



**PT**  
365

# International Relations

Classroom Study Material



# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

(May 2017 – February 2018)

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# 1. INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

## 1.1. INDIA-PAKISTAN

### Why in news?

- The International Court of Justice (ICJ) stayed the execution of Kulbhushan Jadhav, who was sentenced to death by a Pakistan military court on the charge of spying, till its final decision. (ICJ and ICC covered later)

### Details

- The Court said that India should have been granted consular access to Kulbhushan Jadhav as per the Vienna Convention.

### Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963

- It defines the guidelines for consular relations between the independent countries.
- A **consul normally operates** out of an embassy in a different country and performs two functions: (1) protecting the interests of the country and the countrymen of the consul, and (2) furthering the commercial and economic relations between the two countries.
- They are afforded most of the same privileges, including a variation of diplomatic immunity called consular immunity, but these protections are not as extensive.

### Related information - Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961

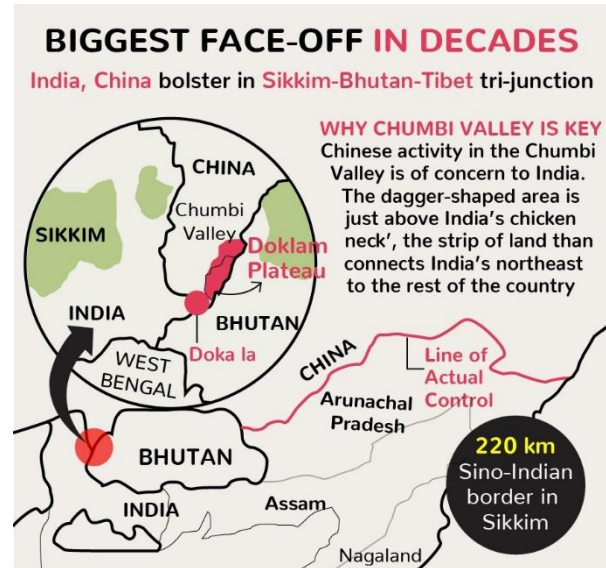
- It is an international treaty of 1961 which gives a **framework for diplomatic relations** between independent countries.
- It **specifies the privileges of a diplomatic mission** that enable diplomats to perform their functions without fear of coercion or harassment by the host country. It forms the legal basis for diplomatic immunity.

India is a party to both the above conventions.

## 1.2. INDIA-CHINA

### Why in news?

- Putting behind the Doklam standoff, India and China agreed to move forward in their ties.
- This was the **first time that India used troops to protect Bhutan's territorial interests.**



### About Doklam

- It is a strategically vital 269 square km patch of Bhutan's territory that Beijing laid claim to in the 1980s. It is an area with a plateau and a valley, lying between **Tibet's Chumbi Valley** to the north, **Bhutan's Ha Valley** to the east and India's Sikkim state to the west.

### Important passes along India-China border (from west to east)

- J & K - Aghil Pass, Chang La
- Himachal Pradesh - Shipki La
- Uttarakhand - Thaga La, Niti Pass, Lipu Lekh
- Sikkim - Nathu La, Jelep La
- Arunachal Pradesh - Bum La, Diphu Pass

## 1.3. INDIA-NEPAL

### Why in news?

There have been calls to review the 1950 India-Nepal friendship treaty.

### India-Nepal Friendship Treaty

It provides for-

- An open border between the two countries
- Allows Nepali nationals to work in India without a work permit, to apply for government jobs and the civil services (except for the IFS, IAS, and IPS)
- To open bank accounts and buy property.

India had waived its rights under reciprocity as a sign of goodwill.

## 1.4. INDIA-BANGLADESH

### 1.4.1. JOINT INTERPRETIVE NOTES

#### Why in news?

- The union cabinet approved signing of the **joint interpretative notes (JIN)** on the Agreement for the Promotion & Protection of Investment.

#### Related Information

**Operation 'Insaniyat':** The Ministry of External Affairs has started Operation Insaniyat to provide assistance to Bangladesh in response to humanitarian crisis being faced by it due to large influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar.

#### Significance of JIN

- The JIN would **impart clarity to the interpretation** of the existing agreement between India and Bangladesh for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.

### 1.4.2. INTEGRATED CHECK POSTS (ICP)

#### Why in News?

- India and Bangladesh have recently agreed to operate **Petrapole-Benapole Integrated Check Posts**.
- A separate body — the **Land Port Authority of India (LPAI)** — was constituted in 2011 to boost trade via the land border points.

#### Integrated Check Posts

- It helps put in place a system to secure the country's borders against hostile elements. It also facilitates trade and commerce and boosts revenue.
- Five ICPs — at Attari in Punjab (Pakistan border), Petrapole in West Bengal (Bangladesh border), Akhaura in Tripura (Bangladesh), Raxaul in Bihar (Nepal) and Jogbani in Bihar (Nepal) — are already functional.

#### About the Petrapole-Benapole ICP

- An estimated 60 percent of India-Bangladesh trade is conducted through the Petrapole-Benapole Check Post, Asia's largest land customs station.

#### Related News

#### Land Port Authority of India (LPAI)

- It was established under **Land Ports Authority of India Act, 2010** as a **statutory body** to function as a body corporate under the

administrative control of the Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs.

- It is mandated to plan, develop, construct, manage and maintain Integrated Check Posts (ICPs).

### 1.4.3. INDO-BANGLADESH INLAND WATER TRANSIT AND TRADE PROTOCOL (IWTP)

#### Why in news?

As a part of the protocol, an Indian consignment of goods reached Tripura officially via the inland waterways of Bangladesh.

#### About IWTP

- In 2016, the Protocol (signed in 1972) between India and Bangladesh was revised and extended as IWTP.
- It aims to revive the River Transport system between the country before Independence.
- Under this protocol, India will be investing in creating infrastructure (Port, Road and Rail) in **Ashugonj port (On river Meghna, Bangladesh) and Akhaura Checkpost (Agartala)**, to facilitate the smooth movement of goods to the NE states.
- Kolkata-Ashugonj-Tripura** route cuts the Kolkata-Agartala distance via Siliguri's 'chicken neck' and Assam and Meghalaya from 1,600 km to 500 km.
- The revised Protocol also gives India and Bangladesh the right to use each other's territory for transiting **goods to third countries**.

### 1.4.4 BORDER PROTECTION GRID

#### Why in news?

- Government has announced the establishment of **Border Protection Grid** with Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB) States.

#### Details

- The system will comprise of physical barriers, non-physical barriers, surveillance system, Intelligence agencies, State Police, BSF.
- Indo-Bangladesh Border is 4096 km long with, so far in 3006 km border security infrastructure of fence, roads, floodlights and border out posts (BOPs) are in place
- Out of 1090 km of non-secured border;

- 684 km would be secured with fence and the related infrastructure.
- 406 km of non-physical barriers covered by rivers etc. would be secured by a combination of electronic gadgets like radar, day-night camera, sensors all integrated in a command and control architecture.

**Related Information**

- **Border with Bangladesh** - 2,217 km falls in West Bengal, 262 km in Assam, 443 km in Meghalaya, 856 km in Tripura and 180 km in Mizoram.
- The **length of our land borders** with neighboring countries – Bangladesh (4096), China (3488), Pakistan (3233), Nepal (1751), Myanmar (1643), Bhutan (699) and Afghanistan (106).

## 1.5. INDIA-MYANMAR

**Why in news?**

The government has approved the agreement between India and Myanmar on Land Border Crossing. There are already free movement rights (under Free Movement Regime) for people ordinarily residing in the border areas of both countries.

**Free Movement Regime**

- The tribal communities, particularly Nagas, Singhpos, Kukis, Mizos etc. claim that the boundary between India and Myanmar is inconsistent with the traditional limits of the region they inhabited and they still continue to have trans-border linkages with their kiths and kins.
- It is thus an arrangement to alleviate insecurity of tribals living along India and Myanmar border.
- It permits tribes residing along the border to travel 16 km across the boundary without visa restrictions.
- While India allows Myanmarese nationals to stay 72 hours without visa, Myanmar allows stay of only 24 hours.

**Additional information**

India is developing four major connectivity projects in Myanmar namely

- the **Kaladan multi-modal corridor**
- repair of 69 bridges on the **Tamu-Kalewa road**

- the construction of the 120-km **Kalewa-Yargyi corridor** (which is a part of the **India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway**), and
- the **Rhi-Tiddim** road in the Chin state bordering Mizoram.

Further, The Archeological Survey of India has recently restored the **Ananda temple**, a jewel among all **Bagan pagodas**.

## 1.6. INDIA-SRI LANKA

**Why in news?**

- Prime Minister visited Sri Lanka to participate in the **UN Vesak Day** celebrations in Colombo.

**What is Vesak?**

- Vesak (Sinhalese), is the name used for the 2<sup>nd</sup> month in Sri Lankan traditional Moon calendar (Lunar calendar) which corresponds with the month of May in the Gregorian calendar (Solar calendar).

**India and Sri Lanka Economic relations**

- **Commercial Relations**- SL is one of India's largest trading partner in SAARC.
  - Trade between the two countries grew particularly rapidly after India-SL **Free Trade Agreement came into force in March 2000**.
- **Recent Developments**- SL recently allowed India to jointly develop the **Trincomalee port** (oil tanks farm) in north-eastern part of the country.
  - SL has invited Petronet LNG to set up a **liquid gas import terminal** in the country. It may help it straddle the gas sector, the dominant fuel for future economic growth.
  - SL signed an agreement with India to build **1,200 houses in Hambantota**.
  - India has also bid to lease and manage the **Mattala airport** in Hambantota.

**The 'China factor'**

- Sri Lanka has formally handed over its southern port of Hambantota to China on a 99-year lease to pay off debt.
- According to the new deal, only **Sri Lankan Navy will be responsible for security** of the deep-sea port, and the port will not be allowed to become a base for any foreign Navy.

### Significance of Hambantota Port

- **Hambantota Port** is right in the middle of vital energy supply lines in the India Ocean connecting the Middle East and East Asia.
- The Hambantota port is part of China's Belt and Road Initiative.

## 1.7. INDIA-AFGHANISTAN

### Why in news?

India and Afghanistan inaugurated a **dedicated air freight corridor service**.

#### Initiatives of India in Afghanistan

The **Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)** between the two sides, provides for assistance to help rebuild Afghanistan's infrastructure and institutions. India is one of the leading donor nations to Afghanistan, and by far the largest from among the regional countries. Various development projects undertaken are-

- Salma Dam
  - New Afghan Parliament building
  - Doshi & Charikar substations, etc.
- It passes through the **airspace of Pakistan** and will provide Afghanistan, a landlocked country, **greater access to markets in India**.

### Access to Afghanistan

India has been closely working with Afghanistan to **create alternate and reliable access routes for the landlocked country**.

