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Classroom Study Material

# **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

JUNE 2016 – FEB 2017

**NOTE:** March 2017 to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 current affairs for PT 365 economy will be updated on our website on third week of May 2017.

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# 1. INDIA AND WORLD

## 1.1. INDIA-PAKISTAN

### 1.1.1. BALOCHISTAN ISSUE

#### Why in news?

In a significant shift in policy on Pakistan, Prime Minister made a reference to the Baloch freedom struggle in his Independence Day speech.

#### Issue of Balochistan

- Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province, which is home to over 13 million people, mostly Balochis.
- When Pakistan was born in 1947, the rulers of the **Khanate of Kalat**, which was a princely state under the British and part of today's Balochistan, refused to join the new nation.
- Pakistan sent troops in March 1948 to annex the territory.
- Though **Yar Khan**, the then ruler of Kalat, later signed a treaty of accession, his brothers and followers continued to fight.

#### Armed conflict

- There are several separatist groups in the province.
- The strongest among them is the **Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)**, designated as a terrorist group by Pakistan and the UK.

#### Major projects

The province is now holding greater importance in Pakistan's grand economic and geopolitical strategies.

- China has proposed to build at an investment of \$46 billion linking the deepwater port of Gwadar with the city of Kashgar, a trading hub in the western Chinese region of Xinjiang.
- The Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline is also planned to go through Balochistan.



### 1.1.2. GILGIT-BALTISTAN

- **Gilgit-Baltistan** is a chunk of high-altitude territory at the northwestern corner of Jammu and Kashmir. The region was a part of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, but has been under Pakistan's control since November 1947.
- The region was renamed 'The Northern Areas of Pakistan'. After the Pakistani government enacted the Gilgit-Baltistan Empowerment and Self-Governance Order in August 2009, the 'Northern Areas' came to be known as Gilgit-Baltistan.
- India sees Gilgit-Baltistan as part of Indian territory illegally occupied by Pakistan.
- The unanimous parliamentary resolution of 1994 had reaffirmed



that the region is a “part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India by virtue of its accession to it in 1947”.

### China role

- Since the Pakistan-China agreement in 1963 which saw the transfer of the **Shaksgam Valley** to China, Beijing has been an important player in the region.
- China constructed the **Karakoram Highway** linking **Kashgar in Xinjiang with Gilgit**.
- China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (**CPEC**) passes through this region.

### 1.1.3. IWT

#### Why in News?

- In the wake of the Uri attack, several experts have demanded that India withdraw from the Indus Waters Treaty and also MFN status to Pakistan.
- **Kishanganga Hydroelectric Plant Dispute:** Pakistan has lodged a fresh complaint with World Bank over a run-of-the-river project on Kishanganga River (tributary of Jhelum) in J&K. It has disputed over construction of **Ratle Dam** over Chenab River.
- **Baglihar Dam Issue:** is a run-of-the-river power project on the Chenab River. Pakistan claimed that design parameters of Baglihar project violated the Indus Water Treaty.

#### Review of Indus Water Treaty

Centre drew up a list of measures to optimize use of the Indus waters that India has so far failed to do.

- It has decided to set up an inter-ministerial committee to study further options on IWT.
- The government also decided to build more run-of-the-river hydropower projects on western rivers, to exploit the full potential of 18,600 MW (current projects come to 11,406 MW).
- A decision was taken to review restarting the Tulbul navigation project that India had suspended after Pakistan's objections in 1987.

#### Indus Water Treaty (IWT)

The Indus Waters Treaty was signed on September 19, 1960 by the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistan's President Ayub Khan.

- The 1960 treaty for the Indus and five tributaries flowing from India to Pakistan was brokered by **the World Bank (then, the IBRD)**.
- According to the treaty, **Beas, Ravi and Sutlej** are to be governed by **India**, while, **Indus, Chenab and Jhelum** are to be taken care by **Pakistan**.
- However, since Indus flows from India, it is **allowed to use 20 per cent of its water** for irrigation, power generation and transport purposes.
- **A Permanent Indus Commission** was set up as a bilateral commission to implement and manage the Treaty. The Commission solves disputes arising over water sharing. The Treaty also provides arbitration mechanism to solve disputes amicably.
- Though **Indus originates** from Tibet, China has been kept out of the Treaty. If China decides to stop or change the flow of the river, it will affect both India and Pakistan.

#### Dispute resolution mechanism

The Treaty recognizes three categories of such divergence and mechanism for their resolution:

- **'Questions'** to be discussed and resolved at the level of the Indus Commission, or at the level of the two governments;
- **'Differences'** (that is, unresolved 'questions') to be referred to a **Neutral Expert (NE)** if they are of certain kinds (that is, broadly speaking, differences of a technical nature); and
- **'Disputes'** (going beyond 'differences') that can be referred to a **Court of Arbitration**.

#### 1.1.4. MOST FAVOURED NATION (MFN)

- Under WTO rules, a member country cannot discriminate between its trade partners. If a special status is granted to a trade partner, it must be extended to all members of the WTO.
- Thus, MFN is a treatment accorded to a trade partner to ensure non-discriminatory trade between two countries vis-a-vis other trade partners.
- While India has given the status to Pakistan in 1996, it has not reciprocated.

#### 1.1.5. UNMOGIP

##### Why in news?

- Swedish Major General Per Lodin has been appointed in, as chief military observer and head of mission for **UN Military Observer Group in India & Pakistan (UNMOGIP)**, for the term of two years.

##### About UNMOGIP

- It was established in 1948 to investigate and mediate the dispute between the two countries over Kashmir.
- India does not recognize its mandate as it considers it to be a bilateral issue as recognized by the Shimla agreement of 1972.
- Recently, UN clarified that its mandate is limited to LoC, whereby it needs to report on the ceasefire between the two countries along LoC. Thus, UN will no longer monitor situation in Kashmir.

### 1.2. INDIA-AFGHANISTAN

#### President Ghani paid official visit to India

- Signed an Extradition Treaty to facilitate exchange of wanted terrorists and criminals.
- Agreements on peaceful uses of outer space and on cooperation on civil and commercial matters.
- India extended a \$1-billion for 'capacity and capability building' in education, health, agriculture, skill, women empowerment, energy, infra and strengthening of democratic institutions.

#### Prime Minister Modi and Afghan President Ghani in Afghanistan

- Inaugurated Afghan-India Friendship Dam in Herat province, Afghanistan.
- PM was conferred with Afghanistan's highest civilian honour, **the Amir Amanullah Khan Award**.
- The Afghan govt. in 2015 changed the name of the project from Salma dam to Afghan-India Friendship Dam.
- The 42 MW dam will boost the agricultural and industrial sectors of Herat.



#### India's contribution in institution and infrastructure building:

- India has contributed \$2 billion in institution and infrastructure development in Afghanistan.
- It has also signed the **TAPI pipeline project** that aims to bring natural gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan and Pakistan to India.

### 1.3. INDIA-BHUTAN

##### Why in news?

- The Union Cabinet approved a new agreement for a free trade regime between India and Bhutan.
- The previous Agreement on Trade, Commerce and Transit between India and Bhutan was signed on July 29, 2006 for a period of ten years.

## About the new Agreement

- The new agreement provides for
  - ✓ A free trade regime between two countries.
  - ✓ Duty free transit of Bhutanese merchandise for trade with **third countries**.
  - ✓ Bilateral trade between will continue to be transacted in Indian Rupees and Bhutanese Ngultrums.
- The new agreement removed requirement of having an annual consultation between India and Bhutan for the transit of goods of both countries along with the goods originating in third country

## 1.4. INDIA-BANGLADESH

### 1.4.1. SYLHET CITY

India and Bangladesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the sustainable development of **Sylhet city** with **financial aid** from **India**.

- Under the project in Sylhet, the Indian government will provide financial aid for the construction of a five-storey Kinder Garten and High School Building, a six-storey cleaner colony building; and for some development work in Dhupa Dighirpar area at a total cost of around Taka 240 million.
- The signing was the follow-up of an earlier MoU which was signed by India and Bangladesh in April 2013 for the implementation of sustainable development projects in socio-economic sectors of Bangladesh.

### 1.4.2. PETRAPOLE INTEGRATED CHECK POST (ICP)

- Indian and Bangladesh Prime Minister jointly inaugurated the Petrapole ICP in July 2016 through video-conferencing.
- Petrapole-Benapole is an important land border crossing for India-Bangladesh trade. More than **50 per cent of the India-Bangladesh trade** passes through Petrapole.
- Petrapole ICP will be **the second ICP** on the India-Bangladesh border after the Agartala ICP at the Agartala (India)-Akhaura (Bangladesh) land border.
- It will also be the biggest land port in South Asia.

### 1.4.3. AKASHVANI MAITREE

President launched "**Akashvani Maitree**" Channel .The channel is a unique venture of All India Radio aimed at strengthening ties between India and Bangladesh. The service will be broadcast on 596 KHz.

## 1.5. INDIA-SRI LANKA: FISHERMEN ISSUE

### Why in news?

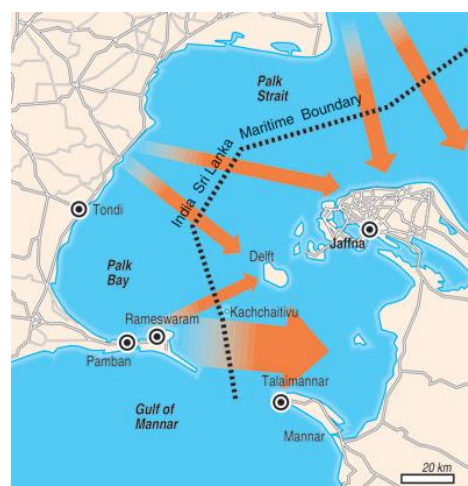
India and Sri Lanka have agreed to set up a Joint Working Group on Fisheries (JWG) and a hotline between their Coast Guards to address the long-standing issue of fishermen from Tamil Nadu being arrested.

### Related Information

- The bone of contention between the two sides is the Palk bay, the 137 km long and its breadth varies between 64 to 137 km.
- An **International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL)** separates five Indian and three Sri Lankan districts.
- The Palk Bay has been providing rich fishing grounds for both the countries. However, multiple issues have compounded in recent decades to bring tensions in the region.

### Issue of Sovereignty of Kachchatheevu

- The maritime boundary agreements of 1974 and 1976 delimited international boundaries in the Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar and Bay of Bengal, respectively.





- The island previously used to be under the Zamindari system of land tenure established by the British. At the time of ceding, India did not consider Kachchatheevu to be its part but rather a disputed territory.
- According to Tamil Nadu government, the sufferings of Indian Tamil fishermen is a direct consequence of ceding Kachchatheevu to Sri Lanka and sacrificing the traditional fishing rights enjoyed by Indian fishermen.
- According to the then foreign minister, Swaran Singh, though the island was ceded to Sri Lanka, the Indian fishermen continued to enjoy their traditional rights of fishing in and around Kachchatheevu

## 1.6. INDIA-MYANMAR

### 1.6.1. VISIT OF PRESIDENT OF MYANMAR

#### Why in news?

H.E.U Htin Kyaw, President of Myanmar, paid a State visit to India in August, 2016.

#### List of MoUs/Agreement signed during the visit of President of Myanmar to India

- MoU on Cooperation in the construction of 69 Bridges including AP Approach Roads in the Tamu-Kyigone-Kalewa Road Section of the Trilateral Highway in Myanmar.
- MoU on Cooperation in the construction / upgradation of the Kalewa – Yagyi Road Section.
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine.

#### India's Foreign Minister visit to Myanmar

Indian FM visit in 2016 was first high level engagement after civilian government came to power in Myanmar.

- Myanmar's leaders assured that they would not allow any insurgent group to use its territory against India.
- Foreign Minister discussed areas of possible collaboration such as power with the Myanmar leadership. India is already supplying 3 MW electricity to Myanmar through the Moreh-Tamu link.

### 1.6.2. KOLKATA-MIZORAM TRADE ROUTE VIA MYANMAR

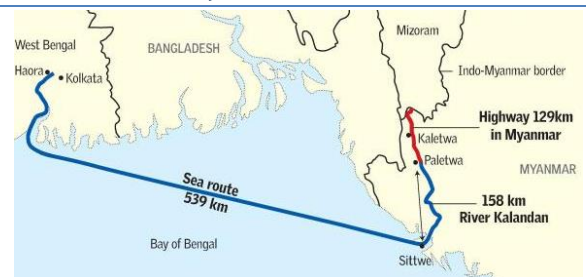
- The inauguration of Myanmar's deep water **Sittwe port** (built by India) in Bay of Bengal gives India an alternate route to chicken neck for north east.
- It will lower the cost and distance of movement from Kolkata to Mizoram and beyond

#### About Sittwe

- Sittwe is the capital of Rakhine State (which has been in the news for the plight of Rohingya Muslims) in south-western Myanmar.
- It is located at the mouth of the Kaladan river, which flows into Mizoram in north-eastern India.

### 1.6.3. KALADAN MULTI-MODAL TRANSIT TRANSPORT PROJECT

- The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is a project that will connect the seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Myanmar by sea.
- It will then link Sittwe seaport to Lashio in Myanmar via Kaladan river boat route and then from Lashio on to Mizoram in India by road transport.



### 1.6.4. KOKANG REBELS

The Kokangpeople are an ethnic group of Burma .They are Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese living in Kokang, administered as Kokang Special Region.

## 1.7. SOUTH EAST ASIA

### 1.7.1. INDIA-THAILAND-MYANMAR FRIENDSHIP MOTOR CAR RALLY

India flagged off a Friendship Motor Car Rally from India Gate lawns in Delhi to Bangkok.

#### About IMT trilateral Highway

- The India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway is an ambitious project of 1990 miles (3200 km) that will connect India with the ASEAN region.
- The highway will link Moreh in Manipur state (India), via Mandalay city (Myanmar) and to Mae Sot district (Thailand).
- Bangladesh has also been showing interest in joining the IMT highway through BIMSTEC.

### 1.7.2. INDIA-CAMBODIA

The Union Cabinet approved signing of the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) with Cambodia.

- It is the first Bilateral Investment Treaty in accordance with the text of the Indian Model BIT, approved by the Cabinet in December 2015.
- The treaty seeks to promote and protect investments from either country in the territory of the other country with the objective of increasing bilateral investment flows.

### 1.7.3. INDIA-INDONESIA

Indonesian President Joko Widodo paid official visit to India. This is his first visit after assuming power in 2014.

#### Outcomes of the visit

India and Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation decided to expand their defence and maritime security ties and resolved to deal with terrorism.

- A joint communiqué on combating illegal and unregulated fishing.
- A joint statement said the two leaders condemned terrorism in all forms, saying there must be **“zero tolerance”** of acts of terror.
- **South China Sea dispute:** The two sides called for resolving the issue through peaceful means and in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**.
- Both sides reiterated support for reforms to the U.N. and its principal organs, including the Security Council, with a view to making the global body more democratic, transparent and efficient.
- **Defense cooperation:** Both sides wanted early convening of the Defence Ministers' Dialogue and the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee meetings to upgrade the agreement on defence to a bilateral defence cooperation agreement.

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago, straddling the Indian and Pacific Oceans. It can potentially control **all the straits linking the southern Indian Ocean to the South China Sea.**



### 1.7.4. INDIA-SINGAPORE

#### Why in news?

- Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Lee Hsien Loong visited India recently.
- During the visit the following agreements were signed:
  - MoU in the field of Industrial Property Cooperation.
  - MoU on Technical and Vocational Education and Training
  - The agreements were signed for “smart cities” and “skill India”
- India signed a third protocol with Singapore to amend the bilateral **double taxation avoidance agreement (DTAA)**, in a move to check tax evasion.

### Main points about protocol

- The India-Singapore DTAA at present provides for residence-based taxation of capital gains of shares in a company. The Third Protocol amends the DTAA with effect from April, 2017 to provide for **source based taxation of capital gains** arising on transfer of shares in a company.
- It will allow India to levy capital gains tax on investments coming from Singapore.
- The tax rate will be half the prevailing Indian rate for the next two years and rates will be equated by April 2019.
- For first 2 years, India and Singapore will share the taxes on such gains equally and from third year onwards, all such taxes will accrue to India.

### 1.7.5. INDIA-VIETNAM

**A. Indian PM visited Vietnam, the two countries decided to upgrade their relationship from a “strategic partnership” to a “comprehensive strategic partnership”.**

- 12 agreements in a wide range of areas covering defence, IT, space, double taxation and sharing white shipping information
- **Defence Agreement:** India extended \$500 million Line of Credit to Vietnam for defence cooperation
- India had offered earlier \$100 million in 2013 to Vietnam to buy defense hardware. Though both countries have been negotiating the sale of **BrahMos missiles** (jointly produced by India and Russia), no decision was taken on the issue.

