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# International Relations (PRE-Cure)

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## 1. Hong Kong Protests

- As a result, Hong Kong has its own legal system and borders, and rights including freedom of assembly and free speech are protected
- The Chinese government said in 2014 it would allow voters to choose their leaders from a list approved by a pro-Beijing committee, but critics called this a "sham democracy" and it was voted down in Hong Kong's legislature.
- Protests in Hong Kong are against a controversial extradition bill, which if approved, would allow suspects to be sent to mainland China for trial

## 2. SCO

- It is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation, the creation of which was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai (China) by Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. It was preceded by the Shanghai Five mechanism

### Main goals

- strengthening mutual trust and neighborliness among the member states promoting their effective cooperation in politics, trade, the economy, research, technology, and culture, as well as in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, and other areas
- making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security, and stability in the region and
- moving towards the establishment of a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order
- The historical meeting of the Heads of State Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was held in Astana in 2017, where the status of the full member was granted to India and Pakistan
- SCO comprises eight member states and 4 observers (Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia)
- Heads of State Council (HSC) is the supreme decision-making body which meets once a year and adopts decisions and guidelines on all important matters of the organisation
- Its official languages are Russian and Chinese
- It has two permanent bodies – SCO Secretariat based in Beijing and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) based in Tashkent



- RATS operates on combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism
- SCO Interbank Consortium (SCO IBC) was established in 2005 to provide funding and bank services for investment projects sponsored by the governments of the SCO member states
- ✓ India and Pakistan are not members of the same

### 3. BIMSTEC

- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization comprising seven Member States lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal constituting a contiguous regional unity
- This sub-regional organization came into being on 6 June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration
- It constitutes seven Member States: five deriving from South Asia, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and two from Southeast Asia, including Myanmar and Thailand
- BIMSTEC region is home to around 1.5 billion people which constitute around 22% of the global population with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of 2.7 trillion economies.
- Unlike many other regional groupings, BIMSTEC is a sector-driven cooperative organization.
- Starting with six sectors—including trade, technology, energy, transport, tourism, and fisheries—for sectoral cooperation in the late 1997, it expanded to embrace nine more sectors—including agriculture, public health, poverty alleviation, counter-terrorism, environment, culture, people to people contact and climate change—in 2008.
- The Chairmanship of BIMSTEC rotates among the Member States. Sri Lanka is the present chair of BIMSTEC.



### 4. ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation

- It is a forum that functions as a coordinator of co-operation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the three East Asian nations of China, South Korea, and Japan
- It is the latest development of East Asian regional co-operation
- Its significance was strengthened by the Asian Financial Crisis

- In response to the crisis, ASEAN closely cooperated with China, South Korea, and Japan. Since the implementation of the Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation in 1999 at the Manila Summit, APT finance ministers have been holding periodic consultations
- ASEAN Plus Three, in establishing the Chiang Mai initiative, has been credited as forming the basis for financial stability in Asia, the lack of such stability has contributed to the Asian Financial Crisis

### **Asian Currency Unit (ACU) is a proposed weighted index of currencies for ASEAN+**

- Its purpose is to help stabilise the region's financial markets
- It is a currency basket and not a real currency i.e., a benchmark for regional currency movements
- Since the process began in 1997, ASEAN Plus Three (APT) co-operation has broadened and deepened to also focus on subjects other than finance too in the discussion such as the areas of food and energy security, financial cooperation, trade facilitation, disaster management, people-to-people contacts, narrowing the development gap, rural development and poverty alleviation, human trafficking, labour movement, communicable diseases, environment and sustainable development, and transnational crime, including counter-terrorism.

## **5. Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA)**

- It is an intergovernmental forum for enhancing cooperation towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia
- It is a forum based on the recognition that there is close link between peace, security and stability in Asia and in the rest of the world
- It pursues its policy based on the principles of sovereign equality, non-interference in internal affairs of the Member States and economic, social and cultural cooperation to achieve its main objective of enhancing co-operation through elaborating multilateral approaches towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia
- All decisions in CICA are taken by consensus
- For becoming a member of CICA, a state must have at least a party of its territory in Asia
- A CICA summit is convened every four years in order to conduct consultations, review the progress and set priorities

### **In News**

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar attended the 5th conference in the Tajik capital Dushanbe
- Theme: Shared Vision for a Secure and More Prosperous CICA Region
- India is a member of the 27 member body since its inception and former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee had participated in the first CICA summit in 2002 in Almaty, Kazakhstan
- The minister stressed that terrorism is the gravest threat that Asia faces and CICA members are its victims and it should be clear that terrorists and their victims must never be equated

- India has already proposed Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) in the United Nations

## 6. New START Treaty

- The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) caps the number of nuclear warheads well below Cold War limits
  - ✓ It replaced the 1991 START I treaty, which expired in December 2009 and superseded the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), and will expire in 2021
- It was signed by US President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Prague in 2010
- It continues the bipartisan process of verifiably reducing the US and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals
- Provisions
  - ✓ It caps the accountably deployed strategic nuclear warheads and bombs along with the missile, bomber and launcher limits
  - ✓ It does not limit the number of non-deployed ICMBs and SLBMs, but it does monitor them and provide for continuous information on their locations and on-site inspection to confirm that they are not added to the deployable force
  - ✓ It does not prohibit either side from deploying conventional warheads on long-range ballistic missiles
- Together with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, New START is considered a centerpiece of superpower arms control
  - ✓ Russia suspended participation in the INF treaty in March 2019 after President Trump's White House announced it would ditch the key agreement over alleged Russian violation of the terms

## 7. QUAD Meet

- India, United States, Japan and Australia met for the fourth time with latest quadrilateral meet in Bangkok, Thailand
- India has said that the quadrilateral meeting is a consultative process, not a military alliance
  - ✓ What began as a humanitarian coordination effort among the four countries with the December 26, 2004 tsunami had a brief life as a "Quadrilateral Security Dialogue" meeting in 2007. But Australia later removed itself from that framework, and the four did not meet again until 2017
- It stands for free passage for ships and a free and open Indo-Pacific
- The countries reiterated their strong support for Asean-centrality and Asean-led mechanisms in the regional architecture for Indo-Pacific and in this regard welcomed the initiative of Asean towards a common vision for Indo-Pacific

- India, Australia, Japan and the US revived the Quad in November 2017 as part of efforts to keep key sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence

## 8. Golden Card Programme

- United Arab Emirates launched a permanent residency scheme to woo wealthy individuals and exceptional talents such as doctors, engineers, scientists, students and artists
  - ✓ The move could attract more Indian professionals and businessmen to the Gulf nation
- It offers unprecedented benefits to the cardholders and their families while creating an attractive environment for business and growth
  - ✓ The benefits of the permanent residency also include the spouse and children of the cardholder to ensure cohesive social ties
- The scheme categorises the visa in the following ways
  - ✓ General investors who will be granted a 10-year visa
  - ✓ Real estate investors, visa for 5 years
  - ✓ Entrepreneurs and talented professionals such as doctors, researchers for 5 years
  - ✓ Innovators for 10 years
  - ✓ Outstanding students for five years
- The Indian expatriate community is the largest ethnic community in the UAE, constituting roughly about 30% of the country's population of around 9 million

## 9. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO)

- India has been invited as an observer in the CTBT
  - ✓ CTBT is a global treaty that opened for signature in 1996, but is yet to come into force because eight countries, including India, have not signed it as yet
  - ✓ Between 1945 and 1996, over 2000 nuclear tests were conducted – mainly by US, Soviet Union and France – and the treaty was brought in to halt further nuclear tests
  - ✓ So far, 184 countries have signed the treaty and 168 of them have also ratified it. However, for it to come into force, 44 countries that have nuclear capability and research reactors need to sign and ratify
  - ✓ Eight of these 44 are yet to do so. The US, China, Egypt, Iran and Israel have signed but not yet ratified
  - ✓ India, Pakistan and North Korea are yet to sign. While the US has not ratified yet, it is the biggest funder for the CTBTO
    - ❖ India has refused to sign the Treaty on the grounds that the CTBT, like the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), is discriminatory. While endorsing the spirit of test-ban and self imposed moratorium on tests, India has said it would join the treaty only if there was no

discrimination in favour of the five 'nuclear weapon states' in fulfilling the obligations for complete elimination of nuclear weapons

