



pravahini

# Monthly Compendium

**SUCCESS MANTRA (GTB Nagar)**

# PREFACE

It gives us great pleasure to release the monthly edition of the PRAVAHINI – Monthly e-Compendium & Weekly e-Periodicals of Current Affairs. The magazine's members have shown considerable cooperation as well as devotion. We at successmantra.in work tirelessly to create this magazine and bring it to you with a great sense of gratitude.

The PRAVAHINI April-2022 eBook covers the current events that happened in the month of April. Current Affairs is a crucial component of any competitive exams including CLAT, AILET, DU-LLB, HM, CAT, IAS, PCS, SSC, Banking, MBA and various other competitive examinations.

Current Affairs play the bigger role in many competitive and government exams. It holds the power of making or breaking your chance of success. Therefore, the candidates should cover the Current Affairs thoroughly and smartly.

The PRAVAHINI April-2022 eBook is divided into different sections keeping in mind the need of various exams. The sections covered namely International, National, Economy, Ecology and Environment, Science & Technology, Legal Affairs, Sports, States News Makers and few others.

We would also be pleased to receive any suggestion that could assist us with the upcoming editions.

Success Mantra (GTB Nagar, Delhi)

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## Our Goal

Our goal at Success Mantra is to provide Quality education at rational price and thereby to create an environment that guides students towards the path of the success. Along with designing the curriculum and delivering the lectures, we work upon the ways the students think and approach problems asked.

*B. S. Shanti*



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

🚩 National Affairs

🚩 International Affairs

🚩 Economic Affairs

🚩 Appointments

🚩 Awards & Honor

🚩 Sports

🚩 Dates & Days

🚩 Report & Indexes

🚩 Science & Technology

🚩 Miscellaneous

🚩 Important Articles of The Month

#1. PM Modi in quad leaders' virtual meeting

#2. Ongoing conflict b/w Russia & Ukraine

#3. Russia suspended from UNHRC

#4. India at 5th BIMSTEC summit 2022

#5. 103 years of Jallianwala Bagh massacre

#6. US report on human rights in India

#7. Shehbaz Sharif as new pm of Pakistan

#8. SC on Krishna river water dispute



# NATIONAL AFFAIRS

## AP CM INAUGURATES 13 NEW DISTRICTS IN STATE

**YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh**, inaugurated 13 new districts in the state via video conference on Monday, April 4 in Tadepalli, Guntur district. As a result, there will be a total of 26 districts in the state.



The new districts were created using Parliamentary constituencies as a guide. **With the addition of 13 new districts**, Andhra Pradesh now has a total of 26 districts.

*The following is a list of the new districts and their headquarters:*

Alluri Sitarama Raju District – Paderu  
 Annamayya District – Rayachoti  
 Anakapalli – Anakapalli  
 Bapatla – Bapatla  
 Eluru – Eluru  
 Kakinada – Kakinada  
 Kona Seema – Amalapuram  
 Manyam District – Parvathipuram  
 Nandyal – Nandyal  
 NTR District – Vijayawada  
 Palnadu – Narsaraopeta  
 Sri Balaji District – Tirupati  
 Sri Sathya Sai District – Puttaparthi.

The CM added that people have accepted and liked the decentralised system of government because the initiatives are given straight to their doorstep, and that the same is now being extended to the districts.

## INDIAN GOVT. INTRODUCED INDIAN ANTARCTIC BILL

The Indian government has introduced the **Indian Antarctic Bill-2022**, around 40 years after the country had first signed the Antarctic Treaty.



This bill has been introduced to **monitor and regulate activities at its research stations** that are located in Antarctica.

This bill aims to regulate activities and visits to Antarctica as well as all potential disputes that can arise among those nations that are present on the continent.

The bill has also prescribed penal provisions for certain violations. Under this Bill, the **jurisdiction of Indian courts** has been extended to Antarctica and it has been allowed to investigate and trial crimes that are committed on the continent.

Under this bill, an Indian expedition to Antarctica or conducting certain activities on the continent is prohibited without a permit from the committee that will be set up by the government. **Also, the committee can cancel the permits.**

As every country has an allotted quota of fishing in this region, this **Bill has provided guidelines for commercial fishing in this region by India**. However, strict guidelines have been placed in accordance with the related international law.