- In this context, in January 2015, India had announced its decision to allow Afghan Trucks to enter the Indian territory through **Attari land Checkpost** for offloading and loading goods from and to Afghanistan.
- India is also cooperating with **Afghanistan and Iran for development of the Chabahar Port**. In this context, a **trilateral transport and transit agreement based** on sea access through Chabahar was signed in the presence of the leaders of the three countries in Tehran in May 2016.

## 1.8. INDIA-MALDIVES

### Why in news?

- Recently the President of the Maldives declared a state of emergency.

### India-Maldives relations

- India established **formal diplomatic relations** with Maldives after the independence of Maldives from the British rule in 1966.
- Operation Cactus was **India's military aid** of 1600 soldiers to Maldives to fight the armed attack of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) supported rebel groups in 1988 for an attempted coup.
- India shares very **close military ties** with Maldives by having two helicopter bases, integration of radars and Indian Coast Guard surveillance along Maldivian coast. India also aims to remain as a net security provider to Maldives.

### Contemporary situation

- The current situation is very serious as democratic institutions are being subverted which would make it difficult for Indian Government to negotiate a better relation with Maldives, this calls for India's intervention in Maldives.
- But unlike India's operation Cactus, where request for intervention was from the sitting president, in the present case the demand for intervention is from opposition parties. The situation does not meet the requirements articulated by the **'responsibility to protect'** doctrine, under Article 2 of the UN charter and India's traditional policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other sovereign countries.

### Responsibility to Protect

- It is a global political commitment which was endorsed at the 2005 World Summit.
- All Member States formally accepted the responsibility of each State to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.
- At the Summit, world leaders also agreed that when any State fails to meet that responsibility, all States (the "international community") are responsible for helping to protect people threatened with such crimes.

#### Related News – The China factor

- Maldives signed its first ever **Bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** with China. It became the second South Asian country after Pakistan to do so.
- The Maldives has also agreed to become a partner in **China's maritime silk route**.

## 1.9. SASEC ROAD CONNECTIVITY

### Why in news?

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for upgradation and widening of 65 kms of Imphal-Moreh Section of NH-39 in Manipur at a cost of Rs. 1630.29 crores.

- The project is being developed with ADB's loan assistance under the South Asian Sub-Regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Road Connectivity Investment Program.
- The project corridor is also a part of the **Asian Highway No. 01 (AH01)** and acts as **India's Gateway to the East**. Thus trade, commerce and tourism in the region will get a boost.

### About SASEC Road Connectivity Investment Program:

- The seven-member SASEC formed in 2001 comprises India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Myanmar, and aims to increase economic growth by building cross-border connectivity.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been providing technical, advisory, and financial support to the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement initiative as part of its assistance to the SASEC programme.
- Recently, Bangladesh, India and Nepal have given nod to operating procedures for movement of passenger vehicles under BBIN agreement. Bhutan signed the agreement but did not ratify it.

### Asian Highway Network

- It is a cooperative project among countries in Asia and Europe and the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)** to improve the highway systems in Asia.
- It is one of the three pillars of **Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID) project**, endorsed by the ESCAP commission in 1992, comprising Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) and facilitation of land transport projects.

## 1.10. INDIAN OCEAN REGION

### Why in news?

- India and France have released a **joint strategic vision for cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.

### More on news

- The vision establishes an open, inclusive and transparent cooperation architecture for peace, security and prosperity
- Four critically important waterways in the region are the Suez Canal (Egypt), Bab el Mandeb (Djibouti-Yemen), Strait of Hormuz (Iran-Oman) and Strait of Malacca (Indonesia-Malaysia)
- The vision gains importance considering increasing footprint of China in the region – its new naval and air base near **Gwadar** in Pakistan, recently opened naval and military base at **Djibouti**, **Hambantota Port** in Sri Lanka etc.



### India's presence in the region

- Recently, India has been given access to naval facilities at the **port of Duqm** in **Oman**. India is also modernizing and expanding port of **Chabahar** near this **strait of Hormuz**.
- **Logistics agreement with US** in 2017 provide facilities to India at Diego Garcia and the various US facilities in the Persian Gulf



- Recently, finalization of logistic agreement with France was announced which will provide access to French key bases at Djibouti on the Red Sea and at Réunion in the southern Indian Ocean.
- A deal with Singapore facilitated enhanced access to Changi naval base

#### Important organisations in the region

##### • Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):

- It is an inter-governmental organisation aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean region through its 21 Member States and 7 Dialogue Partners.
- The major priorities & focus areas include Fisheries Management, Blue Economy, Women's Economic Empowerment, Maritime Safety & Security etc.

- The members include Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

- **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS):** It is an initiative to increase maritime co-operation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region. The group has 35 members and the inaugural IONS was held in 2008 in New Delhi.

- **Indian Ocean Commission (COI):** The COI is an intergovernmental organisation created in 1984. It consists of five African Indian Ocean nations: Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Réunion and Seychelles.



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## 2. INDIA AND WEST ASIA



### Importance of Chabahar Port

- **Connectivity with Europe and Central Asia-** When linked to the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), it would connect South Asia and Europe & Central Asia, which would provide Indian business better opportunities to expand in Central Asia.
- **Geostrategic location-** This port is located very close (around 100kms) to Pakistan’s **Gwadar Port**, which has been developed by China. Thus, the location is strategic to balance the increasing footprint of China in Asia through the policy of ‘String of Pearls’.
- **Reducing transportation cost-** The distance between India’s Kandla Port and Chabahar Port is quite short, thereby reducing the transportation costs of the goods and freight time.

### 2.1. INDIA-UAE

#### Why in news?

- Indian Prime Minister recently visited UAE.
- He was also the guest of the honour at **World Government Summit held at Dubai**.

#### World Government Summit

- It is an **annual event** held in Dubai that brings together leaders in government for a global dialogue about governmental process and policies with a focus on the issues of futurism, technology and innovation, as well as other topics.

#### Related News

- Recently, ONGC Videsh Ltd acquired stake in - Lower Zakum Concession in Abu Dhabi.
- PM inaugurated the first Hindu temple to be built in UAE capital Abu Dhabi.

### 2.2. INDIA-IRAN

#### Why in news?

India sent its first consignment of wheat to Afghanistan through the **Chabahar port** in Iran.

#### More about the Route

- The sea route connects **Gujarat’s Kandla port** to Chabahar from where the shipment will be taken to Afghanistan through a **land route**.

### GEO-STRATEGIC PUSH

The consignment of wheat is the first of six shipments to be sent to Afghanistan over the next few months via Iran.



#### Related News

#### Middle East to India Deepwater Pipeline (MEIDP) –

It is a proposed pipeline between India And Iran of 1,300-km length, which is expected to start from Chabahar Port on Iran’s southern coast and terminate near Porbandar (Gujarat) on India’s west coast.

#### Details

- It will be a deepest underwater transnational gas pipeline and will completely bypass Pakistan.
- It will connect the Gas Rich Gulf & Middle East regions to India, for the transportation of Natural Gas to **secure India’s Energy Needs** at **competitive rates**.

- It envisages a **pivotal role for Oman** as a potential transit hub, source of gas supply, and as an equity partner in the project.

**Additional Information**

**International North – South Transport Corridor (INSTC)**

- It is a multimodal transportation network established in 2000 by India, Russia and Iran.
- It aims to link Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea via Iran, and onward to northern Europe via St. Petersburg in Russia.
- Later INSTC was expanded to include 10 new members namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, Oman and Syria.

**2.3. INDIA ISRAEL**

**Why in News?**

Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently visited India.

**Two- State Solution of Israel Palestine Issue**

It envisages an independent State of Palestine alongside the State of Israel west of Jordan river.

- **1937:** Proposed on basis of Peel Commission report but rejected by Arabs.
- **1948:** UN partition plan given with Jerusalem under international control
- **Oslo Accord, 1991:** Provided the foundation for political boundaries as it stands today.
- The **Madrid Conference of 1991** was a peace conference co-sponsored by the US and the Soviet Union to revive the Israeli–Palestinian peace process through negotiations.
- **UNSC Resolution 1397:** Agreed in 2000 with support from USA and becoming first UNSC resolution to agree on two state solution.

**Background**

- In 1992, the two became **strategic partners**.
- The two countries recently completed **25 years of diplomatic ties** and this is only the **second visit** by an Israeli prime minister after a gap of 15 years since Ariel Sharon in 2003.



**De-hyphenation of relation-**

De-hyphenation means delinking two entities and considering them as individuals. India’s relationship with Israel stands on its own merits, independent and separate from India’s relationship with the Palestinians.

**India-Israel Relations**

- **Agriculture-** In 2008, Israel launched the **India-Israel Agriculture Project (IIAP)** aimed at setting up specialised agriculture centres across India.
- **Defence & Security** - Israel is one of the top supplier of arms to India. The arms acquisitions range from Phalcon AWACS (airborne warning and control systems) and Searcher, Heron and Harop UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) to Aerostat and Green Pine radars, Barak anti-missile defence system.
- **"India-Israel Industrial R&D and Technological Innovation Fund (I4F)"** - It envisages promotion of bilateral Industrial R&D and Innovation cooperation in the fields of science and technology. India and Israel will make a contribution of **four million US Dollars** each for the Fund, both equivalent amounts, annually for five years.

**Related information**

US President has recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and has decided to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

## 2.4. INDIA-PALESTINE

### Why in news?

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas visited India recently.

### Background

India and Palestine enjoy historically close and friendly ties.

- In 1947, India voted against the partition of Palestine at the United Nations General Assembly.

- India was the first Non-Arab State to recognize Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in 1974. India was one of the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine in 1988.
- In 1996, India opened its Representative Office to the Palestine Authority in Gaza, which later was shifted to Ramallah in 2003.

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### 3. INDIA AND SOUTHEAST/EAST ASIA



- It was **founded in 1967** by the five South-East Asian nations of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- There are currently **10-member** states: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam.

#### Other Events

- Many other events that took place simultaneously in Manila during the summit are-
  - the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) leaders' meeting
  - First meeting of the India-U.S.-Japan-Australia quadrilateral (covered later).

#### 3.1.1. INDIA-ASEAN

##### Why in News?

Recently, a summit was held to mark the 25th anniversary of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India Dialogue Relations and **Delhi Declaration** was signed.

##### Highlights of the Declaration

- Promotion of stable and sustainable growth for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) was also agreed upon.
- **Physical and digital connectivity-** They reaffirmed their commitment to enhance physical and digital connectivity in line with the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and the ASEAN ICT Master plan (AIMS 2020).

##### RCEP

- It is a proposed free trade agreement between the members of the ASEAN and the six states with which ASEAN has existing free trade agreements (Australia, People's Republic of China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, and New Zealand).
- The negotiations were launched in November 2012 at the ASEAN Summit in Cambodia.

##### Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025

- It was adopted during Vientiane Declaration in 2016 with a vision to achieve a seamlessly and comprehensively connected ASEAN that will promote competitiveness, inclusiveness, and a greater sense of Community.
- It will focus on five strategic areas to achieve this vision-
  - Sustainable Infrastructure
  - Digital Innovation



### 3.1. ASEAN

#### Why in News?

- The Philippines plays host to the grand anniversary celebration of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), marking the regional bloc's **50th** year.

**Association of South East Asian Nations**

- It is a **political and economic organization** aimed primarily at promoting economic growth and regional stability among its members.

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#### ASEAN ICT Masterplan

Launched in 2015, it has a vision to propel ASEAN towards a digitally-enabled economy that is secure, sustainable, and transformative; and to enable an innovative, inclusive and integrated ASEAN Community.

#### India-ASEAN

- In 1992, India became a dialogue partner across limited sectors in ASEAN and in 1995 it achieved the status of **full dialogue partnership**.
- In 1996, India was given the opportunity to appear in the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) and became a full member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). While in 2012 the relations were upgraded to **strategic partnership**.
- The “ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress, and Shared Prosperity” in 2004 and the “Plan of Action” in 2012 highlighted the growing confluence in various areas between ASEAN and India.
- Two decades of the Look East Policy, now renamed as Act East Policy by the government, have brought some positive results for India in making ASEAN an important regional partner.

#### Trade & Economic Cooperation-

- India signed an FTA in goods in 2009 and an FTA in services and investments in 2014 with ASEAN.
- Apart from this, India has a **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)** with various countries of the ASEAN region which has resulted in concessional trade and a rise in investments.

#### Additional Information

- The 4th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference was recently held at Rajgir in Nalanda district, Bihar as a part of the commemorative events to mark ASEAN-India 25 years of dialogue partnership.
- The theme of the conference was “State and Social Order in Dharma-Dhamma Traditions”
- It has been organised by Nalanda University, in collaboration with the Centre for Study of Religion and Society, India Foundation, Ministry of External Affairs and the Vietnam Buddhist University.

### 3.1.2. EXPANDED ASEAN MARITIME FORUM (EAMF)

#### Why in news?

5th EAMF was held in **Jakarta**, Indonesia.

#### Details about EAMF

- It was created for the first time in **2012** during the ASEAN High Conference in **Manila, The Philippines**.
- It includes the **ten Southeast Asian countries** with the addition of **Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the United States (8 nations)**
- It focuses mainly on **maritime issues**, which include territorial maritime disputes, piracy, and also maritime regulations among members of the forum itself.
- Before the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum was established in 2012, the topic surrounding maritime issues was discussed under **Asia Maritime Organization for Security and Cooperation (AMOSC)**. The AMOSC could not bring any positive outcome.

### 3.2. INDIA AND JAPAN

#### Why in news?

- The India-Japan Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy entered into force.

#### Nullification clause

- It was a major hurdle in the deal which sought **automatic cancellation** of the agreement if India resorts to nuclear testing in the future.
- It was resolved by annexing a separate memorandum to the treaty which specifies that Japan can suspend cooperation if India **breaches its no-testing pledge to the NSG**.

#### Significance of deal for India

- For India, the deal represents hope that the 2008 waiver it received from the Nuclear Suppliers’ Group might finally begin paying off given that so far it has had limited tangible benefits for the country’s power industry.
- The pact is a major achievement for India as it is **Japan’s first civilian nuclear cooperation** pact with a country that has not signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

### Other recent developments

- **“Toward a Free, Open and Prosperous Indo-Pacific”**, the title of the joint statement, gave away the common concern weighing down both countries for instance - **“rules-based order”** in the Indo-Pacific region and **implementation of Resolution 1267 of the UN Security Council to counter cross-border terrorism**.
- India and Japan signed an agreement that will allow their airlines to operate unlimited number of flights between the two countries. The National Civil Aviation Policy of 2016 allows countries covered under such agreements an unlimited number of flights to the six metro airports in Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Bengaluru and Chennai.
- Joint inauguration of the high-speed rail project between **Mumbai and Ahmedabad**. The ambitious project is being implemented with nearly **90% financial support and technology** from Japan.

India has an Open Sky agreement with following countries:  
US, Jamaica, Guyana, Czech Republic, Finland, Spain, Sri Lanka, ASEAN and Greece.

### 3.2.1. ASIA-AFRICA GROWTH CORRIDOR

#### Why in news?

A vision document on the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) was released at Africa development bank submit by India in partnership with Japan.

#### About the corridor

- **The vision document was prepared jointly by Indian and Japanese think tanks**, i.e. Research and Information Systems for Developing Countries (RIS), Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), and Institute for Development Economics - Japan External Trade Organisation (IDE-JETRO), in consultation with other think tanks in Asia and Africa.
- **The main objective of the corridor is to enhance growth and connectivity between Asia and Africa.**
- The corridor **will focus on four areas**: Development Cooperation Projects, Quality Infrastructure and Institutional Connectivity,

Enhancing Skills, and People-to-People Partnership.

- Agriculture, health, technology, and disaster management have been identified as the main areas of development cooperation.

### 3.3. INDIA AND PHILIPPINES

#### Why in news?

India has decided to provide financial assistance to the Philippines to aid its fight against the Islamic State (IS)-affiliated terror groups in the city of Marawi in Mindanao province.

#### More on news

- The Philippines has been engaged with Islamic State (ISIS)-affiliated militants who launched an offensive to control city of Marawi in Mindanao province on May 23, 2017.
- This is the first time India is sending financial aid to another country for relief and rehabilitation from deadly terror groups.

### 3.4. INDIA-SOUTH KOREA

#### Why in news?

India will further strengthen the Korea Plus cell created here to promote and facilitate investments.

#### Korea Plus

- Korea Plus, operationalized on June 18, 2016 comprises of a representative from the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Energy, Government of the Republic of Korea and representative from Korea Trade Investment and Promotion Agency (KOTRA) and three representatives from Invest India.
- It is a strategic initiative between the Governments of India and South Korea “to promote, facilitate and retain Korean investments in India.

### 3.5. MEKONG GANGA COOPERATION (MGC)

#### Why in News?

India has been calling for expanding the areas of cooperation among the member countries of the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) bloc

### About MGC

- It is an initiative by six countries – India and five ASEAN countries, namely, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam for cooperation in tourism, culture, education, as well as transport and communications.
- It was launched in 2000. Both the Ganga and the Mekong are civilizational rivers, and the MGC initiative aims to facilitate closer contacts among the people inhabiting these two major river basins.

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## 4. EUROPEAN UNION



### 4.1. INDIA-EU

#### Why in news?

- The 14th annual Summit between India and the European Union (EU) was recently held in New Delhi.

#### India-EU relations

- India and the EU have been **strategic partners since 2004**.
- The EU is India's largest regional trading partner with bilateral trade in goods at \$88 billion in 2016.
- The EU is also the largest destination for Indian exports and a key source of investment and technologies.

#### About European Union

- It is a unified trade and monetary body of 28-member countries. Its purpose is to be more competitive in the global marketplace at the same time balancing the needs of its independent fiscal and political members.
- The EU's 28-member countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. That will drop to 27 when Brexit causes the UK to leave the EU.

- Institutional set-up -
  - the EU's broad priorities are set by the **European Council**, which brings together national and EU-level leaders
  - directly elected MEPs represent European citizens in the **European Parliament**
  - the interests of the EU as a whole are promoted by the **European Commission**, whose members are appointed by national governments
  - governments defend their own country's national interests in the **Council of the European Union**.

#### Related information

##### Eurozone

- It is a geographic and economic region that consists of countries that have fully incorporated the euro as their national currency.
- As of 2018, the eurozone consisted of 19 countries in the EU: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

##### Schengen Area

- It is an area comprising **26 European states** that have officially abolished passport and all other types of border control at their mutual borders
- The area is named after the **Schengen Agreement** signed in June 1985 in the town of Schengen, Luxembourg.
- 22 of 28 EU member states participate in the Schengen Area.
- The four European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member states- Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland- are not members of the EU but have signed agreements in association with the Schengen Agreement.

#### 4.1.1. EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT

##### Why in News?

- The Union cabinet recently approved India's membership for European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).
- Steps will be initiated by the Department of Economic Affairs to acquire the membership.

##### About EBRD

- It is a **multilateral developmental investment bank**, established in 1991.

- It initially focused on helping former Communist states build their economies after the Cold War and then expanded to support development in more than 30 countries from central Europe to central Asia.
- It works only in countries that are "**committed to democratic principles**", using investment as a tool to build market economies.

**Significance for India**

- India will only be **providing rather than receiving money** with its new membership. It may, however, benefit indirectly through EBRD projects or if Indian companies invest alongside the bank, thereby increasing India's investment opportunities and enhancing its international profile.

**4.1.2. INVESTMENT FACILITATION MECHANISM**

- The European Union (EU) and India announced the establishment of an **Investment Facilitation Mechanism (IFM) for EU investments in India**.
- As part of the IFM, the EU Delegation to India and the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) will hold regular high-level meetings to assess and facilitate "**ease of doing business**" for EU investors in India by creating a **single-window entry** point.

- **Invest India**, the Indian government's official Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency, will also be part of the IFM.

**4.2. PESCO**

**Why in news?**

European Union adopted the decision to establish a European Union defense pact known as Permanent Structured Cooperation on Defense (PESCO).

**Lisbon Treaty** - It is an international treaty which amended Maastricht Treaty and Treaty of Rome to form European Union on Constitutional Basis. It was signed by EU member states in 2007.

**About the Pact**

- It is an intergovernmental, **binding, permanent** framework and a structured process to gradually **deepen defence cooperation** within EU framework.
- The aim is to jointly develop defence capabilities and make them available for EU military operations.
- The Member states can also make the military capabilities available under PESCO for United Nations and NATO as well.
- So far 25 members of EU have signed the pact except **Denmark, Malta and Britain**. PESCO is also open to NATO members also who wish to take part in it. However, there is **no provision** about the inclusion of **non-EU NATO member**.

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## 5. USA

### 5.1. INDIA-US

#### Why in news?

PM Modi paid official visit to US. This was the fourth visit of PM to US and first direct official meet with President Donald Trump.

#### Global Entry Program

- India signed **International Expedited Traveler Initiative Program, also known as Global Entry Program** with the United States.
- It is a US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) program that allows speedy clearance for low-risk travellers upon their arrival in the US.
- On landing at the selected airports in the United States, the approved applicants can make their way ahead through automatic kiosks instead of standing in the immigration lines.
- While its goal is to **speed travelers through the process**, they may still be selected for further examination when entering the United States.
- Apart from India, citizens of Colombia, United Kingdom, Germany, Panama, Singapore are eligible to become members of this programme. South Korea and Mexican nationals are also included under Global Entry Programme.

