

# **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

**JANUARY 2022**



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## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### #FIRST EVER INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA SUMMIT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the **first-ever India-Central Asia Summit** virtually on January 27, 2022.

- It was **attended by Presidents of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan.**
- This first India-Central Asia **coincided with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Central Asian countries.**
- The summit came two days after a **similar China-Central Asia Conference** was held where China offered USD 500 million in assistance and pledged to ramp up trade to USD 70 billion from the present levels of about USD 40 billion a year.



### Adoption of Delhi Declaration

- The **joint declaration called upon other central Asian countries** to consider joining the connectivity initiatives of India and Central Asian member nations such as the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Ashgabat Agreement (a multimodal transport agreement between India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Oman).
- The leaders also supported India's proposal to include the Chabahar Port and Turkmenistan's proposal to include **Turkmenbashi Port within the framework of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).**
- The leaders also agreed on the need to continue large-scale and long-term economic cooperation between India and Central Asian countries to strengthen and expand inter-connectivity. Turkmenistan President stressed on the importance of the **TAPI gas pipeline project in the context of the same.**
- The leaders further directed their Ministers to prepare a roadmap to enhance trade and industrial cooperation between **India and the Central Asian countries** and encouraged the **India-Central Asia Business Council (ICABC)** to accelerate their efforts to promote business linkages between the countries.

## India's Stand on:

- **Kazakhstan:** It has become a vital partner for India's energy security. India also expressed condolences for the recent **loss of life and property in Kazakhstan**.
- **Uzbekistan:** India's state governments are also **active partners in its growing cooperation with Uzbekistan**.
- **Tajikistan:** Both the countries have a **longstanding cooperation in the field of security**.
- **Turkmenistan:** It is an important part of Indian vision in the field of regional connectivity, which is evident from participation in the **Ashgabat Agreement**.
- **Regional connectivity in Central Asia is a key arm** of the 2018 Ashgabat Agreement.

## India-Central Asia Dialogue

- It is a ministerial-level **dialogue** between India and the Central Asian countries namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- **All five nations became independent states** after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, post-Cold war.
- All the countries participating in the dialogue, except for Turkmenistan, are also members of the SCO.
- The dialogue **focuses on a number of issues including ways to improve connectivity and stabilise war-ravaged Afghanistan**.

## Significance of the Summit for India

- The summit is symbolic of the importance attached by the leaders of India and the Central Asian countries to a comprehensive and enduring India-Central Asia partnership.
- It is being held at a critical juncture when **tensions between the West and Russia and the United States (US) and China** are rising. India too has faced geopolitical setbacks: Border tensions with China and the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.
- It follows **President Vladimir Putin's visit to India**, which may have allowed **India to push Russia to moderately balance China** in Eurasia and to contain the threats from Afghanistan.
- The **recent unrest in Kazakhstan** also showed that "**new actors**" are vying for influence in the region though their motives are still not clear.

## Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

- SCO is a permanent **intergovernmental international organization**.
- It's a Eurasian political, economic and military organization aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region. It was created in 2001.
- The SCO Charter was signed in 2002, and entered into force in 2003.
- It is a statutory document which outlines the organization's goals and principles, as well as its structure and core activities. The SCO's official languages are Russian and Chinese.
- Prior to the creation of SCO in 2001, **Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were members of the Shanghai Five**.
- Shanghai Five (1996) emerged from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks which the four former Soviet republics held with China to ensure stability along the borders.



- Following the accession of Uzbekistan to the organization in 2001, the **Shanghai five** was renamed the **SCO**.
- **India and Pakistan** became members in 2017.

## RELATED: INDIA & ISRAEL 30 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONSHIP

- **India and Israel** recently launched a commemorative logo to mark the 30 years of diplomatic relations. The logo has Ashoka Chakra and Star of David. It also has the numeral 30, featuring 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the countries.
- India officially recognized Israel in 1950. However, the diplomatic ties between the countries were established only in 1992. As of 2020, **India is one of the 164 countries to have diplomatic ties with Israel**.
- **India's embassy is located in Tel Aviv and Israel's embassy is located in Delhi**. The US embassy is located in Jerusalem. US recognized Jerusalem in 2017 and shifted its embassy there.
- In 2000, **Lal Krishna Advani** became the first Indian minister to visit Israel and Jashwanth Singh was the first Indian foreign minister to visit Israel. Ariel Sharon was the first Israeli Prime Minister to visit India in 2003.
- India is the largest buyer of Israeli military equipment. India is also the tenth largest trade partner of Israel. India is the second largest defence supplier of Israel. Russia is the first largest defence supplier.
- **Agriculture Cooperation:** India and Israel started the Indo – Israeli Agricultural Cooperation Project. It focused on micro – irrigation, farming technologies and dairy. The programme created ten centres of excellence by 2014. The centres conducted training sessions to farmers.
- **Historical ties:** Israel is one of the few countries in the world that chose not to condemn Pokhran nuclear tests of India. Israel supplied the **M – 58 mortar ammunition to India during the latter's war against Pakistan in 1965**.

## #RELATED: UNREST IN KAZAKHSTAN

Recently, a sharp and sudden **spike in fuel prices** triggered a **national crisis in Kazakhstan**, with the government officially stepping down following days of violent **protests across the country**.

- **Russian-led forces** have also arrived in Kazakhstan at the request of the country's authoritarian president, amid a violent crackdown on anti-government protests.
- Earlier, the Defence Minister of **India held bilateral talks with the Defence Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan** in New Delhi.



### Reason for the Unrest:

- Angry Kazakhs first took to the streets after **fuel prices doubled in the oil-rich Central Asian nation** when the government lifted price caps for **Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG)**, commonly used in vehicles.
- The protests began in the oil city of Zhanaozen, where at least 16 oil workers **protesting against poor working conditions** were killed by the police in 2011.

- Demonstrations broke out and **quickly turned violent in cities and towns across the country, in what is being called the biggest wave of protests in Kazakhstan's history.**
- Kazakhstan **has been a largely stable autocracy** since the collapse of the Soviet Union; protests of this scale haven't been seen since the 1980s.
- **Autocracy** is a system of government of a country in which one person has complete power.
- Protesters **demand the resignation of the government and lowering of LPG prices.**
- They have argued that the **jump in prices would cause a steep increase in food prices and deepen the income inequality** that has plagued the nation for decades.
- Just last year (2021), **inflation** in the country was closing in on 9% year-on-year, the highest it has been in over five years.

