

Israel's Iron Dome and Yom Kippur War

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Why in news?

- The Hamas militant group launched its worst attack inside the Jewish state's territory since 1948, killing at least 250 Israelis and abducting several others.
 - The surprise attack has brought back memories of the **Yom Kippur war**.
- Journalists have shared an undated video on X of the **Iron Dome**, Israel's air defence system, intercepting rockets coming in from Gaza.

What is the Iron Dome?

- **About**
 - It is a short-range, ground-to-air, air defence system that includes a radar and Tamir interceptor missiles that track and neutralise any rockets or missiles aimed at Israeli targets.

- It is used for countering rockets, artillery & mortars (C-RAM) as well as aircraft, helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles.

- **Genesis**

- The genesis of the Iron Dome goes back to the 2006 Israeli-Lebanon war, when the Hezbollah fired thousands of rockets into Israel.
- The following year, Israel announced that its state-run Rafael Advance Systems would come up with a new air defence system to protect its cities and people.

- **Success rate**

- The Iron Dome was deployed in 2011.
- While Rafael claims a success rate of over 90%, with more than 2,000 interceptions, experts agree the success rate is over 80%.

How does Iron Dome work?

- The Iron Dome has three main systems that work together to provide a shield over the area where it is deployed, handling multiple threats. These are:
 - Detection and tracking radar to spot any incoming threats,
 - A battle management and weapon control system (BMC), and
 - A missile firing unit.
- The BMC basically liaises between the radar and the interceptor missile.
- It is capable of being used in all weather conditions, including during the day and night.
- There is something in each missile called proximity fuse which is a laser-controlled fuse.
- When passing within ten metres of the target, this activates and blasts the missile with shrapnel that destroys the target.
- The warhead is exploded in such a way that it caters for the velocity of the missile and the target.

What is Yom Kippur War?

- **About**

- The Yom Kippur war, or the October war, or the Ramadan war, was fought between Israel on one side and Egypt and Syria on the other, from October 6 to 25, 1973.
 - Yom Kippur is the holiest day in Judaism and Samaritanism.
 - It is also known as the Day of Atonement. It is observed on the 10th day of the lunar month of Tishri, which falls in September or early October.
- It is also called the Fourth Arab-Israeli war, coming after three wars in 1949, 1956, and 1967.

- **Background**

- After its decisive victory in the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel had acquired an aura of invincibility.
- It also captured territories from its neighbours, including the Golan Heights from Syria and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt.
- Six years later, the two countries launched a coordinated attack on Israel.
- While Israel was aware of troops mobilisation, it had not expected an attack in the Holy Islamic month of Ramadan.

- Caught by surprise, Israel took time to mobilise its own soldiers, many of whom were on leave for Yom Kippur.
- Thus, initially, both Syria and Egypt made some gains.

- **Aftermath**

- Israel was able to stem the advance on both Syrian and Egyptian sides after three days and soon launched its own counterstrikes.

Why is the current violence being compared with the Yom Kippur war?

- For one, this has been the deadliest attack on Israel since the Yom Kippur war of 1973.
 - In the Yom Kippur war, more than 2,500 Israeli soldiers were killed.
- The second similarity is the criticism within Israel for the state being found unprepared.
 - The recent attack came as a surprise, despite Israel's advanced intelligence and interception systems.
 - This attack came when many Israelis were preparing to observe **Simchat Torah**, which marks the end of the annual cycle of public Torah readings, and the beginning of a new one.
 - The Torah constitutes the first five books of the Hebrew Bible.

What is the significance of the Yom Kippur war?

Israel is not invincible:

- The heavy casualties it suffered in the war, made it clear that Israel could be battered, if not beaten, in battle.
- In fact, many analysts believe that Egypt's strategy behind launching the attack was not necessarily to defeat the militarily superior Israel, but to bruise it enough to bring it to the negotiating table.

For Egypt:

- Under the 1978 Camp David Accords, Israel returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt.
- The 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was the first instance of an Arab country recognising Israel as a state.

For Syria:

- For Syria, however, the war brought no happy consequences.
- Israel in fact ended up occupying even more of the strategically important and fertile plateau of Golan Heights, which it holds to this day.

Q1) What is the geographical location of Golan Heights?

The Golan Heights is a region located in the Middle East, primarily in southwestern Syria. It shares borders with Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel.

Q2) What is the geographical location of Sinai Peninsula?

The Sinai Peninsula lies between the Gulf of Suez and the Suez Canal on the west and the Gulf of Aqaba and the Negev on the east, and it is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea on the north and the Red Sea to the south.

Source: [What is Israel's Iron Dome, how does it intercept rockets? | Indian Express](#)

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