❖ Pakistan has joined in as an observer

- The decision has been taken in the wake of changes in the organisation, which has moved from being more confident in CTBT and International Monitoring System. This is because the CTBTO is making the data available to people – which is not traditional. This was not so at the beginning of the organisation which had the 'task leader for data confidentiality' which doesn't exist anymore
- Being an observer will give India access to data from the International Monitoring System – a network which when complete will consist of 337 facilities (321 monitoring stations and 16 radionuclide labs) located in 89 countries
  - ✓ This system can detect even small nuclear explosions using seismology, hydroacoustics, infrasound and radionuclide technology

## 10. UN Security Council

- The council is composed of 15 members
  - ✓ 5 Permanent members and 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly (with end of term year)
- More than 60 UN Member states have never been members of the Security Council
  - ✓ A State which is a Member of the United Nations but not of the Security Council may participate, without a vote, in its discussions when the Council considers that country's interests are affected
  - ✓ Both Members and non-members of the United Nations, if they are parties to a dispute being considered by the Council, may be invited to take part, without a vote, in the Council's discussions; the Council sets the conditions for participation by a non-member State.

### Non-Permanent Members

- Each year the General Assembly elects five non-permanent members (out of 10 in total) for a two-year term.
- The 10 non-permanent seats are distributed on a regional basis as follows:
  - ✓ five for African and Asian states
  - ✓ One for Eastern European States
  - ✓ Two for the Latin American and Caribbean States
  - ✓ Two for Western European and other States

### Role of Non-Permanent Members

- The right of veto of the permanent members of the UNSC is restricted, i.e., it does not apply in cases of a procedural nature (related to functioning of UNSC itself)
  - ✓ In such a situation, the support of nine member is needed for the Security Council to make a decision, regardless of whether they are permanent or non-permanent member.

## India

- India has won the unanimous support of all countries in the 55-member Asia-Pacific Group at the United Nations in support of its bid for a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council (UNSC) for a two-year term in 2021-22
- The development is particularly significant given that Pakistan and China, both countries with which India has had diplomatic challenges at the UN, supported the move
- No challenges to India's candidacy are expected with regard to acquiring the support of other UN members. India will need the vote of two-thirds of the 193 UN General Assembly members to win a nonpermanent seat on the UNSC
- India has already held a non-permanent seat on the UNSC for seven terms: 1950-1951, 1967-1968, 1972-1973, 1977-1978, 1984-1985, 1991-1992 and 2011-2012
- India has been keen to hold the seat in 2021-22 to coincide with the 75th anniversary of Independence in 2022

## 11. Sister Cities

- India has over 100-sister city partnerships that have developed over the decades and remained largely ornamental, except for helping to foster closer cultural bonds
- Ministry of External Affairs stressed that what hitherto remained an arrangement for cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts will now be leveraged for economic goals
  - ✓ The idea is to leverage sister-cities and sister-state partnerships and arrangements to bring investments, ideas for urbanisation and also find markets for products and businesses of respective cities and states
- New sister-city arrangements have been launched with China, Japan and Nepal
  - ✓ The partnerships with China include
    - ❖ Chennai-Chongqing
    - ❖ Hyderabad-Qingdao
    - ❖ Aurangabad-Dunhuang
    - ❖ Ahmedabad-Guangzhou
    - ❖ State-level ties between Karnataka and Sichuan and Gujarat and Guangdong
  - ✓ In 2013, three metros of India found sister-cities in China
    - ❖ Delhi-Beijing
    - ❖ Bengaluru-Chengdu
    - ❖ Kolkata-Kunming
  - ✓ Japan is actively involved in an industrial partnership with the town of Neemrana in Rajasthan
  - ✓ Punjab is contemplating closer business ties with Chinese provinces

- ✓ To boost economy in the landlocked northeast, the plan is to pair cities in those states with cities in Myanmar
- The officials described this state-level partnership in the spirit of cooperative federalism

## 12. Paris-Pact Initiative

### What it is?

- It is a group of 58 countries and 23 International Organisations affected with drug trafficking of Afghan Opiates
- The establishment of a broad international coalition aims at the reduction of illicit traffic in opiates, including opium poppy cultivation, production and global consumption of heroin and other opiates
- Illicit traffic in opiates, including heroin, is a growing problem, generating illicit financial flows, fuelling corruption, and organized crime and in some cases funding terrorist activities and insurgency
- Under the ambit of UNODC, Paris Pact Initiative has addressed the issue of drug problem related to opiates originating in Afghanistan, both at policy and implementation level
- It has provided the platform for the Member Countries and International Organizations to coordinate and combat the trafficking and consumption of opiates on the principle of common and shared responsibility
- The Paris Pact Initiative is made up of two equally important and inter-related dimensions
  - ✓ The partnership itself - 58 partner countries and 23 partner organizations, including UNODC - responsible for defining and implementing priorities outlined in the Vienna Declaration, based on the principle of shared responsibility; and
  - ✓ The global programme established by UNODC on behalf of the partnership to provide coordination support

### Why in News?

- Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance is hosting a Meeting of Expert Working Group on Paris Pact Initiative on Illicit Financial Flows deriving from the trafficking of Opiates originating in Afghanistan

### Importance

- The experts from other countries and International Organisations will share their experiences during this Expert Working Group Meeting
- This will provide an opportunity for Indian Agencies to understand the updates on current threats posed by illicit financial flows which may include new methods to assess such threats and activities
- The Meeting will also highlight upon the technical assistance needs and new capabilities to enhance understanding and disruption of illicit financial flows
- This will lead to improving the effectiveness of India's AML/CFT framework as per FATF standards with respect to illicit financial flows linked to drug trafficking.

## 13. Sagar Maitri

- Oceanographic research vessel of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), INS Sagar dhvani, embarked on a two-month long SAGAR MAITRI (SM) Mission-2 from South Jetty, Southern Naval Command (SNC) in Kochi
- SAGAR MAITRI is a unique initiative of DRDO which aligns with the broad objective of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's policy declaration —Safety And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) to promote closer co-operation in socio-economic aspects as well as greater scientific interaction especially in ocean research among Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) countries. Under the aegis of PM's policy, specific scientific component of DRDO is —MAITRI (Marine & Allied Interdisciplinary Training and Research Initiative)
- SAGAR MAITRI Mission-2 commemorates the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of India's lone research ship INS Kistna's missions as part of the historic International Indian Ocean Expeditions(IIOE), which took place during 1962-65. As part of the mission, INS Sagardhwani will revisit the selected tracks of INS Kistna and provide NPOL scientists ample opportunities to collaborate and garner a close working relationship with the oceanographic counterparts of the IOR countries
- The prime objectives of the SAGAR MAITRI Mission are data collection from the entire North Indian Ocean, focussing on the the Andaman Sea and adjoining seas and establishing long-term collaboration with eight IOR countries in the field of ocean research and development.
- The other IOR countries, include Oman, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Myanmar. The programme also aims at establishing long term scientific collaboration with these countries in the field of 'Ocean Research & Development' and data collection with a focus in the Andaman Sea

## 14. UNRWA

- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a relief and human development agency which supports more than 5 million registered Palestinian refugees, and their patrilineal descendants, who fled or were expelled from their homes during the 1948 Palestine war as well as those who fled or were expelled during and following the 1967 Six Day War
- Originally intended to provide jobs on public works projects and direct relief, today UNRWA provides education, health care, and social services to the population it supports
- Aid is provided 5 areas of operation
  - ✓ Jordan
  - ✓ Lebanon
  - ✓ Syria
  - ✓ Gaza Strip
  - ✓ West Bank including East Jerusalem
- Area for Palestinian refugees outside these areas is provided by UNHCR