## Demand for Democracy:

- Cheaper fuel is only the tip of the iceberg. There has been a **growing discontent among ordinary Kazakhs, both over rising income inequality**, which has only worsened due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the **lack of democracy.**
- While the country has been able to attract millions of dollars worth of foreign investments by appearing politically stable, its **authoritarian government has been widely criticised over the years for violating fundamental freedoms.**

## For Russia:

- The protests are also significant as **Kazakhstan has been aligned with Russia**, whose president views the country — **a body double of sorts for Russia in terms of its economic and political systems** — as part of Russia's sphere of influence.
- The intervention by the **Collective Security Treaty Organisation**, a Russian version of **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)**, is the first time that its protection clause has been invoked, a move that could potentially have sweeping consequences for geopolitics in the region.
- This is the third uprising against an authoritarian, Russia-aligned nation, following pro-democracy protests in **Ukraine** in 2014 and in **Belarus** in 2020.
- The chaos **threatens to undermine Russia's sway in the region at a time when Russia is trying to assert its economic and geopolitical power** in countries like Ukraine and Belarus.
- The **countries of the former Soviet Union are also watching the protests closely**, and the events in Kazakhstan could **help energise opposition forces elsewhere.**

## For US:

- Kazakhstan also matters to the US, as it has become a **significant country for American energy concerns**, with Exxon Mobil and Chevron having invested tens of billions of dollars in western Kazakhstan, the region where the unrest began this month.
- The United States government has long been **less critical of post-Soviet authoritarianism in Kazakhstan than in Russia and Belarus.**
- The **United Nations (UN)**, US, UK, and France have called on all sides to refrain from violence.
- India is closely monitoring the situation in Kazakhstan and will facilitate the return of Indians.

## OTHER TOPICS TO BE REFERRED:

- **EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION**
- **AFGHANISTAN TAKEOVER BY TALIBAN**
- **PUTIN'S VISIT TO INDIA**

## #GERMAN WARSHIP BAYERN ARRIVES IN INDIA

- Germany has realised that the world's political and economic centre of gravity is, to a large degree, shifting to the **Indo-Pacific region**, with India as a key player, strategic partner and long-standing democratic friend at the hub.
- After visiting Japan, Australia, Vietnam, Singapore and others in the Indo-Pacific region, the **German Navy frigate Bayern recently landed in Mumbai**.
- The visit of Bayern signifies a concrete outcome of the Indo-Pacific Policy Guidelines that Germany adopted in 2020.



## India, Germany and Indo-Pacific Region

- **Indo-German Ties:** The bilateral relations between India and Germany are founded on common democratic principles. India was amongst the first countries to establish diplomatic ties with the Federal Republic of Germany after the Second World War.
- Germany cooperates with India to the tune of **1.3 billion Euros a year in development projects**, 90% of which serves the purpose of **fighting climate change, saving natural resources** as well as promoting clean and green energy.
- Germany has also been supporting the **construction of a huge solar plant in Maharashtra** with a capacity of 125 Megawatt which generates annual CO2 savings of 155,000 tons.
- After the appointment of new Chancellor of Germany in December 2021, India and Germany agreed that as major democracies and strategic partners, they will step up their **cooperation to tackle common challenges, with climate change on top of the agenda**.
- **Economic Cooperation** - Germany has a Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) with India via EU, it **does not have the competence to negotiate it separately**.
- Also, Germany is particularly **sceptical about India's trade liberalization measures**, it bats for more liberal labour regulations.
- **Indo-Pacific Region** - The Indo-Pacific, with India as its centrepiece, looms large in Germany's and the **European Union's** foreign policy.
- Germany is determined to contribute to buttressing the rules-based international order.
- Within the **German Indo-Pacific guidelines**, India is mentioned for the enhancement of engagement and fulfilment of objectives. India should now be an important node while discussing issues relating to international security.

## Importance of Germany for India

- **Strengthening Indo-German Relations:** Germany views **India as an important partner for resolving global issues**, including climate change, food security, energy and international peace and security.
- Also, the **new coalition government formed in Germany** offers an opportunity for India to strengthen the strategic partnership between the two.
- Germany is **keen to implement connectivity projects**, through the European Union, **to counter China**. The coalition sees the **conclusion of an India-EU BTIA as an important aspect** that will help develop relations.
- **An Opportunity to Coordinate:** Germany recognises that no global problem can be solved without India's active involvement.
- In 2022, **Germany will hold the G7 Presidency**, and from December 2022, **India will also assume the same role** for the **G20**. This is an **opportunity for joint and coordinated action**.
- **Together Towards Sustainable Development:** No country receives more financial support from Germany in tackling climate change than India.
- What world leaders agreed upon at **COP26 in Glasgow**, Germany and India are putting into practice.
- Together the two countries can **work on a sustainable path for India's growth that will benefit both of them**.
- **NSG Membership:** Germany has supported India's membership bid in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).
- **G4 Grouping:** India and Germany are members of G-4 along with Brazil and Japan. The G4 nations support each other's bids for permanent seats on the **United Nations Security Council**.

## RELATED TOPIC: OLAF SCHOLZ TO BE NEXT GERMAN CHANCELLOR

- **Social Democrat Olaf Scholz** will take oath as the new Chancellor of Germany, marking an end to the 16-year rule of Angela Merkel, who had been the **first female chancellor of Germany**.
- India has deep relations with Germany and it is expected to continue as per the newly elected tripartite coalition led by Olaf Scholz.
- **Olaf Scholz was confirmed to be** the next German chancellor after the leaders of three parties sealed a coalition deal.
- The pact paves way for a three-way coalition government comprising the **Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and liberal Free Democrats (FDP)**.



## German Coalition Pact

- The **SPD, Greens and FDP coalition pact** brings to an end nearly five weeks of formal negotiations. The 3-way coalition is known as the traffic-light coalition, due to their respective colors of red, green and yellow. The parties worked behind the closed doors to reach to an agreement.
- The coalition government will mark an end to 16 years of conservative-led rule. Angela Merkel's conservative party narrowly lost to the **Social Democrats in the 2021 German National Elections**.