The Bill has enabled the Indian tour operators to conduct tourism in the region under strict regulations.

This bill provides for the constitution of an inspection team that will have the right to carry out inspections in Antarctica. This bill has **provided guidelines for the protection of the Antarctic environment**.

### Prohibitions under this bill

**Under this bill, dredging, drilling, collection of mineral resources, and excavation** have been prohibited in the region except for scientific research purposes that too with a permit.

## LOK SABHA PASSED WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

The Lok Sabha has passed the **Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022**.



The Bill has been passed to amend the **Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005**.

In accordance with India's international commitments, the amendment bill was passed to prohibit the financing of the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

**The 2005 Act** prohibited the transport, manufacturing, and transfer of **weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems**.

### *The reason for amending the act*

The amendment of the act is necessary as in recent times, the various regulations that are in place and are related to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery system's proliferation by international organizations have increased.

The **Financial Action Task Force** also has sanctioned the financing of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems proliferation.

### *What are Weapons of Mass Destruction?*

A weapon of mass destruction is a radiological, nuclear, biological, chemical, or any other weapon that can cause significant harm as well as kill numerous individuals and also cause great damage to infrastructures, the biosphere, or the natural structures.

## ENVIRONMENT MINISTER LAUNCHED PRAKRITI GREEN INITIATIVE

In the presence of **Union Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav**, the mascotto 'Prakriti' was launched today to raise public awareness about small changes that can be made to our lifestyle for a better environment.

As well as various green initiatives taken by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & **Climate Change and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** to ensure effective Plastic Waste Management (PWM) in the country.



To combat the problem of plastic pollution, India's Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, pledged to **eliminate single-use plastics (SUPs) by 2022**.

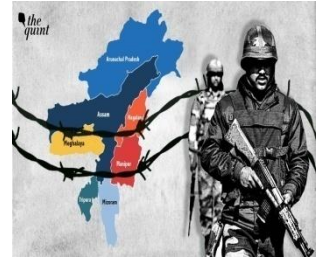
The Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change also administered the 'Swachh Bharat Harit Bharat Green Pledge' to the crowd, carrying the momentum forward and emphasising the importance of active citizen engagement.

Plastic has emerged as one of the most important environmental concerns of our day. **India produces over 3.5 million tonnes of plastic waste** each year, with per capita plastic waste creation nearly doubling in the last five years.

Our ecosystems are harmed by plastic pollution, which is also linked to air pollution.

## GOVT. ANNOUNCED CHANGES IN AFSPA

The Central Government has announced the reduction of areas **under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA)** in the Northeast states of the country. The impacted states are Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Manipur.



In the year 1958, **AFSPA was enacted with the aim of bringing the situation under control** in all the conflict-hit areas of the country.

Under the AFSPA law, the armed forces are allowed to use any means that is deemed necessary to maintain public order **in the states where AFSPA is applicable**.

Under AFSPA, the Armed Forces can cause deaths, destroy structures that are being used as hideouts, training camps, or launch pads and **also arrest anyone without having a warrant**.

### *Changes in AFSPA*

**In Assam:** In Assam, from 23 districts AFSPA will be removed while in one district it will be applied partially.

**In Manipur:** In the state of Manipur, from 15 police stations in 6 districts, the AFSPA jurisdiction will be removed

**In Arunachal Pradesh:** In this state, in only 3 districts AFSPA will be applicable along with the jurisdiction of two police stations in another district.

**In Nagaland:** From 15 police stations in 7 districts of Nagaland, the jurisdiction of AFSPA will be removed.

## ASSAM AND MEGHALAYA BORDER PACT

**Assam and Meghalaya agreed to settle their five-decade-long border dispute** in six of the 12 disputed areas that have provoked recurrent tensions between the two states.



**Union Home Minister Amit Shah** hailed the decision as a "**historic day for the Northeast**," as Assam and Meghalaya settled their five-decade-long border dispute in six of the 12 contested areas that have periodically generated tensions between the two states.

In the presence of Shah, **the chief ministers of Assam and Meghalaya, Himanta Biswa Sarma and Conrad Sangma**, respectively, signed the agreement.

The accord will end a long-running dispute in six of the 12 places along the two countries' 884.9-kilometer border.

As Per the statements of home minister Amit Shah, the signing of the agreement has resolved 70% of the border dispute between the two countries, and he wants to find a solution for the remaining six points soon.

