



PT
365

International Relations

Classroom Study Material
(May 2018 to February 2019)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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1. INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

1.1. INDIA-PAKISTAN

1.1.1. INDUS WATER TREATY

Why in news?

Government of India has decided to stop India's share of waters in the Indus river system from flowing into Pakistan.

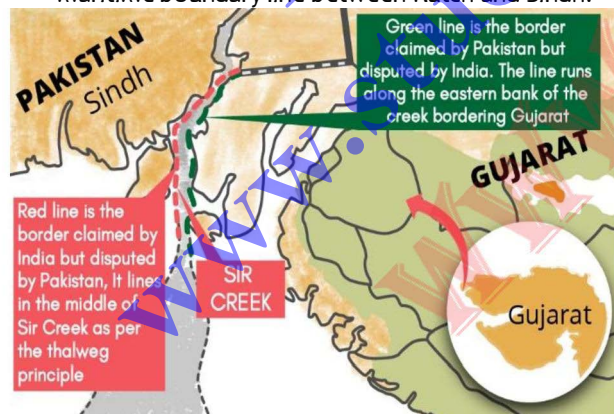
About the Treaty

- India and Pakistan, the two main countries in the Indus basin, divided up rights to the various tributaries under the **Indus Water Treaty of 1960** brokered by the **World Bank**.
- Though Indus originates from Tibet, China has been kept out of the Treaty.
- As per the treaty, **control over three eastern rivers** Ravi, Beas and Sutlej was **given to India**. While control over three western rivers Indus, Jhelum and Chenab was given to Pakistan.
- It allows India to use **only 20% of the water of Indus river**, for irrigation, power generation and transport.
- The **Permanent Indus Commission (PIC)** was set up as a bilateral commission to implement and manage the Treaty. The Commission also solves disputes arising over water sharing.

Additional Information

Sir Creek Issue

- Sir Creek is a 96 km tidal estuary on the border of India and Pakistan.
- The creek, which opens up into the Arabian Sea, divides the Gujarat state of India from the Sindh province of Pakistan
- The dispute lies in the interpretation of the maritime boundary line between Kutch and Sindh.



1.1.2. KISHANGANGA PROJECT

Why in news?

PM recently inaugurated Kishanganga hydro power project.

More about the news

- It is a 330 megawatt **Run of the River** Hydroelectric power project located in Gurez valley in Kashmir.
- It envisages diversion of water from the Kishenganga River to a power plant in the Jhelum River basin through an **underground tunnel** and the discharge of the water into the Wular lake.
- The project began in 2009 but in 2010 Pakistan appealed to **Hague's Permanent Court of Arbitration** complaining that the project violated the Indus River Treaty and deprived Pakistan the water share to its power project which is under construction at Neelum valley in PoK, as the Kishanganga river flows into Pakistan.
- Court of Arbitration ordered India to **submit technical data** of the project and allowed India to go ahead with the construction of the dam while maintaining minimum 9 cubic metres of flow of water across border.

Other Major Disputed Projects

Project	River/Tributary and Location
Pakal Dul Dam (concrete-face rock-fill dam)	Marusadar River, a tributary of the Chenab in Jammu and Kashmir
Ratle (run-of-the-river hydroelectric power station)	Chenab River, downstream of the village of Ratle in Jammu and Kashmir.
Miyar (run-of-the-river scheme)	Miyar Nallah, a tributary of Chenab near Lahaul & Spiti in Himachal Pradesh.
Lower Kalnai (gravity dam)	On Lower Kalnai Nalla, tributary of river Chenab in Jammu and Kashmir.

Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)

- It was established by the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, concluded at The Hague in 1899 during the first **Hague Peace Conference**.
- It **facilitates arbitration and other forms of dispute resolution between states**.
- The PCA is not a court in the traditional sense, but a permanent framework for arbitral tribunals constituted to resolve specific disputes.
- The PCA was the first permanent intergovernmental organization to provide a forum for the resolution of international disputes through arbitration and other peaceful means.
- It has a **three-part organizational structure** consisting of an **Administrative Council** that oversees its policies and budgets, a **panel of**

independent potential arbitrators known as the Members of the Court, and its **Secretariat**, known as the International Bureau, headed by the Secretary-General.

1.1.3. GILGIT-BALTISTAN ISSUE

Why in news?

India recently **opposed Pakistan's Supreme Court order** to integrate the region of Gilgit-Baltistan into the federal structure of the country.



About Gilgit Baltistan (GB) region

- The region was a part of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, but has been **under Pakistan's control since November 4, 1947**, following the invasion of Kashmir by tribal militias and the Pakistan army.
- The region was renamed '**The Northern Areas of Pakistan**' and put under the direct control of Islamabad. The Northern Areas were **distinct from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK)**, the part of J&K that Pakistan calls "Azad Kashmir". The Northern Areas are, however, **more than six times the size of PoK**.
- China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)** is passing through Gilgit Baltistan.

Current Status

- It has an **elected Assembly** and a **Council** headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.
- GB **do not find any mention in the Pakistan's constitution**: It is neither independent, nor does it have provincial status. It was treated as a **separate geographical entity by Pakistan till now**.

Additional Information

India shares a 3,323 km border with Pakistan. The border is divided into three parts:

- First is the **International Border (IB)**, which stretches for approximately 2,400 km from Gujarat to the north banks of Chenab in Akhnoor in Jammu.
- Second is the **Line of Control (LoC)**, which is 740 km long and runs from parts of Jammu to parts of

Leh. It is a **ceasefire line** which came into existence after the 1948 and 1971 wars between India and Pakistan. It was **delineated in the Simla Agreement (July 1972)** whereby both sides agreed not to alter it unilaterally.

- Third is the **Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL)**, which divides the current position of Indian and Pakistani troops in the Siachen region. It is 110 km long and extends from NJ 9842 to Indira Col in the north.

Related news

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed a veteran Uruguay Army general, Major General Jose Eladio Alcain, as the chief military observer of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP).

- It was established in January 1949 with first team of unarmed military observers arriving in Jammu and Kashmir to supervise the ceasefire between India and Pakistan, and to assist the **Military Adviser to the UN Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP)**, established in 1948 by the UN Security Council.
- Following the **India-Pakistan war in 1971** and a subsequent ceasefire agreement, the tasks of UNMOGIP have been to observe, to the extent possible, developments pertaining to the strict observance of the ceasefire of December 17, 1971 and to report to the Secretary-General.
- Further, it clarified that mission does not have a mandate beyond the LoC and **does not cover whole of Kashmir**.
- On the other hand, India has maintained that UNMOGIP **has outlived its utility** and is **irrelevant after the Simla Agreement and the consequent establishment of the Line of Control**.

1.1.4. MFN STATUS

Why in News?

Recently, India withdrew the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status from Pakistan.

About MFN principle

- According to the MFN principle of the WTO's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), each of the WTO member countries should **"treat all the other members equally as 'most-favoured' trading partners."**
- If a **special favour** such as a lower customs duty rate is grant to someone by a nation, then it has to do the **same for all** other WTO members.
- Thus, in effect it means **non-discrimination**.
- Exceptions to MFN Principle**
 - Right to enter Free Trade Agreements**
 - Special Access to developing Countries** to their markets.
 - Raise barriers against **unfair trade practices**

- **General exceptions** – The nation has right to take measures which may restrict trade in goods but are necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health.
- **Security exceptions** – A nation has right to take measures to protect essential national security interests, which may restrict trade in goods. India could consider making use of this clause to deny the MFN status to Pakistan or bring in certain trade restrictions.
- **Balance-of-payments (BOP)** – A nation has right to take measures to safeguard its external financial position and its BOPs.
- **Exception in Services:** Countries are allowed to discriminate in limited circumstances.
- India accorded MFN status to all WTO member countries, including Pakistan, from the date of entry into force of the **Marrakesh Treaty**.
- However, Pakistan never reciprocated citing non-tariff barriers as well as huge trade imbalance. It maintains a negative List of 1,209 products that are not allowed to be imported from India.

Principles of National Treatment

- This principle implies that **imported and locally-produced goods should be treated equally** – at least after the foreign goods have entered the market.
- Thus, it is also a measure of **non-discrimination** in trade.
- The same should apply to foreign and domestic **services**, and to foreign and local item of **intellectual property (IoIP)**.
- Charging customs duty on an import is not a violation of national treatment even if locally-produced products are not charged an equivalent tax as this principle only applies **once a product, service or IoIP has entered the market**.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

- It (established as General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947) was set up under **Marrakesh Treaty (1994)** as a result of Uruguay Round (1986-1994).
- WTO as an organization was expected to play larger role for **improved living standards, employment generation, trade expansion with increasing share for developing countries and overall sustainable development**. Trade liberalization was seen as means for achieving the above-mentioned objectives.
- Basic principles of trade liberalizations that were to be followed were **non-discrimination** and **reciprocity**.
- These principles are implemented through Ministerial Conferences, taking **consensus-based**

decisions based on '**one country one vote** which demonstrates **democratic structure and processes of WTO**.

- Also, a **dispute resolutions** mechanism provides protection against arbitrariness.

Organizational Structure of WTO

- **Ministerial Conference** - It includes all members, **meets once in 2 year**. Recently, the **11th Ministerial Conference** was held in **Argentina**.
- **General Council** – It acts a **Dispute Settlement Body and Trade Policy Review Body**.

1.1.5. TRACK-II DIPLOMACY

Why in News?

India and Pakistan recently held a **Track-II Dialogue** in Islamabad.

Details

- It was held on the lines of **Neemrana dialogue** between India and Pakistan which was first held in 1991-92, in Neemrana Fort (Rajasthan).
- **Track II Diplomacy** is also known as Backchannel Diplomacy, in which private individuals (such as former diplomats, military veterans, academicians etc.), meeting **unofficially**, can find their way to common ground that official negotiators can't and the talks under it are not codified as official statements.
- **Track I Diplomacy** is official government diplomacy whereby communication and interaction is between governments.

1.1.6. GENEVA CONVENTION 1949

Why in News?

Recently, Pakistan government was accused of violating Geneva Convention in treatment of Indian Airforce Pilot who crashed in the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir region.

What is Geneva Convention?

- The Geneva **Conventions and their Additional Protocols** form the basis of modern international humanitarian law, setting out how **soldiers and civilians** should be treated during the war.
- Although they were adopted in 1949, to take account of the experiences of the Second World War, **the four Geneva Conventions** continue to apply to armed conflicts today.
- **Three additional protocols** were also adopted later on which expanded the rules.
- The **Conventions** have been **ratified by all States** and are universally applicable.
- Any nation that has ratified the Geneva Conventions but not the protocols is still bound by all provisions of the conventions.

- The provisions of the conventions **apply in peacetime situations, in declared wars, and in conflicts that are not recognised as war** by one or more of the parties.
- They contain stringent rules to deal with what are known as "**grave breaches**".
- **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** has been mandated under the Geneva Conventions to ensure the application of international humanitarian law.

The four Geneva Conventions

- **Convention I:** This convention protects wounded and infirm soldiers from **torture, assaults** upon personal dignity, and execution without judgment. It also **grants the right to proper medical treatment** and care.
- **Convention II:** This extends the protections described above to **shipwrecked soldiers and other naval forces**, including special protections to hospital ships.
- **Convention III:** It defined '**Prisoner of War**,' and accorded them proper and humane treatment as specified by the first convention.
 - It states that PoW have to be protected against insults and public curiosity as well as acts of violence or intimidation.
 - ICRC describes "PoWs as usually members of the armed forces of one of the parties to a conflict who fall into the hands of the adverse party." ICRC visits prisoners, both military and civilian.
- **Convention IV:** Under this convention, **civilians are afforded the same protections.**

The protocols

- **Protocol I** expands protection for the civilian population as well as military and civilian medical workers in **international armed conflicts**.
- **Protocol II** elaborates on protections for victims caught up in **high-intensity internal conflicts** such as civil wars. It was the **first-ever** international treaty devoted exclusively to situations of non-international armed conflicts.
 - It does not apply to internal disturbances such as riots, demonstrations and isolated acts of violence.
- **Third Additional Protocol:** It provides for distinctive emblem- **the red crystal** - which has the same international status as the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems. People displaying any of these protective emblems are performing a humanitarian service and must be protected by all parties to the conflict.

International Red Cross and Red Cross Movement

- It is a humanitarian movement with approximately 17 million volunteers worldwide.
- It consists of various International and National organizations with common objective but legally independent of each other.

Grave Breaches

- It involves any of the following acts, if committed against persons or property protected by the Convention:
 - Willfully killing, torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments,
 - Willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health
 - Extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly.
- Those responsible for grave breaches must be sought, tried or extradited, whatever nationality they may hold.