## Olaf Scholz new German Chancellor

- **Olaf Scholz was till recently serving as Germany's Finance Minister** and Merkel's deputy in the grand coalition.
- The 63-year-old Scholz will become the fourth post-war SPD chancellor after Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt and Gerhard Schroeder.
- ***Social Democratic Party's Helmut Waldemar Schmidt** had served as the Chancellor of West Germany from 1974 to 1982 in coalition with the Free Democrats even though his party had won fewer parliamentary seats than the conservative bloc.*

## Angela Merkel's retirement creates a huge vacuum?

- **The incumbent German Chancellor Angela Merkel did not run in the 2021 German national elections**, marking the first time in the history of the Federal Republic that an incumbent did not run. She has decided to retire after serving as German Chancellor for 16 years. **Her stepping down has left a huge vacuum in the heart of German politics.**
- **Angela Merkel had taken office in 2005**, becoming the first female chancellor of Germany. Ever since she took office, she has been described as the **de facto leader of the European Union, the most powerful woman and one of the world's most successful political leaders.**
- She has stood large on the European stage since the time when **George W. Bush was US president, Tony Blair was UK Prime Minister and Jacques Chirac was the French President.**
- She has dealt with four US Presidents, five UK Prime Ministers, four French Presidents and seven Italian Prime Ministers during her 16-year rule.

## Background

- The **Social Democratic Party's gain in 2021 German National Elections** marks a major comeback for the party after the historic defeat in the 2017 National Elections. The SDP is one of the two major parties of contemporary Germany along with the Angela Merkel-led Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU).

## #PM MODI ADRESSED WEF'S DAVOS AGENDA

Recently, the **Prime Minister** addressed the **World Economic Forum's (WEF) Davos Agenda** via video conferencing.

- The WEF annual meeting in Davos (Switzerland) engages the world's top leaders to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

### One Earth, One Health:

- During the course of **Covid-19**, India saved many lives by exporting essential medicines and vaccines by **following its vision of "One Earth, One Health"**.
- India has delivered 1154.173 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccines to 97 countries till 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.
- India is the **world's third-largest pharmaceutical producer** and is considered 'pharmacy to the world'.

### Pro-Planet People (P3) Approach:

- Proposed the idea of the "P3 (Pro-Planet-People) movement" that underscores **India's commitments to climate change at the global forum (UNFCCC COP 26)**.
- Reiterated India's "clean, green, sustainable, and reliable" energy goals which dwell on **achieving a net-zero carbon emission target by 2070**.
- **Making LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment - given by the Indian PM at UNFCCC COP 26 Conference) into a mass movement can be a strong foundation for P3**.
- LIFE is a vision of a resilient and sustainable lifestyle that will come handy in dealing with the climate crisis and other unpredictable challenges of the future.
- Throwaway culture and consumerism has enhanced the climate challenge.

### Reforms recently Undertaken by India:

- **In physical and digital infrastructure like optical fibre in 6 lakh villages, 1.3 trillion dollars invested in connectivity-related infrastructure, the goal of generation of 80 billion dollars through asset monetization.**
- **Gatishakti National Master Plan to bring all the stakeholders on the single platform to infuse new dynamism to the seamless connectivity of goods, people and services.**
- **Today India has the world's largest, secure and successful digital payments platform.**
- **In December 2021, 4.4 billion transactions were done through Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in India.**
- **Technological solutions like Arogya-SetuApp for tracking of Corona Infections and CoWinPortal for Vaccination.**

### India as an Investment Destination:

- Recently, various reform measures have been taken by the Government, such as the removal of **Retrospective taxation, reduction in compliance requirements** and simplification of the **Corporate Tax rate structure** making it the best Investment Destination today.

- In the last year alone, India has reduced more than 25,000 compliances.
- Today, India has the **third largest number of unicorns in the world**. More than **10,000 start-ups have been registered** in the last six months.
- India is promoting **Ease of Doing Business, minimizing government intervention**.
- Policy-making is focussed on needs for the next 25 years for a “clean and green” as well as “sustainable and reliable” growth.

## World Economic Forum

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a **Swiss nonprofit foundation established in 1971**, based in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Recognized by the Swiss authorities as the international institution for public-private cooperation.
- **Mission:** Committed to **improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society** to shape global, regional, and industry agendas.
- **Founder and Executive Chairman:** Klaus Schwab.
- **Some major reports published by WEF are:**
  - **Energy Transition Index.**
  - **Global Competitiveness Report.**
  - **Global IT Report**
- WEF along with INSEAD and Cornell University publishes this report.
- **Global Gender Gap Report.**
- **Global Risk Report.**
- **Global Travel and Tourism Report.**

## #CHINA'S NEW LAND BORDER LAW

China's new law on land borders came into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2022.

- It comes at a time when **border standoff in eastern Ladakh remains unresolved** and **several places in Arunachal Pradesh have been renamed** recently by China as part of its claim on the Indian state.
- **Delimitation and Survey of Land Borders:** The new law lays down that the People's Republic of China (PRC) shall set up **boundary markers on all its land borders** to clearly mark the border.



## Management and Defence of Border Areas:

- The People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Chinese People's Armed Police Force are **assigned with the responsibility of maintaining security** along the border.
- This responsibility includes cooperating with local authorities in combating illegal border crossings.
- The law **prohibits any party from indulging in any activity** in the border area which would “endanger national security or affect China's friendly relations with neighbouring countries”.
- Even citizens and local organisations are mandated to protect and defend the border infrastructure.

- Finally, the law provides for the **border to be sealed in the event of a war**, armed conflict, incidents which threaten the security of border residents such as biological and chemical accidents, natural disasters, and public health incidents.

## International Cooperation:

- On the topic of its border-sharing countries, the law lays down that the relations with these countries are to be based on **principles of “equality and mutual benefit”**.
- Further, the law provides for **provisions for formation of joint committees, both civil and military**, with the said countries to negotiate land border management and resolve border-related issues.
- The law also stipulates that PRC should abide by the treaties on land borders that it has signed with the respective countries and all border issues are to be settled through negotiations.

## China's Border Disputes:

- China has a 22,100-kilometer land border with 14 countries.
- It has resolved the boundary disputes with 12 neighbours.
- India and Bhutan are the two countries with which China is yet to finalise the border agreements.
- China and Bhutan signed an MOU firming up a three-step roadmap for expediting the boundary negotiations.
- India-China border disputes cover 3,488-km along the **Line of Actual Control**, China-Bhutan dispute covers about 400 km.

## #CHINA'S NEW BRIDGE NEAR PANGONG TSO LAKE

Recently, it was found that China is building a **new bridge on Pangong Tso** which will provide an additional axis to deploy troops faster between the north and south banks of the lake, and closer to the **LAC (Line of Actual Control)**.