#### Recent Developments

- **Defense cooperation**
  - US has cleared the sale of **22 unmanned Guardian drones** to India.
- **Maritime security and data sharing**
  - Both leaders announced their intention to **'build on the implementation of the "White Shipping" data sharing arrangement**. The agreement allows countries to share data on maritime traffic and domain awareness.
- **U.S. LNG for India**
  - India recently received its first LNG cargo from the US under a long-term supply deal, at Dabhol (Maharashtra). GAIL had signed a sale and purchase agreement (SPA) with the US LNG exporter Cheniere Energy in December 2011. Foreign Secretary told that from next year liquefied natural gas (LNG) from US will start flowing to India.
- India and USA co-hosted the **Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES)** at Hyderabad.

- Organized annually since 2010, GES is the preeminent annual entrepreneurship gathering that convenes over one thousand emerging entrepreneurs, investors, and supporters from around the world.
- This year marks the first GES held in South Asia, and the event underscores US broad and enduring partnership with India.
- This year, the theme is **"Women first, prosperity for all"**.
- Niti Aayog is the lead Indian agency in holding the event in partnership with the state government of Telangana.

### 5.2. US WITHDRAWS FROM GLOBAL COMPACT ON MIGRATION

#### Why in News?

The US recently pulled out of **United Nation's Global Compact on Migration**, deeming it inconsistent with its immigration policies.

#### What is UN's Global Compact on Migration?

- It is the **first, inter-governmentally negotiated agreement** and is consistent with target **10.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** in which member States committed to cooperate internationally to **facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration**.
- Its main aim is to-
  - Address all aspects of international migration, including the humanitarian, developmental, human rights-related and other aspects;
  - Make an important contribution to global governance and enhance coordination on international migration;
  - Present a framework for comprehensive international cooperation on migrants and human mobility;
  - Set out a range of actionable commitments, means of implementation and a framework for follow-up and review among Member States regarding international migration in all its dimensions; etc.
- It was prepared under the auspices of the United Nations, in September 2016, in the

**New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants**, which was adopted by 193 UN member states. The declaration is of **non-binding nature**.

- India has also signed this declaration.
- To be adopted in 2018, the compact is seen as a significant opportunity **to improve the governance on migration** and is expected to address the challenges associated with today's migration, and to strengthen the contribution of migrants and migration to sustainable development.

### 5.3. US WITHDRAWS FROM UNESCO

#### Why in news?

The United States has decided to withdraw from the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), accusing the body of **anti-Israel bias**.

#### About UNESCO

- Its aim is "to contribute to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information"
- It was established in 1946 and is based in **Paris**.
- It has 195 member states and ten associate members.
- Its five major programs are:
  - **Education,**
  - **Natural sciences,**
  - **Social/human sciences,**
  - **Culture**
  - **Communication/information.**

#### Related information

- US earlier withdrew from the organization in 1984 and then rejoined the organization in 2002.
- The US had cancelled its substantial budget contribution to UNESCO in 2011 in protest of its decision to grant the Palestinians full membership. U.S. laws bar funding to any U.N. agency that recognizes the Palestinian state.
- US will maintain its presence at UNESCO as an observer state.

### 5.4. US NEW AFGHAN POLICY

#### Why in news?

Recently the U.S. President laid out strategy for **"Afghanistan and South Asia"**.

#### Important points of new strategy

- **From Rapid Withdrawal to Uncertain Time Frame**
  - In outlining his new strategy, the President recommitted the United States to an open-ended conflict in Afghanistan, saying U.S. forces must **"fight to win" the war.**
- **Tougher Stance On Islamabad**
  - Trump directly called Pakistan a country that shelters terrorists. He demanded that Pakistan's support to cross-border terror **"will have to change"** and **"change immediately"**.
  - America would no longer tolerate Pakistan's policy of harbouring terrorists.
- **Larger role for India**
  - Describing India as **"a key security and economic partner of the United States,"** the President said America would further **"develop its strategic partnership with India — the world's largest democracy."**

### 5.5. US SPECIAL WATCH LIST

#### Why in news?

- US recently has placed Pakistan on a **'Special Watch List'** while also withholding USD 1.15 billion military aid.
- US also announced re-designation of 10 countries as **'Countries of Particular Concern' (CPC)**.

#### About Special watch list.

It is for countries that engage in or tolerate severe violations of religious freedom but may not rise to the level of the 'Countries of Particular Concern' (CPC).

#### About CPC:

- A country is labeled as a CPC after it engages in or tolerates systemic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious liberty. It is in accordance with the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.
- The list includes Myanmar, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

## 5.6. THE NEW US SECURITY STRATEGY

### Why in news?

USA has recently unveiled its New Security strategy (NSS).

### Key Highlights

- **Indo-Pacific region** - The document explicitly includes India in its definition of the Indo-Pacific, which stretches “from the west coast

of India to the western shores of the United States”.

- **Combating China and Russia** – They have been termed as "revisionist" powers determined to reshape the world according to their own ideals.
- **Tilt to Bilateralism** - It favors bilateral trade deals over multi-country deals considering the countries are in fierce competition with each other.

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## 6. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/ INSTITUTIONS

### 6.1. UNSC REFORM

#### Why in news?

India has demanded transparency in the UN Security Council reform process at the plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly.

#### What is UNSC Reform agenda?

It entails discussions on following areas:

- Categories of membership
- The question of the veto held by the five permanent members
- Regional representation
- Size of an enlarged Council and its working methods and
- The Security Council-General Assembly relationship.

#### More about the news

- The reform agenda has been on continuous annual consideration since 1993 but there has been a lack of consensus on the issue, primarily due to “institutional inertia”.

#### G-4 Nations

- It comprises of Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan and they support each other's bids for permanent seats on the UNSC.
- They recently demanded an ‘early reform’ and enhanced role for developing countries and improvement of working methods in UNSC in order to make the Council more legitimate, effective and representative.

#### Uniting for Consensus (UfC) or Coffee Club

- UfC is a movement to counter the bids for permanent seats proposed by G-4.
- It demands that a consensus must be reached first on the form and size of the Security Council before expanding it.
- It is led by Italy and includes Pakistan, South Korea, Canada, Argentina and some other countries.

#### 6.1.1. UN STRUCTURE

#### About UN

- It is an international organization founded in 1945. It is currently made up of 193 Member States.

- It has 6 principle organs, viz. General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the UN Secretariat.

- **General Assembly-** It is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN. All 193 Member States of the UN are represented in the General Assembly, making it the only UN body with universal representation.
- **Security Council-** It has primary responsibility, under the UN Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has **15 Members** (5 permanent and 10 non-permanent members).
- **Economic and Social Council-** is the principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on economic, social and environmental issues, as well as implementation of internationally agreed development goals. It has 54 Members, elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms.
- **Trusteeship Council-** It was established to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories to ensure that adequate steps were taken to prepare the Territories for self-government and independence. The Trusteeship Council suspended operation on 1 November 1994, because by then the trust territories had already attained self-government or independence.
- **International Court of Justice-** is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Its seat is at the Peace Palace in the Hague (Netherlands).
- **Secretariat-** It comprises the Secretary-General and tens of thousands of international UN staff members who carry out the day-to-day work of the UN as mandated by the General Assembly and the Organization's other principal organs.

**Related Information**

- Recently, India was re-elected to ECOSOC for a term of three years.
- It has also been re-elected to the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), a subsidiary body of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) along with other 12-member countries.

**Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC)**

- It is main subsidiary organ of UN ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly for planning, programming and coordination.
- It was established by ECOSOC under a resolution

## 6.2. UN PARTNERSHIP FUND

**Why in News?**

India has pledged an additional USD 100 million towards the **UN partnership fund** at the 2017 UN Pledging Conference for Development Activities.

The **India-UN Development Partnership Fund (UNDPF)** is a dedicated facility within the **United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation** established in 2017.

It supports Southern-owned and led, demand-driven, and transformational sustainable development projects across the developing world, with a focus on least developed countries and small island developing states.

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), hosted by **UNDP since 1974**, was established by the UN General Assembly with a mandate to advocate for and coordinate South-South and triangular cooperation (collaboration and partnerships between South-South-North countries) on a global and UN system-wide basis.

**Details**

- The first project from the fund is being executed in partnership with seven Pacific Island countries. The fund has also identified 15 more projects.
- India is also contributing USD 10.582 million to various other UN programmes.
- The contribution has significantly scaled up India's support to sustainable development projects across the developing world.

**South-South Cooperation (SSC)** - It is a **methodology of development** which facilitates the exchange of knowledge, experience, technology, investment, information and capacity between and among Southern countries through various agencies like governments, civil society

organizations, etc. to accelerate all-round development.

## 6.3. UN-HABITAT

**Why in news?**

India has been unanimously elected as the president of the UN-Habitat.

- On behalf of India, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation Minister will preside over the deliberations of the 58-member Governing Council (GC) of the UN-Habitat for the next two years.
- Since the UN-Habitat came into being in 1978, it is the third time that India has been elected to lead this organisation after 2007 and 1988.

**About UN Habitat**

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the United Nations agency for human settlements and sustainable urban development.

- It was established in 1978 as an outcome of the First UN Conference on Human Settlements and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat I) held in Vancouver, Canada in 1976.
- UN-Habitat maintains its headquarters at the United Nations Office at **Nairobi, Kenya**.
- It is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.
- It is a member of the United Nations Development Group.
- The mandate of UN-Habitat derives from the Habitat Agenda, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996.

## 6.4. SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION (SCO)

**Why in news?**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit took place in Kazakhstan's Astana in June, 2017. India and Pakistan inducted as full members of the SCO at the summit.

### About SCO

- It is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation, the creation of which was announced in 2001 in Shanghai (China) by the Kazakhstan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Russian, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
- It was preceded by the Shanghai Five mechanism.
- Its main goals are as follows: strengthening mutual trust and neighbourliness 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.
- The **Heads of State Council (HSC)** is the supreme decision-making body in the SCO and the Council of Heads of Government is the second-highest council in the organisation. The SCO's official languages are Russian and Chinese.
- The organisation has two permanent bodies — the **SCO Secretariat** based in Beijing and the Executive Committee of the **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)** based in Tashkent.

## THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION



## 6.5. BRICS

### Why in news?

Recently, 9th BRICS Summit 2017 was held in Xiamen, China.

### Xiamen declaration

Focusing on the theme of ‘**Stronger Partnership for a Brighter Future**’, leaders had issued a joint

statement outlining the agendas for this year as well as points the nations agreed to work upon.

### Highlights of the Xiamen declaration

#### Issue of terrorism

- BRICS leaders called for expeditious finalization and adoption of the **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)** by the United Nations General Assembly.

#### Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)

- Proposed first by India in 1996.
- It includes adoption of universal definition of terrorism, steps for cutting off access of terrorist groups to funds and safe havens and also calls for amending domestic laws to make cross-border terrorism an extraditable offence.

- The **BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)** represents a milestone of BRICS financial cooperation and development, which also contributes to global financial stability.