**B. The Defence Minister paid an official visit to Vietnam.**

- India has recently provided Vietnam with a US\$100 million Line of Credit which is being utilised by Vietnam for procurement of Offshore Patrol Boats for their Border Guards.
- Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Chairwoman of National Assembly of Vietnam, paid official visit to India.
- Vietnam is the **14th country with which India signed the civil nuclear deal**.
- MoU was signed between India's Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and Vietnam Electricity (EVN) on developing a partnership to jointly work in **the area of energy efficiency**.
- **Defence cooperation:**
  - ✓ India has agreed to train the southeast nation's Sukhoi-30 fighter pilots.
  - ✓ A memorandum of understanding was signed on peacekeeping as well as exchange of delegations.

### 1.7.6. INDIA AND PHILIPPINES

Kolkata-based public sector yard Garden Reach Ship Builders (GRSE) emerged as the lowest bidder to supply two warships to the Philippines Navy. It offered the **Kamorta class Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW)** ships.

- India exported its first warship to Mauritius in December 2014, an offshore patrol vessel.
- It is also set to supply 4 patrol vessels to Vietnam under \$100 million line of credit extended by India in 2014.

**'Act East' policy (AEP)**

- India's Act East Policy focusses on the extended neighbourhood in the Asia-Pacific region. The policy which was originally conceived as an economic initiative, has gained political, strategic and cultural dimensions.
- India has been actively beefing up relations in the region as part of its 'Act East' policy under which **maritime security and defence cooperation** are assuming a central role.
- AEP provides an interface between North East India including the state of Arunachal Pradesh and the ASEAN region.
- India continues with stepped up efforts to forge closer partnership with concerned regional and multilateral organization such as ASEAN, ARF, EAS, BIMSTEC, ACD, MCG and IORA.

## 1.8. INDIA-JAPAN

A MoU has been signed between Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Republic of India and The Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC) on Mutual Collaboration in Marine and Earth Science and Technology.

## Benefits

- Advance of academic research in Earth Sciences for peace and human welfare.
- Enhanced capability in atmospheric and climate research, ocean technology observation and hazard mitigation in case of disasters
- Boost to our “Blue Economy” with better research and exploration of marine resources.
- More exposure to Indian scientists by sharing of mutual experiences

## 1.9. INDIA AND SOUTH KOREA

- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing of an Undertaking between India and Korea on Mutual Recognition of Certificates.
- It is done in accordance with the provisions of regulation 1/10 of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) for Seafarers.
- It will pave way for recognition of maritime education and training, certificates of competency, endorsements, training documentary evidence and medical fitness certificates for seafarers issued by the Government of the other country
- It will facilitate cooperation between the two countries in the training, certification and management of seafarers.

## 1.10. INDIA-TAIWAN

### Why in news?

The three-member Taiwanese parliamentary delegation visited India. Taiwan is represented in New Delhi by a “**Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre**” and India has an “**India-Taipei Association**” in Taiwan.

### Obstacle in full development of relations:

- Taiwan still does not have **full diplomatic relations with India** and with several other countries, all important nations – blame it on the One China policy.
- India has followed the “**One China Policy**” for decades, and places restrictions on the official-level exchanges with Taipei.
- China has lodged a protest against India for hosting a Taiwanese parliamentary delegation and asked it to deal “prudently” with Taiwan-related matters.
- China has been objecting to such visits to India, maintaining that countries that have diplomatic relations with it should fulfil their commitment to the ‘**One China**’ policy.

### New Southbound Policy of Taiwan

Taiwan’s new government under President Tsai ing-Wen has launched the “New Southbound policy” which aims to energise Taiwan’s ties with the ASEAN region, Australia, New Zealand and India.

## 1.11. WEST ASIA

### 1.11.1. INDIA-UAE

#### Why in news?

- Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, crown Prince and deputy supreme commander of the armed forces of Abu Dhabi was the chief guest for the Republic Day.

#### UAE’s Importance for India

- **Energy security:** UAE is a significant contributor to India's energy security and was the fifth largest supplier of crude oil in 2015-16.
- **Important trading Partner:** bilateral trade last year stood at \$50 billion. It has \$4 billion in investments in areas ranging from smart cities to real estate.

#### Important agreements:

- Agreement on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
- MoU on cooperation in Defence Industry
- MoU on Institutional Cooperation on Maritime Transport
- MOU on technical development and cooperation in cyber space.

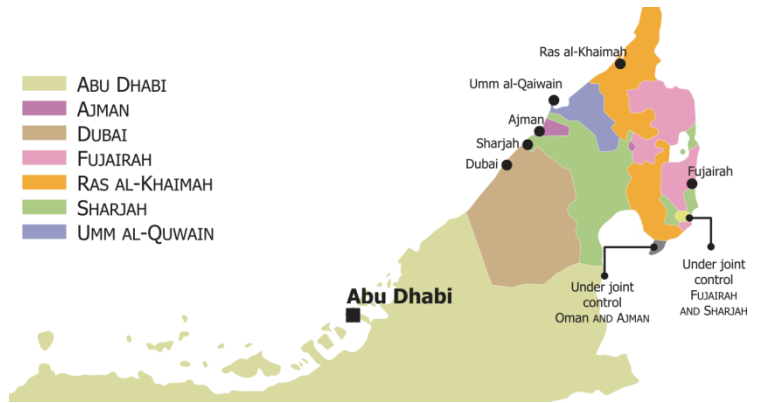
- **Security and welfare of Indian community:**

- ✓ Indians make up 30% of the population, 2.6 million — the single largest expatriate community in the UAE.
- ✓ India receives around 52% of its remittances from its Gulf expatriates.

- **To counter radicalization:** UAE is member of **Gulf cooperation council** - close cooperation is essential for maintaining stable relations in Gulf region and for counter radicalization.

- **To isolate Pakistan:**

- ✓ In 2015, during PM's visit, UAE made a critical shift in its policy by backing India on terrorism from Pakistani soil.
- ✓ The unspoken significance of the UAE visit is about **“ending Pakistan’s primacy”** in the UAE.



#### About GCC

- It is a regional intergovernmental political and economic union consisting of all Arab states of the Persian Gulf, except for Iraq.
- Its member states are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.
- The Charter of the Gulf Cooperation Council was signed on 25 May 1981, formally establishing the institution

### 1.11.2. INDIA-QATAR

Both Indian PM Visit to Qatar and Qatar PM visit to India in last one year.

#### Qatar’s Importance for India

- **Energy security:** Qatar is the largest supplier of LNG to India, accounting for 66 per cent of the total imports in 2015-16.
- **Important trading Partner:** Bilateral trade in 2014-15 standing at \$15.67 billion of which India’s exports were only \$1 billion.
- **Security and welfare of Indian community:** Indians form largest expatriate community in Qatar. There are over expatriate 630,000 Indians in Qatar.

### 1.11.3. INDIA AND IRAN

Prime Minister paid his first official visit to Iran. During the visit, the two sides signed 12 agreements on economy, trade, port development, culture, science, and academic cooperation.

#### **Chabahar port agreement**

India and Iran signed the “historic” Chabahar port agreement, which has the potential of becoming **India’s gateway to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Europe.**

- A contract for the development and operation for 10 years of two terminals and five berths.
- Extension of credit lines of \$500 million and Rs. 3,000 crore for importing steel rails and implementation of the port.
- MoU on provision of services by Indian Railways, including financing to the tune of \$1.6 billion, for the Chabahar-Zahedan railway line — also part of the trilateral agreement between India, Iran and Afghanistan on a transit and trade corridor.
- India will invest in setting up industries —from aluminium to urea plants — in **Chabahar free trade zone**



### Economic significance of Port

- Once the Chabahar port is developed, Indian ships will get direct access to the Iranian coast; a rail line to the Afghan border town of Zaranj will allow India a route around Pakistan.
- The Zaranj-Delaram road constructed by India in 2009 can give access to Garland Highway, setting up access to 4 major cities in Afghanistan — Herat, Kandahar, Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif.
- Goods from India will not only travel up to Afghanistan, but beyond, along the yet-to-be developed International North-South Transport Corridor (**INSTC**) to Central Asia.

### The trilateral trade treaty

- India, Afghanistan and Iran signed the trilateral trade treaty for developing the port.
- A trilateral transport corridor project has the potential to alter the geopolitical map of South and Central Asia, and has been described as a “game changer”.

- **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** is the ship, rail, and road route for moving freight between **India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia**.
- **It was established in 2000** by Iran, Russia and India.
- This corridor connects India Ocean and Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea via IRAN, then is connected to St. Petersburg and North European via Russian Federation.
- It was expanded to include eleven new members, namely: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, Oman, Syria, Bulgaria (Observer).

## 1.12. INDIA-AFRICA

President Mukherjee paid visit to 3 African nations - Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) and Namibia.

### 1.12.1. INDIA-IVORY COAST

#### Highlights of visit

- President Mukherjee has been accorded the country's **highest honour, Grand Cross National Order**.
- Inked an agreement to re-establish the headquarters of the **Exim Bank in Abidjan**.
- **Cote D'Ivoire**, the **world's largest producer of cocoa**, sought investment from India's private sector, particularly in processing the main ingredient in chocolates, to strengthen trade ties.
- It is the biggest exporter of **cashew nuts** to India, which procures nearly 80% of its cashew nuts exports.

### 1.12.2. INDIA-GHANA

#### Following are list of agreements/MoUs

- Agreement on exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports.
- Memorandum of understanding on the establishment of a joint commission.
  - ✓ The commission will periodically review various aspects of the multi-dimensional ties.
- **MoUs** between the Foreign Service Institute (India) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ghana).

#### Trade relation

- India's cumulative investments in Ghana hover around \$1 billion, whereas bilateral trade is \$3 billion in 2015-16.
- Ghana's main trade consists of **gold imports**; it's nearly 80 per cent of total trade.

### 1.12.3. INDIA-NAMIBIA

#### Nuclear cooperation

- Namibia signed an agreement with India in 2009 for uranium supply. The treaty sets the framework for long term supply of uranium but it is pending ratification by Namibian Parliament.
- Namibia being a member of the **African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (ANWFZT)**, it is barred from trading in uranium with India, which is **not a signatory of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**.

- Namibia is the fourth largest producer of uranium.
- Namibia asked New Delhi to come up with similar agreements with other countries to help it convince the ANWFZT members.

#### African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (ANWFZT)

- The ANWFZT, also known as the **Treaty of Pelindaba**, is named after South Africa's main Nuclear Research Centre.
- Pelindaba was the location where South Africa's atomic bombs of the 1970s were developed, constructed and subsequently stored.
- The Pelindaba Treaty signed in 1996 **aims at preventing nuclear proliferation and preventing** strategic minerals of Africa from being exported freely.

### 1.12.4. INDIA-EGYPT

#### Why in News?

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi paid official visit to India.

#### Outcome

- Both countries have set a bilateral trade target of \$8 billion in the near future from the current \$3 billion.
- As a \$286-billion economy with around 89 million consumers, which is the second largest in Africa, Egypt has tremendous potential as an economic partner.
- President Al-Sisi invited Indian participation in the **Suez Canal Economic Zone** in sectors such as petro-chemicals, energy, agriculture, healthcare, education, skills and IT.
- **Agreement on Maritime Transport:** The agreement would help the two nations to step-up co-operation on the seas not only in terms of maritime commerce but also in transit of naval vessels.
- Cultural exchange is another vital aspect of our excellent bilateral relations.
- The two leaders agreed that a special and enlarged "India by the Nile Festival" would be held in 2017 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of India's independence. They also welcomed the proposal to have the inaugural "Egypt by the Ganga Festival" in 2017.



### 1.12.5. VICE PRESIDENT VISIT TO NORTH AFRICAN NATIONS

Vice President paid official visit to the North African nations of **Morocco and Tunisia**.

#### A. India - Morocco

India and Morocco signed two agreements on culture and diplomacy

- To reinforce cooperation in the field of music, art and archives, cultural heritage, cultural activities through the exchange of expertise and information in the related fields.
- To exchange information on training programs for diplomats, experts and researchers, strengthen communication and exchange of expert visits.

## Trade relations

- The India-Morocco Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IMCCI) was launched by Vice President and Moroccan PM Abdelilah Benkirane.
- Bilateral trade between the two countries stood at \$ 1.26 billion in 2015 with Indian exports forming roughly 25 per cent of the trade volume.

## B. India - Tunisia

### Highlights of visit

- Signed two MoUs on promotion of handicrafts and IT and communication and digital economy
- India will train 350 Tunisian students in next five years and the two sides will promote each other's traditional handicraft as per the agreements.
- The trade between the two countries last year was a little over 340 million US dollars. India accounts for around 50 per cent of Tunisia's global phosphoric acid exports.
- Tunisia supports India's bid for a place in an expanded UN Security Council.
- Tunisia's is the '**cradle of Arab Spring**', the string of popular uprisings that swept the Arab world in 2011. The **Jasmine Revolution** in Tunisia was the trigger for Arab uprisings.

## 1.12.6. INDIA-EAST AFRICA

### Why in news?

Vice-President paid official visit to Rwanda and Uganda, in a bid to strengthen ties with the East African countries.

#### A. India- Rwanda

- Bilateral air services agreement enabling direct flights between the two countries.
- The other two MoUs pertained to the setting up of an entrepreneurial development centre in Rwanda and exemption of visa for entry of diplomatic and official passports.
- Vice president also paid tribute to the victims of the **1994 massacre** at the Kigali Genocide Museum

#### B. India- Uganda

Vice-President held bilateral talks with Ugandan President. Both sides agreed to cooperate in the fields of vocational training, space technology and peaceful uses of atomic energy.

- As goodwill gesture medicines worth US\$ 2million and medical equipment worth US\$ 1million were presented to Uganda.
- India supports some development projects in Uganda, including a **tele-medical center** at the national referral hospital that is connected to 11 hospitals in India.
- India is one of the largest trade partners of Uganda. Bilateral trade is estimated to around US\$ 615 million.
- There is, at present, a 30,000-strong Indian community in Uganda that is heavily invested in the economy of the country.



## 1.12.7. PM FOUR NATION VISIT

Prime Minister paid visit to four African nations- Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya. The focus of the African tour was on deepening cooperation in areas of **hydrocarbons, maritime security, trade and investment, agriculture and food.**

**About Tutsi genocide in Rwanda-**In just 100 days in 1994, some 800,000 people were slaughtered in Rwanda by **ethnic Hutu extremists**. They were targeting members of the minority **Tutsi community**, as well as their political opponents, irrespective of their ethnic origin.



## A. India-Mozambique

- MoU on drug demand reduction and prevention of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs
- Long-term agreement for purchase of **pulses from Mozambique**.
- Gas discoveries in past few years have led to emergence of energy talks
- India will also help build capacities of Mozambique's security forces.

## B. India-South Africa

India and South Africa agreed to deepen engagement in key areas of defence production, manufacturing, mining and minerals while vowing to cooperate "actively" in combating terrorism and dealing with issues at multilateral fora.

### Highlights of visit

- **Push for Make in India:** PM invited defence businesses to set up a manufacturing base in India.
- PM undertook a train journey to **Pietermaritzburg station** in memory of the **1893 incident** in which Mahatma Gandhi was thrown out of a train compartment on account of his skin colour.

## C. India-Tanzania

India and Tanzania agreed to work closely, bilaterally, regionally and globally to combat the twin threats of **terrorism and climate change**.

- MoU on Cooperation in the field of water resource management and development between the two countries.
- Agreement on Joint Action Plan (JAP) between National Small Industries Corporation of India (NSIC) and Small Industries Development Organization Tanzania (SIDO).

### 'Solar Mamas'

'**Solar Mamas**', a group of rural women solar engineers from Africa who have been trained under Government of India - supported programmes to fabricate, install, use, repair and maintain solar lanterns and household solar lighting systems in their villages.

### India's outreach to Africa

India is making a renewed push to regain relevance in a rapidly evolving African strategic landscape.

- India's focus over the last few decades has largely been on **capacity-building** on the continent, providing more than \$1 billion in technical assistance and training to personnel under the **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme**.
- India has committed \$7.5 billion to African infrastructure, covering 137 projects in more than 40 countries.
- It has also offered duty-free market access to **Africa's least developed countries**. But India's trade with Africa at around \$72 billion remains far below potential. China trade with Africa is \$200 billion.

### Maritime Security

Prime Minister spoke about shoring up maritime ties as part of the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**, and linking India's own "**Sagar-Mala**" outreach for Indian Ocean islands with the South Africa-authored "**Operation Phakisa**", that focusses on Africa's combined strengths in blue economies and ocean governance.

### About ITEC

- The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme was instituted on 15 September 1964. Under the ITEC and its sister programmes, the **SCAAP** (Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme), and the **Technical Cooperation Scheme of Colombo Plan**, more than 160 countries are invited to share India's developmental experience acquired over six decades of her existence as a free nation.
- The ITEC programme has several components. Apart from organizing training courses in India, it also covers deputation of Indian experts abroad, aid for disaster relief, gifting of equipment, study tours and feasibility studies/consultancy services.
- ITEC is a demand driven programme, therefore, assistance offered under ITEC is usually in response to requests received from friendly countries and the commitments made by India's political leadership.

### 1.12.8. INDIA-KENYA

#### Why in news?

Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya paid a State Visit to India.

