Syllabus subtopic:

- Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India’s interests, Indian Diaspora.
- Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests.

Prelims and Mains focus: About the move to withdraw and its implications, About Oslo Accords, West bank settlements; Six-Days war

News: Palestinian officials threatened on Sunday to withdraw from key provisions of the Oslo Accords, which define relations with Israel, if U.S. President Donald Trump announces his West Asia peace plan next week.

Why?

- Mr. Trump’s initiative will turn Israel’s temporary occupation (of Palestinian territory) into a permanent occupation.

- The Palestinians, who see east Jerusalem as the capital of their future state, say Mr. Trump’s plan buries the two-state solution that has been the cornerstone of global West Asia diplomacy.

About Oslo Accords

- The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement, signed in Washington in 1995, sought to put into practice the first Oslo peace deal agreed two years earlier. The agreement set out the scope of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza.

- Under the Oslo Accords, both Israel and the Palestinians agreed that the status of settlements would be decided by negotiations. But the negotiations process has been all but dead for several years now.

- Israel walked into East Jerusalem in 1967 (Six-Day War), and subsequently annexed it. For Israel, Jerusalem is non-negotiable. The
Palestinians want East Jerusalem as the capital of their future state. Most of the world’s nations look at it as occupied territory.

About West Bank

It is a landlocked territory near the Mediterranean coast of Western Asia, bordered by Jordan to the east and by the Green Line separating it and Israel on the south, west and north. The West Bank also contains a significant section of the western shore of the Dead Sea.

About West Bank settlements

- The West Bank was captured by Jordan after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.
- Israel snatched it back during the Six Day War of 1967, and has occupied it ever since.
- It has built some 130 formal settlements in the West Bank, and a similar number of smaller, informal settlements have mushroomed over the last 20-25 years.
- Over 4 lakh Israeli settlers — many of them religious Zionists who claim a Biblical birthright over this land — now live here, along with some 26 lakh Palestinians.

Settlements legal or illegal?

- The United Nations General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and the International Court of Justice have said that the West Bank settlements are violative of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

- Under the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949), an occupying power “shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies”.

- Under the Rome Statute that set up the International Criminal Court in 1998, such transfers constitute war crimes, as does the “extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly”.