- UNRWA is the only UN agency dedicated to helping refugees from a specific region or conflict and is separate from UNHCR
  - ✓ Formed in 1950, UNHCR is the main UN refugee agency, which is responsible for aiding other refugees all over the world
  - ✓ Unlike UNRWA, UNHCR has a specific mandate to aid its refugees to eliminate their refugee status by local integration in current country, resettlement in a third country or repatriation when possible
- UNRWA allows refugee status to be inherited by descendants of male refugee, including legally adopted children

### Funding

- It is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN Member States
- It also receives some funding from the Regular Budget of the United Nations

## 15. UN Convention on International Settlement Agreements (UNISA)

- In commercial disputes, mediation often proves to be the cheapest, quickest and the most confidential mode for dispute resolution. Often, corporates find themselves in a situation where they have multiple dealings with one another, and do not wish to spoil the relationship due to a disagreement in a particular transaction
  - ✓ Mediation is the answer as it helps to preserve business relationships. It also affords the parties greater control over the outcome, leading to a more commercially-sound resolution as opposed to a determination through an adjudicatory mechanism.
- Mediation, unlike arbitration or court litigation, suffers from a drawback.
  - ✓ Mediated settlements typically take shape in the form of a settlement agreement. This is unlike a court judgment or arbitral award, where a party could directly file for execution and/or initiate contempt proceedings. Therefore, mediated settlements would generally be recorded in the form of court orders or consent awards. This leads to unnecessary costs, delays and, in certain cases, to loss of confidentiality. Therefore, there is a need for an international framework to enforce such settlement agreements

## 16. Singapore Convention

- It was passed by the United Nations General Assembly on December 20, 2018. The Singapore Convention essentially allows direct enforcement of mediated settlement agreements and places such agreements on a par with judgments and awards. In effect, it promotes the credibility of mediation for resolving cross-border commercial disputes
- Singapore Convention was opened for signature on August 7, 2019, and will come into force after six months from the date the sovereign state confirms their ratification.

- As more countries ratify the Singapore Convention, it will surely improve cross-border trade by making it easier to enforce the outcomes of mediated settlement agreements, and save both cost and time for the parties
- The Singapore Convention can be resorted to only in case of an international commercial dispute, and specifically excludes disputes arising from personal, family, inheritance or employment matters
- The convention also does not apply to settlement agreements that have been approved by a court or concluded in the course of court proceedings, and which are otherwise enforceable as a judgment. In addition, it does not include settlement agreements that have been recorded and are enforceable as an arbitral award.
- 46 countries have signed the treaty named Singapore Convention on Mediation
  - ✓ India has signed UNISA
- Signing of the Convention will boost the confidence of the investors and shall provide a positive signal to foreign investors about India's commitment to adhere to international practice on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- In order to encourage international commercial arbitration in India, to evolve a comprehensive ecosystem of arbitration the Government is establishing the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (NDIAC) as a statutory body
- World's three largest economies (USA, China & India) are the participants
- Signing the Convention is important for the growth of mediation in India

## 17. UNSCR 47

- The Resolution 47 of the UNSC focuses on the complaint of the Government of India concerning the dispute over the State of Jammu & Kashmir, that India took to the Security Council in January 1948
- In October 1947, following an invasion by soldiers from the Pakistan Army in plainclothes and tribesmen, the Maharaja of Kashmir, Hari Singh sought assistance from India and signed the Instrument of Accession. After the first war in Kashmir (1947-1948), India approached the UN Security Council to bring the conflict in Kashmir to the notice of Security Council members.
- UNSC increased the size of the investigating council to include 6 members (Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Syria and Ukraine) along with Permanent members of UNSC
- India's position at the UNSC: India was ready to hold a plebiscite to know of the people's desire and accept the results of the vote
  - ✓ Pakistan denied its involvement in the conflict and counter-accused India
- UNSC ordered for the conflict to cease and to create conditions for a "free and impartial plebiscite" to decide whether J&K would accede to India or Pakistan
- UNSC also stated that it gave "full freedom to all subjects of the State, regardless of creed, caste or party, to express their views" and the freedom to vote on the issue of the accession of the State

- For India UNSC ordered that after the Pakistani army and tribesmen withdrew and the fighting ceases, India would submit a plan to the Commission for withdrawing forces from J&K and to reduce them over a period of time to the minimum strength required for civil maintenance of law and order

### India Pakistan's Reaction

- Both countries rejected Resolution 47. India's contention was that the resolution ignored the military invasion by Pakistan and placing both nations on an equal diplomatic ground was a dismissal of Pakistan's aggression and the fact that the Maharaja of Kashmir, Hari Singh had signed the Instrument of Accession
- India also raised its concerns on the matters of sovereignty
- Pak on the other hand wanted an equal representation in the state government for the Muslim Conference, which was the dominant party in Pakistani-held Kashmir. Despite their differences with the provisions of Resolution 47, both India and Pakistan welcomed the UN Commission and agreed to work with it

## 18. International Court of Justice

- It was established in 1945 by the San Francisco Conference, which also created the UN
- ICJ was not the first effort at instituting a multilateral forum to settle international disputes between states. The ICJ's precursor was the Permanent Court of International Justice, which fell into irrelevance owing to the inability to enforce its mandate, especially during the intervening war years
- The ICJ is a continuing and autonomous body that is permanently in session. It consists of 15 judges – no two of whom may be nationals of the same state – who are elected to nine-year terms by majority votes in the UN General Assembly and the Security Council
- The judges, one-third of whom are elected every three years, are eligible for re-election. The judges elect their own president and vice-president, each of whom serves a three-year term
- The seat of the ICJ is at The Hague, Netherlands, but sessions may be held elsewhere when the court considers it desirable to do so. The official languages of the court are French and English
- Cases before the ICJ are resolved in three ways –
  - ✓ parties can settle the dispute at any time during the proceedings
  - ✓ a state can discontinue the proceedings and withdraw at any point
  - ✓ the court can give a verdict
- The ICJ decides disputes in accordance with international law as reflected in international conventions, international custom, general principles of law recognised by civilised nations, judicial decisions, and writings of the most highly qualified experts on international law
- The Court may give a declaratory judgement or judgement requiring performance
  - ✓ A declaratory judgement covers questions of jurisdiction, interpretation of international treaties concerning the existence or nonexistence of a legal principle or relationship, and questions of whether there has been an infringement of a right

- ✓ The Court may also declare lack of jurisdiction, or it may decline to give a decision because the dispute has already been resolved as a result of the conduct of the defendant
- A judgement once rendered, can be revised on application made by a party if some fact, of such a nature as to be a decisive factor, was, when the judgement was given, unknown to the Court and also to the party claiming revision
- The court's primary function is to pass judgment upon disputes between sovereign states. Only states may be parties in cases before the court, and no state can be sued before the ICJ unless it consents to such an action
- Although the judges deliberate in secret, their verdicts are delivered in open court. The court's judgment is final and without appeal
- The ICJ is also empowered to give advisory opinions on legal questions at the request of other organs of the UN and its specialised agencies when authorised to do so by the General Assembly
- The ICJ has also concerned with issues such as admission to the UN, the expenses of UN operations, and the territorial status of South West Africa (Namibia) and Western Sahara. The court may also be granted jurisdiction over certain cases by treaty or convention.
- The court itself has no powers of enforcement. However, Article 94 of the UN Charter states that of any party fails to perform the obligations under a judgement, the other party may have a recourse to the Security Council

## 19. G7

- G7 (or Group of Seven) is an organisation made up of the world's seven largest so-called advanced economies: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States
- The group regards itself as "a community of values", with freedom and human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and prosperity and sustainable development as its key principles