1.2. INDIA-NEPAL

1.2.1. FRIENDSHIP TREATY

Why in news?

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

India-Nepal Friendship Treaty

- The treaty:
 - 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)
 - allows Nepali nationals to open bank accounts and buy property.
 - allowing Nepal to import arms and ammunition via territory of India.
- India had waived its rights under reciprocity as a sign of goodwill.

1.2.2. WATER COOPERATION

Why in news?

A revised second detailed project report for multi-purpose Pancheshwar dam project was prepared.

About Pancheswar Dam Project

- It is a bi-national project aimed at energy production and augmenting irrigation in India and Nepal.
- It is proposed on river Mahakali (known as river Sharda in India), where the river forms the international boundary between Nepal and State of Uttarakhand in India.
- A Treaty known as "**Mahakali Treaty**" concerning the integrated development of the Mahakali River, which included Sharda

barrage, Tanakpur barrage and Pancheshwar Dam Project, was signed between the Nepal and India in 1996.

Other Important Projects between the two countries-

- Kamla and Bagmati Multipurpose Projects
- Sapta-Kosi High Dam Project and SUN Kosi storage cum diversion scheme
- Karnali Multipurpose Project

1.2.3. 2+1 DIALOGUE MECHANISM

Why in news?

China has proposed a new dialogue mechanism with Nepal that would also involve India.

Details

- **Two Plus One** format for dialogue as proposed is **different from a trilateral mechanism**. Under the Chinese proposal, **China and India can jointly conduct a dialogue with a third regional country** i.e. it is **not Nepal specific** and can be applied to **any other country in South Asia**.
- This was announced after the **Wuhan Summit**, which was an informal summit between India and China.

1.3. INDIA-BANGLADESH

1.3.1. INAUGURATION OF MULTIPLE PROJECTS IN BANGLADESH

Why in News?

Recently, India and Bangladesh jointly inaugurated multiple projects in Bangladesh.

About the Inaugurated projects

- Supply of 500 MW additional power supply from India to Bangladesh.
- Construction work of various railway links.
- Construction of **India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline** Project for transportation of oil, connecting Siliguri in India and Parbatipur in Bangladesh.

Other Important projects

- **Rooppur project** is the first initiative under Indo-Russian deal to undertake atomic energy projects in Bangladesh. India will provide personnel training, consultation support and participate in the construction and erection activity and non-critical materials supply to the site in Bangladesh.
- Through **Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT)**, India is assisting Bangladesh to capture the potential of

waterways for both inter and intra border connectivity of Bangladesh.

- **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal Initiative** aims to facilitate movement of vehicles carrying cargo and passengers in each other's territory without the need for trans-shipment of goods.
- India has extended **National Knowledge Network** for digital connectivity of education with Bangladesh.

1.3.2. BORDER HAATS

Why in news?

The first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on **Border Haats** was held in Agartala.

Details

- It is a border trade market organised by the two countries **one day a week** and it aims at promoting the wellbeing of the people dwelling in remote areas across the borders, by establishing **traditional system of marketing the local produce through local markets**.
- Two border haats are located in **Meghalaya** at **Kalaichar (1st border haat)** and Balat and two are located in **Tripura** at Srinagar and Kamalasagar.

Additional Information 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.
- ICPs which are already functional include: Attari in Punjab (Pakistan border), Petrapole in West Bengal (Bangladesh border), Akhaura in Tripura (Bangladesh), Dawki in Meghalaya (Bangladesh), Raxaul in Bihar (Nepal) and Jogbani in Bihar (Nepal).

1.4. INDIA-MYANMAR

1.4.1. LAND BORDER CROSSING AGREEMENT

Why in news?

Recently Indian Government has approved the Agreement between India and Myanmar on Land Border Crossing.

More about the news

- The agreement **facilitates regulation and harmonization** of already existing free movement rights for people ordinarily residing in the border areas of both countries.
- It also facilitates movement of people on the basis of valid passports and visas which will

enhance economic and social interaction between the two countries.

- Recently, two crossing points at **Moreh in Manipur and Zokhawthar in Mizoram were opened.**
- It marked the abolishing of special land entry permission which was previously required for visitors entering the country via land routes.

Other connectivity projects through Myanmar

- **IMT Trilateral Highway:** A regional highway being constructed under India's Act East policy. It will connect Moreh in India with Mae Sot, Thailand via Myanmar. The highway is expected to boost trade and commerce in ASEAN-India Free Trade Area, as well as with rest of Southeast Asia.
- **Motor Vehicle Agreement:** India, Myanmar and Thailand has been negotiating for finalising and implementing a Motor Vehicle Agreement.
- **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project** is a project that will connect the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Rakhine State, Myanmar by sea. In Myanmar, it will then link Sittwe seaport to Paletwa, Chin State via the Kaladan river boat route, and then from Paletwa by road to Mizoram state in Northeast India.



1.4.2. ROHINGYAS

Why in News?

Recently, **Rohingyas were deported to Myanmar via Manipur's Moreh** along the India-Myanmar border.

About Rohingyas

- They are a predominantly **Muslim group living mainly in Rakhine State (Arakan Region) on the Myanmar's western coast.** They speak a **dialect of Bengali**, as opposed to the commonly spoken Burmese language.
- Though they have been living in the South East Asian country for generations, Myanmar considers them as persons who migrated to their land during the Colonial rule. So, it has **not granted Rohingyas full citizenship.**
- India legally deports the Rohingya to Myanmar since it is **not party to the 1951**

Convention on Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Both these legal instruments enshrine the principle of non-refoulement or the obligation of state parties to not return refugees to countries where they face a clear threat of persecution.

- They are treated as **illegal immigrants in India** and India **does not have any domestic law on procedure or law that governs the protection of refugees in India.**
- In response to the humanitarian crisis being faced on account of the large influx of refugees into Bangladesh, Government of India has decided to extend assistance to Bangladesh under **Operation Insaniyat.**

1.5. INDIA-MALDIVES

Why in news?

The President of Maldives Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, recently visited India.

Additional Information

- Indian Army's '**Operation Cactus**' foiled a coup in Maldives that was attempted by a pro-Eelam group in 1988.
- India maintains a naval presence in Maldives, at the request of the Maldives, since 2009.

Recent developments exemplifying recalibration of ties

- India recently announced \$1.4 billion **financial assistance** to the island nation in a bid to bail out its debt-trapped economy.
- India plans to renew its offer to extend the **coastal surveillance radar systems (CSRS)** project. The CSRS project was initially established in 2015 with the coastal nations of Mauritius, Seychelles, and Sri Lanka.
- Backed by India, **Maldives** recently became **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Member.** Also, it is helping expedite its inclusion in the **Commonwealth** again.

Related Information Commonwealth

- It is a unique political association of 53-member states (31 are island nations), **nearly all of them former territories of the British Empire.**
- The chief institutions of the organisation are the **Commonwealth Secretariat**, which focuses on intergovernmental aspects, and the **Commonwealth Foundation**, which focuses on non-governmental relations between member states.
- It was originally created as the British Commonwealth through the **Balfour Declaration at the 1926 Imperial Conference**, and formalised by the United Kingdom through the **Statute of Westminster in 1931.**

- The current Commonwealth of Nations was formally constituted by **the London Declaration in 1949**, which modernised the community, and established the member states as "free and equal".
- Member states have **no legal obligations to one another**. Instead, they are united by English language, history, culture and their shared values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

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 22 Member States and 9 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, Maldives and Yemen.

Other Important Organizations in the region

- **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 inaugural IONS was held in 2008 in New Delhi. Recently, it celebrated its 10-year anniversary.
- **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.



1.6. INDIA-BHUTAN

Why in news?

Prime Minister of Bhutan recently visited India.

Bhutan's significance for Indian Foreign policy

- **A trusted partner:** India Bhutan ties are governed by **1949 Friendship Treaty** (amended in 2007) which states that both countries will ensure perpetual peace, friendship and protect each other's national interests.
- **Economic overlapping:** India continues to be **the largest trade and development partner of Bhutan**. India has contributed generously towards latter's Five-Year Plans since 1961.
 - Also, three Hydropower projects developed with Indian assistance have already been completed, they are **1020 MW Tala Hydroelectric Project, 336 MW Chukha Hydroelectric Project, 60 MW Kurichhu Hydroelectric**.

1.7. INDIA-AFGHANISTAN

Why in news?

Afghanistan began exports to India through Chabahar port.



Relevance of Chabahar Port in India-Afghanistan Relations

- The development of a port in Iran can serve as an alternative route.
 - Goods brought at the port can be easily transported to the Afghan border & distributed to different parts of Afghanistan via **Zaranj-Delaram highway**.
 - India can export the **iron ore extracted from the Hajigak mines in Central Afghanistan** through Chabahar port.
 - It will help in regional integration of Afghanistan and reducing Pakistan's influence.

Other Initiatives to increase connectivity with Afghanistan

- **India-Afghanistan Air Corridor:** To reduce dependence on the Karachi port for foreign trade, subsidized air cargo facilities between India & Afghanistan were announced at **Heart of Asia Conference 2016**.

- **Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA):** Under this agreement, goods originating in Afghanistan would be allowed transit upto Wagah and in return Afghanistan will allow Pakistan the transit route to Central Asian Republics (CARs).
- **International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC):**
 - Though Afghanistan is not a member, INSTC will boost connectivity to Afghanistan as well through Chabahar to Zaranj and Delaram.
 - Recently, India signed a MoU with Russia to fast-track implementation of INSTC. Russian Railways Logistics Joint Stock Company (RZD) and Container Corporation of India (CONCOR) signed the MoU for providing logistics services on INSTC.



1.8. INDO-PACIFIC AND INDIAN-OCEAN REGION

1.8.1. QUAD

Why in news?

Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) Summit was held in Singapore.

Details

- It is an informal mechanism between **India, the US, Australia and Japan**, and interpreted as a joint effort **to counter China's influence** in the Indo-Pacific region.

- The idea of the Quad could be originally attributed to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.
- It got operationalized in 2007 and was revived in 2017.

1.8.2. ASIA REASSURANCE INITIATIVE ACT (ARIA)

Why in news?

US President has signed ARIA act to counter the threat from China and to reinvigorate US leadership in the Indo-Pacific region.

Details

- It aims to establish a multifaceted U.S. strategy to **increase U.S. security, economic interests**, and values in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The new law mandates actions **countering China's illegal construction and militarization** of artificial features in the South China Sea and coercive economic practices.
- ARIA recognizes the vital role of the **strategic partnership between the U.S. and India** in promoting **peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region** and it calls for strengthening diplomatic, economic, and security ties between both the countries.
- It **allocates a budget of \$1.5 billion** over a five-year period to enhance cooperation with America's strategic regional allies in the region.

Related News

- US recently renamed its strategically important Pacific Command (PACOM) as the **U.S. Indo-Pacific Command**, indicating that for U.S. government, East Asia and the Indian Ocean Region are gradually becoming a single competitive space and India is a key partner in its strategic planning.
- US launched **Indo-Pacific Business Forum** as an economic pillar for country's Indo-Pacific Strategy.

Rim Of Pacific Multinational Naval Exercise

- The 26th edition of RIMPAC, hosted by the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), RIMPAC is the world's largest set of international maritime war games.
- Theme of RIMPAC 2018 was "Capable, Adaptive, Partners."
- This is the **first time Brazil, Israel, Sri Lanka and Vietnam** are participating in RIMPAC.
- Indigenously built stealth frigate, **INS Sahyadri**, participated in RIMPAC.
- **China was absent this year** as it was dis-invited from participating by the U.S., citing China's military actions in the South China Sea.
- The Indian Navy was an observer for the 2006, 2010 and 2012 editions of the exercise.

1.8.3. INFORMATION FUSION CENTRE - INDIAN OCEAN REGION

Why in news?

Indian Navy recently inaugurated the Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR).

Information Fusion Centre

- The Information Fusion Centre (IFC) is a **24/7 regional information sharing centre**.
- The IFC has been established at the Navy's **Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC)** in Gurugram. IMAC is the single point centre linking all the coastal radar chains to generate a seamless real-time picture of the coastline of the nation.

What functions will it perform?

- The IFC-IOR is established with the vision of **strengthening maritime security in the region**.
- Through this Centre, information on **“white shipping”**, or commercial **non-military** shipping, will be exchanged with countries in the region to improve **maritime domain awareness** in the **Indian Ocean**. India has bilateral white shipping agreements with 36 countries.