#### Highlights of the visit

- \$100 million Line of Credit for agricultural mechanization.
- During the PM visit to Kenya, **Line of Credit Agreement for US \$15 million** to IDB Capital Limited, Kenya, for development of various small and medium enterprises [SMEs] in Kenya was concluded.
- India invited Kenya to join the framework agreement of the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.
- **Trade and investment potential in Kenya and EAC:** Bilateral trade, valued at **\$4.23 billion in 2014-15**, has the potential for rapid growth if Indian companies are willing to be active in a competitive market.

#### East African Community (EAC)

- The East African Community (EAC), comprising **Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan**, has emerged as one of the most successful of Africa's Regional Economic Communities.
- Having established a customs union, it is building a single market and wants to set up a monetary union.
- EAC is market of **168 million consumers and have a combined GDP of \$161 billion**.

### 1.13. INDIA-USA

Prime Minister Modi paid fourth official visit to USA.

#### Highlights of Joint statement

	What India gave	What India got
Climate and Energy	Work towards an HFC amendment in 2016 "with an ambitious phasedown schedule" under the <b>Montreal Protocol</b> pursuant to the Dubai Pathway	US to pursue membership of the <b>International Solar Alliance(ISA)</b>
	Pursue negotiations at the <b>International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly</b> to reach a "successful outcome" to address greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation.	<b>Six AP 1000 reactors to be built by Westinghouse;</b> India and the U.S. Export-Import Bank to work together toward a competitive financing package for the project.
	Announcement of a \$20 million <b>US-India Clean Energy Finance (USICEF)</b> initiative, supported equally by both countries.	\$40 million <b>U.S.-India Catalytic Solar Finance Program</b> , also supported equally.
Export Control and Defence Cooperation	US to designate India as a "major defence partner."	US re-affirmed support for India's entry into the NSG, the MTCR, the Australia Group and Wassenaar Arrangement. It will give India access to almost 99 per cent of latest U.S.'s defence technologies
	Text of the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement "finalised."	US welcomed India's offer to host the <b>Summit on Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism in 2018</b>
		MoU for exchange of earth observation satellite data "finalised"
Cyber	A "commitment" to promote the free flow of information.	Closer cooperation among agencies to combat cybercrime
	India supports norm against conducting or supporting ICT-enabled theft of IP, including trade secrets or other confidential business information for commercial purposes.	US commits to strengthen " <b>critical Internet infrastructure</b> " in India.
	Greater cooperation on cybersecurity standards and security testing.	Norm to tackle malicious cyber activity emanating from one's territory
Counter-terrorism		Express iteration of Pakistan's responsibility to "bring the perpetrators of the 2008 Mumbai and [for the first time] 2016 Pathankot terrorist attacks" to justice
Trade	Work towards concrete progress on IPR issues and enhance bilateral cooperation among the "drivers of innovation" in both countries.	

### 1.13.1. INDIA-US VISA DISPUTE

- In March 2016, India dragged the US to WTO's dispute settlement body against the latter's measures imposing increased fees on certain applicants for L-1 and H-1B visa categories.
- India has stated that the move would impact Indian IT professionals.
- India has alleged that the US is violating its obligations under **General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)** as well as the GATS Annex on Movement of **Natural Persons Supplying Services**, to not discriminate against or between non-US service providers.

#### About GATS

- The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is the first set of multilateral rules covering international trade in services. It came into effect in 1995 and is being negotiated under the auspices of World Trade Organization (WTO).
- **The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)** agreement covers four modes of supply for the delivery of services in cross-border trade:

Modes	Criteria	Supplier Presence
Mode 1: Cross-border supply	Service delivered within the territory of the Member, from the territory of another Member	Service supplier not present within the territory of the member
Mode 2: Consumption abroad	Service delivered outside the territory of the Member, in the territory of another Member, to a service consumer of the Member	Service supplier present within the territory of the Member
Mode 3: Commercial presence	Service delivered within the territory of the Member, through the commercial presence of the supplier	Service supplier present within the territory of the Member
Mode 4: Presence of a natural person	Service delivered within the territory of the Member, with supplier present as a natural person	Service supplier present within the territory of the Member

### 1.13.2. DEFENCE COOPERATION

India and the US finalized the specifications for designating India a '**Major Defence Partner**' of the U.S.

- "Major Defence Partner" is based on the concept of the US treating India as its closest ally and partner for the purpose of technology transfer.
- India was accorded this status during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington in June 2016.
- Both sides reviewed the progress in defence ties in recent years, and welcomed the progress achieved under the **Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)** intended to promote opportunities for co-production and co-development of weapon systems and platforms.
- In the past two years, some major agreements were signed:
  - ✓ The Defence Framework Agreement in 2015, which laid a blueprint for collaboration between the defence establishments
  - ✓ The logistics support agreement **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)**.

#### About LEMOA

- It is a tweaked India-specific version of the Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), which the U.S. has with several countries it has close military to military cooperation.
- It is also one of the three foundational agreements — as referred to by the U.S. These are
  - ✓ Logistics Support Agreement (LSA)
  - ✓ Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA)
  - ✓ Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA)
- LEMOA gives access, to both countries, to designated military facilities on either side for the purpose of refuelling and replenishment.
- The agreement will primarily cover four areas — port calls, joint exercises, training and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

### 1.13.3. COOPERATION FOR THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

- India and the US have signed a MoU to collaborate in the fields of developmental activities and aid in third world countries.
- The MoU has been signed between the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs of India.

**Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC):** MCC is a US agency providing eligible countries with grants to fund country-led solutions for reducing poverty through sustainable economic growth.

**Development Partnership Administration (DPA):** DPA looks after implementation of India's development cooperation programmes with partner countries.

### 1.14. INDIA-RUSSIA

#### Why in news?

- The Russian President visited India for the 17th bilateral summit between India and Russia.

#### Key Highlights of the Bilateral Summit

- **Cross Border Terrorism-** Condemned unequivocally and sealed a deal on 'information security' to counter terrorism, drug trafficking and other illegal cross-border activities.
- **Defence Sector-** Agreement to buy Russia's most advanced S-400 'Triumf' anti-missile defence system, to manufacture Kamov-226T utility helicopters and four improved Krivak or Talwar class stealth.
- **Regional Integration and Trade-** Emphasize on implementation of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).
- **Infrastructure and Technology-** Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) to invest in a sub-fund under the National Infrastructure Investment Fund (NIIF) of India.
- **Nuclear Power Project-** Modi and Putin both jointly declared the second unit of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (Units 5 and 6).
- **Russian Largest FDI in India-** Russian oil firm Rosneft and United Capital Partners signed an agreement to acquire Essar Energy Holdings Ltd's refining and retail assets at \$10.9 billion, making it Russia's largest foreign direct investment in India.

### 1.15. INDIA-UKRAINE

#### Why in news?

Mr. Stepan Kubiv, Deputy PM of Ukraine, paid visit to India. Ukraine commended India for not supporting Russia's claims over the Crimean peninsula and wanted to partner modernization plans of Indian armed forces.

#### Background

- Following the intervention in Crimea, **Russia annexed** the region in March 2014. However, India has maintained that the situation should be resolved peacefully.
- India and Ukraine are also on track to revive high-level political dialogue. The last big visit from India was 12 years ago when President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam visited Kiev in 2005.
- **Defence cooperation:** Ukraine wants to complete the contract, signed in 2009, on modernisation and overhauling of An-32 fleet for the Indian Air Force.

### 1.16. INDIA-CYPRUS

The Indian government has rescinded a notification blacklisting Cyprus, providing relief to investors who route their investments through the Mediterranean island nation.

- Cyprus's removal comes after both countries agreed to changes in the **double taxation avoidance agreement (DTAA)**.
- The revised treaty signed by both the countries gives India the right to **tax capital gains from sale of shares on investments** made by Cyprus-based companies after 1 April 2017.
- Cyprus was one of the key destinations through which companies based in Europe and the US invested in India, benefiting from the treaty between both countries.
- In 2015-16, Cyprus ranked eighth in terms of foreign direct investment into India at \$3.3 billion.

## 1.17. INDIA-PORTUGAL

Prime Minister of Portugal Antonio Costa visited India on a State Visit in January. He attended the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas as the chief guest in Bengaluru.

- **Defence Agreement**
  - ✓ Meeting security challenges, including in the maritime domain and defence industries.
  - ✓ Prime Minister invited Portuguese companies to **'Make in India' and set up joint ventures** and commercial partnerships based on joint production and technology transfer.
- **Renewable energy:** framework for promoting cooperation in **wind, solar and hydro-electricity sectors.**
- **Start Ups:** MoU on Start Ups and call for regular exchanges between Start-Up India and Start-Up Portugal.
- **Terrorism**
  - ✓ Recognizing the importance of the Central role of UN in combating terrorism, the two leaders exhorted the international community to effectively implement the measures enumerated by the **1267 UN Sanctions Committee.**
  - ✓ The joint statement said both sides called for strengthening cooperation in combating terrorism in a **spirit of 'zero tolerance'**, underlining that States should not support any terror entity including 'non-state actors' on any grounds.

**1267 UN Sanctions:** On 30 December 2016, China had blocked India's move to list Pakistan-based Masood Azhar as a global terrorist, at the 1267 Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council. China was the only member on the 15-nation committee to have opposed India's move.

## 1.18. INDIA-UK

### Why in news?

- UK's PM **Theresa May** offered **frequent registered traveller scheme** for Indians travelling to Britain for business.
- The UK is also planning to restrict immigration through "work and study routes" which will have an impact on Indians being hired by British firms.

### About the traveller Scheme

- Under the scheme, Indian nationals frequently visiting to the U.K. and contributing to growth in both countries will have a 'significantly easier' entry process including fewer forms to be filled, access to the EU-EEA passport controls, swifter passage through airports.
- It will give a boost to trade and investment in both the countries and strengthen ties between two nations.

### About EU-EEA

- The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of 28 countries. It operates an internal (or single) market, which allows free movement of goods, capital, services and people between member states.
- The EEA includes EU countries and also Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. It allows them to be part of the EU's single market.
- Switzerland is neither an EU nor EEA member but is part of the single market - this means Swiss nationals have the same rights to live and work in the UK as other EEA nationals.

### Current UK's Immigration scheme

- Broadly, the U.K. visa statutes for immigrants have been classified into tier system - Tier-1 and 2.
- Tier 1** takes care of the highly esteemed emigrants who can really contribute to U.K.'s economy.
- Tier 2** includes trained workers under different classes.

## 1.19. INDIA AND GERMANY ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- To deepen their collaboration in skill development, an implementation agreement was signed between the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and (German International Cooperation (GIZ)
- Under the agreement, projects focused on adapting elements of the German dual system in select industrial clusters in India will be initiated.
- The project will be implemented under the umbrella of the 'Joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the field of Skill Development and Vocational Education and Training (VET).

As part of the dual system, one attends classes at a vocational school and receive on-the-job training at a company.

## 1.20. INDIA AND ITALY

### Italian marine case

- UN arbitration tribunal has ruled that Italian marine can return to Italy until it decides the dispute raised by Italy **about India's jurisdiction to try him and his colleague** for the killing of two Indian fishermen in 2012.
- Subsequent to tribunal ruling, The Supreme Court ruled that Girone (Italian marine) can return to Italy while an international tribunal decides on a jurisdictional issue between India and Italy. The Supreme Court laid down conditions for releasing Mr. Girone.
  - ✓ He continues to remain under **the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court** and report to the local police station in Italy once every month. Also, the Italian authorities will keep the Indian embassy informed.
  - ✓ **Envoy's responsibility:** The Italian Ambassador will take the responsibility of ensuring his return within a month in case the tribunal rules in favour of trial in India.

### India's position

India has steadfastly rejected Italian argument and **has invoked its sovereign right to prosecute** the accused under the provisions of Indian law.

### International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)

In June 2015 Italy approached the International **Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)** in Hamburg.

- The tribunal is adjudicating only on the limited question of whether India or Italy has the jurisdiction to try the two marines.
- In August 2015 ITLOS ordered that: "Italy and India shall suspend all court proceedings and refrain from initiating new ones which might aggravate or extend the dispute submitted to the Annex VII arbitral tribunal or might jeopardise or prejudice the carrying out of any decision which the arbitral tribunal may render."
- After the ITLOS ruling, both parties agreed that the dispute would be resolved under the UNCLOS tribunal.
- **May 2, 2016:** A U.N. arbitration court rules that India should release Italian marine Salvatore Girone.

- ITLOS is an intergovernmental organization created by the mandate of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.
- It was signed at **Montego Bay, Jamaica**, in 1982.
- The tribunal is based in **Hamburg, Germany**.
- The Tribunal has the power to settle disputes between party states

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## 2. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/ INSTITUTIONS

### 2.1. INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION (IORA)

#### 2.1.1. MOU ON MSME COOPERATION

- MoU on MSME Cooperation finalized by Ministry of MSME will take effect for each party upon signature by countries.
- The MoU involves areas such as linkages & alliances amongst MSMEs, exchange best practices, greater participation of MSME in global supply chain, promote youth and women empowerment etc.
- An IORA special fund has been created to carry out these activities in MoU
- IORA Secretariat at Mauritius will be the coordinating agency for the implementation of the MoU.

#### 2.1.2. HIGH LEVEL MEETING OF INTERIOR MINISTERS

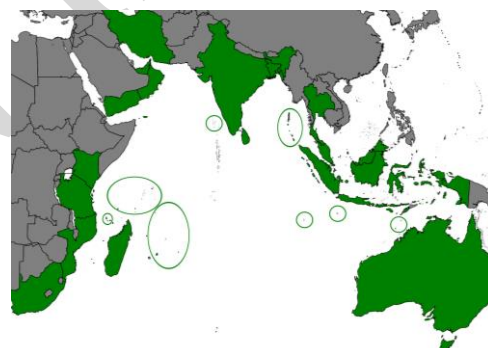
- The high-level meeting with 18 littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region was held in Colombo where **Colombo declaration** was adopted.
- The delegates resolved to work towards making the Indian Ocean a “Drug Free Zone”.

##### About Colombo Declaration

- The Colombo declaration stresses upon the need for coastal states to cooperate more closely on enforcing maritime law, sharing information, and providing mutual legal assistance
- It also focuses on expansion and development of communication through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC’s) Indian Ocean Prosecutors Network.

##### About IORA

- The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), formerly known as the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative and Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), is an international organization consisting of coastal states bordering the Indian Ocean.
- It is based on the principles of Open Regionalism for strengthening Economic Cooperation particularly on Trade Facilitation and Investment, Promotion as well as Social Development of the region.



##### The countries included in IORA are:

Australia	Iran	Mozambique	South Africa	United Arab Emirates
Bangladesh	Madagascar	Oman	Sri Lanka	Indonesia
Comoros	Malaysia	Seychelles	Tanzania	Kenya
India	Mauritius	Singapore	Thailand	Yemen

### 2.2. IMF REFORMS

#### Why in news

- The IMF reforms came into effect on January 27 which was approved by it in 2010.
- The reforms were unable to implement due to the absence of its approval by the US Congress, which it did last year.

#### Voting Rights

- The emerging and developing economies gained more influence in the governance architecture of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- More than **six per cent** of the quota shares will shift to emerging and developing countries from the U.S. and European countries.

- India's voting rights increase to **2.6 per cent from the current 2.3 per cent**, and China's, to 6 per cent from 3.8, as per the new division.
- The reforms bring India and Brazil into the list of the top 10 members of IMF, along with the U.S, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, China and Russia.

#### Financial strength

- The reforms also increase the financial strength of IMF, by doubling its permanent capital resources to 477 billion special drawing rights (\$659 billion).

#### IMF's Executive Board

- As part of the reforms, for the first time, the IMF's Executive Board will consist entirely of elected Executive Directors, ending the category of appointed Executive Directors.
- Currently the members with the five largest quotas appoint an Executive Director, a position that will cease to exist.

#### About IMF

- International Monetary Fund (IMF) was established along with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development at the Conference of 44 nations held at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA in July 1944.
- At present, 187 nations are members of IMF.
- India is a founder member of the IMF.
- **The objectives of IMF** is
  - ✓ macro-economic growth,
  - ✓ alleviation of poverty and economic stability,
  - ✓ policy advice & financing for developing countries,
  - ✓ forum for cooperation in monetary system,
  - ✓ Promotion of exchange rate stability and international payment system.
- India has not taken any financial assistance from the IMF since 1993.

## 2.3. CEPI

#### Why in news

It was officially launched in Jan 2017 at World Economic Forum (WEF) at Davos with an initial investment of \$460 million from the Germany, Japan and Norway including Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

#### What is CEPI?

- It is a Global alliance of governments, intergovernmental institutions like WHO, health specialists, and philanthropists to finance and coordinate the development of new vaccine to prevent and contain infectious disease epidemics.
- CEPI has signed a MoU with WHO. It is using WHO's priority list to choose which diseases to pursue.
- CEPI has finalized three diseases to start developing vaccines for: Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), Lassa fever and Nipah.