- The initial group of six first met in 1975 "to exchange ideas on possible solutions" to a global economic crisis. Canada joined the following year
- Ministers and civil servants from the G7 countries meet throughout the year to discuss matters of mutual interest
- Energy policy, climate change, HIV/Aids and global security are just some of the subjects discussed at past summits
- It also claims to have been a driving force behind the implementation of the 2016 Paris climate agreement, though the United States has given notice that it will withdraw from that

- Despite having the world's biggest population and its second-biggest economy, China's relatively low level of wealth per head of population means that it is not deemed to be an advanced economy in the way the G7 members are, though it is part of the wider G20 group of nations, boasting a number of modern cities, such as Shanghai
- Russia joined the group, which then became known as the G8, in 1998 but was suspended in 2014 after it annexed Crimea from Ukraine

## Challenges

- G7 has had a number of disagreements, most recently when President Trump clashed with other members over taxes on imports and action on climate change
- The organisation has also been criticised for not reflecting the current state of global politics or economics
- There are no G7 members from Africa, Latin America or the southern hemisphere
- It faces a challenge from fast-growing emerging economies, like India and Brazil who, though represented in the G20 group of economies, are not members of the G7

## 20. Asia-Pacific Group

- Pakistan was placed in the “enhanced expedited follow-up list” by the Asia-Pacific Group for its failure to act credibly against terror financing and money laundering
- APG is the FATF style regional body for the Asia-Pacific region
- It is an inter-governmental organisation founded in 1997 in Bangkok, Thailand, consisting of 41 members regionally focused within the Asia-Pacific
- As a task force, it is not established by international convention or treaty, or any other such legal instrument. Instead, and by agreement of all of its member jurisdictions under the APG Terms of Reference 2012, APG members come together on an ad hoc basis (similar to the FATF) and take action collectively on a consensus basis to address the crimes of money laundering (and the associated predicate crimes) as well as terrorist financing
- APG is not an investigative body or law enforcement authority and is therefore unable to take any action on matters of investigation of money laundering cases

## 21. BASIC

- It is a bloc of four large newly industrialised countries—Brazil, South Africa, India and China—formed by an agreement in 2009
- BASIC countries put together has one-third of world’s geographical area and nearly 40% of the world’s population
- The four committed to act jointly at the Copenhagen climate summit, including a possible united walkout if their common minimum position was not met by the developed nations

- ✓ Subsequently, the grouping is working to define a common position on emission reductions and climate aid money and to try to convince other countries to sign up to the Copenhagen Accord. However, in January 2010, the grouping described the Accord as merely a political agreement and not legally binding, as is argued by the US and Europe
- Union Minister of Environment and Forests Prakash Javadekar said that the BASIC Group could play an important role in making Paris Agreement accepted by all the countries in its true letter and spirit

## 22. SAARC

- Est. with signing of SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985.
- 8 member states : Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka
- Secretariat set up in Kathmandu on 17 January 1987

### Objectives

- Promote welfare of peoples of South Asia and improve quality of life
- Accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development
- Promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among countries of South Asia

### Decisions are taken on basis of unanimity

- Bilateral and contentious issues are excluded from deliberations of the Association.
- Meetings of Heads of State is the highest decision making authority under SAARC
- Summits usually held biennially hosted by Member State in alphabetical order
- 1st Summit in Dhaka in 1985 and the latest one was in Kathmandu in 2014
- 19th Summit was called off after India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Afghanistan boycotted it
- Currently there are 9 Observers to SAARC including the EU, USA and Iran
- Comprises 3% of the world's area, 21% of the world's population and 3.8% of global economy as of 2015

### Achievements/Role of SAARC

- Substantial increase in Cooperation
  - ✓ SAARC Development Fund (SDF) (2005)
    - ❖ It was decided to be established as a comprehensive funding mechanism with provision of 3 Windows (Social, Economic, Infrastructure)
    - ❖ Primary objective is of funding project-based collaboration
  - ✓ SAARC Arbitration Council (SARCO) (2007)
    - ❖ To resolve cost-effective settlement of disputes via arbitration within the region
  - ✓ South Asian University (SAU) (2007)

- ❖ It is necessary for the Member State to recognise the Degrees and Certificates awarded by SAU at par with National Institutions
- SAARC Regional Standards Organisation (SARSO) (2011)
  - ❖ To harmonise standards and promote cooperation in fields of metrology, accreditation and conformity assessment for enhancing capacity of respective national institutions in carrying out their technical tasks
- Economic and Trade Discussions
  - ✓ South Asia Free Trade Area
    - ❖ The agreement was signed during 12th Summit in Islamabad in 2004 and it entered into force in 2006
    - ❖ Under it, SAARC members will bring their duties down to 20% by 2009
    - ❖ Although after it, the import and export increased but the intra-SAARC trade still amounts to just a little over 1% of SAARC's GDP
- South Asia Satellite (SAS)
  - ✓ Boost communication and improve disaster links among 7 SAARC countries
  - ✓ Built by ISRO and funded entirely by India, it is a geostationary communication satellite
    - ❖ Provide significant capability to participating countries in terms of DTH and link the countries for disaster information

## Caveats

- SAARC, in comparison to other regional groupings like EU, ASEAN or MERCOSUR, has been a nonstarter
  - ✓ Intra-regional trade in goods is around 5% and 0.2% in services where as in ASEAN it is 26% and 15% in MERCOSUR
- Reasons for underperformance
  - ✓ Political tensions between India and Pakistan
  - ✓ Strongly entrenched bureaucracies and interest groups in these nations who view every issue from a myopic and nationalistic view point
  - ✓ Political uncertainties in some countries
  - ✓ SAARC does not have any arrangement for resolving disputes or mediating conflicts. Disputes among the member countries often hamper consensus building
  - ✓ Lack of connectivity between the members
    - ❖ Trade and other relations are hampered between India and Afghanistan
  - ✓ Lack of people to people contacts
  - ✓ Poor state of critical infrastructure and lack of security and the prevalence of terrorist threats

- ✓ EU or ASEAN are groupings of economies that are more or less equal but SAARC is dominated by India which accounts for nearly 60% of SAARC's population, area or GDP
  - ❖ Except for Afghanistan, India shares a border with any other SAARC member unlike others. This obvious asymmetry makes meaningful cooperation more problematic
- ✓ Psychological Framework : Not many countries consider themselves as predominantly South Asian
  - ❖ Afghans consider them Central Asian, Pakistan prefers to be a part of Middle East, both Sri Lanka and Maldives think themselves to be South East Asian

### Comparison of SAARC Countries

- Population
  - ✓ India > Pakistan > Bangladesh > Afghanistan > Nepal > Sri Lanka > Bhutan > Maldives
- GDP per capita
  - ✓ Maldives > Sri Lanka > Bhutan > India > Pakistan > Bangladesh > Nepal > Afghanistan
- Human Development Index
  - ✓ Sri Lanka > Maldives > India > Bhutan > Bangladesh > Nepal > Pakistan > Afghanistan
- Population BPL
  - ✓ Afghanistan > Nepal > Bangladesh > India > Maldives > Pakistan > Bhutan > Sri Lanka

## 23. Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)

### Why in News

- India skipped a meeting of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which was organised by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) at Xi'an in China
- EAEU is an international economic union that comprises countries located in northern Eurasia
- Founding members: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia in 2015
  - ✓ Kyrgyzstan joined later
- Created in part in response to the economic and political influence of the European Union and other Western countries
- Objectives
  1. Increasing cooperation and economic competitiveness for the member states
  2. Promotion of stable development in order to raise the standard of living in member states
- It ensures the free movement of goods, services, labor and capital between the states, and provides for common policies in macroeconomic sphere, transport, industry and agriculture, energy, foreign trade and investment, customs, technical regulation, competition and antitrust regulation.
- Unlike the Eurozone, it has not established a single currency yet.