- Earlier, **China's new law on land borders** came into effect from 1st January, 2022, at a time when border standoff in eastern Ladakh remains unresolved and several places in Arunachal Pradesh have been renamed recently by China as part of its claim on the Indian state.
- India too has been **improving its infrastructure in the border areas**. In 2021, the Border Roads Organisation completed more than 100 projects in border areas, the majority of which were close to the border with China.

## Background:

- Since the **military standoff began in May 2020**, India and China have not only worked to improve existing infrastructure, but have also built several new roads, bridges, landing strips along the entire frontier.
- Towards the end of August 2020, India outmanoeuvred China to capture the previously **unoccupied heights of the Kailash Range on the south bank** of Pangong Tso lake.
- Indian **troops positioned themselves on the peaks there, including Magar Hill, Gurung Hill, Rezang La, Rechin La, and this allowed them to dominate the strategic Spanggur Gap** — it can be used for



launching an offensive, as China had done in 1962 — and also gave them a view of the PLA garrison at Moldo.

- Indian troops had also positioned themselves **above the Chinese troops in the Fingers area on the north bank**. During this scramble for the heights, shots had been fired by both sides, a first in over four decades.
- Troops from the two countries remained on these heights through the harsh winter months. The **significance of these positions was one of the main factors that compelled China to negotiate a pullback**.
- Both countries agreed to a pullback from the north bank of the lake, and positions on the Kailash Range in the Chushul sub-sector south of Pangong Tso.

### About:

- The bridge is being constructed **more than 20 km east of Finger 8 on the lake's north bank** – India says Finger 8 denotes the LAC.
- The Lake is overlooked by the Finger Area - a set of eight cliffs extending out of the Sirijap range (on the northern bank of Lake).
- Pangong Tso, an endorheic lake, is **135 km long, of which more than two-thirds is under Chinese control**.
- The north and south banks of the lake were among the several friction points that surfaced after the start of the standoff. Before India and China pulled back troops from the north and south banks in February 2021, the area had seen massive mobilisation and the two sides even deployed tanks, barely a few hundred metres apart in some locations.
- The bridge site is just **east of Khurnak Fort** in Rutog county where the **PLA (People's Liberation Army)** has frontier bases.
- Historically a part of India, **Khurnak Fort has been under Chinese control since 1958**.
- From Khurnak Fort, the LAC is considerably west, **with India claiming it at Finger 8 and China claiming it at Finger 4**.

### Significance for China:

- The bridge will cut a 180-kilometer loop from Khurnak to the south banks through Rudok reducing the distance between Khurnak and Rudok to 40-50 kilometres, rather than approximately 200 kilometres as previously stated.
- The building of the bridge **will allow it to mobilise its troops faster in this area**, hoping to prevent a repeat of what happened in August 2020.
- **Implication for India:** The bridge is in their territory, and the Indian Army will have to factor this in its operational plans.
- The widening of roads, building of new roads and bridges, new bases, airstrips, advance landing bases, etc are not restricted to the eastern Ladakh region, **but are happening across the three sectors of the India-China boundary** (Eastern, Middle and Western).

## #CHINA-LITHUANIA TENSIONS

- The **European Union (EU)** has found itself caught in a bind over the worsening tensions between Lithuania and China.
- Last week, top EU diplomats met to find a way to de-escalate tensions **before a planned EU-China summit, expected in the coming weeks.**



### About the Issue:

- In November 2021, a Taiwanese Representative Office was opened in Lithuania, notable because it is for the **first time that Taiwan was allowed to use its own name** to open an office within the EU.
- Following this, **China has downgraded its diplomatic relations with Lithuania**, calling it a violation of the **“One China Policy”**. China has also unofficially boycotted products from Lithuania, whether it is sourced directly or indirectly from the country.
- China alleges that **Lithuania is acting in concert with the American efforts** of containment by using the **Taiwan card**, and to spread discord between China and Europe.
- **‘One China Policy’** means that countries seeking diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC, Mainland China) must break official relations with the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) and vice versa.

### Action at WTO:

- By going to the WTO, the **EU lent support to accusations by Lithuanian business leaders and officials** that the row has resulted in China blocking imports from Lithuania and other economic restrictions.
- China's crackdown on Lithuanian imports **affects other European nations as well.**
- The country has also **imposed trade restrictions** on goods from countries like **France, Germany and Sweden**, which include parts from Lithuanian supply chains.
- The EU is currently **China's largest trading partner**, and about **80-90% of Lithuania's exports** are based on manufacturing contracts with the rest of the EU.

### Reasons for taking on China by Lithuania:

- Lithuania's current wave of assertive moves against China to a certain extent has been attributed to the **change of government in 2020.**
- It is also due to growing **geopolitical tensions in Eastern Europe** over EU and NATO's fallout with Lithuania's adversarial neighbours, Russia and Belarus.
- Lithuania, being the **first constituent of the Soviet Union** to break out as an **independent state**, has its own historical context and ideological rationale for standing up to China.
- The **growing Sino-Russian partnership** against the West has also made Lithuania wary of China.
- Lithuania has been **one of the biggest critics of China** within the EU on the **Xinjiang and Hong Kong issues.**

- In May 2021, Lithuania **quit China's 17+1 cooperation forum** with central and eastern Europe, by calling it "divisive", now it is 16+1.
- Lithuania is the first country in that group to have done so and stated economic non-reciprocity of China and threats to European unity as reasons for its exit.
- Citing security reasons, Lithuania has advised its **population to avoid buying smartphones made in China**, and has kept China away from acquiring controlling stakes in its **Klaipėda seaport, as well as from its 5G infrastructure bids**.

## #RELATED TOPICS TO BE REFERRED

### Conflict between China and Taiwan (Background):

- China and Taiwan **separated amid civil war in 1949** and **China considers Taiwan part of its territory** to be taken control of by force if necessary.
- But **Taiwan's leaders** say that **Taiwan is a sovereign state**.
- After decades of hostile intentions and angry rhetoric, relations **between China and Taiwan** started improving in the 1980s. China put forward a formula, known as "one country, two systems", under which Taiwan would be given significant autonomy if it accepted Chinese reunification.
- In Taiwan, the offer was rejected, but the **government did relax rules** on visits to and investment in China.
- There were also limited talks between the two sides' unofficial representatives, though Beijing's insistence that **Taiwan's Republic of China (ROC) government** is illegitimate prevented government-to-government contact.
- China's implementation of a **national security law in Hong Kong** in 2020 was seen by many as yet another sign that Beijing was becoming significantly more assertive in the region.

