

Yemen Civil War

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What's in today's article?

- **Why in News?**
- **The Yemen Civil War (Background, Beginning)**
- **News Summary Regarding Peace Talks in Yemen**

Why in News?

- After eight years of crushing civil war in Yemen, a new round of talks this week has raised a glimmer of hope for a breakthrough in one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Background of the Yemen Civil War:

- The wave of protests known as the **Arab Spring** did not take long to arrive in Yemen after the Tunisian Revolution (2011-2012).

- **Yemen**, only unified since 1990, was a **poor country** with a government widely acknowledged to be **corrupt**, with a large number of **weapons in private hands**. It had **deep divisions that persisted** between the north and south.
- By 2011, the country was **already facing challenges** from al Qaeda-linked militants and separatists in the south and Zaydi Shia Muslim rebels in the north.

The Beginning of the Civil war:

- In September 2014, the **Houthi insurgency** (predominantly a Iran-backed Zaydi Shia force) transformed into a full-blown civil war as Houthi fighters swept into the capital of Sana'a.
- The rebels continued to apply pressure until the **internationally recognised government was ousted in January 2015**.
- The **Houthis declared themselves in control of the Yemeni government**, dissolving the Parliament, and installing an interim **Revolutionary Committee**.
- The then President (Hadi) escaped to Aden and declared himself Yemen's legitimate president and proclaimed Aden as the country's temporary capital.
- **The Saudi-led coalition** intervened in 2015 in an attempt to restore the (Hadi) government, launching a devastating **bombing campaign** that lasted years.

YEMEN

Key players in the conflict

In March 2015, a **Saudi-led coalition** – backed by the **US** – intervened militarily in Yemen in a bid to **fight the Houthis, restore Hadi's government**, and reverse what they say is growing **Iranian influence in the region**.



Image Caption: Key Players in Yemen Conflict

The world's worst humanitarian crises:

- Even before the war, **Yemen was the poorest Arab country**.
- But the conflict mired the Yemenis into one of the world's worst humanitarian crises and pushed the country to the brink of **famine**.
- The UN estimates the war had **killed 377,000 people** as of the end of 2021, both directly and indirectly through hunger and disease – **70% of those deaths are children**.
- About 24 million people – **80% of Yemen's population** – are in need of humanitarian aid.

News Summary Regarding Peace Talks in Yemen:

- **What has changed now?** A surprise rapprochement/resumption of harmonious relations between two regional powers, **Saudi Arabia and Iran** – who fed a **proxy conflict** that worsened the war.
- **Who is at the talks?** The negotiations in Yemen's capital, Sana, bring together **Saudi Arabia** and the **Houthis**.
- **What are they trying to achieve?**
 - Negotiators are seeking the reinstatement of a **truce** and **a complete withdrawal of foreign forces from Yemen**.
 - The negotiators also want to pave the way for broader talks **to resolve Yemen's multifaceted political conflict and repair its demolished economy**.
- **Why does the détente between Saudi Arabia and Iran matter?**
 - Both Riyadh and Tehran are keen to prove that their diplomatic efforts were instrumental in bringing calmness to Yemen.
 - Saudi officials are eager to end their military involvement in Yemen, which has been **expensive and damaging to the kingdom's international reputation**.
- **Will these talks end Yemen's conflict?** Without genuine support within the country, among the Yemenis themselves, a political resolution cannot take root.

Q1) What is the Arab spring?

The Arab Spring was a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions that spread across much of the Arab world in the early 2010s. It began in Tunisia in response to corruption and economic stagnation.

Q2) What is the Houthi movement?

The Houthi movement is an Islamist political and armed organisation that emerged in North Yemen in the 1990s. The Houthi movement is a predominately Zaidi Shia force, whose leadership is drawn largely from the Houthi tribe, that have a complex relationship with Yemen's Sunni Muslims.

Source: [What do peace talks in Yemen mean for its 8-year war?](#) | [Aljazeera](#)

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