Related news

Trans Regional Maritime Network

- **India has recently signed** the ascension agreement to the **Trans Regional Maritime Network (T-RMN)**.
- It facilitates information exchange on the movement of commercial traffic on the high seas.
- The multilateral construct comprises of 30 countries and is **steered by Italy**.
- It will give the country access to information about ships passing through the Indian Ocean Region, thereby helping to check suspicious and criminal activities and illegal trade across the ocean.

1.8.4. INDIAN OCEAN CONFERENCE

Why in News?

The **third** edition of **Indian Ocean Conference** was held at **Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam**.

Indian Ocean Conference

- The Indian Ocean Conference is initiated by **India Foundation** along with its partners from Singapore, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh
- It is an annual effort to bring together Heads of States/Governments, Ministers, thought Leaders, scholars, diplomats, bureaucrats and practitioners from across the region.
- Two successful editions of the Conference have been hosted so far in 2016 and 2017 in Singapore and Sri Lanka respectively.

2. INDIA AND SOUTHEAST/EAST ASIA

2.1. DELHI DIALOGUE X

Why in News?

Recently, India hosted the 10th edition of the Delhi Dialogue with a theme “**Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation**”.

Delhi Dialogue

- It is a **premier annual track 1.5 event** to discuss politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement between India & ASEAN.
- It has been held **annually since 2009** in partnership with **Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)**.

Association of South East Asian Nations(ASEAN)

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

Research & Information System for Developing Countries

- It is a **New Delhi-based autonomous policy research institute** which focusses on **promoting South-South Cooperation and collaborates with developing countries** in multilateral negotiations.

Track 1.5 Diplomacy is used to denote a situation in which official and non-official actors work together to resolve conflicts.

2.2. EAST ASIA SUMMIT

Why in news?

Recently, India participated in the 13th East Asia Summit, held in Singapore.

About East Asia Summit (EAS)

- It is an **annual meeting of regional countries** which was started in 2005. It is an **ASEAN-centred forum** which can **only be chaired by an ASEAN member**.
- The members include 10 **Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)** nations plus 8 other nations such as **Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the US**.
- The EAS membership represents around **54% of the world's population and accounts for 58% of global GDP**.
- There are **six priority areas of regional cooperation** within the framework of the EAS.

These are – Environment and Energy, Education, Finance, Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases, Natural Disaster Management and ASEAN Connectivity.

2.3. INDIA-SOUTH KOREA

Why in news?

South Korean President Moon Jae-in recently visited India.

Key Highlights of the visit

- Moon coined a new acronym ‘**3P Plus**’ for boosting bilateral ties through **cooperation for people, prosperity and peace**.
- Indian Prime Minister and President of the Republic of Korea inaugurated **Samsung’s mobile manufacturing plant**, touted as the biggest in the world, in Noida.
- **South Korea would be the second country after China** with whom India would undertake a **joint project in Afghanistan**.
- Also, India and South Korea launched an initiative ‘**Korea Plus**’, as proposed by Indian Prime Minister in June 2016 to promote and facilitate Korean Investments in India.

Related Information

New Southern Policy

- The new S. Korean government is seeking to elevate strategic ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on par with Korea’s four traditional, major diplomatic partners of the United States, China, Japan and Russia.
- It is a new policy orientation being pursued under the government’s broader strategy of promoting a “Northeast Asia Plus Community for Responsibility-sharing (NEAPC)”.
- New Southern Policy is one of the 3 parts of NEAPC which would involve deepening relations with India as well as the countries of Southeast Asia, including in the economic realm.

2.4. INDIA-JAPAN

Why in News?

Indian PM recently visited Tokyo for the 13th Indo –Japan annual bilateral summit.

Details

- **Increased Economic Cooperation:** The biggest take away was the \$75 billion **currency swap** that Japan Offered to India (50 percent higher than the last swap).
- **Connectivity through huge infrastructure projects:**

- **Within India-** Japan has been a leading financial donor in the form of ODA (Official Development Assistance) to India.
 - ✓ It provides support for **India's mega infrastructure projects** like the Delhi-Mumbai Freight Corridor, Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, Chennai-Bangalore Industrial Corridor and the Ahmedabad-Mumbai High Speed Rail system.
- **Defence ties:** They announced the commencement of negotiations on an **Acquisition and Cross-servicing Agreement**. This agreement, as and when it comes into effect, would enable Japanese ships to get fuel and servicing at Indian naval bases.



2.5. INDIA-INDONESIA

Why in news?

Indian Prime minister recently visited Indonesia.

More about the visit

- Both sides have agreed to elevate the bilateral relationship between the two countries to the level of **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**.
- A **shared Vision on Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific** was announced.
- A link will be established between **Andaman Nicobar and Aceh** to tap the economic potentials of both areas.

Significance of India- Indonesia relations

- **Strategic importance:** Recently Indonesia agreed to give access to the strategic island of **Sabang**, close to the Malacca Strait for Indian investment.
- Indonesia is important for countering China's presence in Indian Ocean, India's Act East Policy, Trade and Investment, etc. Also, India's vision of **SAGAR (Security and Growth for all in the Region)** matches with Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum.

Related News

India and Singapore recently signed a bilateral agreement that will allow logistical support to Indian Navy ships at Singapore's **Changi Naval Base** located near disputed South China Sea.

2.6. INDIA-AUSTRALIA

Why in News?

Australia's Prime Minister has announced implementation of "**An India Economic Strategy to 2035**", a vision document that will shape India-Australia bilateral ties.

What is the vision and why?

- It is based on **three-pillar strategy**- Economic ties, Geostrategic Engagement and Rethinking Culture-thrust on soft power diplomacy.
- The focus of this report is **on building a sustainable long-term India economic strategy**.
- The report **identifies 10 sectors and 10 states** in an evolving Indian market where Australia has competitive advantages, and where it should focus its efforts. These are divided into a flagship sector (education), three lead sectors (agribusiness, resources, and tourism) and six promising sectors (energy, health, financial services, infrastructure, sport, science and innovation).

3. INDIA AND CENTRAL ASIA/RUSSIA

3.1. 1ST INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA DIALOGUE

Why in news?

1st India-Central Asia Dialogue was held in **Samarkand, Uzbekistan** and was co-chaired by the Minister of External Affairs of India.

Highlights of the summit

- The ministerial level summit saw the participation of External Affairs Ministers of **Afghanistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.**
- India proposed the **creation of a Regional Development Group** for better coordination on economic and policy issues.
- India also proposed a **dialogue on air corridors** with the countries of landlocked Central Asia.

Important points related to Central Asia

- India's only foreign military airbase is in **Farkhor (Tajikistan)**, which is operated by IAF and Tajik Air Force.
- India and **Uzbekistan** signed a deal for long-term supply of **uranium**. After Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan will become the second Central Asian country to supply uranium to India.

India's efforts to connect with the region

- **Connect Central Asia Policy** which was launched in 2012 included strong political relations, strategic and security cooperation, long term partnership in energy and natural resources etc.
- **Ashgabat Agreement:** India has acceded to the Ashgabat Agreement, an international transport and transit corridor facilitating transportation of goods between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf.
- **Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI):** It is the proposed natural gas pipeline that runs from Galkynysh field (Turkmenistan) – Herat – Kandahar – Multan - Fazilika (Pak-India Border).
- **Eurasian Economic Union (EEU):** India is negotiating a comprehensive economic partnership agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union, which include Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.
- **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme** is also an effective instrument under which young professionals

of these countries undergo training and human capacity development.



3.2. INDIA-RUSSIA RELATIONS

Why in News

Russian President Vladimir Putin recently visited India for the 19th Annual Bilateral Summit in New Delhi.

What has this summit achieved?

Reinforced Defence—The major breakthrough was the **materializing of the S-400 deal** despite threats of sanctions by US under the **Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)**.

Related Information

S-400

- The Russian-built S-400 Triumf — identified by NATO as the SA-21 Growler — is the world's most dangerous operationally deployed modern **long-range surface-to-air missile system**.
- The S-400 is a mobile system that **integrates multifunction radar, autonomous detection and targeting systems, anti-aircraft missile systems, launchers, and a command and control centre.**

Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)

- It is a USA Act which aims to counter the aggression by **Iran, Russia and North Korea** through punitive measures.
- Under the Act, the **Department of State** has notified almost all major **39 Russian entities** from defence and intelligence sector, dealings with which could make third parties liable to sanctions.

4. INDIA AND WEST ASIA

4.1. INDIA-SAUDI ARABIA

Why in news?

Recently, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman visited India as a part of its 3-nation tour, including China and Pakistan.



More about News

- The visit has broadened and deepened the strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia, substantially enhancing **security cooperation including counter terrorism**.
- Saudi Arabia **increased India's Haj quota** by about 25,000 taking the number of pilgrims from the country who can perform the pilgrimage to 2 lakh.
 - The **Haj subsidy** (in form of discounted air fares) provided by the government was **removed** in the light of a Supreme Court order of 2012.

Additional information

India and Saudi Arabia had signed two prominent declarations:

- In **Delhi Declaration (2006)**, the two sides had agreed to ensure "reliable, stable and increased" volume of **crude oil supplies** through "evergreen" long-term contracts.
- **Riyadh Declaration** was signed in 2010 to establish a strategic partnership between two nations.

4.2. INDIA-UAE

Why in news?

The India-UAE Partnership Summit (IUPS) was held in Dubai where India aimed to attract large-scale investment opportunities from the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** countries.

More about News

- India-UAE Partnership Summit (IUPS) is an event specifically designed **for promotion of investments from UAE to India and India to UAE**.
- The focus sectors for IUPS 2018 are investments in Education and SME's, Skill Development and Placements along with presentations by Indian States seeking investments.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

- It is a **regional intergovernmental political and economic union** of six countries in the Arabian Peninsula: **Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates**.
- Established in 1981, the **GCC holds a summit every year** to discuss cooperation and regional affairs.
- Due to their geographic proximity, similar political systems and common sociocultural stances, the immediate goal was for these countries **to protect themselves from threats after the Iran-Iraq War**.
- **All current member states are monarchies**, including three constitutional monarchies (Qatar, Kuwait, and Bahrain), two absolute monarchies (Saudi Arabia and Oman), and one federal monarchy (the United Arab Emirates, which is composed of seven member states, each of which is an absolute monarchy with its own emir).

4.3. DUQM PORT

Why in news?

- Recently, India got access to **strategic Oman port Duqm for military use**.

About Duqm Port

- It is situated on the southeastern seaboard of Oman, overlooking the **Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean**.
- It is **strategically located**, in close proximity to the **Chabahar port** in Iran.
- This is part of **India's maritime strategy to counter Chinese influence** and activities in the region.

- With the Assumption Island being developed in Seychelles and Agalega in Mauritius, Duqm

fits into India's proactive maritime security roadmap.



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5. INDIA AND AFRICA

5.1. INDIA INCREASING DIPLOMATIC FOOTPRINTS IN AFRICA

Why in News?

India has begun appointing ambassadors to African countries where previously it had no representation.

NEW INDIAN EMBASSIES IN AFRICA



Some other developments in Africa

- **India-Africa Summit** is the official platform for African-Indian relation with participation from all African countries.
- **Asia-Africa Growth Corridor** is an economic cooperation agreement between the governments of India, Japan and multiple African countries.
- **African Development Bank (AfDB)**: India joined AfDB in 1983 and has contributed to its General Capital and has also pledged capital for grants and loans.
- **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** is the result of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement among members of the

African Union. Till now, 49 countries have joined it.

Related News

- Recently, **India gifted 200 locally bought cows** to villagers from Rweru village for Girinka Programme.
- **Girinka Programme** is the Rwanda's one of a kind **Social Protection scheme** under which the poorest residing in the region **get cows from the government** and gift the first female calf to a neighbour to promote brotherhood.

5.2. E-VIDYABHARTI AND E-AAROgyABHARATI NETWORK PROJECT

Why in News?

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd (TCIL) signed an Agreement for the implementation of **e-VidyaBharati** and **e-AarogyaBharati (e-VBAB) Network Project** in Africa.

About E-VBAB Network Project

- It is primarily a technological upgrade (digital bridge) and **extension of the Pan-African e-Network Project**.
 - Under the Pan African e-Network Project, India had set up a fibre-optic network to provide satellite connectivity, tele-medicine and tele-education to countries of Africa.
 - TCIL, a Government of India undertaking, is implementing the project on behalf of Government of India.
- It will be **completely funded by the Government of India**.
- There will be two separate platforms for **e-VidyaBharati (tele-education)** and **e-AarogyaBharati (tele-medicine)** which will link, through a web-based technology, various educational institutions and hospitals in India and the participating African countries.

6. USA

6.1. INDIA USA 2+2 TALKS

Why in News?

Recently, India and the USA held the first edition of their 2+2 dialogue involving Indian External Affairs and Defence Ministers and their American counterparts in New Delhi, where they also signed long-pending **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)**.