## 24. Central Adverse List

- The Ministry of Home Affairs with inputs from all the state governments, maintains a list of individuals who supported the Khalistan movement in the 1980s and 1990s and left India to take asylum abroad.
  - ✓ Since law and order is a state subject, so state police also utilised for intelligence gathering in order to update the list
- This list included names of pro-Khalistan “hardliners” who had opposed the Operation Blue Star
- This list is not restricted to Punjab, or the Khalistan movement; it has names of individuals who are suspected to have links with terror outfits or violated visa norms in a previous visit to India, those who indulged in criminal activities or been accused of sexual crimes against children in their respective countries
- It is constantly used by all Indian Missions and Consulates to stop the individuals named in it from entering India.

## 25. India-Mongolia

- Landlocked country in East Asia, sandwiched between Russia and China
- Contains very little arable land, as much of its area is covered by grassy steppe, with mountains to the north and west and the Gobi Desert to the south
- Its capital Ulaanbaatar shares the rank of the world’s coldest capital city with Moscow, Ottawa and Nur Sultan

### India-Mongolia Relationship

- The cooperation is limited to diplomatic visits, provision of soft loans and financial aid and the collaboration in IT sector.
- India was the first country outside the Soviet bloc to establish diplomatic relations with Mongolia back in 1955.
- India financially helped the country in 2016 when it was blocked by China.

### Military Exercises

- Nomadic Elephant
- Khaan Quest

### Recent Visit

- The relationship has been upgraded at the level of ‘strategic partnership’
- V-P M. Venkaiah Naidu called for expanding bilateral ties between India and Mongolia in different sectors including renewable energy, especially solar energy and Information Technology.
- Mongolia joining the International Solar Alliance was appreciated.

- PM Modi and President Battulga unveiled the statue of Lord Buddha installed in Gandan Monastery in Ulaanbaatar.
- Both countries also signed MoUs on space cooperation and disaster management.

## 26. International Migrant Stock 2019

- India has emerged as the leading country of origin for immigrants across the world, with 17.5 million international migrants in 2019 coming from India according to data released by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).
- The percentage of international migrants of the total global population has increased to 3.5% from 2.8% in 2000.
- While India remained as the top source of international migrants, the number of migrants living in India saw a slight decline from 5.24 million in 2015 to an estimated 5.15 million in 2019 – both 0.4% of the total population of the country.
- One-third of all international migrants originated from 10 countries including India, Mexico, China, Russia and Syria.

## 27. UNDESA

- It is a part of the UN Secretariat and is responsible for the follow-up to major United Nations Summits and Conferences as well as services to the UN ECOSOC.
- It supports international cooperation to promote sustainable development for all, having a foundation the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 SDGs.
- It translates global commitments in the economic, social and environmental spheres into national policies and actions and continues to play a key role in monitoring progress towards internationally agreed-upon development goals.
- It is also a member of UN Development Group (UNDG).

## 28. CPEC

- CPEC is clutch of projects valued at \$51 billion which aims at rapidly expanding and upgrading Pakistan's infrastructure and strengthening the economic ties between China and Pakistan
- It includes building roads, laying railway lines and pipelines to carry oil and gas
- It eventually aims at linking the city of Gwadar in South Western Pakistan to China's North Western region Xinjiang through a network of highways and railways
- CPEC's potential impact on Pakistan has been compared to that of the Marshall Plan undertaken by US in post-War Europe
- The proposed project will be financed by heavily-subsidised loans, that will be disbursed to Pakistan by Chinese banking giants such as Exim bank of China, China Development Bank, and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China

✓ About 90% of the total outlay for this project will be funded by the consortium of Chinese banks and the balance 10% by Pakistan

### Geo-political Impact

- It establishes a symbiotic relationship between China and Pakistan and analysts worry that this may have ramifications for the geopolitical situation in Kashmir (especially PoK).
- If the corridor opens up a major new global trade route, not just Pakistan and China, but also India may see positive spillover effects from burgeoning trade with West Asia or Africa



## 29. FATF Grey List

- Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering was founded in 1989 on a G7 initiative to tackle money laundering
- Initially it was tasked with monitoring legislative, financial and law-enforcement activities at both national and international levels
- Post 9/11, its role became more prominent and it expanded its operations and included terror financing under its purview
- In 2003, FATF came out with a new set of guidelines where it asked state to confiscate proceeds of illegal transactions and form a financial intelligence unit to receive and probe suspicious transaction reports **Working** FATF Secretariat is housed at Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development headquarters in Paris There are 9 FATF-style regional bodies (FSRBs) established for the purpose of disseminating international standards throughout the world
  1. Eurasian Group (EAG)
  2. Asia/Pacific Group on combating money laundering (APG)
  3. Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF)
  4. Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism of the Council of Europe (MONEYVAL)
  5. Eastern and South African Anti Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG)
  6. Financial Action Task Force on Latin America (GAFILAT)

7. Inter Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA)
8. Middle East & North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF)
9. The Task Force on Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC)

## 30. Blacklisting & Grey Listing

- FATF grey lists a country which it considers as a safe haven for terror funding and money laundering. It is a warning to the country to tackle the issues.
- If the country is not actively tackling money laundering for terror funding, it is then blacklisted
- So far only two countries have been blacklisted; they are Iran and North Korea
- Countries currently under Grey list are Bahamas, Botswana, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Pakistan, Panama, Sri Lanka, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Yemen.

## 31. Implications of being Blacklisted on Pakistan

- In a globalised world, Pak's economy is not insulated and is dependent on international investors. It might adversely affect its imports, exports, remittances and limit its access to international lending
- Blacklisting may lead to institutions like the IMF, ADB being cautious while dealing with the national government
- It may force risk rating agencies like Moody's S&P and Fitch to downgrade ratings
- Blacklisting may also jeopardise Pakistan's multi-billion dollar part in China's Belt & Road Initiative

## 32. India-China 2nd Informal Summit

- The 2nd Informal Summit was held in Mamallapuram President Xi Jinping was received by PM Modi at Arjuna's Penance. This was followed by Krishna's Butter Ball, Five Rathas and finally Shore Temple



### Highlights

- Exchange in views in a friendly atmosphere on overarching, long-term and strategic issues of global and regional importance
- Shared respective approaches towards national development

- Both leaders shared the view that international situation is witnessing significant readjustment and both India and China share the common objective of working for a peaceful, secure and prosperous world in which all countries can pursue their development within a rules-based international order

### 33. UN Financial Crisis

- UN has a record \$4.8 bn funding gap for its 2009 aid programmes
- The UN has lurched from one financial crisis to another in the last decade. The basic problem is that the world's politicians have consistently failed to stump up the resources that the UN needs to fulfil the tasks that they demand of it or to set up a system of effective managerial oversight and planning in the organisation
- Last December the UN's world food programme announced that the spike in food prices meant that it was struggling to meet its commitments to feed 49 million people in 12 of the world's most hunger stricken countries
- The UN funds its operations through a mixture of assessed and voluntary contributions by member states. The regular budget now only accounts for around 10% of total expenditure, with agencies relying on voluntary contributions for the rest
  - ✓ Major Contributors: USA (22%) > China (12%) > Japan (3%)
- India paid \$230 mn on January 30, 2019

### 34. India Bangladesh Old Rail Links

- Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina announced the reopening of rail links between India and Bangladesh that were closed after 1965 war Till 1965, the trains from Bangladesh to Darjeeling via Siliguri were operated There are four rail links between India and Bangladesh
- The first rail link between India and Bangladesh was opened in 2008
- The first train was Maitri Express that connected Dhaka and Kolkata
- Bandhan Express launched in 2017, connects Kolkata and Kulna
- India and Bangladesh jointly laid the foundation for up gradation of missing tracks on Haldibari-Chilahati track that connects Bengal and Assam via Bangladesh

### 35. RCEP

- India finally rejected the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade deal at the RCEP summit in Bangkok, Thailand on November 4, 2019.
- Apart from 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, it included the bloc's six free trade partners – China, India, South Korea, Japan, New Zealand and Australia
- RCEP negotiations were launched in 2012
- After India's rejection, the remaining 15 countries decided to go ahead and underlined their intent to sign a trade deal sometime next year, keeping the door open for India to join at a later date