#### Significance

- It will provide a **permanent, sustainable model** for epidemic vaccine development through sharing of risk and benefits of vaccine development.
- It will help in building regional capabilities of various stakeholders in the long run.
- It will **shorten the time** it takes to make vaccines to protect against virus epidemics, which can emerge suddenly as global public health threats.

## 2.4. CICA

Fifth foreign ministers' meeting of the Conference was held in Beijing, China.

- **Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures (CICA)** in Asia is an **inter-governmental forum** for enhancing cooperation towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia.
- CICA, which has 26 members including India, was formed based on a proposal by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev in 1992 to further inter government consultations.

During the conference Chinese president unveiled security doctrine to counter **U.S. 'pivot'**

- China has invited Asian countries to join Beijing in framing a security governance model with **"Asian features"** to counter the **U.S. 'rebalance'** to the region.
- President Xi Jinping urged participants "to build consensus and step up dialogue" to foster "a security governance model with Asian features".



## 2.5. MULTILATERAL EXPORT REGIMES

### 2.5.1. ABOUT NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP (NSG)

Nuclear Suppliers Group meets in **Seoul and Vienna** did not take decision on India's application to join the group as a full member.

#### Opposition to India's membership

Both India and Pakistan, which have applied for NSG membership, have not signed the NPT. While India's case is pushed by the US, China is backing Pakistan.

- 38 countries out of 48 were in favour of India's membership.
- China has strongly opposed India's membership citing to **procedural hurdles (not signatory of NPT)**.

#### Importance of NSG membership

- India is keen to become a member of the NSG, apart from being stakeholders in the Wassenaar Agreement and Australia Group, **to expand its nuclear power generation and also enter the export market.**
- The NSG was founded in response to the Indian nuclear test in May 1974 and first met in November 1975. As of 2014 the NSG has 48 members.
- It is a multinational body concerned with reducing nuclear proliferation by controlling the export and re-transfer of materials that may be applicable to nuclear weapon development and by improving safeguards and protection on existing materials.
- As the 48-member **NSG works by consensus**, not majority, India is reaching out to every possible country, much like the push at the UNGA for reforms.
- Four UN member states have not joined the NPT: **India, Israel, Pakistan and South Sudan.**

### 2.5.2. MISSILE TECHNOLOGY CONTROL REGIME (MTCR)

India became the **35th member** of the MTCR. India's efforts to get in got a boost after it joined the **Hague Code of Conduct**, dealing with the ballistic missile non-proliferation arrangement.

#### Significance of membership

- The MTCR membership will provide a boost to **India's space and missile technology**, besides the government's Make in India initiative.
- India's space programme will be an obvious beneficiary, In the 1990s, New Delhi's pursuit of **Russian cryogenic engine** technology was stymied by the MTCR.
- It will enable India to buy **high-end missile technology** and also enhance its joint ventures with Russia.
- It will ease the way for **export of supersonic BrahMos cruise missile**, co-developed with Russia
- India will be able to **import Predator drones** from the US.

#### About MTCR

The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) is a multilateral export control regime. It is an **informal and voluntary partnership** among 35 countries to prevent the proliferation of missile and unmanned aerial vehicle technology capable of carrying above 500 kg payload for more than 300 km.

- China, Israel and Pakistan are not members of MTCR.
- USA, UK, Russia, France, Japan, Germany, Brazil and Australia are prominent members of the group.

#### About Hague Code of Conduct (HCOC)

The **International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation**, also known as the **Hague Code of Conduct (HCOC)**, was established in 2002 to prevent the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

- HCOC is **voluntary, legally non-binding**, preventing the spread of ballistic missiles that can deliver weapons of mass destruction.
- India joined the HCOC on 1 June 2016.
- The number of signatories of HCOC is 138.
- **China, Pakistan, Israel and Iran** have not joined the voluntary regime yet.

### 2.5.3. WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT

The **Wassenaar Arrangement** is a multilateral export control regime (MECR) with 41 participating states.

**Objective:** Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies.

In 2013, the Wassenaar Arrangement added a new category pertaining to “**intrusion software**” that could potentially be used as “monitoring tools”, or to thwart “protective countermeasures” in cyberspace. Hardware and software that helped “extract information” were also classified within this restricted category.

### 2.5.4. AUSTRALIA GROUP

The **Australia Group** is an informal group of countries (now joined by the European Commission) established in 1985 (after the use of chemical weapons by Iraq in 1984) to help member countries to identify those **exports which need to be controlled so as not to contribute to the spread of chemical and biological weapons.**

It now has **42 members**, including all Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) members, the European Commission, all 28 member states of the European Union, Ukraine, and Argentina. The name comes from Australia's initiative to create the group. Australia manages the secretariat.

## 2.6. BIMSTEC

**Why in news?**

- The BIMSTEC Summit was held in Goa in October 2016. The next meeting will be held in Nepal for the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit in 2017.
- **Focus Areas** of Summit were Regional connectivity, terrorism, development of the region, Cooperation in various sectors, promoting people-to-people contacts and tourism.
- In this regard, BIMSTEC countries have issued **Leaders Retreat Outcome Document.**

#### About BIMSTEC

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization.
- It came into being on 6 June 1997 through the **Bangkok Declaration.**
- It comprises of 7 Member States lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal.
- **Five from South Asia**, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, **India**, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Two from Southeast Asia, including Myanmar and Thailand.

## 2.7. SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION SUMMIT

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) annual summit was held in **Tashkent, Uzbekistan.**

- At the summit, for the first time, the SCO will be expanded to accommodate new countries and make them permanent members of the group.
- India and Pakistan signed the memorandum of obligations on 24 June 2016 at Tashkent, thereby starting the formal process of joining the SCO as a full member. India and Pakistan are likely to become full members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) by June 2017.

**About SCO**

- It is a Eurasian political, economic and military organization which was founded in 2001 in Shanghai by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Member States	Acceding States	Observer States	Dialogue Partners
Kazakhstan	India	Afghanistan	Armenia
China	Pakistan	Belarus	Azerbaijan
Kyrgyzstan		Iran	Cambodia
Russia		Magnolia	Sri Lanka
Tajikistan			Turkey
Uzbekistan			Nepal

## 2.8. WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO)

### Why in news?

WTO Director General Roberto Azevêdo visited India. During the visit, India flagged number of issues pending in WTO to be resolved before **December 2017 Ministerial Conference (MC) in Argentina**.

### India's opposition to inclusion of new issues:

India is against introduction of '**new issues**' into the formal agenda of the WTO-level negotiations on liberalization of global trade without consensus among all the WTO Members. The issues that have been identified for inclusion in the WTO are **electronic commerce and investment**.

#### A. e-commerce issue

- The ICC and B-20 tabled a proposal in September 2016 for the adoption of a "WTO package" on e-commerce.
- Due to **huge disparities in Internet penetration** between developed and developing countries the likely beneficiaries from e-commerce would be developed countries.

#### B. Investment issue

- The focus is on **the investor state dispute settlement process**, using which investors can sue their host states in private international panels.
- India has opposed the **attempts** by some rich countries to work towards a global investment agreement at the WTO-level that would incorporate a contentious **Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanism**.

### About WTO

- It is an intergovernmental organization which regulates international trade. It was established on **Jan 1, 1997** with Geneva (Switzerland) as its headquarters. As of now it has **164 members**
- **It has many roles:** it operates a global system of trade rules, it acts as a forum for negotiating trade agreements, it settles trade disputes between its members and it supports the needs of developing countries.

## 2.9. ASEM SUMMIT

The **11th Asia-Europe Meeting Summit** took place in the Mongolian capital Ulaan Baatar. India was represented by Vice-President Hamid Ansari.

### About ASEM

- The ASEM is an informal inter-regional dialogue that addresses political, security, financial, economic, social and cultural issues.
- It was officially established on 1 March 1996 at the first summit in Bangkok, Thailand.
- **Its objective is to strengthen the relationship between the two regions in a spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership. There are 53 partners of ASEM. India is also part of ASEM.**
- The main components of the ASEM process rest on the following **3 pillars**:
  - ✓ Political Pillar
  - ✓ Economical Pillar
  - ✓ Social, Cultural & Educational Pillar

## 2.10. INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

The UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution approving an agreement to make the International Organisation for Migration part of the **UN as a related organization**.

### About IOM

- IOM, which assisted an estimated 20 million migrants in 2015, is an intergovernmental organization with more than 9,500 staff and 450 offices worldwide.
- 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.
- With 166 member states, a further 8 states holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries,

- IOM was granted Permanent Observer status to the UN General Assembly in 1992, and a cooperation agreement between IOM and the UN was signed in 1996.
- IOM works in the four broad areas of migration management:
  - ✓ Migration and development
  - ✓ Facilitating migration
  - ✓ Regulating migration
  - ✓ Forced migration.

## 2.11. 17TH SUMMIT OF NON ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM)

### Why in news?

- The 17th Summit of the **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)** took place in Margarita, Venezuela.
- India was represented by Vice President and not by the head of government (Prime Minister) as the usual practice.
- Only once before, the Indian Prime Minister had not been to the NAM Summit at Havana (Cuba) in 1979 under the caretaker government of Prime Minister Charan Singh.

### NON ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM)

- It was founded in **September 1961**. At present NAM have 120 member countries and 17 observer countries.
- The idea of NAM was jointly conceived by **India's** PM Jawaharlal Nehru, **Indonesia's** President Sukarno, **Egypt's** President Gamal Abdel Nasser, **Ghana's** President Kwame Nkrumah and **Yugoslavia's** President Josip Broz Tito.
- The first summit was held in Belgrade in 1961.

## 2.12. SAARC SUMMIT

### Why in News?

In the wake of the Uri attack, Indian government has launched diplomatic offensive to isolate Pakistan internationally and in its neighbourhood.

- India has decided to pull out of the SAARC summit in Islamabad this November, with Afghanistan, Bhutan and Bangladesh deciding to follow suit.
- The decision is unprecedented as this is the first time that India has cancelled participation in the regional group's summit meeting because of actions that it blames on Pakistan-based elements.
- As per Experts, India's cancellation might handicap economic integration in South Asia.

### About SAARC

- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is regional intergovernmental organization and geo-political union in South Asia.
- SAARC was founded in Dhaka in 1985. Its secretariat is based in Kathmandu.
- The organization promotes development economics and regional integration.
- Its member states include Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Afghanistan joined SAARC as its eighth member state in April 2007.
- States with observer status: Australia, China, EU, Iran, Japan, Mauritius, Myanmar, South Korea and US

## 2.13. BBIN INITIATIVE

### Why in news?

- The Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) motor vehicle agreement was rejected by the upper house of the **Bhutanese Parliament**, during the on-going winter session recently.
- The agreement had earlier been approved by the lower house of Parliament, though it had received a great deal of criticism by the opposition.
- Last year, the first cargo truck has arrived under the trial organized under BBIN agreement to develop protocols for implementing it.

India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh signed a landmark Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) for the Regulation of Passenger, Personnel and Cargo Vehicular Traffic among the four South Asian neighbours in 2015.

### Reasons cited by Lawmakers of Bhutan

- The BBIN MVA is not much of help to Bhutan in economic development as Bhutan’s trade is mostly with India and both nations already allow free movement of vehicles across their border.

### Significance of BBIN for India

- The MVA agreement between sub-groupings of four SAARC nations Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) would have paved the way for a seamless movement of people and goods across their borders for the benefit and integration of the region and its economic development.
- The BBIN framework was seen as a conducive model of sub-regional co-operation in the area of Connectivity which involves transport as well as energy.
- India’s plan to single out Pakistan by implementing the pact has suffered a jolt by this rejection.

### India’s take on Bhutan’s decision

- India has asked the Bhutanese government to reconsider the pact. However, the reconsideration can be done only after a year, as per the procedure there.
- New Delhi is now exploring various options to operationalize the agreement. For the time being, it has been decided that the pact will be implemented only amongst those countries which have ratified it — India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

## 2.14. INDIA-ASEAN

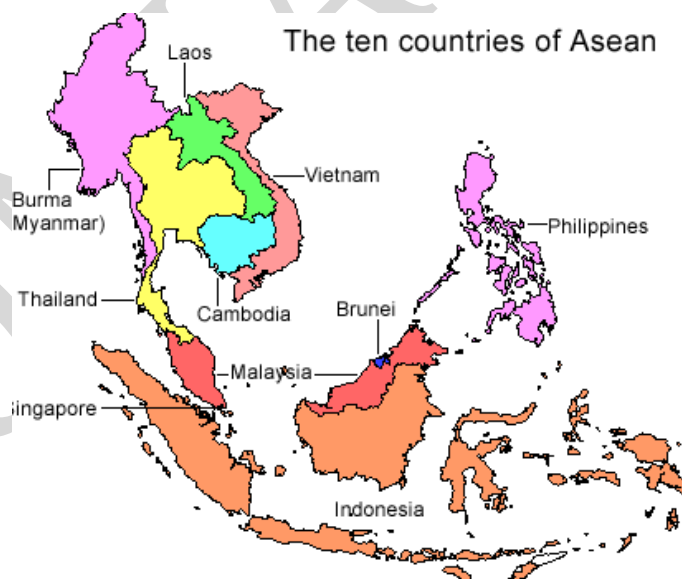
### Why in News?

Prime Minister attended the 14th ASEAN-India Summit and 11th East Asia Summit in Vientiane, the capital of Laos.

### Important Issues Highlighted by PM during the EAS

The two most significant issues highlighted by PM Modi during his address at EAS were: Recommending strongest action against those states that use terrorism as an instrument of state policy and outlining India’s principled stand on the South China Sea issue.

- Lanes of communication passing through the sea were “**main arteries of global merchandise trade**”.
- India supports freedom of navigation and over flight, and unimpeded commerce, based on the principles of international law, as reflected notably in the UNCLOS.



### About ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a political and economic organization of ten Southeast Asian countries. It was formed on August 8th, 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

Secretariat	Membership(10 states)
Jakarta	Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam <b>Observers:</b> Papua New-Guinea, Timor-Leste

### About East Asia Summit (EAS)

- The East Asia Summit is the premier leaders-led forum in the Asia-Pacific. Since its inception in 2005, it has played a significant role in the strategic, geopolitical and economic evolution of East Asia.
- Apart from the 10 ASEAN Member states, East Asia Summit includes India, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand, United States and Russia.
- India, being a founding member of the East Asia Summit, is committed to strengthening the East Asia Summit and making it more effective for dealing with contemporary challenges.

## 2.15. BRICS

### 2.15.1. EIGHTH BRICS SUMMIT

#### Why in news?

- The 8<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit, held at Goa under the theme "**Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions.**"
- The summit concluded with adaptation of Goa Declaration. The 9<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit will be hosted by China in 2017.

#### Key Highlights of Goa declaration

- **On world Security**- Strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms, committed to increase effectiveness of the UN counter terrorism framework. Also, called for need for adaptation of Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism (CCIT) in the UN General Assembly
- **On SDGs**- Welcomed adoption of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.
- **On UN Reforms**- Reiterated urgent need to reforms of the United Nations, including International UN Security Council to increase representation of developing countries.
- **On New Development Bank**- BRICS members were satisfied with the approval of the first batch of loans by the New Development Bank (NDB), particularly in renewable energy projects in BRICS countries.
- **BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement:**
  - CRA, established in 2015 by BRICS member nations is now operational and the central banks of the grouping's members are "fully ready to carry out" the transactions.
  - It is a framework for the provision of support through liquidity and precautionary instruments in response to actual or potential short-term balance of payments pressures.
  - The CRA is generally seen as a competitor to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and along with the New Development Bank is viewed as an example of increasing South-South cooperation.

#### About BRICS

- BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- It was established in 2009. Originally it was known as BRIC before the inclusion of South Africa in 2011.
- The first formal summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

Summits	Year	Location	Importance
1 <sup>st</sup>	June 2009	Yekaterinburg, Russia	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	April 2010	Brasília, Brazil	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	April 2011	Sanya, China	First summit to include South Africa alongside the original BRIC countries.
4 <sup>th</sup>	March 2012	New Delhi, India	The BRICS Cable announced an optical fibre submarine communications cable system that carries telecommunications between the BRICS countries.
5 <sup>th</sup>	March 2013	Durban, South Africa	
6 <sup>th</sup>	July 2014	Fortaleza, Brazil	BRICS New Development Bank and BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement agreements signed.
7 <sup>th</sup>	July 2015	Ufa, Russia	Joint summit with SCO-EEU

### 2.15.2. BRICS RATING AGENCY

- BRICS have agreed to set up an independent rating agency based on market-oriented principles in order to further strengthen the global governance architecture.

- There are concerns that the methodologies of the big three global agencies- S&P Global Ratings, Fitch Ratings and Moody's Investors Service- is biased against developing countries, reflected by their poor rating of these economies.
- Despite having deep capital buffers, the ratings of multilateral banks like the BRICS-promoted NDB are affected due to the parent countries' sovereign ratings.
- Further, under the present pricing model of rating agencies, the company or institution issuing bonds pays the rating agency to be rated, known as issuer-pays model. This is an ethical issue of moral hazard in this model of rating.