Other outcomes of the talk

- **Promoting defence innovation:** a Memorandum of Intent was signed between the U.S. Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) and the Indian Defence Innovation Organization — Innovation for Defence Excellence (DIO-IDEX), which will look into joint projects for co-production and co-development projects through the **Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)**.
- **Negotiations on Industrial Security Annex (ISA):** The two defence ministers also announced readiness to begin negotiations on an Industrial Security Annex (ISA) that would support closer defence industry cooperation and collaboration. An ISA is required to enable private Indian participation in defence production.

About Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)

- It is one of the four foundational agreements that the U.S. signs with allies and close partners to **facilitate interoperability** between militaries and sale of high end technology.
- COMCASA, an India-specific version of the **Communication and Information on Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA)**, comes into force immediately and is valid for a period 10 years.
 - India had signed the **General Security Of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)** in 2002 and the **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)** in 2016. The last one remaining is the **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA)**.
- India will get access to **Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange System (CENTRIXS)**. It is the secure communication system network of the US. Navy ships.

Related News

- US has granted **Strategic Trade Authorization (STA-1) status** to India, giving India same access as NATO allies to latest technology.

FOUNDATIONAL AGREEMENTS	
Basic purpose	
LEMOA	Enable deployed forces to share logistics support to meet unforeseen requirements that might arise in the field or unanticipated mission requirements
CISMOA	Provide the legal mechanism to exchange command, control, communications, computer intelligence, surveillance & reconnaissance (C4ISR) data to a foreign country, establish secure communications channels, and exchange communications supplies & services
BECA	Enable the sharing of a range of geospatial products, including access to mapping and hydrographic data, flight information products, and the U.S National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's geospatial information bank

6.2. INDIA-US TRADE RELATIONS

Why in news?

Recently U.S. has decided to withdraw **Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)** benefits on 94 products for all countries.

What is Generalized System of Preferences?

- It is a **non-reciprocal preferential tariff system** which **provides for exemption from the Most Favored Nation principle of World Trade Organization**.
- It involves reduced MFN tariffs or duty free entry of eligible products exported by **beneficiary countries (developed countries) to markets of donor countries (developing countries)**.
- It was **adopted at UNCTAD Conference** in 1968 and later enacted by General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (now WTO) in 1971.
- The objective of GSP was to give development support to poor countries by **promoting capacity development and trade**.
- 11 Developed countries including the US, EU, UK, Japan etc., extend GSPs to imports from developing countries.

Related News

Specialty Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT)

- India welcomed an announcement by the US State department which designated three Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) terrorists and terror financiers as **Specialty Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT)**.
- SDGT is a designation authorized under **US Executive Order 13224**.

- Designations of terrorist individuals and groups expose and isolate organisations and individuals, and deny them access to the US financial system and all of his property and interests subject to US jurisdiction are blocked.

Related Information

UNSCR 1267

- Recently, the proposal to designate Azhar under the **1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee** was blocked by China for fourth time.
- A UNSC designation subject terrorists to an **assets freeze, travel ban and an arms embargo**.

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7. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTIONS

7.1. UN GLOBAL COUNTER-TERRORISM COORDINATION COMPACT

Why in News?

Recently, UN launched a new framework “UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact”.

About UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact

- It is an agreement between the UN chief, 36 organizational entities, the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) and the World Customs Organisation, to better serve the needs of Member States when it comes to tackling international terrorism.
- **Objective**
 - To ensure that the United Nations system provides **coordinated capacity-building support to Member States**, at their request, in implementing the **UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy** and other relevant resolutions.
 - To foster close **collaboration between the Security Council mandated bodies and the rest of the United Nations system**.
 - The **UN Global Counter-Terrorism Compact Coordination Committee** will oversee and monitor the implementation of the Compact which will be chaired by UN Under-Secretary-General for counter-terrorism.
 - It will replace the **Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force**, which was established in 2005.

Related Information

- India introduced the **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism** (CCIT) in 1996 that defined terrorism and enhanced “normative processes for the prosecution and extradition of terrorists.”

Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted it in 2006 and it is a unique global instrument to enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism.
- UNGA reviews the Strategy every two years.
- The **four pillars of the global strategy** include:
 - measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.
 - measures to prevent and combat terrorism.
 - measures to build states’ capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the

role of the United Nations system in that regard.

- measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism.

7.2. UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Why in news?

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) has adopted a resolution on the repositioning of the UN development system to align it with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

More on the resolution

- It calls for UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) to **better reflect country priorities** and country needs as they would be prepared in full consultation and agreement with national governments, through an open and inclusive dialogue.
- In repositioning, an implementation plan for the inception of the **reinvigorated Resident Coordinator (RC) system** is presented. The functions of the Resident Coordinators (RCs) of the UN system in each country are separated from those of the resident representative of the UN Development Programme (UNDP).
- It also presents an implementation plan for operationalization of the funding arrangements for the new RC system – **hybrid funding**, i.e., through the United Nations regular budget as well as voluntary contributions by UN Member states.
- It stresses on **national ownership** with strong focus on **accountability and results**.

Related Information

United Nations Sustainable Development Group

- The United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) unites the 36 UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies, departments and offices that play a role in development.
- Decision-making is based on consensus among UNSDG members and are binding across the UNSDG working mechanisms.

Related News

The **Pacific Islands Forum** has been granted approval to **establish a permanent observer office** at the United Nations in Geneva.

- The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) is **an inter-governmental organization that aims to enhance cooperation between countries and territories of the Pacific Ocean**.

- It was established in 1971 “to work in support of member governments, to enhance the economic and social wellbeing of the people of the South Pacific.

The General Assembly of UN approved the establishment of two new departments - **the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC)** and the **Department of Operational Support (DOS)**.

7.3. UN PEACEKEEPING FORCES

Why in News?

The 7 Garhwal Rifles Infantry Battalion Group was **awarded the United Nations Medal for "selfless service" in the peacekeeping mission** in South Sudan.

About Peacekeeping

- UN peacekeepers provide **security and the political and peacebuilding support** to help countries make the difficult, early **transition from conflict to peace**.
- UN deployed its **first peacekeeping mission in 1948 to Palestine**.
- As of April 30, 2018, **Ethiopia, followed by Bangladesh and India** were the largest contributors. Over 27% of the peacekeepers were from the Indian subcontinent.
- Since UN doesn't have any military force, troops are provided by member states on a voluntary basis.
- Peacekeeping soldiers are **paid by their own government** according to their own national rank and salary scale.
- The financial resources of UN Peacekeeping operations are the **collective responsibility of UN Member States**. Decisions about the establishment, maintenance or expansion of peacekeeping operations are taken by the **United Nations Security Council**.

Related Information

United Nations Security Council

- It is **one of the six principal organs** (other include: General Assembly, the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat) of the United Nations (UN).
- It has been charged with ensuring **international peace and security, accepting new members to the United Nations and approving any changes to its charter**.
- Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations and international sanctions as well as the authorization of military actions through resolutions – it is the **only body of the United Nations** with the authority to **issue binding resolutions to member states**.
- It has **15 members, including five permanent ones**.

The five permanent members, each with the **power of veto**, are China, France, Russia, the UK and the US. The **10 non-permanent members are elected for two-year terms each**.

- Recently, South Africa, Indonesia, Dominican Republic, Germany and Belgium were elected as non-permanent members.

7.4. UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (UNHRC)

Why in News?

The United States has **withdrawn from the UNHRC** accusing it of chronic bias against Israel.

About UNHRC

- It is a **specialized agency of United Nations to protect and promote human rights across the world** set up in 2006.
- The Council consists of 47 members, **elected yearly by the General Assembly** through direct and secret ballot for three-year terms.
- Recently **India was elected with highest number of votes** by General Assembly to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).
- Members are selected via the basis of equitable geographic rotation using the United Nations regional grouping system.
- Members are **barred** from occupying a seat **for more than two consecutive three-year terms**.

7.5. ICJ ON DECOLONIZATION OF MAURITIUS

Why in News?

International Court of Justice (ICJ) in an advisory opinion has said that Britain has to handover **Chagos Archipelago** to complete the process of decolonization of Mauritius.

More on News

- According to Britain, the request for an advisory opinion by the Government of Mauritius circumvents a vital principle: that a **State is not obliged to have its bilateral disputes submitted for judicial settlement without its consent**.
- Mauritius has maintained that Britain's “unilateral” decision to ban the right of return of **Chagossians (African Tribe)** and to renew the lease for the US base on Diego Garcia, one of the Chagos Islands, breached international law.

About International Court of Justice (ICJ)

- It is the **principle judicial organ of the UN** established in 1945 succeeding the Permanent Court of International Justice (established under League of Nations).
- The Court may entertain two types of cases:
 - Contentious cases** - Legal disputes between States submitted to it by them. Only States (States Members of the United Nations and other States which have become parties to the Statute of the Court or which have accepted its jurisdiction under certain conditions) may be parties to contentious cases.
 - Advisory proceedings** - Requests for advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by United Nations organs and specialized agencies. Contrary to judgments, the Court's advisory opinions are not binding.
- It has **no jurisdiction to deal with applications from individuals, NGOs or private groups** and it rules only on the rights and obligations of States.
- It comprises **15 Judges**, elected by United Nations General Assembly and Security Council for **9 year term**. **Five Judges** are elected **every 3 years** to ensure continuity.
- It is headquartered in Peace Palace, **Hague, Netherlands** and India is a founding member of the ICJ. It is the only one of the six principal organs of the United Nations not located in New York.

Related News

- India's involvement in the **Agalega project** has caused disquiet in Mauritius.
- The MoU for the project was signed in March 2015 during PM's visit.
- India agreed to provide approximately \$87 million to build an airport terminal, extend its runway and refurbish jetties.
- The Agalega archipelago consists of two sparsely populated islands north of mainland Mauritius.

7.6. BRICS

Why in News?

Recently, the 10th BRICS Summit took place at Johannesburg in South Africa. The Theme of the summit was **'BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution.'**

About the Johannesburg Declaration:

- Importance of 4th Industrial Revolution:** It recommends the establishment of **BRICS**

Partnership on New Industrial Revolution (PartNIR).

- 'BRICS outreach to Africa' and 'BRICS Plus' formats:** BRICS plus format **initiated at Xiamen Summit in 2017** by inviting a few countries from different regions was emulated in Johannesburg Summit also.

About BRICS

- Officially formed in 2006, it originally included four emerging economies of **Brazil, Russia, India and China**. Its first summit took place at Russia in 2009. Later in 2010, **South Africa** became the 5th member of the grouping.
- During the sixth BRICS Summit in Fortaleza (2014), the following were agreed -**
 - Agreement for setting up the New Development Bank (NDB) with \$100 billion corpus.
 - Pact for the setting up of the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) with an initial size of \$100 billion to tackle short-term liquidity demands.

7.7. SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION

Why in news?

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit was held in **Qingdao, China**.

Key takeaways of the meet/ Qingdao declaration

- India **refused to endorse the ambitious Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**.
- India coined **SECURE strategy** for comprehensive security in the SCO region.

Shanghai co-operation Organization (SCO)

- It is an Eurasian **political, economic, and security organization formed in 2001** and headquartered in **Beijing**.
- It owes its origin to its predecessor **Shanghai Five** (a multilateral forum founded by 5 countries **China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan** in Shanghai in 1996).
- Its driving philosophy is known as the **"Shanghai Spirit"** which emphasizes harmony, working by consensus, respect for other cultures, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, and non-alignment.
- SCO comprises eight-member states, **India, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russian, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan**.
- 2018 year meet is **India's first participation in the summit as a full-time member**. India, along with Pakistan, became full-time members during the **Astana summit in Kazakhstan** in June 2017.

- Besides it has **4 observer states** and **6 dialogue partners**.

Related information

Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)

- It was established under the aegis of **SCO** in **2002**.
- It is mandated for **counter terrorism activities, collecting military intelligence and security** of the SCO region.
- The **Executive Committee of the RATS** is the permanent body of the SCO based in **Tashkent**.

Exercise SCO Peace Mission 2018.

- It is **conducted biennially** for **SCO member states**.
- This is the **first time** India is participating in this peace mission post joining SCO.
- The exercise provided an opportunity for the armies of **India and Pakistan to operate together outside the United Nations umbrella**.

7.8. ORGANIZATION OF THE PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC)

Why in News?

India would coordinate with China and other Asian countries to raise voice against the “Asian premium” being charged by OPEC.