The **BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)** is a framework for the provision of support through liquidity and precautionary instruments in response to actual or potential short-term balance of payments pressures. It was established in 2015 by the BRICS countries Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

### 6.5.1. PACTS SIGNED BY EXIM BANK UNDER BRICS MECHANISM

#### Why in news?

- Recently, Cabinet approved the signing of the **Interbank Local Currency Credit Line Agreement** and **Cooperation Memorandum Relating to Credit Ratings by Exim Bank** under **BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism**.

#### Exim Bank

- It finances, facilitates and promotes India's international trade. It provides competitive finance at various stages of the business cycle.
- Exim Bank raises resources in the off-shore market in diverse currencies and swaps to mitigate the risk.

#### BRICS Interbank Co-operation Mechanism

- Five banks from the BRICS nations founded it in 2010 with a vision to develop and strengthen economic and investment cooperation among member countries and enterprises.
- It serves as a platform for multi-faceted engagement among member development banks, aimed at mutual resurgence and empowerment.



### Interbank Local Currency Credit Line Agreement

- It is a **non-binding umbrella agreement** which would serve as an enabler to enter into bilateral agreements with member banks subject to national laws, regulations and internal policies of the signatories.
- **Local currencies usage will promote** mutually beneficial economic cooperation, mitigate currency risks, increase trade, and facilitate companies in accessing the BRICS markets.

## 6.6. MULTILATERAL EXPORT CONTROL REGIMES

### Why in news?

- India recently became member of Wassenaar Arrangement and Australia Group.

### Details

There are four Multilateral Export Control Regimes. India is a member of 3, except the Nuclear Suppliers Group. While China is not a member of any export control regimes except NSG.

#### 1. Wassenaar Arrangement

- It is a multilateral export control regime (MECR) to **promote transparency and greater responsibility** in transfers of Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies.
- It was established in 1996 as a successor to the Cold War Era Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (**CoCom**) and is headquartered in Vienna, Austria.
- It has 42 members with India being the newest entrant. All the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council barring China are signatories of the WA.
- It works according to **Wassenaar Control List** under which members agree to exchange information on sensitive dual-use goods and technologies and report on such transfers and denials of controlled items to non-participants.

#### 2. Australia Group (AG)

- It was **formed in 1985** in response to use of chemical weapons by Iraq in Iran-Iraq war of 1984.
- It is a **Multilateral Export Control Regime** and an informal forum of 43 countries (Including EU) which, through the

harmonisation of export controls, seeks to ensure that **exports do not contribute to the development of chemical or biological weapons.**

- Coordination of national export control measures also assists member countries to fulfil their obligations under the **Chemical Weapons Convention** and the **Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.**
- It issues **Australia group Common Control Lists** related to chemical weapon precursors, Dual- Use chemical and biological related technologies, Human and Animal pathogens etc.

#### India & Australia Group

- India had declared a Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies (**SCOMET**) list in April.
- Through SCOMET list India listed its dual use technologies under its Foreign Trade Policy to make India's export controls in line with the Wassenaar Arrangement.

#### 3. Missile Technology Control Regime

- It is an informal and voluntary partnership among 35 countries to prevent the proliferation of missile and unmanned aerial vehicle technology capable of carrying above 500 kg payload for more than 300 km.
- It was established in April 1987 by the G7 countries- Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

#### 4. Nuclear Suppliers Group

- It is a group of nuclear supplier countries that seeks to contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of Guidelines for nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports.
- The guidelines also contain the so-called "Non-Proliferation Principle," adopted in 1994, whereby a supplier, notwithstanding other provisions in the NSG Guidelines, authorises a transfer only when satisfied that the transfer would not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

**Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)**

- It is a multilateral treaty that bans chemical weapons and requires their destruction within a specified period of time.
- It was adopted in 1992 by **UN Conference on Disarmament** and came into force in 1997
- It is implemented by the **Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)** headquartered in Hague.
- **India is a signatory to CWC since 1993** and destroyed its stockpile of Chemical weapons by 2009 becoming third country (after South Korea and Albania) in the world to do so.
- **Egypt, North Korea, Palestine and Sudan** are the only countries that have not signed to the convention.
- **CWC prohibits:**
  - Developing, producing, acquiring, stockpiling, or retaining chemical weapons.
  - The direct or indirect transfer of chemical weapons.
  - Chemical weapons use or military preparation for use.
  - Assisting, encouraging, or inducing other states to engage in CWC-prohibited activity.
  - The use of riot control agents “as a method of warfare.”

**Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC or BWC)**

- It is a **legally binding treaty** that outlaws biological arms.
- It was adopted by UN in 1972 and came into force in 1975.
- It bans-
  - The development, stockpiling, acquisition, retention, and production of
    - ✓ Biological agents and toxins "of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes;"
    - ✓ Weapons, equipment, and delivery vehicles "designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict."
  - The transfer of or assistance with acquiring the agents, toxins, weapons, equipment, and delivery vehicles described above.
- India signed the convention in 1973 and ratified it in 1974.

**6.7. HAGUE CODE OF CONDUCT (HCOC)**

- **HCOC or International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation** was established in 2002.

- HCoC is a voluntary, legally non-binding international confidence building and transparency measure that seeks to prevent the proliferation of ballistic missiles that are capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction (WMD).
- Code is meant to **supplement the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)**.
- Under the Code, States make politically binding commitments to curb the proliferation of WMD-capable ballistic missiles and to exercise maximum restraint in developing, testing, and deploying such missiles
- Code is an agreement between States on how they should “conduct” their trade in missiles and does not call for the destruction of any missiles.
- India joined the HCOC on 1 June 2016 and total number of signatories of HCOC is 138.
- China, Pakistan, Israel and Iran are not its member.

**6.8. INDIAN JUGDE RE-ELECTED AT ICJ**

**Why in News?**

- Recently, Justice Dalveer Bhandari was re-elected as the judge of International Court of Justice (ICJ).

**Details**

- This is the first time in the 70-year history of the United Nations that the U.K. no representation among the panel of judges ICJ.
- This is the first time that one of the five permanent members of the UNSC lost out to an ordinary member in a race.
- This is also the first time that one sitting member of the ICJ lost to another sitting member.
- Bhandari is the fourth Indian judge to be elected to the ICJ after B.N. Rau, Nagendra Singh and R.S. Pathak.

Feature	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	International Criminal Court (ICC)
Year Court Established	1946	2002
UN-Relationship	Official court of the U.N., commonly	Independent. May receive case referrals from the UN Security

	referred to as the "World Court."	Council. Can initiate prosecutions without UN action or referral.
Location	Peace Palace, The Hague, The Netherlands	The Hague, The Netherlands
Jurisdiction	U.N. member-states (i.e. national governments)	Individuals
Types of Cases	(1) Contentious between parties, (2) Advisory opinions	Criminal prosecution of individuals
Subject Matter	Sovereignty, boundary disputes, maritime disputes, trade, natural resources, human rights, treaty violations, treaty interpretation, and more.	Genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, crimes of aggression
Authorizing Legal Mechanism	States that ratify the U.N. Charter become parties to the ICJ Statute under Article 93. Non-UN member states can also become parties to the ICJ by ratifying the ICJ Statute. Each state must provide consent to any contentious case by explicit agreement, declaration, or treaty clause.	Rome Statute (India has not signed the Rome Statute)
Appeals	None. The ICJ decision in a contentious case is binding upon the parties. If a State fails to comply with the judgment, the issue may be taken to the UN Security Council, which has the authority to	Appeals Chamber. Article 80 of the Rome Statute allows retention of an acquitted defendant pending appeal.

	review, recommend, and decide upon enforcement.	
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## 6.9. INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION (IMO)

### Why in news?

India has been re-elected to the Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) under Category "B" for two years (2018-19).

#### Important Conventions

- **International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM):** It came into force in September 2017 and aims to prevent spread of harmful aquatic organisms from one region to another by establishing standards for management of ships' ballast water and sediments.
- **International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage (BUNKER):** It aims to provide adequate, prompt and effective compensation to the people who are affected by the damages caused due to oil spills from the ships carrying oil in their bunkers.
- **International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974:** It aims to specify minimum standards for construction, equipment and operation of ships, compatible with their safety.

### International Maritime Organisation

- IMO is a specialized **United Nations agency** which is committed towards **safe, secure and efficient shipping** on clean ocean and plays an important role to create fair, effective and universally accepted regulatory framework.
- It is headquartered in **London, United Kingdom**, the IMO has **172 Member States and three Associate Members**.

### India and IMO

- India was one of the earliest members of IMO and has ratified over 34 IMO conventions and protocols and joined as a member state in 1959.
- India serves IMO with **expert manpower** whenever required. For example, Indian auditors serve **Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme (VIMSAS)**.

**India's Maritime Initiatives**

- Ratified **SOLAS Convention** for safety of merchant ships.
- Took active initiative in High Risk Area in Indian Ocean along with IMO and Contact Group on Piracy on the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS)
- It has also deposited with the ILO, instrument of ratification of the **Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (revised), 2003** and **Maritime Labour Convention, 2006**.

## 6.10. AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (AFDB)

**Why in news?**

Recently the 52nd Annual Meetings of the African Development bank was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

**About the meeting**

- This was the first time that the Annual Meetings of AfDB were being held in India.
- Reflecting the significance of agriculture in Africa and in the Bank's development work, the 2017 Annual Meetings was held on the **theme: "Transforming Agriculture for Wealth Creation in Africa."**

**About AfDB**

- The African Development Bank Group (AfDB) or Banque Africaine de Developpment (BAD) is a **multilateral development finance institution**.
- It was founded in 1964 and comprises three entities: The African Development Bank, the African Development Fund and the Nigeria Trust Fund.
- Its **mission is to fight poverty and improve living conditions** on the continent through promoting the investment of public and private capital in projects and programs that are likely to contribute to the economic and social development of the region.
- The meeting in Gandhinagar is the fourth time that the Annual Meetings of AfDB are being held outside Africa. The next meeting of AfDB is scheduled to be held in Busan, South Korea in 2018.
- India joined the African Development Bank (AfDB) in 1983. It is a non-regional member of the Bank.

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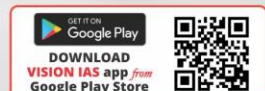
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## 7. INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

### 7.1. QUADRILATERAL MEETING

#### Why in News?

Senior officials from the United States, Japan, India, and Australia met in Manila on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and East Asia Summits—to discuss regional and global cooperation.

#### What is Quadrilateral?

- It is an **informal strategic dialogue** and not a military alliance like the NATO.
- It is seen as a **strategic deterrence** as well as a mechanism to provide more and better options to regional powers.

#### Details

- It was convened around the theme of a “**free and open Indo-Pacific**”.