### One China Policy Challenged:

- This means that countries seeking diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC, Mainland China) must break official relations with the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) and vice versa.
- The existent diplomatic relationship of the Taiwan and its membership in intergovernmental organizations challenges this policy:
- The ROC, Taiwan has diplomatic relations with 15 countries and substantive ties with many others such as Australia, Canada, EU nations, Japan and New Zealand.
- Besides, Taiwan has full membership in 38 intergovernmental organizations and their subsidiary bodies, including the **World Trade Organization, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Asian Development Bank** and Central American Bank for Economic Integration.

### Agreements/Exercises Countering China:

- Recently, the US has announced a new trilateral security partnership for the Indo-Pacific, between **Australia, the UK and the US (AUKUS)**, which is also seen as an effort to counter China.

- **Malabar Exercise** (US, Japan, India and Australia) is also a major step towards building a sustainable Indo-Pacific coalition thereby addressing the massive strategic imbalance generated by an economically and militarily powerful China.

## India's Stand on the Issue:

- Since 1949, India has **accepted the "One China" policy** that accepts Taiwan and Tibet as part of China.
- However, India **uses the policy to make a diplomatic point**, i.e., if India believes in "One China" policy, **China should also believe in a "One India" policy**.
- Even though India has stopped mentioning its adherence to One China policy in joint statements and official documents since 2010, its engagement with Taiwan is still restricted due to the framework of ties with China.
- India and Taiwan **do not have formal diplomatic relations** but since 1995, both sides have maintained representative offices in each other's capitals that function as de facto embassies.

## Lithuania Quits China's 17+1

- Recently, **Lithuania** quit **China's 17+1** cooperation forum with **central and eastern Europe**, by calling it "**divisive**", now it is **16+1**.
- **Lithuania (Baltic Country)** urged other **EU (European Union)** members to pursue "**a much more effective 27+1 approach and communication with China.**"

## About 17+1:

- **Formation:** The **17+1 (China and Central and Eastern Europe Countries)** initiative is a **China-led format** founded in **2012** in **Budapest** with an aim to expand cooperation between Beijing and the **CEE (Central and Eastern Europe)** member countries, with investments and trade for the development of the CEE region.
- **Member Countries:** The initiative includes **twelve EU** member states and **five Balkan states** — Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.
- **Aim and Objectives:** The framework focuses on infrastructure projects such as bridges, motorways, railway lines and modernisation of ports in the member states.
- The platform is largely seen as an extension of China's flagship **Belt and Road initiative (BRI)**.
- **India has consistently opposed BRI** as a key part of it passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).



## 5 NON-PERMANENT MEMBER OF UNSC

The **United Nation Security Council (UNSC)** got five new non-permanent members (**Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates**).

- Estonia, Niger, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam finished their terms recently.
- Albania is joining for the **first time** while Brazil is taking an **11<sup>th</sup> turn**. Gabon and Ghana each have been on the council three times before and the UAE once.
- More than 50 of the UN's 193 member countries have never been elected to the council since its formation.



### UNSC:

- The Security Council was established by the UN Charter in 1945. It is one of the six principal organs of the **United Nations**.
- The other 5 organs of the United Nations are—the General Assembly (UNGA), the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.
- Its primary responsibility is **to work to maintain international peace and security**.
- The council is **headquartered at New York**.

### Members:

- The council has 15 members: **the five permanent members and ten non-permanent members** elected for **two-year terms**.
- The five permanent members are the United States, the Russian Federation, France, China and the United Kingdom.
- India, for the **eighth time**, has entered the UNSC as a **non-permanent member** last year (2021) and will stay on the council for two years i.e 2021-22.
- **Each year**, the General Assembly **elects five non-permanent members** (out of ten in total) for a two-year term. The ten non-permanent seats are **distributed on a regional basis**.
- The **council's presidency is a capacity that rotates every month among its 15 members**.

### Voting Powers:

- Each member of the Security Council **has one vote**. Decisions of the Security Council on matters are **made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members**.
- A "No" vote from one of the five permanent members blocks the passage of the resolution.
- Any member of the United Nations which is **not a member of the Security Council may participate**, without vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Security Council whenever the latter considers that the interests of that member are specially affected.

## India in the UNSC:

- India took active part in the formulation of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** in 1947-48 and raised its voice passionately against racial discrimination in South Africa.
- India has played its part in **formulating decisions on several issues** such as admitting former colonies to the UN, addressing deadly conflicts in the Middle East and maintaining peace in Africa.
- It has contributed extensively to the UN, particularly for the **maintenance of international peace and security**.
- India has taken part in 43 **Peacekeeping missions** with a total contribution exceeding 160,000 troops and a significant number of police personnel.
- India's population, territorial size, **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**, economic potential, civilisational legacy, cultural diversity, political system and past and ongoing contributions to UN activities make India's demand for a permanent seat in the UNSC completely rational.

## Issues with UNSC:

- Absence of Records and Texts of Meetings:** The usual UN rules don't apply to the UNSC deliberations and no records are kept of its meetings.
- Additionally, there is no "text" of the meeting to discuss, amend or object.
- Powerplay in UNSC:** The veto powers that the UNSC's five permanent members enjoy are an anachronism in this age.
- The UNSC in its current form has become a constraint in understanding the international changes and dynamics in the area of human security and peace.
- Divisions among the P5:** There is a deep polarisation within the UN's membership, so decisions are either not taken, or not heeded. Frequent divisions within the UNSC P-5 end up blocking key decisions.
- Example:** With the coronavirus pandemic emergence, the UN, the UNSC, and **World Health Organisation** failed to play an effective role in helping nations deal with the spread.
- An Underrepresentation Organisation:** The absence in the UNSC of the globally important countries – **India, Germany, Brazil and South Africa** - is a matter of concern.