Asian Premium

- It is the extra charge being collected by OPEC countries from Asian countries when selling oil.
- It has roots in the establishment of market oriented crude pricing in 1986.
- There are 3 important benchmarks in global market, representing the cost of oil produced in respective geographies.
 - Brent: Light sweet oil representative of European market**
 - West Texas Intermediate (WTI): US market**
 - Dubai/Oman: Middle East and Asian Market.**
- However, US and Europe had an advantage because their markets and prices were based on future trading and reflected every trend in the crude market. On the other hand, Asia represented by Dubai/Oman do not have any derivative trading, doesn't have that edge.
- Hence, price charged from Asian countries remained \$1-\$2 dollar higher than that from Europe and the US. This price differential is termed as ‘Asian Premium’.

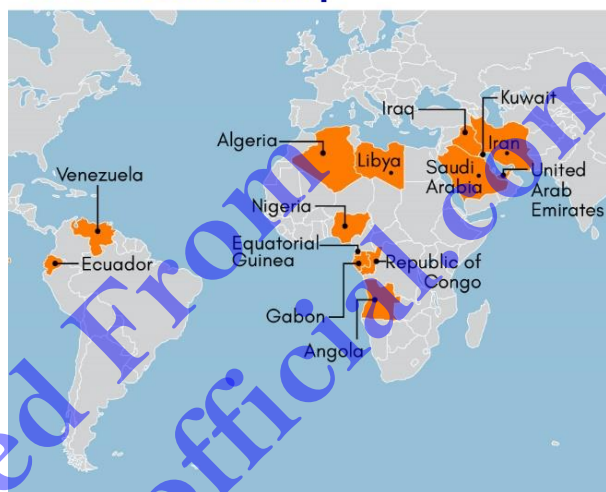
About OPEC

- It is an intergovernmental organisation whose stated objective is to “**co-ordinate and unify petroleum policies among Member Countries**, in order to secure fair and stable prices for petroleum producers; an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to

consuming nations; and a fair return on capital to those investing in the industry.”

- It is headquartered at **Vienna, Austria**.
- It was set up at the **1960 Baghdad Conference** with Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela as founding members.
- It accounts for an **estimated 44 percent of global oil production** and **81.5 percent of the world's "proven" oil reserves**.

OPEC Membership



7.9. INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Why in News?

India has decided to place four more reactors under the **IAEA safeguards**. With this, a total of 26 Indian nuclear facilities will be under the international nuclear energy watchdog.

About IAEA

- 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** set up in July 1957 through its own international treaty, **the IAEA Statute**.
- The IAEA reports to both the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.
- 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**.
- The **objective of IAEA Safeguards** is to deter the spread of nuclear weapons by the early

detection of the misuse of nuclear material or technology.

- In 2009, an **Agreement between the Government of India and the IAEA** for the Application of Safeguards to Civilian Nuclear Facilities was signed. Then in 2014, India ratified an **Additional Protocol** (as part of its commitments under US-India nuclear deal) to its safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- The AP is an important tool of the IAEA, over and above the provisions of the safeguard agreement, to verify the exclusively peaceful nature of a country's nuclear programme.

7.10. AIIB

Why in news?

Recently, third annual meeting of AIIB was held in Mumbai where **Asian Infrastructure Forum** was launched for creating connections & business development opportunities for participants drawn from project sponsors, financiers, governments, etc.

About Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

- It is a multilateral development bank with a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia and beyond.
- It was established in December 2015 but commenced operation in January 2016 and is **headquartered in Beijing**. Currently it has 93 approved members with **India as a founding member**.
- **India is the second largest shareholder** in AIIB with 7.5% voting shares while China holds 26.06% voting shares being the largest.
- Recently it also proposed to invest USD200 million in the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF).

7.11. ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Why in News?

Recently, Asian Development Bank (ADB) released its long-term corporate strategy i.e. Strategy 2030.

About the ADB- Strategy 2030

- It is policy framework for ADB that sets out the its broad vision and strategic response to the **evolving needs of Asia and the Pacific**.
- **Social Dimension:** In contrast to earlier Strategy 2020- the Strategy 2030 document emphasis on human and social factors, in addition to the usual infrastructure and the private sector.

- **Regional or Country Specific Approach:** ADB has, for the first time, adopted a differentiated approach to various groups of member nations.

About Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- ADB was founded in 1966.
- The ADB has 67-member countries, including —48 from the Asian region.
- **India was a founding member of ADB** but operations in the country began only in 1986, when India opted to become a borrowing member.
- ADB has been led conventionally by a Japanese governor.
- Top 5 shareholders in ADB are: Japan (15.6%), United States (15.6%), People's Republic of China (6.4%), India (6.3%) and Australia (5.8%)
- It **provides direct assistance to private enterprises of developing member countries** through equity investments and loans.

7.12. EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT (EBRD)

Why in News?

India recently became the 69th shareholder of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

About EBRD

- It is a multilateral development bank set up in 1991 after the fall of the Berlin Wall to **promote private and entrepreneurial initiative in emerging Europe**.
- It is **headquartered in London**.
- It invests in 38 emerging economies across three continents, according to a set of criteria that aim to make its countries more competitive, better governed, greener, more inclusive, more resilient and more integrated.
- It has members from all over the world with the **biggest shareholder being the United States**, but only lends regionally in its countries of operations.
- The EBRD is **different from the European Investment Bank (EIB)**, which is owned by EU member states and is used to support EU policy.
- The EBRD is unique among development banks in that it **will not finance coal power plants** due to their environmental impact. It has pledged to dedicate above 40 percent of its financing to green investment by 2020.

- India takes a shareholding in the EBRD but it will not be a recipient of EBRD financing.
- To be eligible for EBRD funding, "a project must be **located in an EBRD country of operations** (not in India), have strong commercial prospects, involve significant equity contributions in-cash or in-kind from the project sponsor, benefit the local economy and help develop the private sector and satisfy banking and environmental standards."

7.13. IBSA

Why in news?

Recently, at a **Ministerial meeting of IBSA in Pretoria, South Africa**, Foreign Ministers of India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) adopted a declaration to contribute to greater understanding of development and South-South Cooperation (SSC).

About South-South Cooperation (SSC)

- South South Cooperation (SSC) is defined as the **exchange and sharing of developmental solutions among countries in the global south**.
- The formation of SSC can be traced to the **1955 Bandung Conference**.

IBSA

- It is an international tripartite grouping for promoting international cooperation of India, Brazil and South Africa.
- It was formally established by the **Brasilia Declaration of 6 June 2003** by external affairs ministers of India, Brazil and South Africa.
- It represents three **important poles for galvanizing South-South cooperation** and greater understanding between three **important continents of the developing world**.

IBSA Mechanism for Development Cooperation - IBSA Fund for the Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger

- It was set up with the objective of facilitating the execution of human development projects to advance the fight against poverty and hunger in developing countries.
- Each member country contributes **\$1 Million annually** to this fund.
- The IBSA Fund is managed by the **United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)**.

7.14. SAARC DEVELOPMENT FUND (SDF)

Why in news?

SAARC Development Fund Partnership Conclave 2018 was held in New Delhi.

About SDF

- It was established by heads of all eight SAARC member states during **16th SAARC summit at Thimphu, Bhutan** in 2010.
- Its **Secretariat** is located at Thimphu, capital of Bhutan. Its **Governing Council** comprises finance ministers of these eight countries.
- It was created as umbrella financial mechanism for all SAARC developmental projects and programmes.
- It **funds projects in South Asia** region via three windows viz. Social Window, Economic Window and Infrastructure Window.
- The SDF has a total corpus of \$1.5 billion with the total capital base currently at \$497 million.

South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

- It is a regional organisation which was established in 1985.
- The main objective of setting up of SAARC was to promote the welfare of the people of South Asia, improve the quality of life and accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region.
- **Member countries** – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Afghanistan and Bhutan

7.15. BIMSTEC

Why in News?

Recently, the 4th summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was held in Nepal after a gap of four years. The 3rd BIMSTEC Summit took place in Nay Pyi Taw in 2014.

About BIMSTEC

- BIMSTEC is a regional organization comprising seven Member States lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal including **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand**.
- This sub-regional organization came into being on 6 June 1997 through the **Bangkok Declaration**.
- Its **Secretariat** has been established at **Dhaka**.

7.16. ASIA PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Why in News?

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) at its Summit in Papua New Guinea failed to develop consensus on a communique.

More on news

- This was first such instance in the history of APEC when a **consensus could not be achieved** on final declaration.
- The unprecedented impasse blamed on tensions between China and the United States presents an opportunity of admitting India as a member — both in recognition of the country's status as a major market and as a means to avoiding a similar impasse in future.
 - However, India's **geographical location** isn't conducive for India's membership in APEC as India does not border the Pacific Ocean.

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation

- Established in 1989 APEC is an inter-governmental forum for 21 Pacific Rim member economies.
- APEC aims for regional economic integration by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable growth.
- **India** was allowed in APEC summit in 2011 as an **observer state**.

7.17. APTA

Why in news?

The results of the 4th Round of negotiations under the **Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA)** have been implemented with effect from 1st July, 2018.

More on news

- India has agreed to provide tariff concessions on 3,142 products to APTA and special concessions on 48 tariff lines for LDCs, with Bangladesh and Laos.
- China has agreed to **reduce or cut to zero tariffs** on a total of 8,549 types of goods originating in India, Bangladesh, Laos, South Korea and Sri Lanka.

APTA

- The Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), previously named as the **Bangkok Agreement**, was signed in **1975** as an initiative of UNESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific).
- It is the oldest **preferential trade agreement** (PTA) among developing countries in Asia-Pacific.
- Currently, the following **six Participating States** are parties to APTA: 1. Bangladesh 2. China 3. **India** (founding member) 4. Laos 5. South Korea 6. Sri Lanka (Mongolia is set to become the 7th member)
- It is **open to all developing member countries**.
- It aims to promote economic development through the adoption of mutually beneficial trade liberalization measures that will contribute to intra-regional trade expansion and provides for economic integration through coverage of

merchandise goods, services, investment and trade facilitation.

- Notably, it is the only operational trade agreement linking China and India.

UNESCAP

- It is the **regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region**.
- It was established in 1947 with its headquarters in **Bangkok**, Thailand.
- It seeks to promote cooperation among member States to achieve **inclusive and sustainable development** in Asia and Pacific.

7.18. RCEP

Why in News?

Members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), have finalized an **early-harvest “package”** with the aim of concluding trade negotiations by the year-end.

Background

- The RCEP, forged during the **2012 ASEAN summit in Cambodia**, was built upon the premise of broadening and deepening engagement among parties and facilitating participation to **promote economic development** in the region.
- But the negotiations which had begun in 2012 **resulted in a stalemate** due to various differences among members.
- In the earlier ministerial meetings, India has made it clear that it doesn't favour an **“early harvest”**. Thus, **agreements on all the three pillars** of negotiations — goods, services and investment — can be implemented only as a package.
 - Early harvest scheme is a precursor to a free trade agreement (FTA) between two trading partners. This is to help them to identify certain products for tariff liberalisation pending the conclusion of FTA negotiation.

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.
- Once concluded, RCEP will create the largest regional trading bloc, making up 25% of GDP, 30% of global trade, and 26% of foreign direct investment (FDI) flows.
- 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.”**

7.19. COMPREHENSIVE AND PROGRESSIVE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP (CPTPP)

Why in news?

CPTPP entered into force recently for six countries which had ratified the deal.

About CPTPP

- It is a free trade agreement between **Canada** and **10 other countries** in the **Asia-Pacific region**: Australia, Brunei, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. It is informally known as TPP-11.
- CPTPP includes a broad range of sectors such as **agriculture, sea food products, forest products, industrial products**, etc.
- Most **tariff** lines will become **duty-free** as the Agreement enters into force for each CPTPP country. Tariffs on other goods will be eliminated gradually over “**phase-out**” periods (up to 20 years), which vary by country.

7.20. AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA

Why in news?

African countries are set to launch the African Continental Free Trade Area or **AfCFTA**, the **biggest free trade agreement in the world since the World Trade Organization**.

Details

- The **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** is the result of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement among all 55 members of the African Union.
- It is a continent-wide free-trade agreement brokered by the African Union (AU) and initially signed on by 44 of its 55 member states in Kigali, Rwanda on March 2018.
- The proposal will come into force after ratification by 22 of the signatory states.

7.21. G7

Why in News?

The 44th G7 Summit was recently held in Quebec, Canada.

About G7

- The Group of Seven (G7) is a group consisting of **Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States**.

- These countries, with the seven largest IMF-described advanced economies in the world, represent 58% of the global net wealth (\$317 trillion).
- Each year, the location of the summit **rotates among the member countries**. The host country not only sets the agenda for the year but also holds the G7 presidency.
- For the first time in the last 44 years, the G7 had a **Gender Equality Advisory Council**. The aim of the council is to convince private sector companies to set up such council and eradicate the problem of gender inequality from the root.

