



Israel Recognises Somaliland

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Why in news: Israel has become the **first country to formally recognise Somaliland** as an independent state. Somaliland, located in the Horn of Africa, is **not recognised by the UN** or most countries but has operated with **de facto autonomy since 1991**. This development has implications for **regional stability, maritime security, and great power competition** in the Red Sea–Indian Ocean corridor.

About Somaliland

Historical Background:

oFormerly the **British Somaliland Protectorate**, it gained brief independence in **1960** as the State of Somaliland.
oIt voluntarily merged with Italian Somaliland to form **Somalia**, but declared independence in **1991** after the fall of Siad Barre's regime, amid large-scale human rights abuses against the **Isaaq clan**.

Autonomy:

oMaintains its own **currency, passports, police, and capital (Hargeisa)**.
oFunctions as a **self-governing state** but lacks **international recognition** until Israel's recent move.

Strategic Significance

Location:

oSituated in the **Horn of Africa**, bordering Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia.
oOverlooks the **Bab el-Mandeb Strait**, connecting the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean—a critical global shipping route.

Security & Military Dimensions:

oIsrael gains a **forward strategic base** for intelligence, logistics, and counter-Houthi operations.
oPotential for military and intelligence collaboration with Somaliland.
o**UAE presence:** Military port and airstrip in Berbera enhance regional strategic depth.
oPossible use as a **resettlement location for Palestinians**, reflecting Israel's geopolitical outreach in Africa.