## T.S TIRUMURTI: INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO UN

- India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, TS Tirumurti**, was named the new Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the United Nations on January 4, 2022.
- Tirumurti, before taking up his current position as the Permanent Representative of India to the UN**, had served as the Secretary in the External Affairs Ministry.
- India will chair the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council in January 2022. In 2021, the country was asked to chair three **important Committees of the United Nations Security Council**.
- It includes the **Counterterrorism Committee, Taliban Sanctions Committee, and the Libyan**



## Sanctions Committee.

- **TS Tirumurti: List of positions served by India's Permanent Representative to UN**
  - Tirumurti has previously served at the Embassy of India to Egypt, in Cairo
  - The Permanent Mission of India to the UN in Geneva
  - First Representative of India to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza
  - As the Counsellor in the Embassy of India to the United States, in Washington
  - As a Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India to Indonesia in Jakarta
  - As the High Commissioner of India to Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur
  - Tirumurti served as the Under Secretary (Bhutan)
  - Director (Office of the Foreign Secretary)
  - Joint Secretary (Bangladesh, Myanmar, Maldives and Sri Lanka)
  - Joint Secretary (UN Economic and Social Council) **during his service in the External Affairs Ministry.**

## UN Counter-Terrorism Committee

- The United Nations Security Council Counter-terrorism committee was formed in September 2001 soon after the attack of 9/11 in New York. India had chaired the committee in the **UN Security Council in 2011-2012.**

## Objective of UN Counterterrorism committee

- UNSC, in the wake of **the 9/11 attack, unanimously adopted resolution 1373.**
- The **counter-terrorism committee of the UN** monitors the implementation of the same resolution which among its provisions also obliges all the countries to deny financial support to terrorist activities, criminalize assistance for terrorism, deny safe haven to terrorists, among others.
- While the purpose of the UN counterterrorism committee is to increase the ability of states to fight terrorism, the committee is not a sanctions body and does not maintain a list of terrorist individuals or groups.

## #INDIA TO CHAIR UNSC COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE

- In January 2022, India will chair the **UNSC counterterrorism committee**, after 10 long years.
- The **Counter terrorism committee** is of a greater significance for India, because, India has been pitching pertinent measures to fight terrorism across the global platform. India last chaired the committee in 2012.



## Background

- India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador TS Tirumurti had announced on January 8, 2021 that, India will chair three important communities at the UNSC in 2021-22.
- The **three committees are-** Taliban Sanctions Committee, Counter-terrorism Committee and Libya

Sanctions Committee.

## India's resolution on counter-terrorism

- TS Tirumurti had announced in November 2020 that, India's annual resolution on counter-terrorism issue was co-sponsored by more than 75 countries.
- The resolution was **adopted by consensus in the First Committee of the UNSC**.
- India has encouraged stronger international cooperation for preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the annual resolution called "Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction."
- India has been at the forefront of emphasising the threat to international peace and security that terrorist groups pose, because India has been a victim of state-sponsored cross-border terrorism.
- At United Nations, India had called for stronger national measures for addressing this issue before the **UN Security Council's adoption of Resolution 1540**.
- **UNSC Resolution 1540:** UNSC Resolution 1540 requires all states to refrain from supporting non-state stakeholders in developing, manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, transferring, transporting, or using nuclear, biological or chemical weapons.

## Counter-Terrorism Committee

- **Counter-Terrorism Committee** is a subsidiary body of United Nations Security Council. It is a 15-member committee, established in the aftermath of **9/11 attack in United States to monitor the UNSC resolution 1373**.
- The resolution was adopted mandates all States to criminalize assistance for terrorist activities, share information on groups planning terrorist attacks and deny financial support & safe haven to terrorists.



## #CHILE RE-WRITES IT'S CONSTITUTION

The South American country of Chile has formed a Constitution Convention to write a new constitution to tackle a "**climate and ecological emergency.**"

- As climate catastrophes become inevitable, countries that are already struggling with resource depletion (water, in Chile's case) are being forced to take action by its people.



### Background:

- Chilean politicians want to **leverage its lithium to make the country richer.** As Most Chileans disagree with the government's approach, similar measures in the past (including privatisation of water) have **done little to help out people who need these resources the most.**
- Under the leadership of military ruler Augusto Pinochet (who overthrew communist Salvador Allende in a coup in 1980), Chile began its ongoing journey of resource exploitation.
- There's a problem - lithium mining causes soil moisture to decline and causes daytime temperatures to increase which in turn makes the area drier. While more lithium may be extracted, **it may become even more unfit for humans.**

### About:

- The new constitution will focus on lithium mining and its regulation. In addition, it will foresee how lithium mining benefits indigenous communities. The architects of the new constitution will also assess whether Chile's political system needs a revamp.
- Their work will not only shape how this country of 19 million is governed. It will also determine the future of a soft, lustrous metal — lithium — lurking in the salt waters beneath this vast desert beside the **Andes Mountains.**
- This reworking of the constitution is **a reminder of changing priorities in a world moving towards climate catastrophes.**
- **Challenges:** Many fear that the **new constitution will impose hefty royalties and restrictions on mining and improve focus on local decision-making.**

### Lithium in Chile:

- Chile's **extremely rich in lithium** (second-largest lithium producer after Australia) - an essential component of batteries that support almost all modern smart devices.
- As the world races to replace fossil fuel consumption, the demand for **lithium is causing a surge in its price.**
- India- Chile Relations
- Chile is **India's window to Latin America and to the Pacific Alliance.**
- Chile is the **fifth largest trading partner of India** in the Latin American region.
- India- Chile signed the **Preferential Trade Agreement in 2017** to enhance the trade.

- The bilateral trade is growing and stood at **USD 2.8 billion in 2017-18**.
- India and Chile are **partners in the International Solar Alliance**.
- Both countries cooperate extensively in multilateral fora and share similar views on climate change/renewable energy issues and on expansion and reforms of the **UNSC (United Nations Security Council)**.
- India- Chile has signed three Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) in the fields of -mining, culture, disability.

## #POLITICAL CRISIS IN SUDAN

Recently, Sudan's civilian Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok resigned, plunging the country into further turmoil.

- Mr. Hamdok, who was sacked by the military in October 2021 and reinstated a few weeks later as part of a deal, **stepped down as anti-military protests continued to rock the country**.
- **Sudanese pro-democracy groups** rejected Mr. Hamdok's deal with the military and demanded the Generals hand over power to an independent civilian authority.