7.22. G-20

Why in news?

Recently the **13th G-20 Summit** was hosted by **Argentina**.

Group of Twenty (G 20)

- It is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union.
- The G20 started in 1999 as a meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis. In 2008, the first G20 Leaders' Summit was held, and the group played a key role in responding to the global financial crisis.
- For the first time, **India will host the annual G-20 Summit in 2022**.



* The 20th group is the European Union, comprising 28 member countries

Globally, the **G20** Represents:



7.23. ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS (OPCW)

Why in news?

OPCW has been granted new powers to assign blame for attacks using banned toxic materials.

More on news

- Until now OPCW had **limited power** to only send teams to places to collect samples and draw conclusions whether the chemical weapons attack had happened or not.
- It did not have powers to identify the perpetrator (country or non-state actors) of the chemical weapons' attacks.
- The British-led motion was supported by the United States and European Union, but opposed by Russia, Iran, Syria, and their allies.
- India also voted against the decision because it was critical of the decision to grant "unchecked powers" to the head of the group which could be used for "partisan" purposes.

About OPCW

- It was established in the year 1997 with headquarter at The Hague, Netherlands.
- The OPCW Member States share the collective goal of preventing chemistry from ever again being used for warfare, thereby strengthening international security.
- It is the implementing body for the **Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons**.
- It has membership of 193 countries.
 - **India is a member.**
 - Israel has signed but not ratified the Convention. Egypt, North Korea and South Sudan have neither signed nor acceded.
- The Conference of the States Parties is the plenary organ consisting of all members of the OPCW having equal voting rights.
- OPCW has reached a major milestone of destroying over 90% of the stockpile of the chemical weapons and was awarded **2013 Nobel Peace Prize** for its extensive efforts to eliminate chemical weapons.

7.24. ASIA-EUROPE MEETING

Why in News?

The 12th **Asia-Europe Meeting** was held in October 2018 in **Brussels**, Belgium. Discussions focused on the theme "**Europe and Asia: Global Partners for Global Challenges**".

About ASEM

- It is an **intergovernmental process** established in 1996 to **foster dialogue and cooperation** between 51 Asian and European countries plus two institutional partners (the

EU and the Association of South East Asian Nations - ASEAN).

- **India joined the forum** in 2008.
- The **first summit** was held in Bangkok, Thailand.
- It aims at promoting a more global vision among European and Asian policymakers by allowing them to exchange views on political, economic, financial, social and cultural issues.

7.25. ASIA-PACIFIC INSTITUTE FOR BROADCASTING DEVELOPMENT (AIBD)

Why in News?

Recently, India has been elected (first time) as the President of the **Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)** for a period of two years.

About Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)

- It is a regional inter-governmental organisation servicing countries of the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP)** in the field of electronic media development.
- It was established in 1977 **under the auspices of UNESCO** and the **Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)** is a founding organisation of the Institute and is a non-voting member of the General Conference.
- It is hosted by Malaysia and its secretariat is located in **Kuala Lumpur**.
- The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), are **also founding organisations of the Institute**.

Related Information

Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)

- It was established in 1964 as a non-profit, non-governmental, non-political, professional association.
- ABU promotes the collective interests of television and radio broadcasters as well as key industry players and facilitate regional and international media co-operation.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

- It is the **United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies – ICTs**.
- **It was founded in 1865.**
- It allocates global radio spectrum and satellite orbits.
- It develops the technical standards that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect.

8. INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

8.1. IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

Why in news?

USA has decided to **withdraw from 2015 Nuclear Agreement with Iran** and reinstate sanctions upon it.

More on news

- The Iran deal, also known as **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**, is an agreement reached in 2015 between Iran and six world countries - US, China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany, plus the EU (i.e. P5+Germany+EU).
- **Under the agreement Iran agreed** to completely eliminate its stock of medium enriched uranium, reduce the stock of low enriched uranium by 98% and reduce almost by 2/3rd its gas centrifuges for 13 years.
- Until 2031, Iran will have to comply with any IAEA access request. If it refuses, the commission can decide on punitive steps, including the re-imposition of sanctions through a majority vote.
- The reason sighted by the USA for withdrawal is that the deal does not target- Iran's ballistic missile programme, its nuclear activities beyond 2025 and its role in conflicts in Yemen and Syria.
- In current scenario, the nuclear deal itself won't be scrapped as long as Iran and the other signatories remain committed to it.

Related news

US has agreed to let eight countries including Japan, India and South Korea, **keep buying Iranian oil after it re-imposed sanctions on Iran**, in recognition of their significant efforts to reduce imports from Iran.

- India has given the responsibility to UCO Bank to route the payment as it has no exposure to the US financial system.
- Oil payments are being made in rupees only as against earlier arrangements where there was a ratio of 45 percent rupees and 55 percent Euros.

8.2. COLOMBIA TO JOIN NATO

Why in news?

Colombia will be the next country to join the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**. It has also been approved as a member by OECD.

More about the news

- Colombia has become **the only Latin American nation** in the NATO alliance.

- It will be given the status of **"Partner across the globe"** in the group. NATO cooperates with a range of countries **which are not part of formal group**. They are often referred to as **"Partners across the globe"** or simply **"Global Partners"**.
- Being a global partner **Colombia need not necessarily have to take part in military action** and yet will be **fully accredited as a member** in NATO.
- Other countries in the alliance with status of **"partners across the globe"** are **Afghanistan, Australia, Iraq, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand and Pakistan**.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- It is also called as the North Atlantic Alliance, an **intergovernmental military alliance between three United Nations Security Council (United States, France and United Kingdom) permanent members and 26 other North American and European countries**.
- The alliance was established by the **North Atlantic Treaty 1949**.
- It constitutes a **system of collective defence** whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party.
- Its Headquarters are located in **Haren, Brussels, Belgium**.

Related News

North Macedonia in NATO

- **North Macedonia** recently became 30th member of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).
- It is a country in the Balkan Peninsula in Southeast Europe.
- It is one of the successor states of the former Yugoslavia.
- Macedonia was prevented from joining NATO or EU over its name as Greece cited historical concerns and opposed the use of the name "Macedonia" as cultural appropriation.
- Under **Prespa Agreement**, 2018 between Greece and Macedonia, the changed name North Macedonia was adopted.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

- It aims to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world.
- It has 36 members which include many of the world's most advanced countries but also emerging countries like Mexico, Chile and Turkey.
- **India is not a member** of this.
- Some important publications of OECD include:

- Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India
- Going for Growth
- International Migration Outlook

8.3. SINGAPORE SUMMIT

Why in news?

US President Donald Trump and North Korea leader Kim Jong Un recently met at the US-North Korea summit held in Singapore.

Background

- North Korea has founded its regime's stability on **Byungjin policy**, i.e. pursuing economic development and nuclear weapons programme simultaneously.
- The recent thaw in relations had been aided by attempts by both North and South Korea to restore normalcy on the divided peninsula, beginning with cordiality during the Winter Olympics and then a meeting between the two Korean leaders.
- North Korea had also announced to destroy its Punggye-ri nuclear testing zone.

Outcomes

- US had committed to provide security guarantees to North Korea and end US-South Korea Joint war games.
- Reaffirming the **Panmunjom declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula (between North and South Korea)**, Chairman Kim committed to work towards **complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula**. This can reduce the dangers of proliferation of nuclear weapons in future.

8.4. CASPIAN SEA BREAKTHROUGH TREATY

Why in News?

Recently, five Caspian Sea States – **Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan** - signed a breakthrough agreement on Caspian Sea's legal status.

Background

- The 5 nations have tried to define the Caspian Sea's legal status since the collapse of Soviet Union in order to divide up the waters and its natural resources for new drillings and pipelines.
- Iran, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan have contested the ownership of several oil and gas fields.

About the Treaty

- The treaty **declares 15 Nautical Miles from the coastline as Sovereign waters** and an Exclusive Economic Zone, with a further 10 nautical miles to be used for fishing and beyond this would be common waters.
- The treaty **ends a conflict over whether the Caspian is a sea or a lake**, granting it a **special legal status** and clarifying the maritime boundaries of each surrounding country.
 - The major concern is if it is a sea, it would become governed by United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and outside powers would have access to these waters.
- It allows each member nation to lay pipelines with consent only from the neighbouring states affected, rather than from all Caspian Sea Nations.
- The development of seabed reserves will be regulated by separate deals between Caspian Nations, in line with international laws.
- It prevents the Caspian nations from opening their borders to third party aggressors such as the US and NATO or allowing any foreign military presence on Caspian waters.



UNCLOS

- It is an international treaty which was adopted and signed in 1982.
- It **replaced the four Geneva Conventions of April, 1958**, which respectively concerned the territorial sea and the contiguous zone, the continental shelf, the high seas, fishing and conservation of living resources on the high seas.
- The treaty provides a graduated system of sovereignty in which countries can assert **complete ownership of water within 12 nautical miles of their coastline**.

- Each country can also claim an **additional 200 nautical miles as an exclusive economic zone**, which is an area where each coastal country can regulate scientific research and the exploitation of marine resources.
- The Convention has **created three new institutions** on the international scene:
 - International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
 - International Seabed Authority
 - Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

8.5. COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST BAN TREATY

Why in news?

UN chief Antonio Guterres appealed to eight nations, including India and the US, to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

What is CTBT?

- It is a **multilateral treaty banning all nuclear explosions for both military and civilian purposes**.
- It was negotiated at the **Conference on Disarmament in Geneva** and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. It was opened for signature on 24 September 1996.
- The CTBT with its 183 signatories and 163 ratifications is one of the **most widely supported arms-control treaties**.
- It can only enter into force after it is ratified by eight countries with nuclear technology capacity, namely **China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the United States**.
- The Treaty establishes a **CTBT Organization (CTBTO)**, located in Vienna, to ensure the implementation of its provisions, including provisions for international verification measures.

India's Stand on CTBT

- India **did not support the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1996 and still does not** due to following reasons: CTBT does not address **complete disarmament** (supported by India), **discriminatory in nature** with permanent UNSC members.
- Another major concern was the entry-into-force (EIF) clause, which India considered a violation of its right to voluntarily withhold participation in an international treaty. The treaty initially made ratification by states that were to be a part of the CTBT's International Monitoring System (IMS) mandatory for the

treaty's EIF. Because of this, India withdrew its participation from the IMS.

Related information

- **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) 1968:** Its objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.
 - India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and South Sudan are not parties to this treaty.
- **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons 2017:** It is the first multilateral **legally-binding instrument for nuclear disarmament** to have been negotiated in 20 years.
 - India and other nuclear-armed nations — the United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel had not participated in the negotiations.
- **Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ):** It is a regional approach to strengthen global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament norms and consolidate international efforts towards peace and security. Five such zones exist, with four of them spanning the entire southern hemisphere.
 - Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco, 1967)
 - South Pacific (Treaty of Rarotonga, 1985)
 - Southeast Asia (Treaty of Bangkok, 1995)
 - Africa (Treaty of Pelindaba, 1996)
 - Central Asia (Treaty of Semipalatinsk, 2006)

8.6. INTERMEDIATE-RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES (INF) TREATY

Why in news?

Recently, U.S.A (and then Russia) suspended its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

Background

- The erstwhile President of USSR Mikhail Gorbachev and American President Ronald Reagan signed a **Comprehensive intermediate-range missile elimination agreement** which culminated in the INF treaty in 1987.
- Since 2013, however, both Russia and America have accused each other of violating terms of the treaty.

What is the INF treaty?

- It is a cold war era **arms control treaty** between the United States and Russia under which both agreed not to develop, produce, possess or deploy any ground-based ballistic and cruise missiles that have a range between 500 and 5,500 km. It however exempted the

air-launched and sea-based missile systems in the same range.

- It mandated agreeing parties to destroy all such existing weapons within three years of the signing of the treaty and also clarified that **each of the parties could withdraw from the treaty** with a six-month notice.
- It laid out a **comprehensive inspection protocol**, whereby each of the parties could inspect and monitor each other's' elimination process.
- However, it was a bilateral agreement between US and USSR which left the **other nuclear weapon powers free to develop ground based intermediate range forces**.

Related information

- The **Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)** between the United States and Soviet Union in the late 1960s-1970s led to further weapons control agreements.
- The **Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties** were signed, as START I and START II, by the US and Soviet Union, further restricting weapons.

8.7. BREXIT

Why in news?

After months of negotiation, the UK and EU agreed a Brexit deal at Brussels summit.

What is Brexit?