#### Background

- It was Japanese Prime Minister Abe who conceived the idea of Asian democracies joining forces in 2007 the maritime democracies have a stake in securing a **rules-based global order, liberal trading system and freedom of navigation**.
- In May 2007, the four countries held the inaugural meeting of a new quadrilateral dialogue on the side-lines of an **ASEAN Regional Forum meeting**.

### 7.2. INDIA-PACIFIC ISLANDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

#### Why in news?

Recently a conference on sustainable development between India and Pacific islands was hosted by Ministry of External Affairs.

#### About the conference

- The conference is being held **under the framework of the Forum for India Pacific Islands Co-operation (FIPIC)**, with The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) as its key knowledge partner.
- It will focus on issues such as the blue economy, adaptation-mitigation practices for climate change, disaster preparedness, health, the International Solar Alliance as well

as finding practical solutions to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) implementation.

#### About FIPIC

- FIPIC was formed in November 2014, to strengthen India’s relationship with the Pacific Island Countries.
- The **first FIPIC summit** was held at the level of Heads of Government in November 2014 in Suva, Fiji, followed by the FIPIC-II summit held in August 2015, in Jaipur, India.
- It comprises of India and 14 Pacific Island countries which include Tonga, Cook Islands, Tuvalu, Nauru, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Niue, Palau, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Fiji, and Papa New Guinea.

### 7.3. NUCLEAR WEAPON PROHIBITION TREATY (NWPT)

#### Why in news?

- Over 120 countries in the United Nations voted to adopt the first-ever global treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

#### Details

- The new treaty outlaws the **entire range of activity relating to the production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons**.
- The most central provision is Article 1(d) which **categorically prohibits the use of nuclear weapons** or a threat to that effect, under all circumstances.
- The treaty will be open for signature to all States at UN Headquarters in September and enter into **force 90 days after it has been ratified by at least 50 countries**.
- India and other nuclear-armed nations: the United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel had not participated in the negotiations.

#### India’s Position

- India also maintained that the **Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament (CD)** is the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum.

#### Conference on Disarmament

- It was formed in 1979 as the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum of the international community.

- It is the successor to the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament (TNDC), Geneva, 1960; the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (ENDC), Geneva, 1962-68; and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD), Geneva, 1969-78.
- The CD and its predecessors have negotiated multilateral arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament agreements such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Environmental Modification and Seabed treaties, the Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention (BTWC), etc.
- India is one of its 65 members.

## 7.4. IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

### Why in news?

US President announced that he is formally “**decertifying**” the nuclear deal with Iran.

### What is the Iran nuclear deal?

- An agreement signed **between Iran and the P5+1** (the five permanent members of the U.N.S.C and Germany) in 2015 that removed economic sanctions against the country after it agreed to a **Joint comprehensive plan of action (JCPOA)**.
- This plan ensured that Iran will drastically reduce **its uranium enriching capacity and levels, enriched stockpiles and centrifuges**, and will allow for stringent inspection and monitoring by international agencies.
- The IAEA certified in its latest quarterly report that Iran has complied with the JCPOA and that its stock of low-enriched uranium and centrifuges for enrichment are in line with the nuclear pact.

## 7.5. URANIUM BANK IN KAZAKHSTAN

### Why in news?

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has opened a uranium bank for Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) in Oskemen city of Kazakhstan to discourage new nations from enriching the nuclear fuel.

### Details

- The project was funded by donors, including the United States, the European Union, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Norway and the Nuclear Threat Initiative.

- It will store up to 90 tonnes of the fuel and will act as a supplier of last resort for Member States in case the supply of LEU to a nuclear power plant is disrupted due to exceptional circumstances and the Member State is unable to secure LEU from the commercial market or by any other means.
- IAEA will run the bank independently of any country, will purchase and store low-enriched uranium fuel for civilian reactors but not an ingredient for nuclear weapons.
- A Member State which needs to purchase LEU from the IAEA LEU Bank must have a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA in force and no issues relating to safeguards implementation.

### International Atomic Energy Agency

- It is the world's central intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical co-operation in the nuclear field.
- It is an autonomous international organization within the United Nations system.
- It works for the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, contributing to international peace and security and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.
- It is headquartered in Vienna, Austria.
- India is a member of IAEA.

## 7.6. FATF WATCH-LIST

### Why in news?

Financial Action Task Force is likely to put Pakistan on its terrorist financing watch list or the “grey list” from June.

### Financial Action Task Force

- It is an inter-governmental body established in **1989** and housed in OECD headquarters in **Paris**.
- It has **37 members** currently and India is also a member.
- Its objectives are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for **combating money laundering, terrorist financing** and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

### More about the news

- Putting a country in “grey list” does not involve a direct legal or penal action but involve **increased scrutiny** from watchdogs, regulators and financial institutions.

- Pakistan had earlier been on the FATF 'grey list' from 2012 to 2015, following a detailed assessment by Asia Pacific Group (APG) in 2010 and lack of follow-up action by Islamabad to curb terror financing.
- Now Pakistan is required to submit an action plan to FATF to curb terror financing and money laundering by May.
- The group can place Pakistan on its **blacklist** or "Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories" (NCCTs), along with North Korea and Iran if it fails to act appropriately.

## 7.7. POLAR SILK ROAD

### Why in News?

- Recently, China has released its first official **Arctic policy white paper**, outlining its ambition for a Polar Silk Road.

#### Arctic Council

- Established in 1966, as an intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States.
- The Arctic Council is a high-level intergovernmental forum which addresses issues faced by the Arctic governments and people living in the Arctic region.
- **Member:** Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States.
- **India and China** have observer status.

### Important aspects of the Policy

- Development of Arctic shipping routes which are likely to become important transport routes for international trade. It is referred to as "Polar Silk Road".
- China aims to participate in the exploration for and exploitation of oil, gas, mineral and other non-living resources in the Arctic as the region has an abundance of geothermal, wind, and other clean energy resources.

## 7.8. TAPI GAS PIPELINE

### Why in news?

India will host the next steering committee meeting of the proposed 1,814 kilometre-long Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline.

#### About TAPI

- The pipeline that is set to cross over 1,700 km, through Herat and Balochistan before

reaching the Indian Punjab border will draw from the world's second largest natural gas field of Galkynysh.

- The project is being funded by the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** and transit fee would be incurred by India to Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- The TAPI pipeline will have a capacity to carry 90 million standard cubic metres a day (mscmd) gas for a 30-year period. It will come into operation in 2018.
- India and Pakistan would get 38 mmscmd each, while the remaining 14 mmscmd will be supplied to Afghanistan.



#### Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- It was conceived in the early 1960s as a financial institution that would be Asian in character and foster economic growth and cooperation.
- As a multilateral development finance institution, ADB provides: loans, technical assistance and grants.
- Its clients are member governments, who are also shareholders. In addition, it **provides direct assistance to private enterprises of developing member countries** through equity investments and loans.
- It is composed of 67 members (including India), 48 of which are from the Asia and Pacific region.
- Its top 5 shareholders are: Japan (15.6%), United States (15.6%), People's Republic of China (6.4%), India (6.3%) and Australia (5.8%)

## 7.9. ROHINGYA ISSUE

### Why in news?

According to the UN estimates, over 400,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled Myanmar's Rakhine

state into Bangladesh since August 25 when a fresh wave of violence erupted.

**Related Information**

- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Panglong Conference is a **peace effort** being held in **Panglong city** in the Shan state of Burma between government of Myanmar and armed ethnic groups.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> such conference was held in August-September **2016**.
- **Rohingyas remain outside** this peace conference.

**Related Information**

**UNHCR**

- The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was established on December 14, 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly.
- The agency is mandated to **lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees** and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees.
- **1951 Refugee Convention is the key legal document** that forms the basis of its work. Ratified by 145 State parties, it defines the term 'refugee' and outlines the rights of the displaced, as well as the legal obligations of States to protect them. UNHCR serves as the 'guardian' of the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol. India has not signed it.
- It also has a mandate to help **stateless people**. The 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness are the key international conventions addressing statelessness. India is not a party to both of them.

**7.10. THE KURDISH INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM**

**Why in news?**

Iraq's Kurds voted in a referendum on support for independence.

- The referendum, while non-binding, is a symbolic milestone in the Kurds' decades-long struggle to achieve statehood.
- Kurdistan is a **proto-state** located in the north of Iraq and constitutes the country's only autonomous region.

- The region is officially governed by the **Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)**, with the capital being Erbil.

**Who are Kurds?**

- The Kurds are widely recognized to be the **largest stateless national group** in the world.
- Kurds are an important partner for Iraq in the fight against the IS, with the U.S. also treating the **Peshmerga forces** (Iraqi Kurdistan military forces) **as an ally**.



**7.11. CATALONIA'S INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM**

**Why in news?**

An independence referendum, recently held in Catalonia was backed by 90 percent of voters supporting the region breaking away from Spain.



**Background**

- It is an **autonomous community of Spain** in the north-east end of the Iberian Peninsula. It





has four provinces: **Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona.**

- The capital and largest city is **Barcelona**, which is the second most populated city in Spain.

## 7.12. PALESTINE JOINS INTERPOL

### Why in news?

Interpol voted to accept the State of Palestinian as a member during the 86th Interpol General Assembly.

#### About Interpol

- The International Criminal Police Organization, more commonly known as Interpol, is an international organization facilitating international police cooperation.
- It has 192-member countries.
- Its Headquarter is in **Lyon, France.**

### Details

- Israel had contended that Palestine is not a state and that it is ineligible for Interpol membership.
- Under interim Israeli-Palestinian peace deals, a Palestinian Authority was granted limited self-rule in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
- In 2012, the U.N. General Assembly upgraded the Palestinian Authority's observer status at the United Nations to "**non-member state**" from "**entity**", like the Vatican.
- With their new presence in Interpol, the Palestinians can use Interpol to **issue international legal proceedings** against Israeli leaders and IDF (Israel Defense Forces) military officers.

## 7.13. ISLAMIC ALLIANCE TO FIGHT TERRORISM

### Why in news?

Recently first meeting of **Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism (IMAFT)** was held in Riyadh.

#### Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism (IMAFT)

- It is a Saudi led coalition of 40 countries and constitutes about 60% members of **Organizational of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**. It was announced as a 34-member group initially in 2015.

- Iran, Syria and Iraq are not part of coalition and Qatar though part of the group did not participate in it in the wake of boycott led by Saudi Arabia.
- It will serve as an inter-governmental counter-terrorism alliance against spread of ISIS in the region.
- It further aims to provide military support and coordinate efforts with member countries to counter terrorism and thus aims to delink Islam from terrorism.

### OIC

- It is an inter-governmental organization with a membership of 57 states spread over four continents. India is not a member.
- It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.

## 7.14. UAE AND SAUDI ARABIA FORM NEW GROUP

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia have formed **new economic and partnership group** named Joint Cooperation Committee, separate from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).
- The new committee is assigned to cooperate and coordinate between UAE and Saudi Arabia in all military, political, economic, trade and cultural fields, as well as others in the interest of the two countries.

