



Chasing peace in Yemen

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Chasing peace in Yemen-The events that led to the Stockholm peace agreement, and the way forward

- The ceasefire between Yemen's Houthi rebels and forces loyal to President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi in the port city of Hodeida came into existence on December 18.
- The agreement was reached in UN-mediated talks held in Stockholm.
- With the UN also pushing for talks, the Yemeni government backed by Saudi Arabia gave the green light for talks.

Yemen's humanitarian situation

- Since the Saudi intervention in 2015, at least 10,000 people have been killed in Yemen, according to the WHO.
- The widespread damage caused to infrastructure by the coalition airstrikes and lack of supplies of food and medicines due to the blockade have pushed Yemen into a humanitarian catastrophe.
- A child dies every 10 minutes in Yemen from preventable causes, says UNICEF.

Why is Saudi Arabia in Yemen?

- Saudi Arabia interfered in Yemen after the Shia Houthi rebels captured Sana'a, the capital city, and the internationally recognised government of President Hadi moved to the country's south.
- The Saudis accuse Iran of bankrolling the Houthis and "destabilising" the Arabian peninsula.
- The Saudi plan was to expel the Houthis from Sana'a and restore the authority of the government.
- But almost four years since they launched the attack, the Houthis still control Sana'a and much of the north of Yemen.
- They also fire short-range missiles across the border into Saudi Arabia, which has become a major security concern for Riyadh.
- Barring some violations, the ceasefire held on the second day.

- The Houthis have seen loss of territory in recent months, while the Saudi coalition is facing growing international pressure.
- According to the agreement, all combatants should withdraw from Hodeida in 21 days.
- UN observers will set up a monitoring team of government and rebel representatives to oversee the truce.
- But the Stockholm agreement is primarily focussed on Yemen's humanitarian conditions.
- A solution to the conflict can be found only if the rebels and the government make some political concessions.

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