### 2.15.3. MOU BETWEEN EXIM BANK AND NEW DEVELOPMENT BANK

#### Why in news?

- Union Cabinet signed a pact between Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) and BRICS-promoted New Development Bank (NDB).
- It is a non-binding umbrella agreement which aims at establishing a cooperation framework in accordance with the national laws and regulations, along with skills transfer and knowledge sharing amongst the signatories.

#### About NDB

- New Development Bank assigned one vote to each participant country without any veto power unlike World Bank which assigns votes based on capital share
- The initial authorized capital of the bank is \$100 bln. The initial subscribed capital of the NDB is \$50 billion divided into paid-in shares (\$10 bln) and callable shares (\$40 bln).



### 2.15.4. INDIA TO HOST 1ST BRICS YOUNG SCIENTISTS

- The Department of Science & Technology (DST) hosted a five day event of young scientists/ researchers from BRICS countries.
- It provided a platform for engaging, connecting and networking among young scientists to hold discussions and find solutions to some of the common challenges and problems being faced in BRICS countries.

### 2.15.5. JAIPUR DECLARATION

- Women Parliamentarians from BRICS nations recently adopted the 'Jaipur Declaration' to express their commitment towards economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection
- It called upon international financial institutions to extend support to developing and least developed countries and help them gain easier access to new and affordable technologies as envisaged under the Paris Agreement on climate change.
- It mentions the need for expeditious parliamentary approval of SDG related legislation and adequate budgetary resources.

## 2.16. 50 YEARS OF UNCITRAL

The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) recently completed 50 years of establishment.

#### About UNICITRAL

- Established in 1966, it is the core legal body of the United Nations system in the field of international trade law.
- Its business is the modernization and harmonization of rules on international business.

## Role of UNCITRAL

Trade means faster growth, higher living standards, and new opportunities through commerce. In order to increase these opportunities worldwide, UNCITRAL is formulating modern, fair, and harmonized rules on commercial transactions. These include:

- Conventions, model laws and rules which are acceptable worldwide
- Legal and legislative guides and recommendations of great practical value
- Updated information on case law and enactments of uniform commercial law
- Technical assistance in law reform projects
- Regional and national seminars on uniform commercial law

## 2.17. G-20 SUMMIT

### Why in News?

11th G20 Summit was held in Hangzhou, China. The theme of the Summit was **“Toward an Innovative, Invigorated, Interconnected and Inclusive World Economy”**.

### About G20

- The G20 started in 1999 as a meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis.
- The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for its members' international economic cooperation and decision-making. It comprises 19 countries plus the European Union.
- G20 represents 85% of global GDP, 80% of international trade, 65% of world's population.
- In 2008, the first G20 Leaders' Summit was held, and the group played a key role in responding to the global financial crisis.

## 2.18. DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

### Why in News?

- UN general assembly's disarmament and security committee voted for negotiations to begin next year on a new international treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons.
- Four of the five UN Security Council nuclear powers - Britain, France, Russia and the United States — voted against the draft resolution while China abstained besides India and Pakistan.

### About NPT

- Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT, is an international treaty whose 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.
- It came into being in 1970. In 1995 it was extended indefinitely.
- The treaty recognises five permanent UNSC members: **the US, Russia, the UK, France and China.**
- Four UN member states have never joined NPT: **India, Israel, Pakistan and South Sudan.**

## 2.19. MOU BETWEEN INDIA AND AARDO

### Why in news?

The Cabinet approved MoU for the triennium 2015 – 2017, between India and the African Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO).

### About the MoU

The capacity building programs in the field of rural development will be organized every year during the triennium at various Institutions in India.

### About AARDO

- The AARDO is an autonomous, inter-Governmental organization established in 1962, headquarter in New Delhi.
- AARDO currently has 31 countries of the African - Asian Region under its fold.
- India is one of the Founder Members of the Organization and is the largest contributor among the members.



## 2.20. MALDIVES QUILTS COMMONWEALTH

### Why in news?

- The Maldives quit Commonwealth over allegation of corruption and deteriorating human rights.
- The country becomes the latest to leave the Commonwealth after Gambia which quit in October 2013.

### What is Commonwealth?

- It is an international association established in 1949 consisting of the UK together with states that were previously part of the British Empire, and dependencies.
- Many countries from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and the Pacific have joined the Commonwealth, current membership--52 countries.
- Membership is based on free and equal voluntary co-operation.
- The last two countries to join The Commonwealth are Rwanda and Mozambique.

## 2.21. INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

- Russia formally withdrew its signature from the founding statute of the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** in the backdrop of court publishing report recognising the annexation of Crimea as a military conflict between Russia and Ukraine and classified it as an occupation.
- Burundi, South Africa and Gambia have already quit ICC. Kenya and Uganda intend to follow the suit.

### About ICC

- It is the world's first legal body with permanent international jurisdiction to prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. ICC is based in The Hague.
- The ICC began functioning on 1 July 2002, the date that the Rome Statute entered into force.
- The Rome Statute is a multilateral treaty which serves as the ICC's foundational and governing document.

## 2.22. UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

### Why in news?

Russia lost its bid to retain a seat on the UN Human Rights Council due to allegations of war crimes in relation to its policies in Syria.

### Why is it important?

It was the first time since the UNHRC's creation a decade ago that one of the Security Council's five permanent members failed to be elected to the council.

### About UN Human Rights Council

- The council is a 47-member body based in Geneva, created in 2006 to promote human rights globally.
- Members of the council work to engage countries on improving human rights.
- They make decisions ranging from exposing violations to recommending that the Security Council make a referral to the International Criminal Court.
- The council doesn't have the authority to take action but can exert significant pressure on the violating country and set up special rapporteurs with the mandate to investigate and report human-rights abuses.

## 2.23. JAIPUR SUMMIT: FIPIC

- India hosted the second summit of the Pacific Islands countries, **Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)**.
- The summit in Jaipur underlined the **growing geostrategic importance of the 14 South Pacific islands** that lie at the centre of a **key maritime route** rich in **resources** and **one of the largest voting blocs in the United Nations**.
- **Forum for India-Pacific Islands cooperation (FIPIC)** is a multinational grouping developed in 2014 for cooperation between India and 14 Pacific Islands nations which include Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

- All Head of state/head of government of the above countries met in **Suva, Fiji** in November 2014 for the first time where the annual summit was conceptualized.

## 2.24. INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY

India has joined international energy agency as an associate member which has led to the coverage of 70% of world energy consumption

### About international energy agency

- It was established by developed countries in 1974 in wake of sharp increase in oil prices by OPEC cartel
- Its four main areas of focus are: energy security, economic development, environmental awareness and engagement worldwide.
- It has 29 members with Estonia being the 29th member to join in 2014.
- Only the OECD member states can become members of the IEA. Except for Chile, Iceland, Israel, Mexico, and Slovenia, all OECD member states are members of the IEA.

## 2.25. AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

- The African Development Bank Group (AfDB) is a multilateral development finance institution established to contribute to the economic development and social progress of African countries.
- The AfDB was founded in 1964 and comprises three entities:
  - The African Development Bank
  - The African Development Fund
  - The Nigeria Trust Fund.
- It is headquartered in Tunis, Tunisia

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# 3. INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

## 3.1. ISRAEL-PALESTINE

### Why in news?

Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, passed a law that would retroactively legalise Jewish settlements on privately owned Palestinian land.

- The legislation allows the Israeli government to expropriate private Palestinian land if the land-owners are unknown. If known, they will be compensated.
- Since Israel occupied the **West Bank and East Jerusalem** five decades ago, about 140 settlements have been built in Palestinian territories that house more than 600,000 Jews.

### Criticism of law

- The international community opposes settlements and sees them as an obstacle to peace.
- West Bank is not sovereign Israeli territory and that Palestinians who live there are not citizens and do not have the right to vote for the government that imposed the law on them.

## 3.2. BREXIT

Brexit is the inelegant shorthand for Britain's withdrawal from the European Union. The UK opted for a momentous change of course by voting to leave the European Union in a closely fought referendum.

### Britain's exit process

- To begin the withdrawal process, Britain must invoke **Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon treaty**, which has never been used before.
- The first step is to inform the European Council of member states which sets the clock ticking on a **two-year timetable of negotiations**.

### About European Union (EU)

- It is a political and economic union of 28 member states that are located primarily in Europe.
- The EU has developed an internal single market through a standardised system of laws that apply in all member states.
- Within the Schengen Area, passport controls have been abolished.
- A monetary union was established in 1999 and came into full force in 2002, and is composed of 19 EU member states which use the euro currency.
- The seven principal decision-making bodies—known as the institutions of the European Union—are the European Council, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Central Bank, and the European Court of Auditors.



### Norway model – middle ground

- Norway, along with Liechtenstein and Iceland is a member of the European Economic Area (EEA).
- EEA countries have a separate secretariat in Brussels to manage the relationship between the EU and EEA.
- They make contributions to the EU budget and have access to the single market while staying out of the EU.

### 3.3. USA-PAKISTAN

#### Why in news?

- The USA has decided to block \$300-million military aid to Pakistan for its failure to take sufficient action against Haqqani network.
- US has blamed that Pakistan's military and intelligence services play a "double game" with it by maintaining friendly links with Afghan insurgent and anti-India militant groups

#### Coalition Support Fund (CSF)

- Following 9/11 terror attacks, US Congress began appropriating billions of dollars in 2002 to reimburse Pakistan and other nations for their **operational and logistical support of US-led counterterrorism operations**.
- CSF accounts for nearly half of overt US financial aid to Pakistan since 2001.
- Pakistan is the largest recipient of CSF reimbursements, having received roughly USD 14 billion since 2002.

#### Haqqani Network

- The Haqqani Network has carried out a number of kidnappings and attacks against U.S. interests in Afghanistan, as well as Afghan government and civilian targets.
- The group is also blamed for several deadly attacks against Indian interests in Afghanistan including the 2008 bombing of the Indian mission in Kabul.

### 3.4. HEART OF ASIA (HOA) CONFERENCE

#### Why in News

India hosted the 6th Ministerial Conference of Heart of Asia (HoA) in Amritsar.

#### Amritsar Declaration: Highlights

It called for immediate elimination of terrorism to help the war-ravaged country in its political and economic transition.

- State-sponsored terrorism was identified as a key challenge and members agreed upon a concerted effort to dismantle all kinds of terrorism.
- commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- leveraging the cultural heritage of the region to drive economic and social development
- Members consented on eliminating non-tariff barriers to trade.

Members concerned about the increase in production and cultivation of opium in Afghanistan, the volume of drug trafficking and demand in the HoA Region and beyond.

#### About Heart of Asia

- The Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process was launched in 2011 and the participating countries include Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and the UAE.
- 14 member countries are supported by 16 other countries and 12 international organizations.
- The platform was floated to encourage security, political and economic cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours.

### 3.5. CHINA ROLE IN AFPAK-CENTRAL ASIA

Top military commanders from China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan met in Urumqi, Xinjiang province to form "**Quadrilateral Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism in Counter Terrorism.**"

#### Reasons for formation of Quadrilateral mechanism

- China is concerned about the security of **Xinjiang province and OBOR projects** due to rise of terrorist groups in this region and also the inter-linkage of these terror groups.
- The disruption of **another quadrilateral dialogue** on seeking a political reconciliation in Afghanistan, involving **China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the U.S.**
- China is seeking a political solution to the Afghan crisis **to promote the OBOR initiative**, and on grounds of enhancing its national security.

### 3.6. RUSSIA-PAKISTAN

#### Why in News?

Pakistan-Russia conducted first-ever joint military drills dubbed '**Friendship-2016**' in Pakistan. Reflecting growing military ties between the two former Cold War rivals.

#### Concerns for India

- The joint drill is seen as another step in growing military-to-military cooperation, indicating a steady growth in bilateral relationship between the two countries.
- A Russian-Pakistani renaissance started in 2014 when the Kremlin removed its arms embargo against Islamabad.
- In 2015, Moscow agreed to sell four Mi-35M helicopters to Pakistan and welcomed Islamabad to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

### 3.7. APTTA (AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN TRANSIT TRADE AGREEMENT)

The **Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement** (also known as **APTTA**) is a bilateral trade agreement signed in 2010 by Pakistan and Afghanistan that calls for greater facilitation in the movement of goods amongst the two countries.

- The 2010 APTTA allows for both countries to use each other's airports, railways, roads, and ports for transit trade along designated transit corridors.
- The agreement does not cover road transport vehicles from any third country, be it from India or any Central Asia country.
- The APTTA agreement allows Afghan trucks to transport exports to India via Pakistan up to the Wagah crossing point, but does not offer Afghanistan the right to import Indian goods across Pakistani territory.

### 3.8. ONE CHINA POLICY

#### Why in news?

US President-elect Donald Trump questioned US persistence with a one-China policy.

#### What is One-China policy?

- The **One-China policy** refers to the policy or view that there is only one state called "China", despite the existence of two governments that claim to be "China".
- As a policy, this means that countries seeking diplomatic relations with People's Republic of China (PRC, Mainland China) must break official relations with the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) and vice versa.
- The One China policy is different from the "**One China principle**".
  - ✓ The principle affirms Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan and is the cornerstone of bilateral diplomatic relations between Washington and Beijing.
  - ✓ Any country that wants to establish political and diplomatic relations with China must agree to adhere to this principle and not recognise Taiwan as an independent country.
  - ✓ Currently, 21 states recognize Taiwan as a sovereign country.

### 3.9. SOUTH CHINA SEA (SCS) DISPUTE

The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague, Netherlands, has ruled that China's claims of historical rights over South China Sea (SCS) has no legal basis. The case was brought to the court in 2013 by the **Philippines**, centring on the **Scarborough Shoal**, but Beijing chose to boycott the proceedings.

#### What did the arbitration panel rule?

- The court at The Hague ruled that China's claims to the waters within the so-called "**nine-dash line**", with wide-ranging economic interests, was in breach of the **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**.

- The court slammed China for damaging parts of the **ecosystem in the Spratly islands** — a contested archipelago-- on account of overfishing and development of artificial islands.
- The Court also said that China violated **the Philippines’ sovereign rights**. It said China has caused “**severe harm to the coral reef environment**” by building artificial islands.

**What is the ‘nine-dash’ line?**

The ‘nine-dash line’ stretches hundreds of kilometers south and east of its southerly Hainan Island, covering the **strategic Parcel and Spratly island chains**. China buttresses its claims by citing 2,000 years of history when the two island chains were regarded as its integral parts.

**Chinese response to ruling of PCA**

- China rejected an international ruling on the South China Sea as “null and void” and devoid of any “binding force”.
- China is contemplating to establish a military **Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ)** in the South China Sea (SCS). The imposition of an ADIZ would require overflying planes to first notify China.
- Many Chinese experts stressed that the entire episode was a cover to enforce the **US’ “Pivot of Asia” or Rebalance strategy, aimed at the containment of China.**

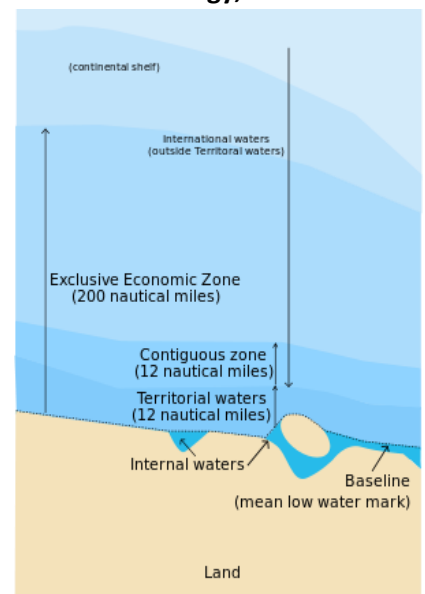


**Why South China Sea is considered so important?**

- The SCS is a busy international waterway, being one of the **main arteries of the global economy** and trade. More than \$5 trillion of world trade ships pass through the SCS every year.
- The SCS is also **resource rich, with numerous offshore oil and gas blocks.**

**About UNCLOS (Law of the Sea Convention or the Law of the Sea treaty)**

- It is an international agreement that resulted from the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), which took place between 1973 and 1982.
- It defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources.



**3.10. XISHA AND NANSHA ISLANDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA**

- The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Navy commemorated the 70th anniversary of the recovery of the Xisha and Nansha Islands, the Chinese names of **Paracel and Spratly islands in the SCS.**
- In compliance of the **Cairo Declaration and Potsdam Proclamation**, China in November-December 1946 designated officials to proceed to the islands by four warships to take over the islands, illegally occupied by Japan.
- China’s claims over the SCS was contested by Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan

### 3.11. SHANGRI LA DIALOGUE: ASIA SECURITY SUMMIT

The IISS Asia Security Summit was launched in 2002 by British think tank the International Institute for Strategic Studies and the Singaporean government.

- This annual dialogue brings together defence ministers and military chiefs from 28 Asia-Pacific countries to talk about security in the region.
- It gets its name from the location of the meeting, the Shangri-La hotel in Singapore.
- India's defence Minister participated in the 15th Shangri-La security summit.