### About GCC

- It is a political and economic alliance of six countries in Arabian Peninsula: Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE.
- It promotes economic, security, cultural and social cooperation between the six states and holds annual summit to discuss cooperation and regional affairs.
- The Charter of GCC was signed in 1981, formally establishing the institution. Its headquarter is in Riyadh, capital city of Saudi Arabia. All current member states of GCC are monarchies.

## 7.15. MILITARY EXERCISES

<b>Lamitye</b>	India & Seychelles army
<b>Immsarex</b>	Indian & Chinese Navy
<b>Yudhabhyas</b>	India & US Military Exercise
<b>Surya kiran</b>	India Nepal Military exercise
<b>Ajeya warrior</b>	India & UK Military Exercise
<b>Sampriti</b>	India & Bangladesh Military Exercise
<b>Hand in hand</b>	India & China Military Exercise
<b>Garuda shakti</b>	India & Indonesia Military Exercise
<b>Prabaldestyk</b>	India & Kazakhstan Military Exercise
<b>Khanjar</b>	India & Kyrgyzstan Military Exercise
<b>Ekuverin</b>	India & Maldives Military Exercise

<b>Nomadic elephant</b>	India & Mongolia Military Exercise
<b>Indra</b>	India & Russia Military Exercise
<b>Al nagah</b>	India & Oman military Exercise
<b>Shakti</b>	India & France Military Exercise
<b>SIMBEX-17</b>	India Singapore Navy Exercise
<b>Varuna-17</b>	India & France Navy Exercise
<b>Sundarban Moitri</b>	Border Security Force(BSF) of India & Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB of Bangladesh).
<b>Exercise KONKAN</b>	Indian Navy and Royal Navy
<b>VINBAX</b>	India & Vietnam Army
<b>Malabar Naval Exercise</b>	India, Japan & US
<b>CORPT</b>	Indian & Indonesian Navy
<b>SIAM BHARAT</b>	Indian Air Force & Royal Thailand Air Force
<b>SLINEX</b>	India & Sri Lanka Naval Exercise

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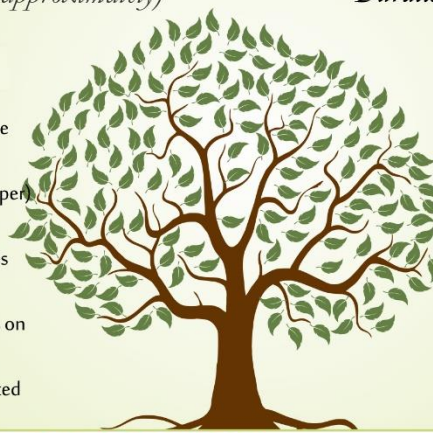
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## 8. MULTILATERAL TRADE

### 8.1. REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP (RCEP)

#### Why in news?

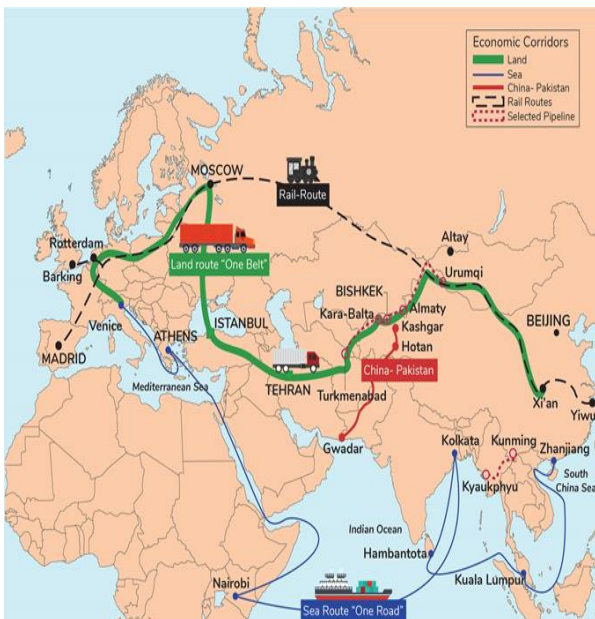
19th Round of the RCEP Trade Negotiating Committee meeting at the technical level was held at Hyderabad.

#### About RCEP

- The RCEP is billed as an FTA between the **10-member ASEAN bloc and its six FTA partners** — India, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.
- When inked, it would become the world's biggest free trade pact.
- The RCEP 'guiding principles and objectives' state that the "negotiations on trade in goods, trade in services, investment and other areas will be conducted in parallel to ensure a comprehensive and balanced outcome."

### 8.2. ONE BELT ONE ROAD (OBOR) SUMMIT

China organized a grand two-day OBOR summit to showcase its plans to build a network of trade routes-One Belt, One Road (OBOR)-that will connect Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.



- The One Belt, One Road or the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) forum in Beijing was attended by 29 heads of state or government and by official delegations from some 100 countries.

- All of India's neighbours, except Bhutan, sent high-level delegations for the summit.

### 8.3. BIMSTEC

#### Why in news?

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) celebrated its 20th anniversary on June 06, 2017.

#### About BIMSTEC

BIMSTEC or Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation was formed nearly two decades ago, in June 06, 1997.

- The BIMSTEC comprises **India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand**.
- The **permanent secretariat** of BIMSTEC was established in **Dhaka in 2014**.
- It was originally called BIST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand - Economic Cooperation) and was formed at a meeting in June 1997 in Bangkok.
- Myanmar was admitted in December 1997 and the organisation was renamed as BIMST-EC.
- The grouping expanded when Nepal and Bhutan were admitted in February 2004.
- The grouping's name was changed to BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) at Bangkok in July 2004.
- BIMSTEC is a **sector-driven cooperative organization, starting with six sectors**—including trade, technology, energy, transport, tourism and fisheries.
- It expanded to embrace **eight more sectors**—including agriculture, public health, poverty alleviation, counter-terrorism, environment, culture, people to people contact and climate change—in 2008.

#### 8.3.1. BIMSTEC DRAFT COASTAL SHIPPING AGREEMENT

#### Why in news?

Recently Member States of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) met in New Delhi to discuss modalities for promoting coastal shipping in the region.

### More about the news

- The draft text of BIMSTEC Coastal Shipping Agreement have been prepared by the Ministry of Shipping, Government of India.
- The objective of the agreement is to facilitate coastal shipping in the region, thereby giving a boost to trade between the member countries.
- Once the agreement is ratified by the member countries and becomes operational, a lot of cargo movement between the member countries can be done through the cost effective, environment friendly and faster coastal shipping route.

## 8.4. G-20

### Why in news?

- The G-20 summit 2017 was held in Hamburg, Germany. The theme of this year's summit was '**shaping an interconnected world**'.

### Background

- The G20 brings together 19 countries plus the EU.
- G20 members account for over 80% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) and they host almost two-thirds of the world's population.
- The G20 summit was established in 2008 amidst the global financial crisis to increase international economic cooperation. Since then, G20 members have been meeting annually to discuss a wide range of issues related to economic and financial cooperation.
- The members are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US, and the European Union.

## 8.5. TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP-11 (TPP-11)

### Why in news?

On the sidelines of **APEC summit** in Vietnam, 11 countries on the Pacific Rim decided to go ahead with the Trans Pacific Partnership despite the USA's withdrawal.

### Details

- The agreement has now been renamed as **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPATPP)**.
- This deal is yet to be ratified.
- TPP was a free trade agreement between USA and 11 other Pacific Rim nations i.e. Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam, Japan, Canada, Mexico, Peru and Chile, and was signed in 2016. However, USA withdrew from it.

## 8.6. AIIB

### Why in news?

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) approved USD 1.5 billion in loans to India for infrastructure-related projects.

#### About AIIB

- AIIB is a multilateral development bank with 84 countries as members.
- It is headquartered in Beijing.
- AIIB was proposed at an APEC summit in Bali in 2013 and started its operation in January, 2016.
- China, India, Russia and Germany are the four largest shareholders of the Bank with 26.06%, 7.5%, 5.93% and 4.5% respectively.

### Significance for India

- Borrowing from AIIB is **preferred** as:
  - It charges about 1-1.5 per cent interest with long term repayment including five-year grace period.
  - The Bank provides lending on liberal terms allowing the government to decide on how to use that money.
- With AIIB investing in various projects including Mumbai Metro, Andhra Pradesh new capital Amaravati's development and irrigation network in West Bengal, India emerged as the top borrower of the Bank.

## 8.7. NEW DEVELOPMENT BANK

### Why in news?

- Recently, Indian government signed a Loan Agreement for financing of Rajasthan Water Sector Restructuring Project for the Desert Areas, with New Development Bank.
- This project will rehabilitate the 678 km long **Indira Gandhi Canal system** built during 1958-63.

**About NDB**

- NDB is an initiative of BRICS countries signed into **Agreement** during the sixth BRICS summit in **Fortaleza** in 2014 and it came into **existence** as a legal entity in **Ufa** Summit in 2015.
- The 5 member states have an equal share.
- The **core** purpose of the NDB is to mobilize resources for **infrastructure and sustainable development** in BRICS countries.



- Mercosur has no provision for expulsion. Thus, the suspension of Venezuela was done to put international pressure on President of Venezuela.



**Other prominent groupings of the region**

- **UNASUR** - The Union of South American Nations is an intergovernmental body modelled after the European Union. The group acts as a forum for interaction between member-country leaders and also serves as a platform for interregional trade promotion.
- **Andean Community** – It is a customs union comprising the South American countries of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.
- **CELAC** – The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States is a regional bloc of 33 Latin American and Caribbean states.

**8.8. MERCOSUR**

**Why in news?**

South American trade bloc MERCOSUR recently suspended Venezuela indefinitely from its membership.

**About MERCOSUR**

- It is an economic and political bloc established in 1991 comprised of 5 full sovereign members (before suspension of Venezuela) namely Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela.
- Its associate countries are Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Suriname and Observer countries are New Zealand and Mexico.
- It was formed through **Treaty Of Asunción** on the pattern of European Community's Treaty Of Rome
- It allows duty free inter-Mercosur trade and levies a common external-tariff (0 to 20 percent) on non-member countries.

**8.9. IBSA**

**Why in news?**

Recently, India, Brazil and South Africa signed the IBSA Trust Agreement at the **8<sup>th</sup> IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission Meeting**.

**IBSA Fund**

- IBSA facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund) is a pioneering and flagship program of IBSA which was established in 2004 by the Brasilia declaration of 2003.
- It is supported and directed by the **Special Unit for South-South Cooperation** and hosted by **United Nations Development Program (UNDP)**.

- The Fund works on a **demand driven approach** wherein the requesting governments are supported by the fund through partnership with UNDP and national government.