Assam shares a 2743-kilometer border with **Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and West Bengal**. It has border conflicts with Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh.

An agreement has been struck for 36 communities in the six areas, totaling 36.79 square kilometers. The two states created three teams to explore the problematic boundary issue in August last year.

## DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Lok Sabha has passed the **Delhi Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Bill** so that three municipal corporations of Delhi (MCD) can be merged into a single entity.

This bill has been passed by a voice vote and various amendments that were moved by the Opposition members have been rejected.

The Union Cabinet had approved this bill's presentation. **A "Special officer" will** be appointed to discharge the elected wing of councilors' functions till the new corporation's first meeting is held.

This amendment bill will be omitting the section related to local bodies, and directors that govern the MCDs functioning.

**Aim of this bill:** The three municipal corporations will be merged into a single, well-equipped, and integrated entity so that a robust mechanism can be implemented for ensuring optimal utilization of resources and strategic planning.

## PM MODI INAUGURATED PRADHAN MANTRI SANGRAHALAYA



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya in New Delhi on April 14.

The Sangrahalaya, located at the iconic Teen Murti complex,

was inaugurated as part of **Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav** – a 75-week celebration launched to mark 75 years of Independence.

The museum will become a source of inspiration for the youth who will be able to witness the hardships each **PM faced and how they overcame them to lay the foundations of a new India**.

The museum will reflect the shared heritage of each government. The Congress alleged that the new museum was an attempt to **dilute the legacy of India's first PM Jawaharlal Nehru**, a charge rejected by the Centre.

### Key Features of Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya:

The **project to build the new museum faced stiff opposition** when the government announced its plan in 2018.

The museum building integrates the **Teen Murti Bhawan in New Delhi**, designated as Block I, with the newly-constructed Block II. The total area of the two blocks is over 15,600 square metres. There are 43 galleries in Sangrahalaya.

The logo of the Sangrahalaya, meanwhile, shows hands holding the dharma chakra, symbolising the nation and democracy.

## KARNATAKA ANNOUNCED CELEBRATION OF INTEGRATION DAY

**Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai** announced that Sri Siddalinga Swami of Tontadarya Mutt's birth anniversary in Gadag will be celebrated **across the state as 'Integration Day.'**



This was announced after the Chief Minister inaugurated the **Aikya Mantapa on 15th April 2022**. The Mantapa is a structure built around the location where the seer's mortal remains were buried on the Tontadarya Mutt grounds in Gadag.

### About Sri Siddalinga Swami

He was a great philosopher and thinker. He was dedicated to building a harmonious society, and he dedicated his entire life to it. He had also received the **Rajyotsava award for communal harmony and the Rashtriya Basava Puraskar**.

The Government of India had also honoured him with the Communal Harmony and **National Integration Award**. The seer had also led the 'Save Kappatagudda'



movement as he was immensely concerned about the environment.

He also had written scores of literary works with social reforms as the main theme. He was well known for his progressive actions, and after taking the seat as the 19th head of Tontadarya Mutt, he discontinued many rigorous practices being followed in the name of tradition.

80 educational institutions had also been established by him.

## WATERWAYS CONCLAVE 2022

The **Waterways Conclave 2022** was organized by the **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** on 11th and 12th April 2022 in Dibrugarh, Assam.

The aim of this conclave was to focus on harnessing the potential of the international and domestic waterway ecosystem in the country's North-eastern region.

The industry partner of this conclave was the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)**.



The conclave was launched by **Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and AYUSH**.

The conclave was attended by various stakeholders in the sector of the waterway ecosystem like Senior Government Officials, Policy Planners, Sector Experts, Domestic and **International Investors, Infrastructure players, Cruise Tourism industry, Vessel Owners and Operators, Representatives of Major Ports, Cargo Passengers**, and representatives from the Governments of Maritime States in India.

### Aim of the conclave

The aim of this conclave is to fast-track the Multimodal projects for the development of the country's Northeast region so that business opportunities, economic activities, and employment generation can be enhanced.