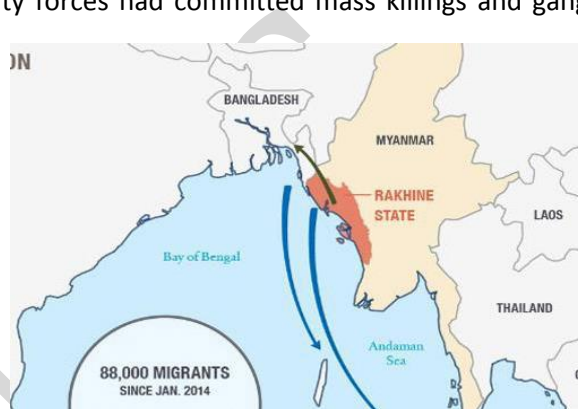
### 3.12. ROHINGYA ISSUE

#### Why in news?

- The UN human rights office said that Myanmar's security forces had committed mass killings and gang rapes of Rohingya Muslims and burned their villages.
- Also, Bangladesh, which shares a 168-km border with Myanmar, has refused to accept more Rohingya refugees. The issue of migration happened due to a military crackdown in the Rakhine State of Myanmar.

#### About Rohingya?

- More than one million people in Myanmar identify as Rohingya, a predominantly Muslim group living mainly in Rakhine State on the country's western coast.
- They practice a Sufi-inflected variation of Sunni Islam.



### 3.13. RAISINA DIALOGUE

#### Why in news?

- The second edition of the Raisina Dialogue tackled the theme of 'The New Normal: Multilateralism with Multipolarity'.
- The conference was attended by delegates from 65 countries.

#### About Raisina Dialogue

- It is envisioned as India's flagship conference of geopolitics and geo-economics.
- It was held jointly by Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), an independent think tank.
- The first edition of the conference was held in March 2016 with the theme "Asian Connectivity".

### 3.14. BATTLE OF ALEPPO

#### Why in news?

Syrian government troops have captured almost 85% of the eastern part of the city (Aleppo) which fell into rebel hands in 2012.

The **Battle of Aleppo** was a major military confrontation between the Syrian opposition (including the **Free Syrian Army** and Sunni fighters, such as the Levant Front and the Al-Qaeda-affiliated Al-Nusra Front), against the government of Bashar al-Assad, supported by Hezbollah, Shiite militias and Russia, and against the Kurdish People's Protection Units.

#### About Aleppo

- In 2011, Aleppo was Syria's largest city with a population of 2.5 million people.
- A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it has been described by *Time* as Syria's commercial capital
- Nationwide protests against President Assad began on 15 March 2011, as part of the Arab Spring. In Aleppo, large protests started more than a year later in May 2012.

### 3.15. RUSSIAN-TURKISH PEACE INITIATIVE FOR SYRIA

The UN Security Council has unanimously approved a resolution supporting a Russian-Turkish peace initiative for Syria, including an ongoing ceasefire and talks in 2017 in Kazakhstan.

- The resolution aims to pave the way for the new talks under the aegis of key Syria government backers Russia and Iran, and of Turkey, which backs rebel groups.
- The resolution approved also calls for **the “rapid, safe and unhindered” delivery of humanitarian aid throughout Syria.**
- Nearly 50,000 people died in the conflict in 2016, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

### 3.16. FAILED COUP IN TURKEY

A section of Turkey’s military tried to overthrow President Tayyip Erdogan who has been in power since 2003. The government has blamed **Fethullah Gulen**, a powerful, reclusive US-based Muslim cleric whom it accuses of fomenting unrest.

#### Turkey as secular state

The Republic of Turkey was created as a secular state in 1923 after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the end of First World War

- Its founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was president until his death in 1938. His successor Ismet Inonu introduced multi-party democracy in 1946.
- Turkey witnessed repressive military coups in 1960, 1971 and 1980.
- In 1997 the Turkish military also forced out current President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s late mentor Necmettin Erbakan from the premiership.

### 3.17. ARMED CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN

Armed conflict erupted in South Sudan’s capital Juba between government and opposition forces, raising the spectre of a return to civil war. Also an Indian national was shot dead by rebel fighters in disputed region of **Abyei, South Sudan.**

#### Recent conflict

- **South Sudan President Salva Kiir and Vice President Riek Machar** are central characters at the heart of the infighting.
- The two leaders have been embroiled in a power struggle since late 2013, when the President accused the vice president of trying to oust him through a coup.
- The current fighting between soldiers loyal to Mr. Kiir, a member of the **Dinka tribe**, and former rebels backing Mr. Machar, a **Nuer**, was triggered by a deadly altercation at a checkpoint.

#### Operation Sankat Mochan

- Government started operation ‘Sankat Mochan’ in July, 2016 to evacuate Indian citizens stranded in South Sudan’s capital Juba.
- It was the first big evacuation effort in a year after Operation Rahat evacuated hundreds of citizens of India and other countries in July 2015 from Yemen.

#### About Abyei region

- Abyei is an energy-rich region between Sudan and South Sudan which remains disputed.

#### U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

There are 2,500 Indian soldiers in the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).





## About South Sudan

- In 2011, South Sudan split from its northern neighbor, Sudan, in a contentious divorce brokered by international diplomats to end one of the world's longest civil wars.
- The split ended decades of violence and bloodshed between South Sudan, which is predominantly Christian, and its Muslim neighbor, Sudan.

## 3.18. REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA (FARC)

- The Colombian government and FARC rebels signed a ceasefire and disarmament agreement to end civil war.
- The deal establishes “a bilateral ceasefire and end to hostilities and the definitive laying down of arms”.
- The deal puts a definitive end to fighting in Latin America’s longest civil war.
- The Colombian conflict started in the 1960s as a rural uprising for land rights that spawned the communist FARC. The conflict has drawn in various leftist rebel groups, right-wing paramilitaries and drug gangs over the decades.

## 3.19. REGIME CHANGE IN BRAZIL

Brazil's Dilma Rousseff was stripped of the country's presidency in a Senate impeachment vote, ending 13 years of leftist rule in Latin America's biggest economy.

### Reasons for Rousseff’s Impeachment

- Ms. Rousseff’s popularity has eroded fast over the last year with a deepening economic crisis and a spreading **corruption scandal**, in which several of her Workers Party (PT) leaders have been implicated.
- Some of the measures she took, such as **cutting public expenditure to control deficit**, were counter-productive as they drove the PT’s traditional base, the working people, away from her.

## 3.20. MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

### 3.20.1. NEW YORK DECLARATION ON MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

UN General Assembly with leaders from the 193 member states took part in the first-ever summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants in September 2016. The outcome of this summit was New York Declaration.

#### Aim of the Declaration

- It expresses the political will of world leaders to save lives, protect rights and share responsibility on a global scale.
- The declaration aimed at providing a more coordinated and humane response to the refugee crisis that has strained resources and sparked divisions from Africa to Europe.

#### What are the commitments?

The New York Declaration contains bold commitments both to address the issues we face now and to prepare the world for future challenges. These include commitments to:

- Protect the **human rights** of all refugees and migrants, regardless of status. This includes the rights of women and girls and promoting their full, equal and meaningful participation in finding solutions.
- Ensure that all refugee and migrant children are **receiving education** within a few months of arrival.
- Prevent and respond to sexual and **gender-based violence**.
- Support those countries rescuing, receiving and hosting large numbers of refugees and migrants.
- Strengthen the global governance of migration by bringing the International Organization for Migration into the UN system.
- **No binding commitments:** The declaration has no concrete commitments and is not legally binding but rather calls on countries to protect refugees’ human rights, boost humanitarian aid and increase resettlement of refugees.

#### Refugees

- According to the UN Refugee Agency, refugees are people forced to flee due to armed conflict or persecution, while migrants choose to move in search of a better life.

### 3.20.2. ENVIRONMENTAL REFUGEES

- An increasing number of people globally are facing displacement due to droughts, famines, rising sea levels and other natural disasters caused by climate change.
- This class of migrants has been labelled as 'environmental refugees'.
- According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, an international body reviewing trends of internal displacement, **24 million people** are being displaced annually by natural disasters **since 2008**.
- This crisis will make almost half a billion people worldwide "environmental refugees" by 2100.

#### The UN Refugee Convention (1951)

- It grants certain rights to people fleeing persecution because of **race, religion, nationality, affiliation to a particular social group, or political opinion**.
- The rights they are entitled to follow the principles of **non-discrimination, non-penalization, and non-refoulement**.
- However, people migrating due to environmental disasters have **no such recognition of their 'refugee' status in international law**, leaving them without any basic rights of rehabilitation and compensation.

#### The Paris Agreement

Paris agreement has mentioned the rights of 'migrants' in its Preamble. However, it is an anemic attempt at appreciating the gravity of this crisis. There is also little follow-up in the text of the agreement to address this problem.

- The agreement, in Paragraph 50 of the **Loss and Damage section**, creates a task force to build upon existing work and develop recommendations for addressing climate migration.
- But this is meaningless for two main reasons - **first, the recommendations of the task force have no binding authority**; and second, **no details are provided on its functions, operations, funding and other aspects**.

### 3.20.3. UNICEF REPORT ON REFUGEES

#### Why in news?

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on 7 September 2016 released the report titled *Uprooted: The growing crisis for refugee and migrant children*.

#### Key findings

- Nearly 50 million children have been uprooted across the globe and millions more migrating.
- Traumatized by the conflicts and violence, they are fleeing, they face further dangers including
  - ✓ the risk of drowning on sea crossings,
  - ✓ malnourishment,
  - ✓ trafficking
- In countries they travel through and at their destinations, they often face xenophobia and discrimination.
- 1 in 200 children in the world is a child refugee. The number has doubled from 2005 to 2015.
- Regional perspective: Asia is home to 2 in 5 of the world's child migrants

#### International protocols

- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and Protocol (1967)
- Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (2000)
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990).

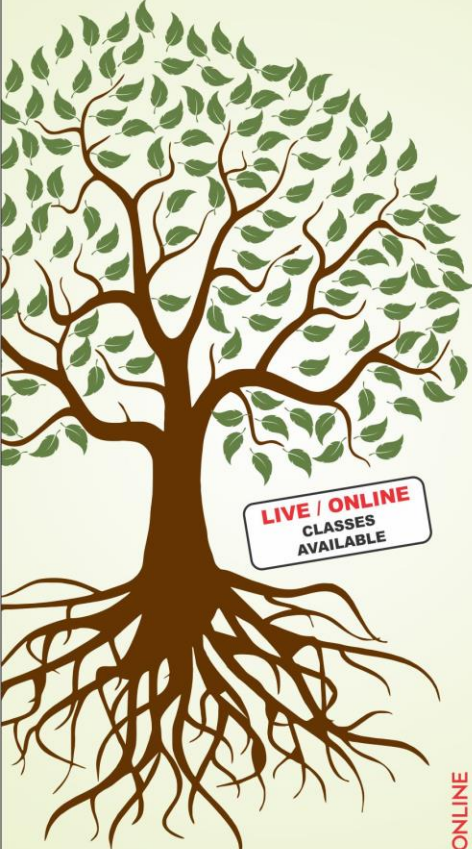
Many countries are yet to ratify these which will strengthen protections to these refugees.

### 3.21. ULAAN BAATAR DECLARATION @ ASEM SUMMIT

- The **11th Asia-Europe Meeting Summit (ASEM)** took place in the Mongolian capital Ulaan Baatar. India is represented by Vice-President Hamid Ansari.
- The ASEM is an informal inter-regional dialogue that addresses political, security, financial, economic, social and cultural issues.

## About ASEM

- It was officially established on 1 March 1996 at the first summit in Bangkok, Thailand.
- Its **objective is to strengthen the relationship between the two regions in a spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership. There are 53 partners of ASEM. India is also part of ASEM.**
- The main components of the ASEM process rest on the following 3 pillars:
  - ✓ Political Pillar
  - ✓ Economical Pillar
  - ✓ Social, Cultural & Educational Pillar



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## 4. MULTILATERAL TRADE

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

#### Why in news?

- India has agreed to provide similar tariff cuts to all RCEP member countries with limited deviation. This benefits China unduly.
- Earlier India proposed 3-layer tariffs.
- Japan has been pushing for a single-tier system to which India has now agreed.

#### About RCEP

- RCEP is a mega trade deal which aims to cover goods, services, investments, economic and technical cooperation, competition and intellectual property rights.
- The 16-member bloc RCEP comprises **10 ASEAN members** (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Laos and Vietnam) and their six free trade agreement partners- **India, China, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand**.

### 4.2. CHINA'S OBOR INITIATIVE

#### Why in news?

- Latvia became the first country in the Baltic Sea area to sign a MoU to link up with China's Belt and Road Initiative, during a visit by Premier Li Keqiang.
- **Silk Road Train**
  - ✓ As part of China's One Belt, One Road program, the first direct rail freight service from China to the UK completed its 18-day trip and arrived in London.
  - ✓ The train left the city of Yiwu, on China's east coast and travelled 12,000km, crossing seven countries, before arriving at a freight depot in UK.

#### About OBOR

- The initiative comprises of the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21 Century Maritime Silk Road.
- The initiative was proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2013.
- It aims to boost connectivity and trade across Asia, Africa and Europe. Three main goals of China are:
  - ✓ Economic diversification
  - ✓ political stability and the
  - ✓ development of a multipolar global order

### 4.3. CPEC

China opened a new international trade route from the newly built Gwadar port connecting Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East by seeing off an export ship to Middle East and Africa.

#### Why is this important?

The Gwadar port is the showpiece of the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)** project, which Beijing sees as a crucial link that will help it in its drive to become a world power.

#### CPEC and Pakistan

- CPEC investment is expected to exceed all FDI in Pakistan since 1970.
- Over 7 lakh direct jobs likely to be created.
- It will enhance the cooperation between China and Pak.

#### The Gwadar port

- Gwadar is warm-water, deep-sea port.
- **Strategic location**- it is located between South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, just outside the Straits of Hormuz.
- It will also be the site of a floating liquefied natural gas facility as part of the larger \$2.5 billion Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project.

### The Baloch angle

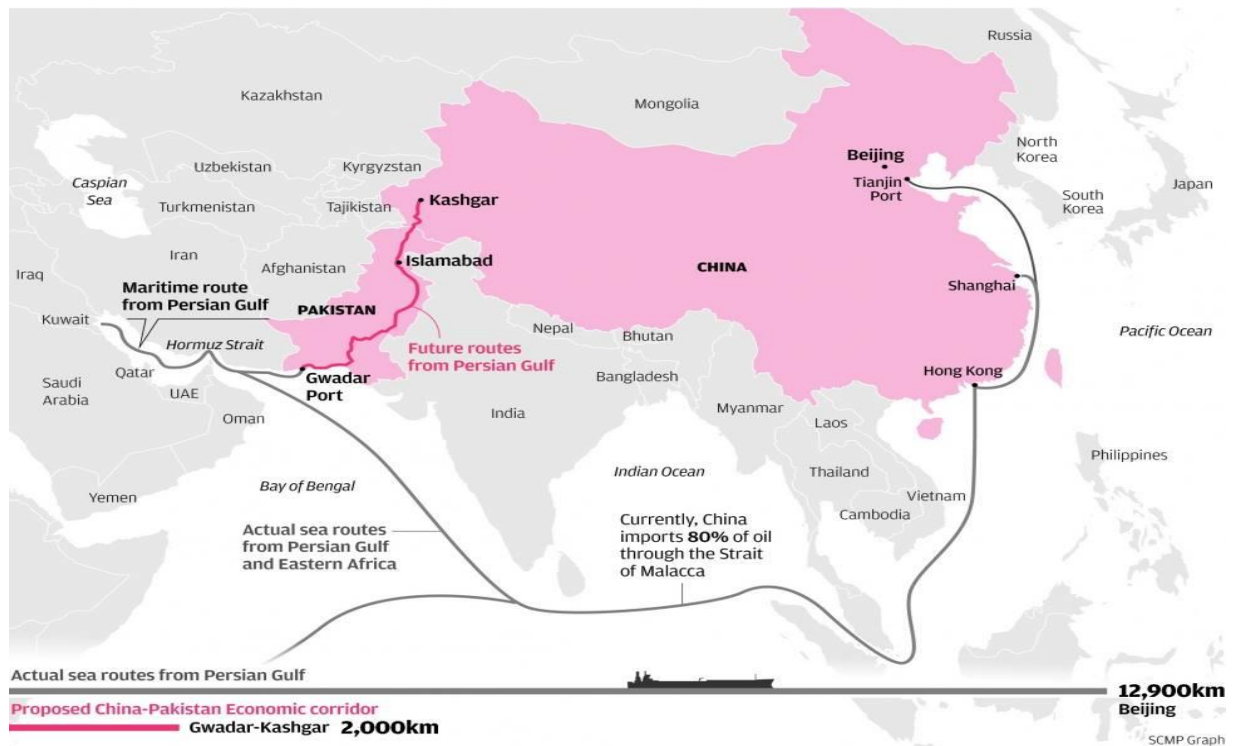
People in Balochistan, the Pakistani province in which Gwadar is located, are against the CPEC. They claim that the CPEC's benefits will not flow to them.