## Unstable Sudan:

- Sudan is at a familiar deadlock, subject to the whims of a brutal military regime after a coup. On a continent with a bad record in this respect, Sudan is in a class of its own, with **six coups and 10 failed attempts since independence in 1956**.
- Since independence **Sudan has been governed, with only occasional breaks, by an Arab elite in Sudan**, bent on plundering the country's considerable wealth at the expense of its people.
- Their rule, **exercised through the army**, has been cloaked in the language of Islam; it is **really a kleptocracy**.
- **Kleptocracy** is a government whose corrupt leaders use political power to appropriate the wealth of their nation, typically by embezzlement or misappropriation of government funds at the expense of the wider population.
- The consequence is a country beset by wars and conflict between the centre and the immiserated peripheries. **The army and its allied militias, notably the Rapid Support Forces, have used their power to carve out swathes of the economy for themselves**, well beyond defence industries.
- Civilian rule, bringing transparency, as well as democracy, would threaten those financial interests.
- The **victims of decades of misrule are ordinary Sudanese**. Facing **inflation** rates of over 100%, almost a quarter of the population can barely feed themselves and millions live in refugee camps.
- By contrast, the **elites seem to get by**. Therefore the elites will fight to preserve the status quo.

## Current Crisis:

- The churn has accelerated since **General Omar al-Bashir, indicted for genocide, was toppled by a popular revolution in April 2019**.

- Subsequently, the **Sovereignty Council**, an 11-member body comprising military and civilian leaders that replaced the military-led transition council, appointed Mr. Hamdok as Prime Minister.
- During the Sovereignty Council's rule, **Sudan entered into a peace deal with rebel groups, banned female genital mutilation, made peace with Israel** and reached out to international powers for economic assistance.
- During this period, **the U. took the country off the list of state sponsors of terrorism**. Reforms at home and international recognition suggested that Sudan was on a slow but steady transition into full democracy.
- The army struck back almost immediately, killing scores of people. An uneasy **alliance of generals and technocrats, headed by Mr Hamdok, governed from August 2019 up to the coup October 2021**.
- That so-called transitional government was supposed to pave the way to elections. **They now look further off than ever**.
- Since the recent coup (2021) the protestors have been protesting against the coup and for a democratic government.

## Russia and China Angle:

- **Russia's Supplies:** An added complication is Russia's support for the generals. Wagner, a mercenary outfit acting in the interests of Russia, has **supplied training for militias and other goodies**.
- Russia has also shielded Sudan at the **United Nations (UN)**, playing its usual spoiler role against the West.
- **China's Investments:** China's **extensive investments** in Sudan have also afforded army protection; China **favours stability over good governance**.

## #INDONESIA TO MOVE ITS CAPITAL TO NUSANTARA

- The **Indonesian Parliament approved a bill** to relocate the **country's capital from Jakarta to Nusantara**. The new capital city of Nusantara will be built on Borneo Island, in the forested province of East Kalimantan.
- The decision has been taken amid growing concerns over **the long-term sustainability of Jakarta** amid climate change, as the capital city is rapidly sinking and is very prone to flooding.



## Nusantara: Indonesia's new capital city

- **Indonesia's new capital city will be called Nusantara**, which means archipelago in Javanese. The name of the new city was chosen by Indonesian President Joko Widodo. It is a Javanese term that means archipelago.
- The new city will be built in a **dense forest on the island of Borneo**.
- **Borneo is the world's third-largest island**, which is owned majorly by Indonesia with Brunei and Malaysia owning parts of its northern region.

- The **city will be a low-carbon "super hub"** that will support health, pharmaceutical and technology sectors and promote sustainable growth in Indonesia.
- Nusantara is expected to be headed by a **chief authority whose position will be equivalent to that of a minister.**

## Why has Indonesia chosen Nusantara as its new capital?

- **Nusantara has been chosen as Indonesia's new capital**, keeping in mind the future of the country.
- **Indonesia aims to fully relocate** to the new capital in the next decade and by 2045 it is expected to release the vision of **'World City for All'**.
- The recently approved bill provides the legal framework for the ambitious \$32 billion mega project. The bill also stipulates how the development of the capital will be funded and governed. **Indonesia decided to relocate its capital from Jakarta, as the city is prone to flooding amid climate change.**

## India-Indonesia relationship

- Both of them have agreed to **work together for peace, security, and prosperity** in order to achieve their shared vision on maritime cooperation in the **Indo-Pacific region**.
- The **Strait of Malacca** - waterway connecting the Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) and the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean) - runs between the Indonesian island of Sumatra to the West and peninsular (west) Malaysia and extreme southern Thailand to the east.
- Both of them recognise the **threat of extremism and terrorism** and have agreed to work closely bilaterally and globally to tackle them.
- India is working with Indonesia to **strengthen the ties in the areas of defence, security, connectivity, trade and investment and people-to-people exchanges.**

## Trade and Commerce:

- **Bilateral trade has increased** from USD 4.3 billion in 2005-06 to USD 21 billion in 2018-19.
- Indonesia has emerged as the **second largest trading partner of India in the ASEAN region.**
- India is the **second largest buyer of coal and crude palm oil** from Indonesia and **imports minerals, rubber, pulp and paper and hydrocarbons reserves.**
- However, there is a **need for greater market access for Indian commodities in Indonesia** including, pharmaceutical, automotive and agricultural products.
- Both countries are members of **G20, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), East Asia Summit** and the **United Nations.**
- **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership:** The two countries inked a **defence cooperation agreement in 2018** which aimed at reflecting the elevation of the relationship between the two countries to a comprehensive strategic partnership.
- **2019 marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Indonesia.
- In **September 2019**, Indonesia announced that the **country's capital would be relocated to East Kalimantan province** on Borneo island from **Jakarta.**



## Bilateral Exercises:

- **Exercise Samudra Shakti** the bilateral **maritime** exercise.
- **Garuda Shakti** is the **joint military exercise** between India and Indonesia.

## #BRAHMOS MISSILES EXPORT TO PHILIPPINES

Recently, **Philippines** have signed a deal with BrahMos Aerospace Private Ltd. for the supply of a **shore-based anti-ship variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile**. This is the **first export order for the missile**, a joint product of India and Russia.



- The Philippines wants to induct this missile amid **tensions with China over the disputed islands in the South China Sea**.
- Several countries have shown interest in acquiring the BrahMos missile.
- For example, discussions are in advanced stages with **Indonesia and Thailand**.

## What are the features of BrahMos Missile?

- BrahMos is a joint venture between the **Defence Research and Development Organisation of India (DRDO)** and the **NPOM of Russia**.
- BrahMos is named on the **rivers Brahmaputra and Moskva**.
- It is a **two-stage (solid propellant engine in the first stage and liquid ramjet in second)** missile.
- It is a **multiplatform missile** i.e it can be launched from land, air, and sea and multi capability missile with pinpoint accuracy that works in both day and night irrespective of the weather conditions.
- It operates on the **"Fire and Forgets" principle** i.e it does not require further guidance after launch.
- Brahmos is one of the **fastest cruise missiles** currently operationally deployed with speed of **Mach 2.8**, which is nearly **3 times more than the speed of sound**.
- Recently, an **Advance Version of BrahMos** (extended range sea-to-sea variant) was test fired.
- Following **India's entry into the MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime) club in June 2016**, the range is planned to be extended to 450 km and to 600km at a later stage.
- The BrahMos missile was **initially developed with a range capped at 290 km**.

