large freshwater lake located in the Jordan Rift Valley between the Galilee region and Golan Heights in the northeastern part of Israel, close to its borders with Jordan and Syria.

News: Israel plans to double population in Golan, cites threats from Syria

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