### CPEC and India

- India is unhappy with the CPEC as it passes through the Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir.
- Baloch activists have been reaching out to India in a hope to bring focus to their plight internationally.
- The China-Pak axis has already been creating waves and is concerning India.

#### About CPEC

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a 3,218-km route consisting of highways, railways and pipelines that will connect Gwadar port to Xinjiang in China. The CPEC is crucial for China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative that aims to connect China to Europe and Asia.



## 4.4. ASIAN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT BANK (AIIB)

- Lack of infrastructure, **poor intra-regional and regional connectivity** and almost negligible amenities in urban spaces are some of the major challenges afflicting several countries of Asia.
- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has been projected as an **“Asian tool”** to deal with such challenges that have stunted the growth prospects of several Asian economies.\

### About AIIB

- The **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** is an international financial institution that aims to support the building of infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region.
- China’s top legislature on 4th November 2015 ratified the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) agreement, which establishes the legal framework for the bank.
- It has 37 founding members. India is founding member of AIIB.

Formation	16 January 2016 (Open for business) 25 December 2015 (Entry into force Articles of Agreement)
Type	Regional Investment Bank
Purpose	Crediting
Headquarters	Beijing, China

## 4.5. TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

### Why in news?

The newly elected US president quit from the TPP the very first day of his office. The US president has signed an executive order formally withdrawing the country from TPP trade deal. US would pursue bilateral arrangements with the TPP signatories to find more favourable to the US.



### About TPP

- It is a trade agreement among 12 Pacific Rim countries signed on 4 February 2016 - Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, US and Vietnam.
- The aim is to ease the flow of goods, services and investments among them, and to strengthen the rules on labour standards, environmental issues, origin criteria and intellectual property.
- The TPP, a deal which will cover **40 percent** of the world economy.

## 4.6. BRAZIL URGES INDIA TO BROADEN MERCOSUR

India at present has over 450 tariff lines with MERCOSUR, but there are efforts to raise the tariff line to 4000. It will expand India's commercial and multilateral footprints in South America through MERCOSUR.

### About MERCOSUR

It is a sub-regional bloc which aims to promote free trade and the fluid movement of goods, people, and currency. Its full members are **Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela** (suspended in Dec, 2016).

## 4.7. TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP (TTIP)

- The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is a proposed trade agreement between the European Union and the United States. The aim is to boost the economies of the EU and the US by removing or reducing barriers to trade and foreign investment.
- The agreement is under ongoing negotiations and its **main three broad areas** are: **market access; specific regulation;** and **broader rules and principles and modes of co-operation.**

## 4.8. APEC SUMMIT 2016

The 2016 Economic Leaders' Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit took place between November in Lima, Peru.

### About APEC:

- Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a forum for **21 Pacific Rim member economies (Headquarters Singapore)** that promotes free trade throughout the Asia-Pacific region.
- It was **established in 1989** in response to the growing interdependence of Asia-Pacific economies and the advent of regional trade blocs in other parts of the world.
- **Member economy:** Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong(China), Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, The Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, The United States, Vietnam.

## 5. REPORTS/INDEXES

### 5.1. GLOBAL PEACE INDEX (GPI) 2016

The **Global Peace Index (GPI)** measures relative position of nations' and regions' peacefulness. It is the product of **Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)** with data collected and collated by **the Economist Intelligence Unit**.

#### Highlights of GPI-2016

- India is ranked 141st (out of 163 countries) in GPI 2016. Violence impacted India's economy by \$679.80 billion in 2016, 9% of India's GDP.
- **Iceland**, Denmark and Austria have been ranked as the most peaceful.

Nation	GPI-2016
Bhutan	13 <sup>th</sup>
Nepal	78 <sup>th</sup>
Bangladesh	83 <sup>rd</sup>
Sri Lanka	97 <sup>th</sup>
India	141 <sup>st</sup>
Pakistan	153 <sup>rd</sup>
Afghanistan	160 <sup>th</sup>

### 5.2. GOOD COUNTRY INDEX

- It is a biannual index founded by Simon Anholt, a British government adviser.
- It measures how countries serve its people's interests as well as contribute to global good of humanity
- It takes into account 35 indices of UN and World bank including global contribution to different fields
- India ranks 70th among 163 countries on 2015 Good Country Index, a list topped by Sweden.
- Its aim is "to find ways of encouraging countries to collaborate and co-operate a lot more, and compete a bit less".

### 5.3. THE WORLD HAPPINESS REPORT 2016

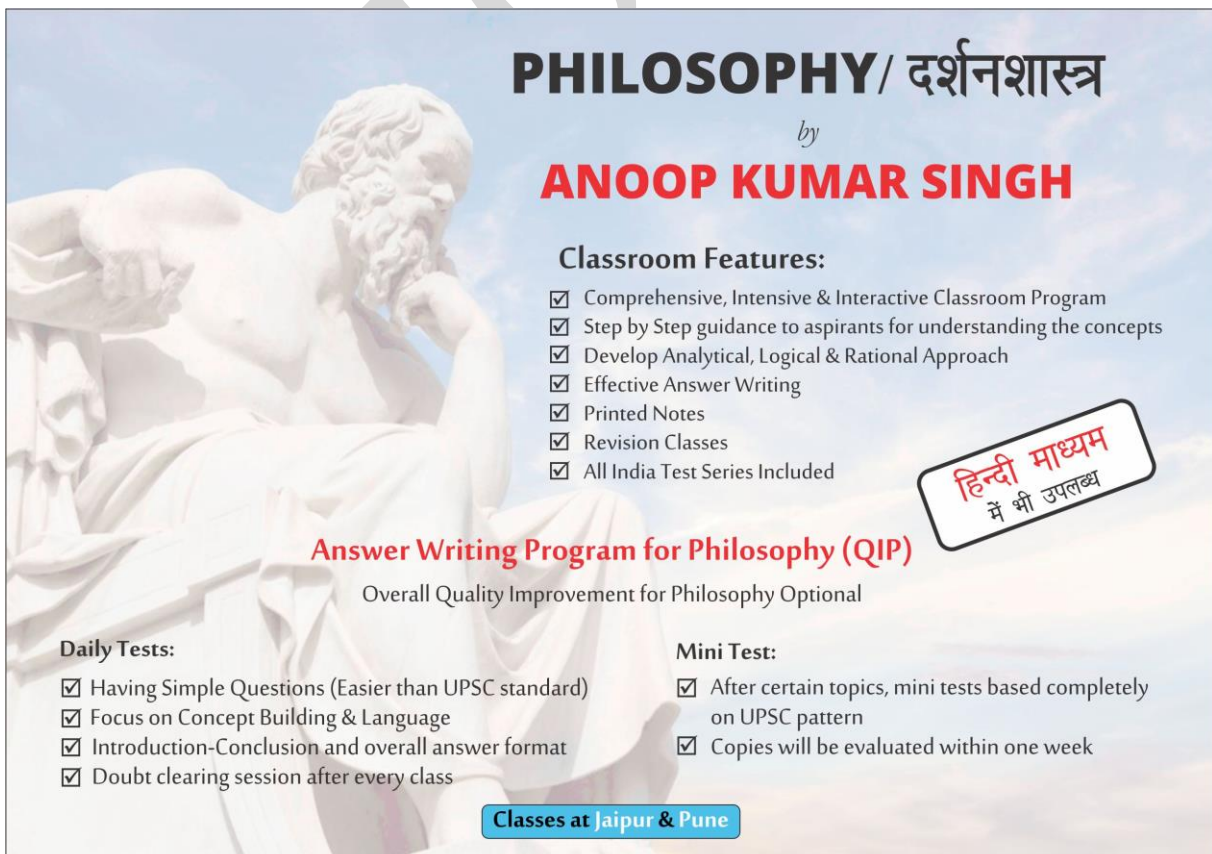
India ranked at 122 out of 155 countries in the World Happiness Report 2017, four notches below its previous rank of 118.

#### About The World Happiness Report

It is published by the **Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)**, a global initiative of the United Nations.

The report takes following parameters into account as indicators of happiness

- ✓ **GDP per capita,**
- ✓ **Life expectancy,**
- ✓ **Social support**
- ✓ **Freedom to make life choices.**



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## 6. MISCELLANEOUS

### 6.1. RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT (R2P)

R2P or RtoP is a global political commitment endorsed by all member states of the United Nations at 2005 World Summit to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

#### Pillars of R2P

The **three pillars** of the responsibility to protect, as stipulated in the Outcome Document of the 2005 United Nations World Summit and formulated in the Secretary-General's 2009 Report on Implementing the Responsibility to Protect are

- The State carries the primary responsibility for protecting populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, and their incitement;
- The international community has a responsibility to encourage and assist States in fulfilling this responsibility; also, it has a responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to protect populations from these crimes.
- If a State is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take collective action, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

### 6.2. GLOBAL INVESTMENT AGREEMENT

#### Why in news?

- India, along with Brazil, Argentina and others, has rejected an informal attempt by EU and Canada to work towards a global investment agreement at the WTO.
- The EU and Canada have inked an investment pact that has incorporated the contentious **Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism**.

#### What is Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism?

- The ISDS mechanism has become contentious as it permits companies to drag governments to international arbitration without exhausting the local remedies.
- It also allows companies to claim huge amounts as compensation citing losses they suffered due to reasons, including policy changes.

### 6.3. WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE 2017

UNGA had proclaimed 20 February as **World Day of Social Justice** in 2007.

#### About:

- To promote national activities in pursuance of goals of the World Summit for Social Development.
- It support and promotes efforts of the international community in poverty eradication, the promotion of full employment and decent work, gender equity and access to social well-being and justice for all.
- The Theme of 2017 world day was: "Preventing conflict and sustaining peace through decent work".

### 6.4. IRCH MEETING

- Ministry of AYUSH organized the 9<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of **International Regulatory Cooperation for Herbal Medicines (IRCH)**.

#### About IRCH

- IRCH was established in 2006. India has been an active member of IRCH network since 2007.
- It is a global network, created by WHO, of regulatory authorities responsible for herbal medicines.
- Its mission is to protect and promote public health through improved regulation for herbal medicines.



## 6.5. CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: AMNESTY REPORT

- Human rights group Amnesty International has published a new report on number of death penalty executions across the world.

### Key Highlights of the Report

- The world saw the **highest number of recorded executions in more than 25 years** in 2015.
- At least 1,634 people were executed last year, **an increase of more than 50% on 2014**.
- **Iran put 977 people to death in 2015**, mostly for "drug-related offences.
- Pakistan executed 326 people in 2015, the highest number ever recorded by Amnesty in Pakistan.
- **Four more countries abolished** the death penalty in 2015, and now the **tally of abolitionist states is 102**.

### About Amnesty International

- Amnesty International was founded in London in 1961
- It is a non-governmental organization focused on human rights that claims to have over 7 million members and supporters around the world.
- The objective of the organization is "to conduct research and generate action to prevent and end grave abuses of human rights, and to demand justice for those whose rights have been violated.

## 6.6. ICN 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

- International Competition Network (ICN) has accepted the proposal for Competition Commission of India to host 2018 ICN Annual Conference. CCI is a member of the ICN since 2003.

### About ICN

- ICN is an international body comprising 132 members exclusively devoted to international competition enforcement.
- It provides competition authorities with a specialized and informal platform for addressing practical competition concerns
- It enables sharing experiences and adopting international best practices.

## 6.7. RADHIKA MENON

- Captain Radhika Menon has become the first woman in the world to receive the Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea for 2016, from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).
- She saved the lives of seven fishermen when their boat was adrift following engine failure and loss of anchor in severe weather.

### About IMO

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is specialized agency of UN, responsible for regulating shipping. Headquartered in London, it has 172 Member States and 3 Associate.

## 6.8. VIENNA CONVENTION

- Pakistan accused India of violating the international convention for protection of diplomats after New Delhi briefly detained a staffer of the Pakistan High Commission In October 2016.

### About Vienna convention:

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

## 6.9. QUEBEC

Six people were killed when gunmen opened fire in a Quebec City mosque. Quebec is the second most populous province of Canada

- Like France, Quebec has struggled to reconcile to its secular identity with a rising Muslim population, many of them North African emigrants.
- Incidents of Islamophobia have increased in Quebec in recent years.
- The face-covering, or niqab, became a big issue in the 2015 Canadian federal election, especially in Quebec, where the vast majority of the population supported a ban on it at citizenship ceremonies.

#### Associated information

The land within the Arctic Circle is divided among eight countries: Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, the United States (Alaska), Canada, Denmark (Greenland), and Iceland.



### 6.10. INDIA SIGNS OPEN SKIES AGREEMENT WITH GREECE

- As per this agreement, India will allow airlines from Greece to operate unlimited flights to six Indian metropolitan airports and Indian carriers can fly to Greece without any such restriction
- Greece is the first country with an open sky arrangement under our new civil aviation policy
- At present, India has an open sky agreement with US and a near open sky agreement with UK under which there are certain limitations on the number of flights.

Air Service Agreements are signed between countries to decide on the number of flights that airlines can fly into each other's countries.

Under the open sky pact, there is no restriction on flights.

### 6.11. EXPANSION OF INDIA-CHILE PTA

- The agreement on expansion has been signed in September 2016
- Under the expanded Preferential Trade Agreement, Chile has offered concessions to India on 1798 tariff lines (unlike earlier 296 tariffs) and India has offered concessions to Chile on 1031 tariff lines at 8-digit level (unlike 178 tariff lines earlier)

Among the LAC countries, Chile was the third largest trading partner of India during 2015-16.

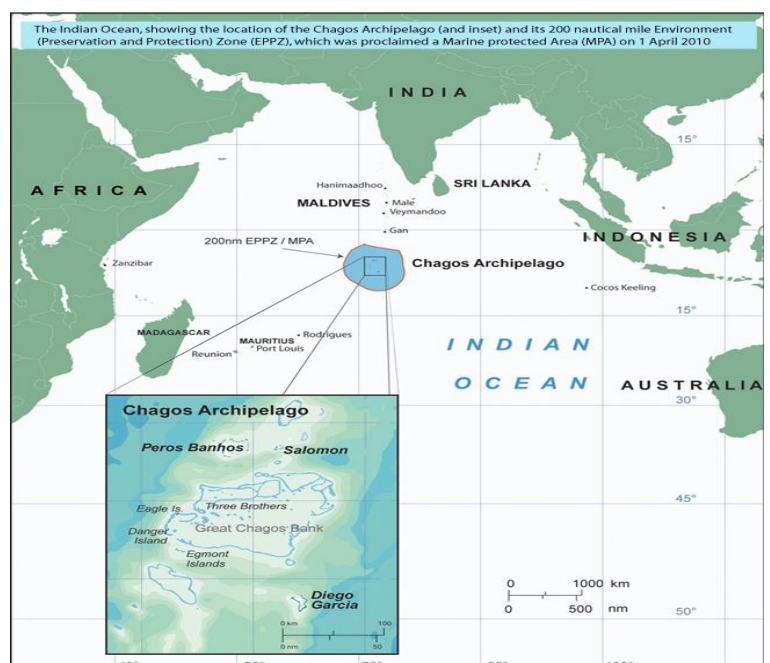
### 6.12. CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO DISPUTE

#### Why in news?

The British Foreign Secretary has sought Indian assistance in resolving current tensions between UK, US and Mauritius over the future of the US military base Diego Garcia, and the Indian Ocean Chagos Archipelago.

#### About the Chagos Islands

- The **Chagos Islands**- referred to by the British as the British Indian Ocean Territory, but which is not recognized as such by Mauritius- is home to the **US military base Diego Garcia**.
- Mauritius has repeatedly asserted that the Chagos Archipelago is part of its territory and that the UK claim is a violation of UN resolutions banning the dismemberment of colonial territories before independence.



- In 2015, the **Permanent Court of Arbitration** unanimously held that the marine protected area (MPA) which UK declared around the Chagos Archipelago in April 2010 was created in violation of international law.

### 6.13. INDIA JOINS CHINA AND PAKISTAN IN MULTILATERAL EXERCISE

- All three countries took part in the “Cobra Gold” multilateral exercises hosted by Thailand
- India was invited to the exercises as an “observer plus” country.
- The exercise involves 35 countries and this year’s theme was humanitarian assistance and disaster relief

### 6.14. 14TH EDITION OF PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS-2017

#### Why in news?

The annual global convention for the Indian diaspora, 14th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held in Bengaluru from in January. The theme of 2017 PBD was **“Redefined Engagement with Indian Diaspora”**.

#### Highlights of Event

- The three-day event started with the Youth PBD, the theme of which was **'Role of Diaspora Youth in the Transformation of India'**.
- The PM urged the diaspora community to switch from their PIO cards to OCI cards.
- The deadline for PIO card conversions to OCI has also been extended to June 30, 2017, without any penalty.
- **Annual remittance from overseas Indians stood at over \$69 billion** with India receiving more expat cash than any other country in the world.
- The President concluded the Convention with conferring of the **Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Awards**.