**Special Unit for South-South Cooperation**

- It was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1978 and is hosted by UNDP
- Its primary mandate is to promote, coordinate and support South–South cooperation and cooperation with the UN.

## 8.10. EASTERN ECONOMIC FORUM

### Why in news?

- India participated in the **3rd Eastern Economic Forum** held in Vladivostok Russia.
- It is an international forum held each year in Vladivostok, Russia since 2015, for the purpose of encouraging foreign investment in the Russian Far East.

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## 9. MISCELLANEOUS

### 9.1. INDIAN TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION (ITEC)

#### Why in news?

India has been involved in capacity-building and offering technical assistance to developing countries in the Global South under the **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)**.

#### About ITEC

- It was instituted by a decision of the Indian Cabinet on 15 September 1964 as a bilateral programme of assistance of the Government of India.
- In more recent years, its activities have also been associated with regional and multilateral organizations and cooperation groupings like Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO), Pan African Parliament, Caribbean Community (CARICOM).
- DPA-II Division of Development Partnership Administration (DPA) in the Ministry of External Affairs is the nodal division for handling all capacity building programmes.
- The program has five components: Training in India of ITEC nominees; project and feasibility studies and consultancy services for a country's particular needs or projects; deputation of Indian experts in whatever needed capacity abroad; and aid for disaster relief.
- The ITEC programme, along with its sister programme SCAAP (Special Commonwealth African Assistance Programme) and Technical Cooperation Scheme of Colombo Plan, is a visible symbol of India's role and contribution to South-South cooperation.

#### Related info

##### Colombo Plan

- The Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific was conceived at the Commonwealth Conference held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in January 1950 and was launched on 1 July 1951.
- It was **established by** Australia, Canada, India, Pakistan, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the

United Kingdom and currently has expanded to include 26-member countries including non-Commonwealth countries and countries belonging to regional groupings such as ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) and SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation).

- It is a partnership concept of **self-help and mutual-help** in development aimed at socio-economic progress of its member countries.

### 9.2. INDIA'S SOFT POWER

#### Why in news?

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has decided to develop a "soft power matrix" to measure the effectiveness of India's soft power outreach and establish linkages between India's soft power and tangible outcomes in area of diplomacy.

##### Soft Power

- It is the ability of a country to persuade other nations of a line of thought in consonance with its goals.
- It is derived from three resources i.e. a country's culture, its political values and its foreign policy.

##### Hard Power

- It means a nation or political body's ability to use economic incentives or military strength to influence other actors' behaviours.
- It includes economic sanctions, trade embargos, physical military intervention and the actual threat of military or economic force.

#### Manifestations of India's Soft power

Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) is nodal government agency responsible for India's soft power projection.

- **Incredible India Campaign:** It was conceptualized in 2002 for India's brand building and to create a distinctive identity for the country in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism.
- In 2006, the Ministry of External Affairs set up a **Public Diplomacy Division** to promote India overseas.
- **Ancient Medicine systems and Yoga** have also become increasingly popular. **Celebration of the International Day of Yoga** on the 21st of June globally is also a very effective manifestation of our soft power outreach. Further, AYUSH troops have been sent to Columbia, Reunion Island and Iraq.

- **Efforts to reach out to Indian Diaspora** and building connections with foreign business interests and foreign aid and development programme.
- **Use of Social Media and IT** to not only connect with youth but also build “nation-brand” India. Organising campaigns for Make in India, holding trade fairs abroad and organizing events such as Raisina Dialogue has also added to presence of India as soft power across world.
- **Project Mausam and Spice Route projects** to revive India’s traditional connections with the Eastern Africa and to the South East Asia and the opening the Silk Road, the ancient trade route that spanned across Asian continent and parts of Europe respectively.
- India has also exercised its soft power through growing influence of Bollywood, educational scholarships extended by MEA, extending humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to help mitigate the adverse impact of natural disasters.

### 9.3. INDIAN DIASPORA LARGEST IN THE WORLD

#### Why in news?

Indian diaspora has been found to be world’s largest as per World Migration Report 2018.

#### International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- It was established in 1951 & is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- It was made a related organization to UN in 2016.
- It is an intergovernmental organization in the field of migration to promote humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all.
- India became a member state in 2008.

#### More about the news

- As per the '**World Migration Report (2018)**', published by the International Organisation for Migration, the Indian diaspora constitutes 6% of the **total number of international migrants**.
- Nearly 72% of international migrant population belonged to the **working age group** of between 20 to 64 years.

#### International Conventions governing Migration

- The **1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees** and its 1967 Protocol (Refugee

Convention) establish a framework of surrogate protection for refugees.

- **Palermo Protocol** to the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) dealing with Trafficking and Smuggling.
- Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), 1990.

### GULF TOP DESTINATION

Top 7 destination countries for global diaspora		Top 7 countries origin for global diaspora		
	No of international migrants (in million)		No of international migrants (in million)	
1	US	46.6	1 India	15.6
2	Germany	12.0	2 Mexico	12.3
3	Russia	11.6	3 Russia	10.6
4	Saudi Arabia	10.0	4 China (+Hong kong)	10.5
5	UK	8.5	5 Bangladesh	7.2
6	UAE	8.0	6 Pakistan	5.9
7	Canada	7.8	7 Ukraine	5.8



### 9.4. INDIAN COMMUNITY WELFARE FUND

#### Why in news?

The Union Cabinet has approved revision of the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) guidelines.

#### Details

- Set up in 2009, it is aimed at assisting Overseas Indian nationals in times of distress and emergency in the most deserving cases on a means tested basis.
- The revised guidelines would cover three key areas namely Assisting Overseas Indian nationals in distress situations, Community Welfare activities and Improvement in Consular services.
- They are expected to provide Indian Missions and Posts abroad greater flexibility in swiftly addressing to requests for assistance by Overseas Indian nationals.



## 9.5 PIO PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

### Why in news?

Recently, the first-ever **Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) Parliamentary Conference** was held on the occasion of Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas (PBD).

### Details

- PIOs (and Overseas Citizens of India) are not Indian citizens but people who want to stay connected and involved with India more closely.
- For that same reason, the government of India issues PIO cards and OCI cards to them according to their needs. Government has been promoting the idea of converting their PIO cards with OCI cards.

**PIO** - A person who or whose any of ancestors was an Indian national and who is presently holding another country's citizenship/ nationality i.e. he/she is holding foreign passport.

**OCI** - A person registered as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Cardholder under section 7A of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

### Benefits of OCI cards over PIO

- Lifetime multiple entry visa to India.
- Exemption from registration with Foreigners Registration Officer (FRO) for any length of stay in India.
- Open special bank accounts in India just like NRIs and make investments.
- Buy non-farm property and exercise ownership rights.
- Economic, financial and educational benefits like NRIs and can also adopt children.

### Restrictions for both PIO & OCI card holders

- Cannot vote, hold a government job or purchase agricultural or farm land.
- Cannot run for public office or travel to restricted areas without permission.

## 9.6. SAMEEP

### Why in news?

Recently the Ministry of External Affairs launched **SAMEEP program**.

### SAMEEP Program

- **Student and MEA Engagement Program (SAMEEP)** is an **outreach program** to

familiarise the students in India about **the functioning of Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** and also take India's **global engagement and its foreign policy** to the grass root levels.

- It is voluntary in nature under which MEA officers, under-secretary and above will visit their home towns and cities and their Alma Maters to bring foreign policy to the masses and raise their interest in diplomacy as career option.

## 9.7. RAISINA DIALOGUE

### Why in news?

Recently, Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, inaugurated the **third edition of the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi**.

### About Raisina Dialogue

- It is a multilateral conference committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the global community, held annually in New Delhi since 2016. It has emerged as India's flagship conference on **geopolitics and geoeconomics**.
- The conference is hosted by the **Observer Research Foundation**, an independent think tank, in collaboration with the **Ministry of External Affairs of India**.
- This year's theme is **Managing Disruptive Transitions: Ideas, Institutions and Idioms**.

## 9.8. SHANGRI-LA DIALOGUE

### Why in News

Indian Prime Minister is expected to speak at the 17th Shangri-La Dialogue on June 1, 2018.

### About Shangri-La Dialogue

- Shangri-La Dialogue or **IISS Asia Security Summit** was launched in 2002 by British think tank the **International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)** and the **Singaporean government**.
- It's a unique "track-one" conference that defence ministers, officials and military chiefs of 28 Asia-Pacific countries, including China and the United States attends annually.
- It gets its name from the location of the meeting, the Shangri-La hotel in Singapore.
- **IISS Manama Dialogue** in Bahrain similarly is another important international meeting held

in the Middle East and attended by government ministers.

## 9.9. GLOBAL COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF WORK

### Why in news?

The ILO launched its Global Commission on the Future of Work.

### Details

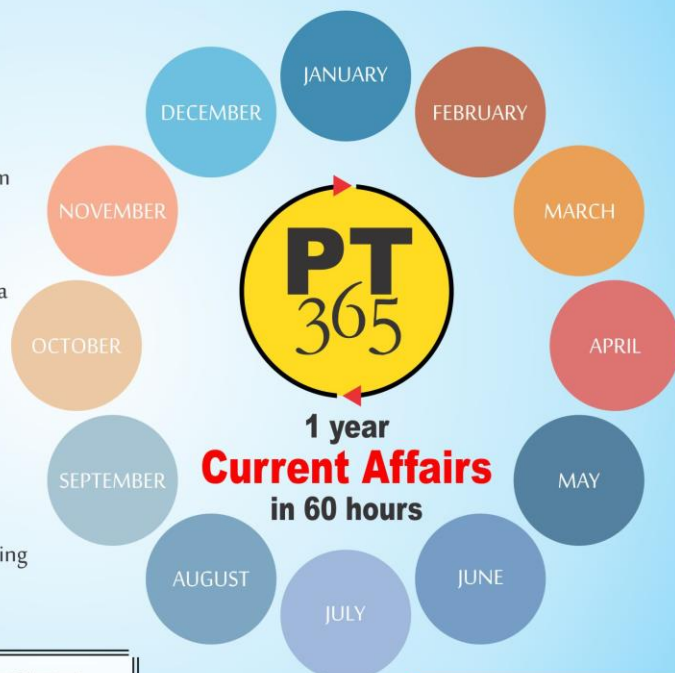
- It seeks to understand and respond effectively to the changing character of production and employment due to, for instance - onward march of technology and the impact of climate change. It **marks the second stage** in the ILO's Future of Work Initiative.
- The **first stage** of the Future of Work Initiative, carried out between 2016 and 2017, involved national dialogues between governments, employers' and workers' organizations.
- Its objective is to **provide the analytical basis** for the delivery of the ILO's social justice mandate in the twenty-first century by **identifying the key challenges** facing the world of work and making practical **recommendations** about how these may be addressed in the future.
- Its purpose will be to examine the output from the national dialogues and other input it may consider necessary. The Commission will publish a report and recommendations in the course of 2018.

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