- Brexit is the withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU), following a referendum held on 23 June 2016 in which 51.9 per cent of those voting supported leaving the EU.
- The invocation of **Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty** set a two-year process which was due to conclude with the UK's exit on 29 March 2019.
- On 21 March 2019 the European Council agreed to the UK's request to extend the deadline and extended it to 12 April 2019.

Terms of agreement of the deal

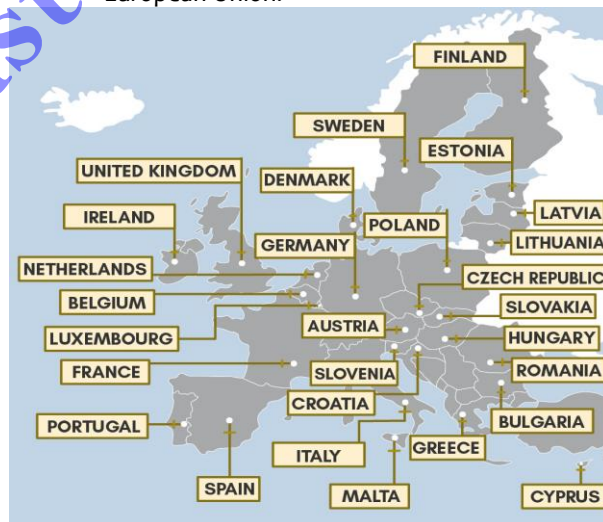
- A **draft agreement on Britain's withdrawal** from the European Union is a legally-binding text that sets out the terms of the UK's departure. It includes:
 - **Commitments over citizens' rights after Brexit** - people will be able to work and study where they currently live, and to be joined by family members.
 - A 21-month transition period after the UK's departure, to allow time for trade talks.
 - The UK would continue to follow all EU rules during this period in order to give

governments and businesses more time to prepare for long term changes.

- A "fair financial settlement" from the UK - also known as the £39bn "divorce bill".
- A "backstop" arrangement to keep the Irish border unmanned if trade talks don't come up with a way of avoiding that happening.

European Union

- It is an economic and political partnership involving 28 European countries.
- **Maastricht Treaty** (or Treaty on European Union) which entered into force in 1993, is responsible for the creation of EU.
 - It paved the way for the creation of a single European currency- Euro as well as European central bank.
 - It granted EU citizenship to every person with citizenship of a member state.
- **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.



India and EU

- The first India-EU Summit took place in Lisbon on 28 June 2000 and marked a watershed in the evolution of the relationship.
- At the 5th India-EU Summit held at The Hague in 2004, the relationship was upgraded to a 'Strategic Partnership'.
- The two sides adopted a Joint Action Plan in 2005 (which was reviewed in 2008).
- India-EU relations received another boost with the 13th India-EU Summit at Brussels in March 2016 adopting the India-EU Agenda 2020, which lays

down a road map for cooperation on a wide range of issues including nuclear cooperation, investments, Internet Governance, climate change, 5G communications etc.

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.

8.8. VENEZUELA CRISIS

Why in news?

The United Nations announced health and nutritional aid for crisis-stricken Venezuela through **Central Emergency Response Fund** (CERF).

More on news

- **Hyperinflation** (extremely fast or out of control inflation) is the biggest problem faced by Venezuela. The economic crisis has also led to food shortage and hit the public health system, making medicine, equipment inaccessible to its people.
- **Central Emergency Response Fund:**
 - It is a humanitarian fund established by the UN General Assembly in 2006 to enable more timely and reliable humanitarian assistance to those affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts.
 - It has 126 UN Member States and observers, and receives support from regional Governments, corporate donors, foundations and individuals.
 - CERF objectives:
 - ✓ Promote early action and response to avoid loss of life.

- ✓ Enhance response to time-critical requirements.
- ✓ Strengthen core elements of humanitarian response in underfunded crises.



8.9. PLACES OF CONFLICT AND COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

Why in News?

- The USA is planning to **withdraw its troops from Afghanistan and Syria**
- A UN mediated ceasefire has been reached between Houthi **rebels in Yemen** and **President Hadi's forces** in the port city of Hodeida.

Places of conflict	Communities affected	Important associated cities
Yemen crisis	Houthis belonging to Zaidi tribes	Sanaa (capital city)
Syrian crisis	Kurds who want Kurdistan – comprising of border areas from Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Iran and Armenia.	In Syria - Aleppo, Palmyra, Raqqa In Iraq – Kirkuk, Mosul
Lebanon	Hezbollah aim at driving Israel from Lebanon.	Tripoli, Beirut
Afghanistan	Pashtun community (Taliban insurgency is mainly restricted to this community)	Mazar-i-Sharif

9. ISSUES RELATED TO SECURITY

9.1. ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

Why in news?

The Indian Navy has commissioned a new airbase, **INS Kohasa**, 100 miles north of Port Blair in the strategically located Andaman and Nicobar islands.

More on News

- This will be India's **fourth** air base and the **third naval air facility** in the archipelago. The Navy currently operates air strips at Port Blair and *INS Baaz* at Campbell Bay, while the Air Force has a base in Car Nicobar. The islands also house **India's only tri-service (land, sea & air) theatre command**.
- With increased contestation in the region and in an effort to keep an eye on movements, India has considerably **upgraded military infrastructure in the islands**.
- In 2017, the **Island Development Agency (IDA)** was established for the holistic development of the islands, focusing on community-based tourism. It is chaired by Union Home Minister.
 - In the first phase, Smith, Ross, Aves, Long and Little Andaman in Andaman and Nicobar while Minicoy, Bangaram, Suheli, Cherium and Tinnakara in Lakshadweep have been selected for their holistic development.

Related News

Joint Logistic Node

- Government has decided to set a joint logistic node at the India's only tri-services command in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- It will provide logistical support to all three defence services and will improve utilisation of resources, manpower and remove duplication.
- The joint logistics node comprises of three elements:
 - Joint Logistics Command & Control Centre (JLC&CC), which is the overall command organisation,
 - Tri-services Detachment at Material Organisation (TRIDAMO), which will meet logistical needs of the armed forces and
 - Tri-services Advanced Detachment (TRISAD), based on mainland and responsible for sending troops and equipment to the nodes.

Renaming of 3 islands

- Prime Minister announced renaming of 3 islands of Andaman and Nicobar archipelago as a tribute to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: Ross Island as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep, Neil Island as Shaheed Dweep and Havelock Island as Swaraj Dweep.



9.2. PERMANENT CHAIRMAN OF THE CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Why in News?

The three services have agreed on the appointment of a Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (PCCoSC).

About PCCoSC

- It is proposed to be headed by a **four-star military officer**, who will be equivalent to chiefs of army, airforce and navy.
- He would **look into joint issues of the services** like training of troops, acquisition of weapon systems and joint operations of the services.
- He would also be **in-charge of the tri-services command** at Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- Various committees such as the **Kargil Review committee** led by K Subramaniam and the **Naresh Chandra committee** of 2011 recommended a permanent chairman.

Current Structure in India

- The Chief of Staff Committee (CoSC) consists of Army, Navy and Air Force chiefs.
- It is headed by the **senior-most** of the three chiefs **in rotation** till he retires.
- It is a platform where the three service chiefs discuss important military issues.

9.3. STRATEGIC POLICY GROUP

Why in news?

The Strategic Policy Group (SPG) has been **reconstituted with National Security Advisor (NSA)** as its chief.

Strategic Policy Group (SPG)

- It was set up in 1999.
- It is the first tier of National Security Council structure.
- It is mandated to publish National Defense Review- a draft of short term and long-term security threats and defense matters for consideration of NSC.
- The SPG shall be the principal mechanism for inter-ministerial coordination and integration of relevant inputs in the formulation of national security policies.
- The Cabinet Secretary will coordinate the implementation of SPG decisions by the Union Ministries and departments and State governments.

Other recent reforms in National Security Architecture

- Three deputy National Security Advisors have been appointed instead of just one, while the post of military advisor has been revived.
- A **Defence Planning Committee**, headed by the NSA, has been set up to align National security needs and defence resources into one decision making box.

National Security Architecture of India

- **Cabinet Committee on Security** is the apex body for executive action on matters of national security.
- CCS is **chaired by the PM** and normally includes the Ministers of Defence, External Affairs, Home and Finance.
- Both National Security Council (NSC) and CCS have a common membership which helps in easier decision making and implementation.
- National Security Council, NSC and National Security Advisor, NSA advises the Prime Minister's Office on matters of National security.
- NTRO (National Technical Research Organization) is a technical intelligence agency under NSA.

National Security Council

- It is the top **executive body** of India which **advises the Prime Minister's Office** on matters of national security and strategic interests.
- It was established in 1998.
- It has a three tier Organizational Structure consisting of Strategic Policy Group (SPG), National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) and National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS).

9.4. BORDER AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (BADP)

Why in news?

The Centre has increased its outlay under Border Area Development Programme for the all-round development of villages located along the international border in 17 states.

About BADP

- It is a **Core of the core Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)** and is now part of the **National Development Agenda**.
- Department of Border Management is implementing the scheme through the State Governments, in 111 border districts in 17 States.
- It has three primary objectives: (a) **to create infrastructure** (b) **provide economic opportunities to the border people**, and (c) **to instil a sense of security among them**.

9.5. NEW INITIATIVES TO CURB LEFT WING EXTREMISM

Why in news?

Recently MHA has taken various measures to tackle Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in India.

Various initiatives

- **Black Panther combat force** – A specialised anti-Naxal combat force for Chhattisgarh on the lines of Greyhounds unit. The Greyhounds are a special force that specialize in Jungle warfare and anti-insurgency operations against Naxalites with jurisdiction limited to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- **Bastariya Batallion** - It is newly formed battalion of CRPF with more than 534 tribal youth from four highly naxal infested districts of Chhattisgarh. Another remarkable feature of it is its adequate female representation which is in sync with the Government's policy of 33% reservation for women making it the first composite battalion in any of paramilitary forces.
- **Approval of Projects under USOF** - Union cabinet has approved the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) supported scheme to provide mobile services in 96 districts of LWE-affected states.

Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)

- USOF was created under department of telecommunications and given statutory status through Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003.
- The Fund is to be utilized exclusively for meeting the Universal Service Obligation.
- Its objectives include:
 - **Economic:** Network extension & stimulate uptake of the ICT services
 - **Social:** Mainstreaming the underserved & unserved areas/groups by bridging the Access Gap
 - **Political:** to enable citizens exercise their political rights in an informed way and
 - **Constitutional:** Equitable distribution of the

fruits of the telecom/digital revolution and fair allocation of national resource (pooled USO levy) via targeted subsidies

- It derives its funding from **Universal Service Levy (USL)** charged from all the telecom operators on their Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) which are then deposited into the Consolidated Fund of India.

9.6. CENTRAL ARMED POLICE FORCES

Why in News?

Recently, Standing Committee on Home Affairs submitted its report on **Working Conditions in Central Armed Police Forces**.

More on news

- The report has identified various issues such as: bureaucratization of armed forces, poor infrastructure, shortage of arms, high vacancies etc.

Central Armed Police Forces under Administrative Control of Ministry of Home Affairs	
Border Guarding Forces	Non-Border Guarding
Assam Rifles: Guards the Indo-Myanmar border.	Central Industrial Security Force (CISF): Provides security for critical infrastructures.
Border Security Force (BSF): Guards the Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Bangladesh borders.	Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF): Deployed for maintaining internal security.
Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP): Guards the Indo-China border.	National Security Guard (NSG): Deployed for anti-terrorist activities.
Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB): Guards the Indo-Bhutan and Indo-Nepal borders.	

9.7. NSG COMMANDOS TO BE DRAFTED IN J&K

Why in news?

The Centre has decided to deploy National Security Guard (NSG) commandos in J&K to fortify counter terrorism operations.

About NSG

- It is an Indian special forces unit under the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
- It was **established in 1984**, following Operation Blue Star and the assassination of Indira Gandhi for combating terrorist activities.
- It is **not categorised under Central Armed Police Force (CAPF)** but has a special forces

mandate. Its core operational capability is provided by Special Action Group (SAG) drawn from Indian Army.

- The NSG personnel are commonly referred to as **Black Cats** because of the black outfit and black cat insignia worn on their uniform.

9.8. DEFENCE MINISTRY ISSUES NEW GUIDELINES FOR START-UPS

Why in news?

Ministry of Defence has specified **new rules for Indian start-ups** to enable them to take part in military projects.

More on news

- The **startups registered with DIPP** will qualify for defence projects.
- Categories include: aeronautics, nanotechnology, virtual reality, green technology, internet of things etc.
- Armed services have identified multiple projects under this in Make II category.