#### About Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

- It has traditionally been held on January 9 to commemorate the return of Mahatma Gandhi as ‘Pravasi’ from South Africa over a century ago (1915).
- Launched in 2003, it is an annual event to step up India's engagement with its diaspora and NRIs and Persons of India origins, the govt. decided to make PBD a biennial event last year.
- It is also an important platform to facilitate engagement between Central and state govts with the Overseas Indian Community.
- Currently, there are 3.12 crore overseas Indians globally, of which 1.34 crore are Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and 1.7 crore NRIs.

### 6.15. BORDER HAATS

- The border haats aim at promoting the wellbeing of the people dwelling in remote areas across the borders of two countries, by establishing traditional system of marketing the local produce through local markets.
- The trade at border haats is permitted to be carried out in currencies on both sides of border and on barter basis
- The data of such trade is maintained by the Haat Management Committee of the respective border haat.
- Currently, four border haats are operational, along the India-Bangladesh border. Two border haats are located in Meghalaya at Kalaichar and Balat and two are located in Tripura at Srinagar and Kamalasar. Six more are being planned
- Recently border haats along Myanmar border also were successful.

### 6.16. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR DEVELOPMENT

- UN declares 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development
- Tourism industry accounts for 10% of the world’s economic activity. Thus, it has tremendous potential to contribute to the fight against poverty and foster mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue
- In the context of SDGs, it aims to promote policies, business practices and consumer behavior towards a more sustainable tourism sector

## 6.17. RIMPAC 2016

### Why in news?

- Last year 25<sup>th</sup> edition of Biennial exercise **Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC)** was held in June in Hawaii.
- Indian Naval ship Satpura, an indigenously built guided missile stealth frigate, participated in the exercise

### About RIMPAC

- The first RIMPAC, held in 1971, involved forces from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US). Other regular participants Chile, Colombia, France, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Peru, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, and the UK.
- It is World's largest international maritime exercise which is held in western pacific region.
- India's association began as an observer in 2006 and enhanced in 2014 by deployment of INS Sahyadri
- It is aimed at increased interoperability and development of common understanding of procedures for maritime security operations.
- It supports maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region and contributes to peace and stability of the global commons.

## 6.18. INDIA AS A SOFT POWER

### About

- India's soft power is based upon its vast heritage going back thousands of years.
- India is placed 34<sup>th</sup> in terms of Soft Power.

### What is Soft Power?

- The **concept of soft power was developed by Joseph Nye of Harvard University** and is the ability to attract and co-opt to shape preference of others instead of using coercion or monetary influence.
- **It is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments.**
- **Hard power encompasses military and economic means while soft power is about culture and values.**
- Soft power is a strategy used, in working to persuade by constructing and mobilising networks, developing and communicating compelling narratives, establishing international norms, building coalitions, and drawing on the key resources that endear one country to another.
- Soft power is important economically, politically and diplomatically, establishing the prestige of a nation.

## 6.19. 'URBAN PLUS' APPROACH

### Why in news?

The sixth edition of Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD) was held in New Delhi.

### Outcomes of the conference

Asia Pacific countries that account for over 55% of global urban population have resolved to adopt 'Urban Plus' approach. This was contained in the **'New Delhi Declaration'** adopted on the conclusion of the APMCHUD. It also adopted **implementation plan**.

### New Delhi Declaration

- The New Delhi Declaration has strongly advocated planning for urban and adjoining rural areas in an integrated manner instead of looking at them as independent entities.
- The Declaration also called for a thorough review of existing policies and formulation of new policies to promote New Urban Agenda adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development in Quito, Ecuador in October 2016.
- Noting governance as the key to sustainable development, the Declaration stressed on the need for effective governance structures in urban areas.

### Urban plus approach

This approach will address ways to make urban expansion sustainable and manageable. This would mean an emphasis on planning for urban and its adjoining peri-urban and rural areas in an integrated manner.

## 6.20. KAFALA LABOUR SYSTEM

### Why in news?

Qatar formally announced the end of its controversial “kafala” system.

### Kafala System

The **kafala system** is a system used to monitor migrant laborers, working primarily in the construction and domestic sectors, in Lebanon, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

- The system requires all unskilled laborers to have an in-country sponsor, usually their employer, who is responsible for their visa and legal status.
- The system was compared to modern-day slavery and left workers vulnerable and open to abuse as workers need sponsor permission to switch jobs or leave the country.

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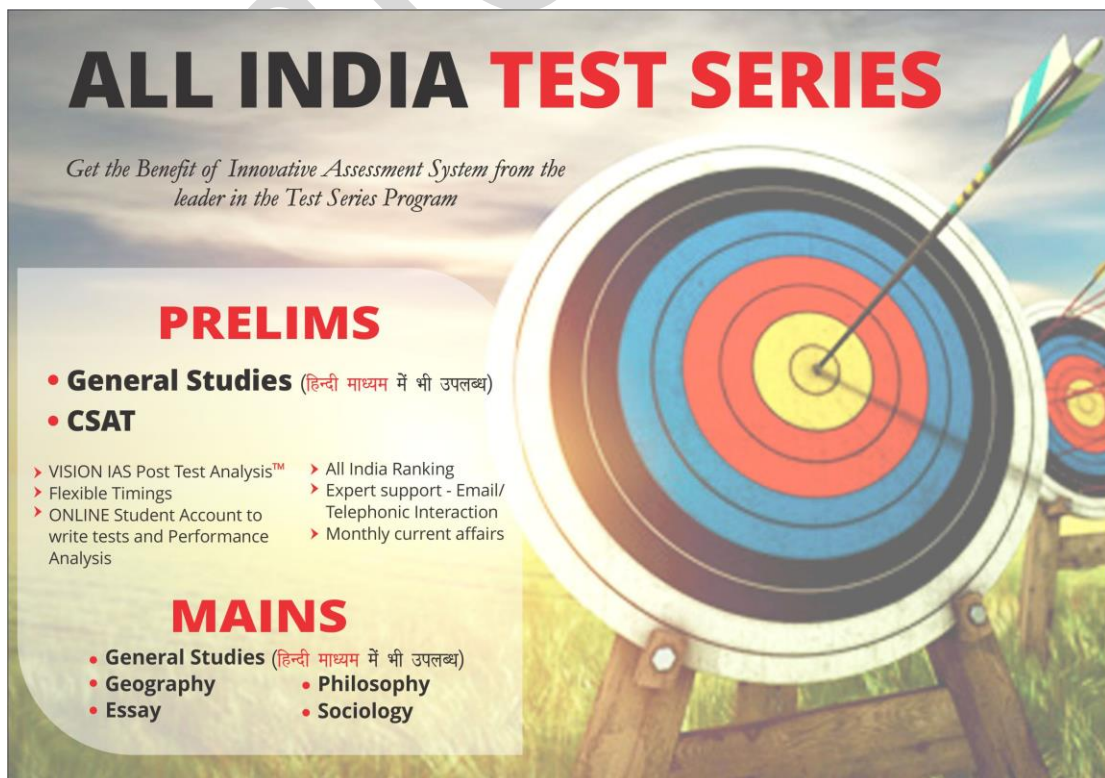
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## 7. MILITARY EXERCISES

SIMBEX-15	India and Singapore naval exercise
Varuna 2015	Indo-French naval exercise
Sundarban Moitry	Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).
LAMITYE	Indian Army and the Seychelles People's Defence Forces (SPDF)
Hand-in-Hand	Indian and Chinese army
Mitra Shakti	India-Sri Lanka joint training exercise
coordinated patrol (CORPAT)	India-Indonesia Bilateral Maritime Exercise
Cobra Gold	Asia-Pacific military exercise held in Thailand/India participated
Naseem Al Bahr	India and Oman :bilateral maritime exercise
SLINEX 2015	Sri Lanka-India bilateral naval exercise
Exercise Malabar	Trilateral naval exercise involving the USA, Japan and India
INDRA	Military exercise conducted by India and Russia
IBSAMAR	navies of India, Brazil, South Africa
Exercise KONKAN	Indian navy and Royal Navy
AUSINDEX-15	India-Australia naval exercise
'Sahyog-Kaijin'	Indo-Japan Coast Guard Joint Exercise
Indradhanush exercises.	India and UK air force
Mithra Shakti	India and Sri Lanka Military exercise
Exercise Shakti	Indian and French armies
Exercise Nomadic Elephant	Indo-Mongolia joint training Exercise
Exercise Yuddh Abhyas	India-US Combined Military Training
Surya Kiran	Indo-Nepal Combined Battalion level Military Training Exercise
Khanjar	India and Kyrgyzstan
Harimau Shakti	India and Malaysia
Red Flag	Air Forces of India and the U.S.
Desert Eagle	Air Force exercise between India and United Arab Emirates (UAE)



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## 8. PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

1. With reference to Look East Policy of India, consider the following statements: **(CSE-2011)**
  1. India wants to establish itself as an important regional player in the East Asian Affairs.
  2. India wants to plug the vacuum created by the termination of cold War.
  3. India wants to restore the historical and cultural ties with its neighbours in Southeast and East Asia.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) 1 and 3 only
  - (c) 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
2. Recently, the USA decided to support India's membership in multi-lateral export control regimes called the "Australia Group" and the "Wassenaar Arrangement". What is the difference between them? **(CSE-2011)**
  1. The Australia Group is an informal arrangement which aims to allow exporting countries to minimize the risk of assisting chemical and biological weapons proliferation, whereas the Wassenaar Arrangement is a formal group under the OECD holding identical objectives.
  2. The Australia Group comprises predominantly of Asian, African and North American countries, whereas the member countries of Wassenaar Arrangement are predominantly from the European Union and American continents.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. India maintained its early cultural contacts and trade links with Southeast Asia across the Bay of Bengal. For this pre-eminence of early maritime history of Bay of Bengal, which of the following could be the most convincing explanation/ explanations? **(CSE-2011)**
  - (a) Monsoon winds across the Bay of Bengal Facilitated sea voyages
  - (b) As compared to other countries, India had a better ship-building technology in ancient and medieval times
  - (c) Both (a) and (b) are convincing explanations in this context
  - (d) The rulers of southern India always patronized traders, Brahmin priests and Buddhist monks in this context.
4. Between India and East Asia, the navigation-time and distance can be greatly reduced by which of the following? **(CSE-2011)**
  1. Deepening the Malacca straits between Malaysia and Indonesia.
  2. Opening a new canal across the kra isthmus between the gulf of Siam and Andaman sea.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. The "New START" treaty was in the news. What is this treaty? **(CSE-2011)**
  - (a) It is a bilateral strategic nuclear arms reduction treaty between the USA and the Russian federation.
  - (b) It is a multilateral energy security cooperation treaty among the members of the east Asia summit.
  - (c) It is a treaty between the Russian federation and the European Union for the energy security cooperation.
  - (d) It is a multilateral cooperation treaty among the BRICS countries for the promotion of trade.

6. Southeast Asia has captivated the attention of global community over space and time as a geostrategic-ally significant region. Which among the following is the most convincing explanation for this global perspective? (CSE-2011)
- It was the hot theatre during the Second World War.
  - Its location between the Asian powers of china and India.
  - It was the arena of superpower confrontation during the cold war period.
  - Its location between the pacific and Indian oceans and its pre-eminent maritime character.
7. The Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index developed by Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative with UNDP support covers which of the following? (CSE-2012)
- Deprivation of education, health, assets and services at household level
  - Purchasing power parity at national level
  - Extent of budget deficit and GDP growth rate at national level
- Select the correct answer using the codes given below:
- 1 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3
8. Recently, a series of uprisings of people referred to as 'Arab Spring' originally started from (CSE-2014)
- Egypt
  - Lebanon
  - Syria
  - Tunisia
9. Consider the following countries: (CSE-2014)
- Denmark
  - Japan
  - Russian Federation
  - United Kingdom
  - United States of America
- Which of the above are the members of the 'Arctic Council' ?
- 1, 2 and 3
  - 2, 3 and 4
  - 1, 4 and 5
  - 1, 3 and 5
10. Consider the following pairs: (CSE-2014)
- | Region often in news | Country              |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Chechnya          | : Russian Federation |
| 2. Darfur            | : Mali               |
| 3. Swat Valley       | : Iraq               |
- Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?
- 1 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3
11. Consider the following statements regarding 'Earth Hour': (CSE-2014)
- It is an initiative of UNEP and UNESCO.
  - It is a movement in which the participants switch off the lights for one hour on a certain day every year.
  - It is a movement to raise the awareness about the climate change and the need to save the planet.
- Which of the statements given above is / are correct?
- 1 and 3 only
  - 2 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3



12. With reference to a grouping of countries known as BRICS, consider the following statements: (CSE-2014)
1. The First Summit of BRICS was held in Rio de Janeiro in 2009.
  2. South Africa was the last to join the BRICS grouping.
- Which of the statements given above is / are correct?
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
13. Amnesty International is (CSE-2015)
- (a) an agency of the United Nations to help refugees of civil wars
  - (b) a global Human Rights Movement
  - (c) a non-governmental organization to help people voluntary very poor people
  - (d) an inter-governmental agency to cater to medical emergencies in war-ravaged regions
14. India is a member of which among the following? (CSE-2015)
1. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
  2. Association of South-East Asian Nations
  3. East Asia Summit
- Select the correct answer using the code given below.
- (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 3 only
  - (c) 1, 2 and 3
  - (d) India is a member of none of them
15. In the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, an initiative of six countries, which of the following is/are not a participant/ participants? (CSE-2015)
1. Bangladesh
  2. Cambodia
  3. China
  4. Myanmar
  5. Thailand
- Select the correct answer using the code given below.
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2, 3 and 4
  - (c) 1 and 3
  - (d) 1, 2 and 5
16. With reference to 'Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)', consider the following statements: (CSE-2015)
1. It was established very recently in response to incidents of piracy and accidents of oil spills.
  2. It is an alliance meant for maritime security only.
- Which of the statements given above is / are correct?
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
17. 'Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action', often seen in the news, is(CSE-2015)
- (a) a strategy to tackle the regional terrorism, an outcome of a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
  - (b) a plan of action for sustainable economic growth in the Asia-Pacific Region, an outcome of the deliberations of the Asia-Pacific Economic Forum
  - (c) an agenda for women's empowerment, an outcome of a World Conference convened by the United Nations
  - (d) a strategy to combat wildlife trafficking, a declaration of the East Asia Summit

18. Consider the following countries (CSE-2015)
1. China
  2. France
  3. India
  4. Israel
  5. Pakistan
- Which among the above are Nuclear Weapons States as recognized by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, commonly known as Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 1, 3, 4 and 5 only
  - (c) 2, 4 and 5 only
  - (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
19. The 'Fortaleza Declaration', recently in the news, is related to the affairs of (CSE-2015)
- (a) ASEAN
  - (b) BRICS
  - (c) OECD
  - (d) WTO
20. Among the following, which were frequently mentioned in the news for the outbreak of Ebola virus recently? (CSE-2015)
- (a) Syria and Jordan
  - (b) Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia
  - (c) Philippines and Papua New Guinea
  - (d) Jamaica, Haiti and Surinam
21. The terms 'Agreement on Agriculture', 'Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures' and 'Peace Clause' appear in the news frequently in the context of the affairs of the (CSE-2015)
- (a) Food and Agriculture Organization.
  - (b) United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change.
  - (c) World Trade Organization.
  - (d) United Nations Environment Programme.
22. The area known as 'Golan Heights' sometimes appears in the news in the context of the events related to (CSE-2015)
- (a) Central Asia
  - (b) Middle East
  - (c) South-East Asia
  - (d) Central Africa
23. What is Rio+20 Conference, often mentioned in the news? (CSE-2015)
- (a) It is the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.
  - (b) It is a Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization.
  - (c) It is a Conference of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change.
  - (d) It is a Conference of the Member Countries of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
24. The India-Africa Summit: (CSE-2016)
1. held in 2015 was the third such Summit
  2. was actually initiated by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1951
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
25. 'Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres)', often in the news, is: (CSE-2016)
- (a) a division of World Health Organization
  - (b) a non-governmental international organization
  - (c) an inter-governmental agency sponsored by European Union
  - (d) a specialized agency of the United Nations

26. Which of the following is not a member of 'Gulf Cooperation Council'? (CSE-2016)
- Iran
  - Saudi Arabia
  - Oman
  - Kuwait
27. 'Belt and Road Initiative' is sometimes mentioned in the news in the context of the affairs of: (CSE-2016)
- African Union
  - Brazil
  - European Union
  - China
28. Consider the following pairs: (CSE-2016)
- | <b>Community sometimes mentioned in the news</b> | <b>In the affairs of</b> |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Kurd  | Bangladesh               |
| 2. Madhesi                                       | Nepal                    |
| 3. Rohingya                                      | Myanmar                  |
- Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?
- 1 and 2
  - 2 only
  - 2 and 3
  - 3 only
29. With reference to 'Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)', consider the following statements: (CSE-2016)
- It is an organization of European Union in working relation with NATO and WHO.
  - It monitors chemical industry to prevent new weapons from emerging.
  - It provides assistance and protection to States (Parties) against chemical weapons threats.
  - Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3

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