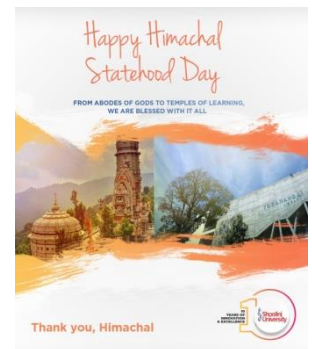
**Gauhati University (GU) and the IWAI** signed an MoU on the research and development as well as investment and consultancy in inland waterways.

**Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited (BCPL)**, Dibrugarh and IWAI also signed an MoU for cargo transportation via inland water transport.

## STATEHOOD DAY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

**Himachal Day** is observed on the 15th of April in Himachal Pradesh. The state became a full-fledged state on this day.

Four districts of **Mandi, Chamba, Mahasu and Sirmour** were integrated with over two dozen princely states, leading to the formation of Himachal Pradesh as a Union Territory in 1948. Decades later, in 1971, Himachal Pradesh became the 18th state in India with Shimla as its capital.



It was on this day in **1948 that Himachal Pradesh was created as a province of India**. The day is marked with a grand parade in the capital city of Shimla. Local events are also organised in the cities, towns, and villages to mark the day.

### About Himachal Pradesh:

Himachal Pradesh is a state in northern India. **Bordering Tibet, it is noted for its Himalayan landscapes (Himachal means 'snow-laden region')** and is a popular tourist destination for trekking and enjoying the natural beauty.

The state also has the fourth-highest per capita income of the Indian state and is the third fastest growing economy in India.

The word "Himachal" is derived from two Sanskrit words, "Hima" (snow) and "Anchal" (lap). The state, situated amid valleys and hills, virtually sits in the lap of the Himalayas.

The main language spoken in the state is Hindi but there are several local dialects like Mahasu, Pahari, Mandeali, Kangri, Kullu, Bilaspuri and Kinnauri.

**The recorded history of Himachal Pradesh goes back to the Maurya period, that is, 4th Century B.C.**

The state has beautiful tourist destinations like Shimla – the queen of hill stations, **Bilaspur, Mandi, Chamba, Kullu, Dalhousie, Kasauli, Kangra, Palampur, Solan, Manali and Dharamshala**.

The **Kalka-Shimla Railway, often called the "toy train", is a UNESCO World Heritage Site**. The Kalka-Shimla Railway traverses the steepest slope (over 5800 ft) in roughly 95 km. The train crosses several bridges and tunnels.



## AVSAR- 'CONNECT TO OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVE'

The AVSAR- 'Connect to Opportunities Initiative' has been launched by Jammu & Kashmir's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. It is a dedicated portal that will be used to connect job aspirants of the Union Territory with the industry.



This initiative was launched under **Mission Youth**. This newly launched initiative has the aim of creating more than 10,000 job opportunities for the aspirants of the UT in 2022.

This initiative has been provisioned so that the youth of the UT can be facilitated with real-time information informing the aspirants about **job opportunities and pre-placement activities**.

The **administration of Jammu & Kashmir** has taken various steps to create schemes, infrastructure, and policies to speed up the economic development in the region and to help the youth so that they can achieve self-growth and contribute to society.

*How many institutions will be available in this portal?*

All **technical institutions** and it is of the UT will be **on-boarded** on this portal to achieve the best possible outcome for the youths of the UT.

## SVANIDHI SE SAMRIDDHI PROGRAMME



The 'SVANidhi se Samriddhi' program has been launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in additional 126 cities across 14 States and UTs of India.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic-related challenges in 2020-21, this program was successful in providing social security benefits to lakhs of street vendors and their families across the country thus protecting them from the livelihood's risks.

On 4th January 2021, Phase 1 of the 'SVANidhi se Samriddhi', an additional program under the PM SVANidhi was launched in 125 cities across India.

In the first phase, 35 lakh street vendors and their families were covered. Scheme sanctions of 22.5 lakh have been extended to them along with 16 lakh insurance benefits under the **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana** and the **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojana**.

Pension benefits of 2.7 Lakh have also been extended under the **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana**.

After Phase 1's success, MoHUA has expanded this program to additional 126 cities and has the aim of covering an additional 28 lakh street vendors and their families across the country. Also, the Ministry has targets of providing 20 lakh scheme sanctions in FY 2022-23.

### About PM SVANidhi

The **Prime Minister Street Vendors AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)** program was launched by MoHUA in June 2020.