As per **Defence Procurement Procedure-2016**, there are two sub-categories of **'Make' Procedure**:

- **Make-I (Government Funded):** It will involve **Government funding of 90%**, released in a phased manner.
- **Make-II (Industry Funded):** Under this, private industry funds the research for the product on its own and develops a prototype. There will be **no government funding** for developing the prototype but there is an assurance of orders on successful development and trials of the prototype.

Under the new policy, top priority to acquiring weapons will be given to Buy (Indian — IDDM) followed by Buy (Indian), Buy and Make (Indian), and Buy and Make (Global); the last priority will be given to Buy (Global) category. IDDM stands for Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured

9.9. TERRORIST TRAVEL INITIATIVE

Why in news?

Recently **Terrorist Travel Initiative**, under **auspices of Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF)** was launched.

Terrorist Travel Initiative

- It will bring together national and local governments, law enforcement and border screening practitioners, and international organizations to share expertise on how to

develop and implement effective counterterrorism watch listing and screening tools.

- The initiative will develop a set of good practices which will reinforce countries and organizations to use border security tools prescribed in **UNSC Resolution 2396 to stop terrorist travel.**

About Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF)

- It is an **informal, apolitical, multilateral counterterrorism (CT) platform**, launched in 2011.
- It develops good practices and tools for policy-makers and practitioners to strengthen CT civilian capabilities, national strategies, action plans and training modules.
- **India is a founding member of GCTF.**

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10. MISCELLANEOUS

10.1. GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION

UN member states (except the U.S. and Hungary) have agreed on a Global Compact for Migration.

About Global Compact for Migration

- It is framed in accordance with **target 10.7 of the SDG** in which Member States committed to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration.
- This Global Compact sets out a common understanding, shared responsibilities and unity of purpose regarding migration, making it work for all.
- The **major objectives of the compact** include:
 - Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.
 - Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration and reducing vulnerability in migration.
 - Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work.
 - Manage borders in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner.
 - Use migration detention only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives.
 - Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion.
 - Establish mechanisms for the portability of social security entitlements and earned benefits.
- It is **not legally binding**. It does not dictate nor impose and it fully respects the sovereignty of States.
- It is the **first-ever UN global agreement** on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions.
- The process of developing compact was started in early 2017 as implementation of decision by UN member states as adopted **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants** in September 2016.

Related news: International Organisation for Migration

Portugal's Antonio Vitorino was recently elected as head of International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

- Established in 1951, IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.
- It is headquartered at Le Grand-Saconnex, Switzerland.
- It was **founded in the wake of the World War II** to resettle refugees from Europe.
- In 2016 it became a **related organization of the United Nations**.

- **IOM X** is IOM's campaign to encourage safe migration and public action to stop exploitation and human trafficking.

10.2. EXTRADITION

Recently, UK Court ordered the **extradition of fugitive** Vijay Mallya to India to face fraud charges resulting from the collapse of his defunct Kingfisher Airlines.

What is Extradition?

- Extradition is the delivery on the part of one State to another of those whom it is desired to deal with for crimes of which they have been accused or convicted and are justifiable in the Courts of the other State.
- Extradition Act 1962 provides India's legislative basis for extradition.
- **Nodal authority for Extradition in India:** Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India is the Central/Nodal Authority that administers the Extradition Act and it processes incoming and outgoing Extradition Requests.

Difference Between Extradition and other process

- **In deportation**, a person is ordered to leave a country and is not allowed to return to that country.
- **In exclusion**, a person is prohibited from staying in a particular part of a sovereign state.
- Deportation and Exclusion are **non-consensual orders** that do not require a treaty obligation. Deportation is governed by the **Foreigners Act, 1946**.

Related News - Interpol Issued Red Corner notice against Mehul Choksi

- **About Interpol (International Criminal Police Organization)**
- It is an international organization facilitating international police cooperation. It has 194 member countries and has HQ at Lyon, France.
- **Notices** are international requests for cooperation or alerts allowing police in member countries to share critical crime-related information.
- The **CBI is the nodal authority** that executes and handles the issuance of all Interpol Notices in India. There are liaison officers in every state police force as well.
- **Types of Interpol notices:**
 - **Red notice:** To seek the location and arrest of wanted persons with a view to extradition or similar lawful action.
 - **Blue notice:** To collect additional information about a person's identity, location or activities in relation to a crime.
 - **Green notice:** to provide warnings and intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offences and are likely to repeat these crimes in other countries.

- **Yellow notice:** to help locate missing persons, often minors, or to help identify persons who are unable to identify themselves.
- **Black notice:** To seek information on unidentified bodies.
- **Orange notice:** to warn of an event, a person, an object or a process representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety.
- **Purple notice:** To seek or provide information on modi operandi, objects, devices and concealment methods used by criminals.
- **The INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council Special Notice:** Issued for individuals and entities that are subject to sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

10.3. DRAFT EMIGRATION BILL

The Ministry of External Affairs has proposed for introduction of the Emigration Bill, 2019 in Parliament that will replace the existing Emigration Act, 1983.

More on news

- The extant legislative framework for all matters related to emigration of Indian nationals is **prescribed by the Emigration Act 1983**. The bill will replace this act.

Other government initiatives for the overseas Indians

- **MADAD Portal:** It is an **online grievances monitoring** system launched by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in 2015. The e-portal provides Indian citizens living abroad an online platform in which they can **file consular grievances** to the Indian government.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, 2017:** It is a **mandatory insurance scheme** aimed at safeguarding the interests of Indian emigrant workers falling under Emigration Check Required (ECR) category going for overseas employment to ECR countries.
- **Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF):** It is aimed at assisting Overseas Indian nationals in times of distress and emergency in the 'most deserving cases'.
- **Indian Workers Resource Centre** has been opened in host countries to serve as a one stop service outlet for the information and assistance needs of emigrants.
- **The Mahatma Gandhi Suraksha Pravasi Yojana (MGPSY),** a voluntary scheme with the objective of protection and welfare of the emigrant workers and to address their social security issues in ECR countries.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas:** is organized every two years and provides platform for overseas Indian Community to engage with the government.
 - The day commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January 1915. However, this year the dates have been shifted to January 21 to 23 to accommodate Republic Day, Kumbh Mela celebrations.
 - During PBD overseas Indians are also honored with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman for their contributions to various fields both in India and abroad.

- **Theme of PBD 2019** – role of Indian Diaspora in building new India.
- **Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojna:** was launched at PBD 2019 and under this, Overseas Indians in the **age group 45-60** will be taken on nationwide tour of **religious places**.
 - ✓ This will be sponsored by Center and the State Government.
 - ✓ **First preference** to people from **Girmitiya countries**.
 - ✓ Girmityas or Jahajis are descendants of indentured Indian labourers brought to Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa, East Africa, the Malay Peninsula, Caribbean and South America (Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname) to work on sugarcane plantations by European colonizers.

10.4. MISSION RAKSHA GYAN SHAKTI

- The **Department of Defence Production** has instituted a new framework titled 'Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti' to inculcate Intellectual Property Right culture in Indian defence manufacturing ecosystem.
- The Directorate General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) under Ministry of Defence is coordinating and implementing the programme.

10.5. RAISINA DIALOGUE 2019

- The fourth edition of the Raisina Dialogue, India's flagship annual conference on geopolitics and geo-economics, themed '**A World Reorder: New Geometries; Fluid Partnerships; Uncertain Outcomes**' was recently held in New Delhi.
- The conference is hosted by the **Observer Research Foundation** (independent think tank) in collaboration with the Government of India, **Ministry of External Affairs**.
- The **United States Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC)** launched a new innovation initiative titled "**Fair Value for Innovation**" at the Raisina Dialogue. It will examine economic underpinnings that would enable breakthrough innovation, and explore how policymakers can harness innovation capital in India and around the globe through research, advocacy, partnerships, and programs.
- In a diplomatic initiative to address the lingering conflicts and mistrust in the Gulf region, **Iran** proposed a new platform "**Persian Gulf Regional Dialogue Forum**" for regional peace building.

10.6. BEIRUT DECLARATION

- At the conclusion of the **Arab Economic and Social Development Summit**, countries taking

part in the summit issued a joint statement called the Beirut Declaration.

- It called for **establishment of an Arab free trade zone** and the international community to **support countries hosting refugees and displaced people**.

10.7. UIGHURS

- Recently there have been reports that about one million Uighur Muslims are being detained in the western Xinjiang region of China.
- Uyghurs are ethnically **Turkic Muslims** living primarily in the **Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China** and are recognized as ethnic minorities in China.

10.8. KERCH STRAIT

- Recently an accident in the Kerch strait caused death of 6 Indians.
- The Kerch Strait is a strait **connecting the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov**, separating the Kerch Peninsula of Crimea in the west from the Taman Peninsula of Russia's Krasnodar Krai in the east.



10.9. FARZAD-B GAS BLOCK

- India may get easier terms for **Iran's Farzad-B gas field** as discussions continue.
- The gas field is **located in Persian Gulf** under the control of Iranian sovereignty and India is progressing on acquisition and exploration of this.

10.10. CATALONIA

- Spain's prime minister has proposed a referendum on whether Catalonia should be given greater autonomy, in a bid to dampen tensions between Madrid and Barcelona.
- Catalonia is an autonomous community in Spain on the northeastern corner of the **Iberian Peninsula**, designated as a nationality by its Statute of Autonomy.
- Catalonia consists of four provinces: **Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona**.

10.11. INSTEX SAS

- **France, Germany and the United Kingdom (E3)**, announced the creation of INSTEX SAS (Instrument for Supporting Trade Exchanges).
- It is a **Special Purpose Vehicle** aimed at facilitating **legitimate trade between European economic operators and Iran**.
- It will function as a **non-dollar, euro-denominated clearing house** or payments channel that avoids monetary transfers in dollars between the EU and Iran with E3 as shareholders.
- It would be based in France with a German banker heading it and UK will head the supervisory board.
- It will focus initially on sectors such as pharmaceutical, medical devices and agri-food goods which are not the target of the US's sanctions.

10.12. GILETS JAUNES PROTESTS

- Recently **France** has witnessed a mass movement called **Gilets Jaunes (Yellow Vests)** Protests which is also spreading to other countries like Belgium, Italy, Bulgaria, Germany, etc.
- A **grassroots citizens' protest movement** began in early November against a planned rise in the tax on diesel and petrol, which French President insisted would aid the country's transition to green energy.
- The movement was named "gilets jaunes" because protesters wear the fluorescent yellow high-vis jackets that all motorists must by law carry in their cars.

10.13. SWEDEN'S FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY MANUAL

- Sweden recently launched feminist foreign policy manual.
- In December 2014, Sweden became the first country to adopt a feminist foreign policy.
- **Feminist Foreign Policy** is a course of action towards those outside national boundaries that is guided by a commitment to gender equality.

10.14. MILITARY EXERCISES IN NEWS

Surya Kiran	India & Nepal Army
Vijay Prahar	Indian Army and Air Force
Malabar 2018	Trilateral Naval Exercise of India, Japan and USA.
Ind-Indo CORPAT	India and Indonesia Navy
Maitree Exercise 2018	India and Thailand Armed forces
Exercise Kazind 2018	India and Kazakhstan Military
Yudh Abhyas	India and US Military
Exercise Slinex 2018	India and Sri Lanka navy

Nomadic Elephant	India and Mongolia military
BIMSTEC MILEX-18	BIMSTEC nations
Exercise Aviaindra-18	India and Russia Airforce
IBSAMAR	India, Brazil and South Africa Navy
JIMEX-18	India and Japan Navy
SAHYOG HOP TAC-2018	India and Vietnam Coast Guards
Vajra Prahar	India and US Army
KONKAN-18	India and UK Navy
SHINYUU Maitri-18	India and Japan Airforce
Exercise Sea Vigil	Indian coast guards, Indian Army and the Indian Air Force, Indian Navy.
Hand-in-Hand	India and China Army
Indra Navy 2018	India and Russia Navy
IMBEX 2018-19	India and Myanmar Army
India-Africa Field Training Exercise (IAFTX)-2019	India and African Countries Army

Cutlass Express 2019	Maritime forces from East Africa, West Indian Ocean nations, Europe, and the United States
Cobra Gold exercise	Armies of Thailand, United States, Singapore, Japan, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and South Korea.
Exercise Topchi	Indian Army
Exercise Rahat	Joint exercise of Indian Army and NDMA for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations
Operation Nistar	Conducted to bring back Indians stranded in Socotra island (Yemen) after Cyclone Mekunu hit the area.
Operation Samudra Maitri	To assist the survivors of earthquake and consequent Tsunami in Central Sulawesi province of Indonesia.