

Middle East Countries, List, Map, Capital, Flag, War and Conflicts

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The List of **Middle East Countries** includes the region around Western Asia as well as Northern Africa. This region has been the hub of international affairs over many years. It is known for its ancient civilizations, rich culture, and strategic location. The region is especially important because of its large oil reserves, major trade routes, and religious sites. For UPSC aspirants, understanding the Middle East is important because it affects India's foreign policy, energy needs, and relationships with other countries.

Middle East Countries Name

The Middle East Countries are culturally and strategically important region connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe through trade and history.

- Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates form the Arabian Peninsula, a major part of the Middle East.
- Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Egypt are widely included in the Middle East because of their historical, political, and geographical importance.

- Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip are part of the Levant region of the Middle East.
- Cyprus is sometimes included in Middle East country lists due to its strong historical and cultural links with the eastern Mediterranean region.
- In broader definitions, countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan may also be included.
- Some studies use the term MENA (Middle East and North Africa), which additionally includes Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Western Sahara.

Middle East Countries List and their Capitals

The List of Middle East Countries includes about 25 widely accepted countries including Israel, Iran and Iraq. All Middle East Countries have capital cities which act as an important centre of government. Some of these countries and their capitals are Tehran in Iran, Baghdad in Iraq, Jerusalem in Israel. Following below is the list of Middle East Countries along with their capitals:

S.No	Country	Capital
1	United Arab Emirates	Abu Dhabi
2	Algeria	Algiers
3	Jordan	Amman
4	Turkey	Ankara
5	Greece	Athens
6	Iraq	Baghdad
7	Azerbaijan	Baku
8	Lebanon	Beirut
9	Egypt	Cairo
10	Syria	Damascus

11	Qatar	Doha
12	Pakistan	Islamabad
13	Afghanistan	Kabul
14	Sudan	Khartoum
15	Kuwait	Kuwait City
16	Bahrain	Manama
17	Oman	Muscat
18	Cyprus	Nicosia
19	Saudi Arabia	Riyadh
20	Morocco	Rabat
21	Yemen	Sanaa
22	Georgia	Tbilisi
23	Iran	Tehran
24	Libya	Tripoli
25	Tunisia	Tunis

Middle East Countries Geopolitical and Economic Importance

The Middle East Countries play an important economic and geopolitical role in international affairs across the globe.

The Middle East Countries are important because:

- **Location is Strategic:** The Middle East regions cover major sea choke points including Suez Canal, **Strait of Hormuz** and Bab-el-Mandeb.

- **Energy Sources:** 48% of the **oil reserves of the world** are held by the Middle East Nations, providing them a central role in energy security.
- **Religious Importance:** Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and Bethlehem are some of the important places in the Middle East Countries.

Middle East Countries War and Conflicts

Middle East Countries War and Conflicts have shaped regional politics and international relations for over a century. The origin, history and major developments of the conflict has been discussed below:

- The roots of many Middle East conflicts lie in the period after World War I, when new national boundaries were created following the decline of the Ottoman Empire.
- The creation of Israel in 1948 led to the first Arab-Israeli war and became a major turning point in the region's political and security landscape.
- The Six Day War of 1967 changed control over several territories and significantly influenced future disputes, diplomacy and regional security concerns.
- The **Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979** transformed regional politics and increased geopolitical competition between Iran, Israel and several Arab countries.
- Over time, conflicts shifted from direct wars between countries to disputes involving armed groups and regional alliances in areas such as Lebanon, Gaza, Syria and Yemen.
- In recent years, tensions between Iran, Israel and their regional partners have led to missile attacks, drone operations and growing security concerns across West Asia.
- Important maritime routes such as the Strait of Hormuz have become strategically significant because they handle a large share of global oil and energy trade.
- Ongoing conflicts continue to affect global energy prices, trade routes, economic stability, humanitarian conditions and international diplomatic efforts in the Middle East.

Also Read: **OPEC**

India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

The **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)** is an ambitious initiative aimed at creating a seamless and secure transportation network that connects India with the Middle East and Europe. The corridor holds significant geopolitical and economic value, especially in strengthening India's strategic positioning and integrating it more deeply into global value chains.

- **Components of the IMEC:**
 - **Railway Infrastructure:** Establishing a modern rail network to link India and the Arabian Gulf with Europe, reducing both shipping costs and transit time.
 - **Digital Connectivity:** Laying high-speed internet cables to improve digital infrastructure and communication across the corridor.
 - **Energy Infrastructure:** Developing clean energy channels, such as green hydrogen pipelines, to support a sustainable energy exchange.

- **Sustainability Measures:** Prioritising renewable energy usage and eco-friendly logistics to reduce carbon emissions and promote green trade practices.
- **Benefits of the IMEC:** The benefits of India- Middle East Economic Corridor includes:
 - **Better Global Supply Chain:** The corridor will help link India, Middle East and Europe through rail and sea links, enabling better movement of products. This will also bring down the dependency on ocean routes, for both energy and basic goods.
 - **Strategic Position:** India having a central location, gets the benefit of connecting with Europe and West Asia, decreasing its dependency on China-predominant routes like the Belt and Road Initiative.
 - **Economic Growth:** The convenience in movement will lead to more job opportunities in industries like infrastructure, energy, logistics and digital connectivity.
 - **Food Security:** For developing nations, especially in Africa and Asia, the corridor offers a reliable and efficient logistics framework for transporting agricultural produce and essential goods—thereby strengthening food security and supply chain resilience.
 - **Green Energy and Sustainability:** The inclusion of clean hydrogen pipelines reflects a strong commitment to green energy. This focus on sustainability aligns with global climate action efforts, promoting environmentally responsible infrastructure and reducing carbon emissions across the corridor.

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