## Some Figures

- Comprising half of the world population and accounting for nearly 40% of the global commerce and 35% of the GDP, RCEP would have become the largest free trade area after finalisation, with India being the third largest economy in it

## India's demands at RCEP

- Shifting the base year for tariff cuts from 2014 to 2019
- Avoiding a sudden surge in imports from China by including a large number of items in an auto-trigger mechanism
- Calling for stricter rules of origin to prevent dumping from China
- Better deal in services

## Chinese Angle

- While India runs large trade deficits with at least 11 of the 15 RCEP members, China alone accounts for \$53 billion of India's \$105 billion trade deficit
- China was keen for greater access to Indian markets to sustain its manufacturing industries. India was keen to protect its industry and farmers from a surge in Chinese imports
- For China, this looks like a win at a time when the Trump administration is pushing Asia into making a choice in its favour by jettisoning Chinese largesse on infrastructure and technology

## India and FTAs

- India's experience has been underwhelming – NITI Aayog suggested that India's FTA utilisation has been measly with only 5%-25%
- Domestically, the RCEP generated considerable opposition with major stakeholders coming out against it, be it farmers, dairy industry or the corporate sector

## Why is India important?

- India presents a market of 1.4 billion populations whose incomes are increasing at 6-8% over the last few years
- It provides a demographic dividend from the perspective of the presenting a huge youth consumer base, who are getting richer
- It has a weak domestic industry which can hardly cater to the needs of the diversified needs of the population who are getting wealthier. The existing industrial productivity is low, and inefficient production processes and supply chains are not conducive enough to withstand the foreign competition
- The economy aspires to be a 5-trillion-dollar one, organically driven by consumption demand, as has happened so far

## 36. Brasilia BRICS Summit 2019

- Theme: Economic Growth for an Innovative Future

- This was the 6th BRICS summit in which PM Modi participated. His first being at Fortaleza, in Brazil in 2014
- BRICS countries account for 50% of the world's economic growth: PM Modi
- PM Modi called for paying special attention to mutual trade and investment, as Intra-BRICS trade accounts for just 15% of world trade
  - ✓ He also said that Sustainable water management and sanitation are important challenges in urban areas and proposed to hold the first meeting of BRICS Water Ministers in India
  - ✓ He was happy that the first Seminar on BRICS Strategies for Countering Terrorism was organized and hoped that such efforts and activities of the five working groups will increase strong BRICS Security Cooperation against terrorism and other organized crimes.

## BRICS

- Jim O'Neill, chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, coined the BRIC concept in 2001
  - ✓ BRIC started after the meeting of the leaders of Russia, India and China in St. Petersburg on the margins of G8 Outreach Summit in 2006
  - ✓ Grouping was formalized during the 1st meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers on the margins of UNGA in New York in 2006. The 1st BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, on 16 June 2009
  - ✓ It was agreed to expand BRIC into BRICS with the inclusion of South Africa at the BRIC Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York in September 2010. Accordingly, South Africa attended the 3rd BRICS Summit in Sanya China on 14 April 2011
- BRICS takes up 25% of the world's land mass
- BRICS bring together five major emerging economies comprising 42% of the world's population, having 23% of the global GDP and around 17% of the share of world trade
- BRICS cooperation has two pillars including consultations on issues of mutual interest through meeting of leaders and ministers as well as cooperation through meeting of senior officials in a number of areas including trade, finance, health, education, science and technology, agriculture, communications IT etc.

## 37. Sakhalin Oil Field

- It is an oil field in Russia which will continue to produce oil and gas till 2055
- ONGC Videsh Limited has 20% stakes of Sakhalin-1 since 2001
- It is a prolific oil producing field like Bombay High
- Rig Krechet is the biggest and most powerful land rig in the world



## 38. UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

- It was created in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development
- UNESCO has announced that Mumbai (Films) and Hyderabad (Gastronomy) have been included in its network of 'Creative Cities' on the occasion of World Cities Day 2019
  - ✓ Chennai and Varanasi are UNESCO cities of music while Jaipur is the City of Crafts and Folk Arts
- By joining UCCN, the cities pledge to share their best practices and develop partnerships involving public and private sectors as well as civil society to strengthen creation, production, distribution and dissemination of cultural activities, goods and services
- The network covers 7 creative fields:
  1. Crafts and folk arts
  2. Media arts
  3. Film
  4. Design
  5. Gastronomy
  6. Literature
  7. Music

## 39. Paris Club

- It is an informal group of creditor nations focused on dealing with borrower nations that face difficulty in paying back their loans
- The origin of the club is traced to a meeting that happened in Paris between officials from Argentina, which had trouble paying back its debt, with a group of lenders in 1956
- It is similar to the London club, which is a group of commercial bankers formed in 1976 to deal with the financial problems of Zaire, and is focused on providing various forms of debt relief to countries that face financial distress due to their heavy debt load

## 40. Global Refugee Forum

- Global Refugee Forums is the first major meeting on refugees of the 21st century
- It was held in Geneva, Switzerland, jointly hosted by United Nations
- United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) along with Government of Switzerland
- The forum is expected to galvanise political support and solidarity and broaden the base of commitments from states, international organisations, private sectors and civil society to deal with the growing number of refugee situations across the world

- Guided by the Global Compact on Refugees, the Global Refugee Forum is an opportunity to translate the principle of international responsibility-sharing into concrete action
- PM Imran Khan, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and leaders from Costa Rica, Ethiopia and Germany have been invited to co-convene the forum
- Pakistan hosts more than 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees according to UNHCR

## New York Declaration

The New York Declaration that was adopted in September 2016 gave birth to two compacts:

1. One on refugees and
2. One on migrants.

Although both are groups of people who live outside of their countries of origin, there are crucial distinctions between the terms “refugee” and “migrant”

- Refugees are persons who are **outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence**, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order and, as a result, require international protection. The refugee definition can be found in the **1951 Convention and regional refugee instruments**, as well as the Statute of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
- While there is **no formal legal definition of an international migrant**, most experts agree that an international migrant is **someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status**. Generally, a distinction is made between short-term or temporary migration, covering movements with duration between three and 12 months, and long-term or permanent migration, referring to a change of country of residence for a duration of one year or more.

## Global Compact on Refugees

- Over 258 million people have crossed borders to escape war, persecution or violence and 85% of them are hosted by low- or middle-income countries.
- The non-legally binding Global Compact on Refugees aims towards a stronger global response where everyone play a part by taking in refugees, investing in them and easing pressure on countries that welcome them.
- It is a blueprint for governments, international organisations and others to help refugees thrive in exile and receive the right support when it is safe to return home.
- It is separate from the newly-adopted Global Compact for Migration.

## Global Compact for Migration

- It is a non-legally binding agreement, adopted by 164 Governments at an international conference in Marrakech, Morocco in a bid to support safe, orderly and regular migration.

## 41. UN Medal for Indian Peacekeepers

- UN has recognised about 850 Indian peacekeepers for their strong contribution to building peace in conflict-wracked South Sudan as well as for going above and beyond their duties to support local Communities.
- The soldiers were particularly praised for their efforts to support peace talks between Government and Opposition forces in the Upper Nile region and establishing the first-ever UNMISS base on the west bank of the Nile at Kodok.
- India has been the largest troop contributor to UN missions since inception. So far India has take part in 49 Peacekeeping Missions with a total contribution exceeding 2,45,000 troops and a significant number of police personnel have been deployed.

### UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

- UNMISS is the newest UN peacekeeping missions for the recently independent South Sudan.
- It is headquartered in the South Sudanese capital of Juba.
- UN Security Council determined that the situation faced by South Sudan continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region and established UNMISS to consolidate peace and security.
- It works to facilitate the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance, such as food, clean water, shelter and healthcare to the millions of displaced people and to provide a safe and supported environment so that these people can return to their former homes and communities to live safely and with dignity.