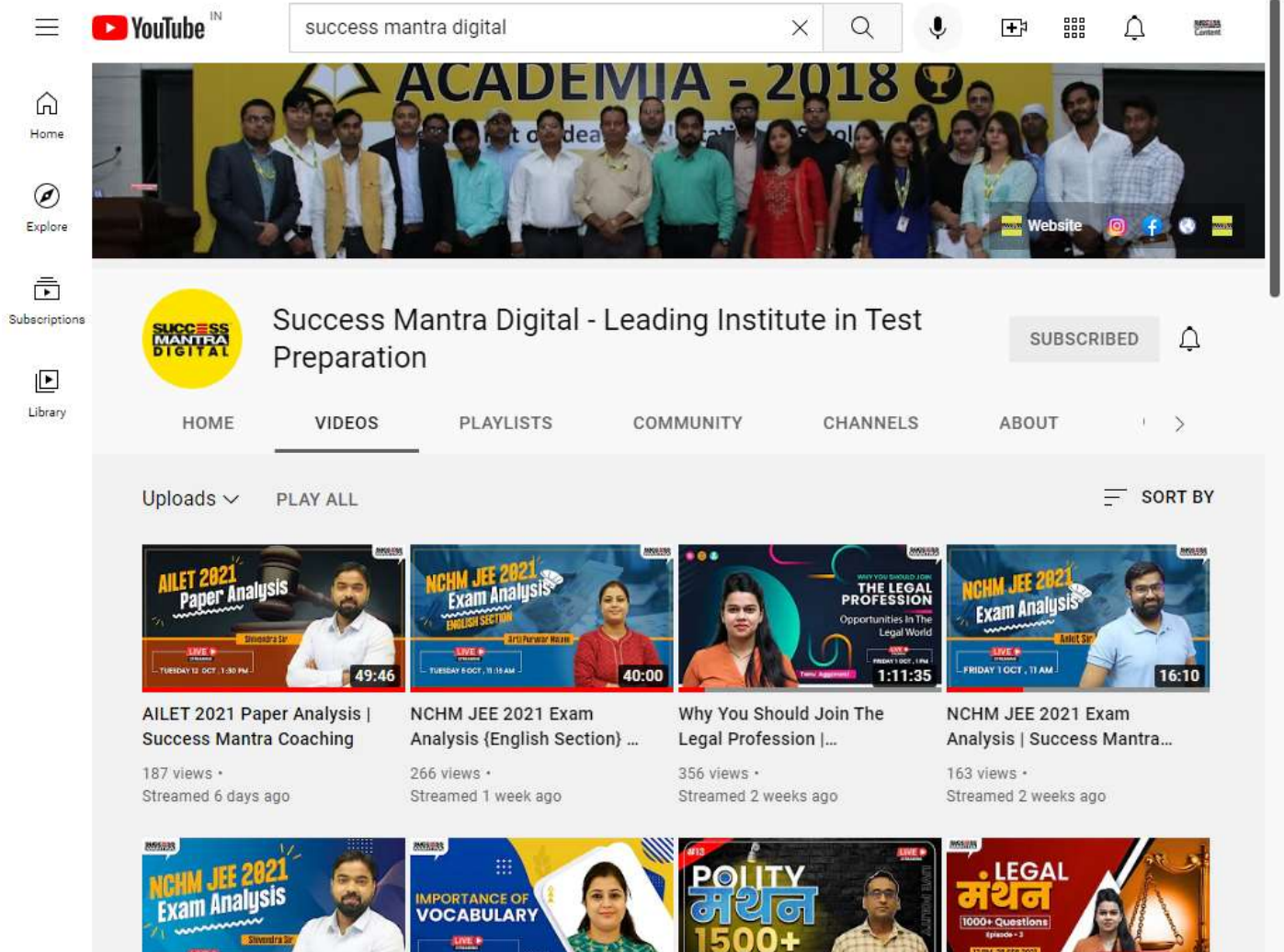
## What is Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)?

- It is an **informal and voluntary partnership among 35 countries** to prevent the proliferation of missile and unmanned aerial vehicle technology capable of carrying greater than **500 kg payload for more than 300 km**.
- The members are thus **prohibited from supplying such missiles and UAV systems that are controlled by the MTCR to non-members**.
- The decisions are taken by **consensus of all the members**.

- This is a non-treaty association of member countries with certain guidelines about the information sharing, national control laws and export policies for missile systems and a rule-based regulation mechanism to limit the transfer of such critical technologies of these missile systems.
- It was established in **April 1987 by G-7 countries** – USA, UK, France, Germany, Canada, Italy, and Japan.

### What is the Status of India's Defence Exports?

- Defence exports are a **pillar of the government's drive to attain self-sufficiency** in defence production.
- Over 30 Indian defence companies have **exported arms and equipment to countries** like Italy, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Russia, France, Nepal, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Israel, Egypt, UAE, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, Philippines, Poland, Spain and Chile.
- The **exports include** personal protective items, defence electronics systems, engineering mechanical equipment, offshore patrol vessels, advanced light helicopters, avionics suits, radio systems and radar systems.
- However, India's defense exports are **still not upto the expected lines**.
- The **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** ranked India at **number 23** in the list of major arms exporters for 2015-2019.
- India still accounts for only **0.17%** of global arms exports.
- Reason for dismal performance in India's Defense exports is that, India's Ministry of Defense so far has **no dedicated agency to drive exports**.
- Exports are left to individual corporations, like BrahMos or the defence public shipyards and undertakings.
- In this context, the **KPMG report titled 'Defence Exports: Untapped Potential** recommends the first step of setting up of an exclusive **"defence export help desk"**.
- On the basis of inputs from the help-desk, the report says, Indian companies could work with government machinery to realise exports.
- If India is successful in providing big-ticket military systems to countries in the neighbourhood, it won't just be a boost for defence exports but will also be a **strategic step to counter China's influence** as it provides defence products in Asia, including Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar.



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