## 42. India US 2+2 Meet

- India US inked the Industrial Security Annex that will allow the transfer of defence technology.
- US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and US Defense Secretary Mark Esper hosted their Indian counterparts External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Defense Minister Rajnath Singh in Washington.
- Wide range of strategic and security issues, including the use of terrorism as a tool of foreign policy (criticising Pakistan) were discussed.

### 2+2

- It is the highest-level institutional mechanism between India and USA that brings together perspectives on foreign policy, defence and strategic issues.
- The first 2+2 was held in New Delhi in 2018.
- India conducts this similar exercise with Japan as well.

## 43. Vitamin B12

- Vitamin B12 makes healthy blood cells and helps keep our nerves working properly.
- Low levels can cause anaemia, fatigue and difficulty in thinking and concentrating.

### Sources

- Animal foods like lean meats and poultry, fish, dairy products and eggs.
- Fortified plant foods, with added vitamin B12.

### Concern

- A common concern with oral vitamin B12 therapy is absorption especially in people suffering from anaemia and gastrointestinal diseases.
- Vitamin B12 cannot be synthesised in human body and has to be regularly obtained from ingestion of animal proteins or fortified cereal products.
- There are no naturally occurring bioactive forms of vitamin B12 from plant sources.
- Researchers have identified a plant extract that has shown potential in enhancing absorption of vitamin B12 through in vitro and in vivo bioassays.
  - ✓ The formulation releases the plant extracts in a controlled manner. It would provide pH dependent solubility due to which the acidic gastric environment is bypassed and releases in intestinal pH

### Deficiency

- Also called Cobalamin deficiency
- It may lead to reduction in healthy RBCs
- Nervous system may also be affected

## 44. Star and its Planets with Indian names

- A white yellow star in Sextans constellations and a its Jupiter like exo-planets, will have Indian names.
- International Astronomical Union announced that the star will be called Bibha and the planet will be called Santamasa.
- Star has been named to honour Indian women scientist Dr. Bibha Choudhury.
  - ✓ She discovered subatomic particle, pi-meson
  - ✓ It also means a bright beam of light in Bengali
- The planet has been named Santamasa to reflect the cloudy nature of its atmosphere.
  - ✓ It means clouded in Sanskrit
- Significantly, this year Nobel Prize in Physics has been partly awarded to the discovery of an exoplanet orbiting a solar-type star.

## Name Exo Worlds

- The IAU chose the name at the end of global contest called Name Exo Worlds

## 45. Chief of Defence Staff

### In News

- Union Cabinet has approved to create the post of Chief of Defence Staff in the rank of a four-star General with salary and prerequisites equivalent to Service Chief. PM on 15th August 2019 announced the formation of this post to provide an effective leadership at the top level of defence

### Chief Of Defence Staff

- CDS will also head the Department of Military Affairs (DMA), to be created within the Ministry of Defence and function as its Secretary
- CDS will also be the Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee
- He would also act the Principal Military Adviser to Raksha Mantri on all tri-services matters
  - ✓ The three Chiefs will continue to advise RM on matters exclusively concerning their respective Services
- CDS will not exercise any military command, including over the three Service Chiefs, so as to be able to provide impartial advice to the political leadership

### Areas dealt by Department of Military Affairs headed by CDS

- The Armed Forces of the Union, namely, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force
- Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence comprising Army Headquarters, Naval Headquarters, Air Headquarters and Defence Staff Headquarters
- The Territorial Army
- Works relating to the Army, the Navy and the Air Force
- Procurement exclusive to the Services except capital acquisitions, as per prevalent rules and procedures

### The mandate of the Department of Military Affairs will include the following areas

- Promoting jointness in procurement, training and staffing for the Services through joint planning and integration of their requirements
- Facilitation of restructuring of Military Commands for optimal utilisation of resources by bringing about jointness in operations, including through establishment of joint/theatre commands
- Promoting use of indigenous equipment by the Services

### As Permanent Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee, CDS will

- administer tri-services organisations. Tri-service agencies/organisations/commands related to Cyber and Space will be under the command of the CDS

- CDS will be member of Defence Acquisition Council chaired by Raksha Mantri and Defence Planning Committee chaired by NSA
- Function as the Military Adviser to the Nuclear Command Authority
- Bring about jointness in operation, logistics, transport, training, support services, communications, repairs and maintenance, etc of the three Services, within three years of the first CDS assuming office
- Ensure optimal utilisation of infrastructure and rationalise it through jointness among the services
- Implement Five-Year Defence Capital Acquisition Plan (DCAP), and Two-Year roll-on Annual Acquisition Plans (AAP), as a follow up of Integrated Capability Development Plan (ICDP)
- Assign inter-Services prioritisation to capital acquisition proposals based on the anticipated budget
- Bring about reforms in the functioning of three Services aimed at augmenting combat capabilities of the Armed Forces by reducing wasteful expenditure

### Advantages

- Reform in the Higher Defence Management would enable the Armed Forces to implement coordinated defence doctrines and procedures and go a long way in fostering jointmanship among the three Services
- The country would be benefitted by coordinated action on greater jointmanship in training, logistics and operations as well as for prioritisation of procurements

## 46. Space Force

### In News

- Following concerns that China and Russia are challenging its position in space, U.S. President Donald Trump signed the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, which created a new branch of the U.S. military

### More about Space Force

- It will be the sixth formal force of the US military, after the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard
- It will be comprised of about 16,000 air force and civilian personnel, some already taking part in the Space Command
- It will be the youngest US military branch, and the first new service since the establishment of US Air Force back in 1947

### Context

- China has been making significant investments in space in recent years and pouring billions into its military-run space programme, with hopes of having a crewed space station by 2022
  - ✓ It completed a test of its Mars exploration lander in November 2019, ahead of its first mission to the red planet slated for 2020
- Space technology (reconnaissance, mapping or navigation) has also become an integral part of both military and civilian everyday life

## 47. Universal Postal Union (UPU)

- Union Cabinet has approved the ratification of Tenth Addition Protocol to the UPU
- The approval enables the Postal Administration of India to have the Instrument of Ratification signed by the President of India and have the same deposited with the Director General of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union through diplomatic channels along with approval of other Acts of the Union
- It will also enable the Department of Posts to bring out any administrative orders to implement the provisions of the UPU Convention in India

### Details

- UPU was established by the Treaty of Bern 1874
- It is a specialised agency of the United Nations, headquartered at Bern, Switzerland
- It oversees the Telematics and Express Mail Service (EMS) cooperatives
- ✓ Each member agrees to the same terms for conducting international postal duties

## 48. Microdots

### In News

- To enhance the vehicle safety, the government has notified rules for microdot identifiers on motor vehicles and their parts

### Details

- MoRTH has notified automotive industry standards in respect of Microdot identifiers affixed on the motor vehicles and their parts, components, assemblies, sub-assemblies through amendment in the Central Motor vehicles Rules 1989
- Microdot technology involves spraying the body and parts of the vehicle or any other machine with microscopic dots, which give a unique identification
- It will also check the use of fake spare parts
- They can be read physically with microscope and identified with ultra violet light source
- Microdots and adhesive fix permanently and cannot be removed without damaging the vehicle itself

## 49. Lamu, Kenya

### In news

- In Lamu county, the coast region of Kenya, al-Shabab militant group stormed a military base that hosts US and Kenyan counter-terrorism forces

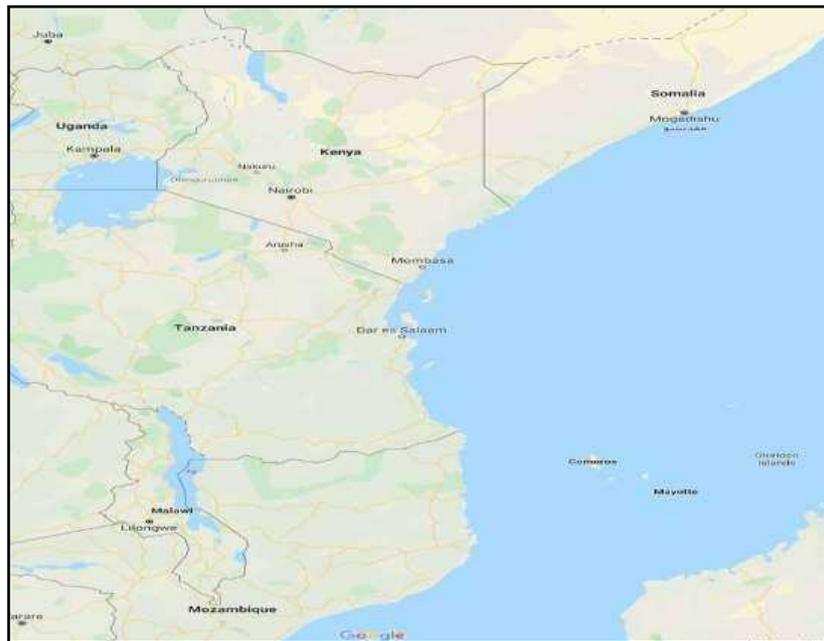
### About Lamu

- It is a small town part of the Lamu Archipelago
- It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site

- ✓ It is Kenya's oldest continually inhabited town and one of the original Swahili settlements along coastal East Africa
- ✓ Swahili people are ethnic and cultural group inhabiting East Africa
- Swahili coast encompasses Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Mozambique as well as the islands of Zanzibar and Comoros and some parts of Democratic Republic of Congo and Malawi

### Al-Shabab

- It is a jihadist fundamentalist group active in East Africa and is involved in the ongoing civil war in Somalia
- It has pledged its allegiance to Al-Qaeda



## 50. India - Brazil

- Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro attended 71st Republic Day parade of India

### Convergence

- The strategic partnership between India and Brazil was established in 2006
- Brazil is one of the most important trading partners of India in the entire LAC (Latin America & Caribbean) region. Trade between the two countries will grow to USD 15 billion by 2022
- A MoU on the cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy was approved in 2019
  - ✓ Both India and Brazil are rich in biodiversity with a large range of health practices based on medicinal plants and history of use of traditional medicine. Ayurveda, Yoga and other traditional systems are popular in Brazil
- India and Brazil share close relationship at the bilateral level as well as plurilateral fora like BRICS, BASIC, G-20, IBSA, International Solar Alliance and in larger multilateral bodies like UN, UNESCO and WIPO

- The MoUs of cooperation that have been signed during the presidential visit on investments, trade facilitation, social security, agriculture, defence and double taxation

✓ It is hoped that investments will also grow in the sectors of clean energy, startups, railways and creation of value chains between India and Brazil where goods may be semi assembled in one country and finished in another



## 51. UNMOGIP

- United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
- Headquarters: Islamabad (winters) and Srinagar (summers)
- The first group of United Nations military observers arrived in the mission area on 24 January of 1949 to supervise the ceasefire between India and Pakistan in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. These observers, under the command of the Military Adviser appointed by the UN Secretary-General, formed the nucleus of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP).
- Following renewed hostilities of 1971, UNMOGIP has remained in the area to observe developments pertaining to the strict observance of the ceasefire of 17 December 1971 and report thereon to the Secretary-General.

## 52. Raisina Dialogue

- It is India's flagship global conference on geopolitics, jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and Observer Research Foundation (ORF)
- The dialogue has been India's contribution to global efforts to discover solutions, identify opportunities and provide stability to a century that has witnessed an eventful two decades
- Title of the Raisina Dialogue 2020 is Navigating the Alpha Century
- The conference, which is in its fifth year, will host 700 participants from more than 100 countries adding that at least 40% of the speakers will be women.
- Another key feature of the event, a session on the Indo-Pacific that includes military or naval commanders from the "Quadrilateral or Quad", Australia, India, Japan, and the United States, will also have a French Defence official on the panel this year.

## 53. China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC)

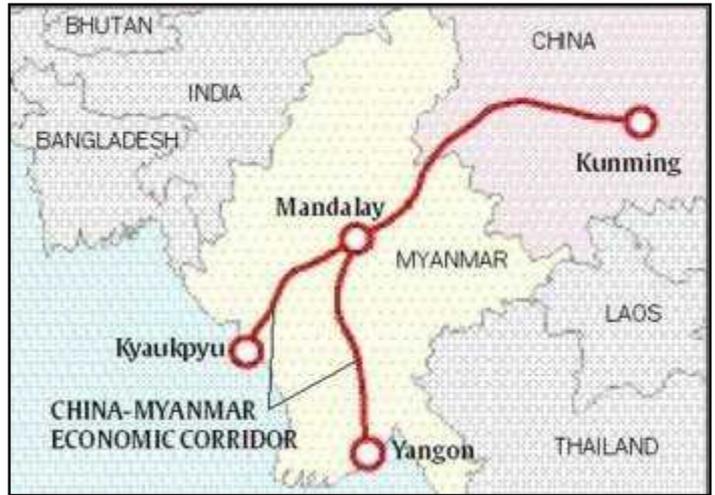
### Pillars of CMEC

- the Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone

- the China- Myanmar Border Economic Cooperation Zone
- the New Yangon City

**Details**

- Among the major infrastructure projects under consideration are the development of a special economic zone and a deep-sea port at Kyaukpyu, the construction of a railway line from the China border to Mandalay in central Myanmar
- The railway will eventually branch out (like the economic corridor) to Kyaukpyu on the western seaboard of Myanmar and Yangon in the south where the Irrawaddy river flows into the Bay of Bengal. The railway line to Kyaukpyu will align with the twin pipeline system that has been carrying oil and natural gas to Kunming, the capital city of Yunnan, for some years
- China would also like to revive the hydel dam at Myitsone and the copper mining project that had to be suspended amidst the political backlash at the ground level against Chinese projects nearly a decade ago
- China is making the case that some of its BRI projects can help alleviate the Rohingya conflict by accelerating the development of the Arakan region. It is also offering projects to promote economic development in the conflict- prone northern frontiers of Myanmar that have long challenged the writ of the central government in the south
- The East India Company and the British Raj that developed the trade routes to China's eastern seaboard through the Indo-Pacific, were eager to develop connectivity into Yunnan through Burma to promote trade between India and western China



**54. India-Portugal**

- India and Portugal enjoy 500 years of shared history
- The two countries are closely tied together through Goa and Mumbai, through our culture, language and kinship
- The two countries are collaborating in science and technology, defence, education, innovation and start-up, water and environment among other things
- India looks forward to Portugal joining the International Solar Alliance in the near future



## Lisbon Treaty

- Initially known as Reform Treaty is an international agreement that amends the two treaties which form the constitutional basis of European Union (EU)

## Iberian Peninsula

- Located in the southwest corner of the European continent
- It principally divided between Spain and Portugal, as well as a small area of France, Andorra and British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar
- It is the second largest European peninsula by area after the Scandinavian Peninsula



## 55. International Solar Alliance

- It is a treaty-based international organisation established to
  - ✓ mobilise more than USD 1000 billion into solar power by 2030
  - ✓ accelerate the development and deployment of over 1000 GW of solar generation capacity in member countries
  - ✓ to meet energy demands and to bring prosperity, energy security and sustainable development through solar
- Launched at United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris on 30 November 2015 by PM Narendra Modi and French President Francois Hollande
- It was officially established on 6 December 2017 on the entry into force of the Framework Agreement
- Recognizing that ISA has a major role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals, and objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and that the ISA initiative would benefit the world at large, during the first Assembly of the ISA an Indian resolution to extend the Membership of the organisation to all countries that are Members of the United Nations was adopted.

## Initiatives of ISA

1. Scaling up solar applications for agricultural use
2. Affordable finance at scale
3. Scaling up solar mini-grids
4. Scaling up solar rooftop
5. Scaling up solar e-mobility and storage

## 56. Geography of North America



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