Under this scheme, an affordable working capital loan is provided to the street vendors of the country.

The scheme not only extends loans to the **country's street vendors but also aims for their economic upliftment and holistic development**.

Up to Rs 10 thousand rupees is provided to the street vendors as a working capital loan for the facilitation of the resumption of their livelihoods that was affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## GLOBAL AYUSH INVESTMENT & INNOVATION SUMMIT 2022

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will open the **Global Ayush Investment & Innovation Summit 2022** at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.



The three-day conference will bring together key policymakers, entrepreneurs, investors, startups, and other national and international players to discuss innovation and **how India can become a global Ayush destination for entrepreneurship**.

**Shri Pravind Jugnauth**, Prime Minister of Mauritius, and **Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), will attend the summit's opening ceremony, as will Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel, Union Minister of Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, and Minister of State Dr. Munjpara Mahendrabhai Kalubhai.

The **global ayush investment and innovation conference 2022** will have 5 plenary sessions, 8 roundtables, 6 seminars, and 2 symposiums over the course of three days.

After the opening ceremony, technical sessions will take place on the first day of the summit. Two roundtables will be held during these sessions, one on the diplomat's

conclave and the other on Indian ayush prospects for the rest of the globe.

Embassy representatives from the **Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Mali, Mexico, Rwanda, Togo, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Chile, Cuba, Gambia, Jamaica, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan, Zimbabwe, Costa Rica**, and the US Department of Health and Human Services will attend the diplomatic conclave.

The second roundtable on the first day will focus on collaboration – G2B interactions between major Ministries and Industries/Entrepreneurs/Start-ups, Ayush in the FMCG sector, and globalisation of yoga certification.

## NADABET SEEMA DARSHAN PROJECT



On 10th April 2022, **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** launched the Nadabet Seema Darshan Project along the India-Pakistan border in the Banaskantha district of Gujarat.

The **tourism project in Gujarat** will help in generating employment and will also stop the migration of people residing in the border villages.

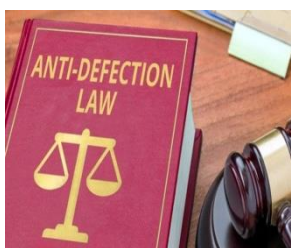
The government of India has undertaken several initiatives to develop the country's border infrastructure with the objective of enhancing border security and the newly launched **Seema Darshan project is a part of it.**

The cost of this project will be Rs 125 crore.

### *The Objective of this project*

This border tourism project will help in increasing the **people's respect towards the personnel of the Border Security Force (BSF)** and will also help in boosting tourism in this area. With an increase in tourism, employment will also be generated.

## AMENDMENT REQUIRED IN ANTI-DEFECTION LAW



Recently, the **Vice-President** has said that the time has come to amend the **anti-defection legislation** in the country to plug existing loopholes.

### *What is Anti Defection Law?*

The **anti-defection law punishes individual Members of Parliament (MPs)/MLAs** for leaving one party for another.

Parliament added it to the Constitution as the Tenth Schedule in 1985. Its purpose was to bring stability to governments by discouraging legislators from changing parties.

**The Tenth Schedule - popularly known as the Anti-Defection Act** - was included in the Constitution via the 52nd Amendment Act, 1985.

It sets the provisions for disqualification of elected members on the grounds of defection to another political party. It was a response to the **toppling of multiple state governments by party-hopping MLAs after the general elections of 1967.**

## KARNATAKA SOCIAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN 'SAANS'

Health and Medical Education Minister of Karnataka, Keshava Reddy Sudhakar has launched the **'Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia successfully' (SAANS) Campaign.**



**SAANS is a campaign** that has been launched to ensure early detection and greater awareness of pneumonia in children under the age of five.

As per SRS 2018, **Karnataka's under-five mortality** is at 28 per 1000 live births.

Pneumonia is a lung infection that is caused due to viral, bacterial, or fungal infection. By 2025, the state's goal is to reduce the under-five mortality to 23 per 1,000 lives.

Also, to achieve the **National Health Policy goals, pneumonia mortality** has to be reduced to less than 3 deaths per 1,000 live births.

## INDIA'S 1ST CARBON NEUTRAL PANCHAYAT

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi** dedicated a 500 KV solar plant to the nation in the unassuming hamlet of Palli in Jammu and Kashmir's border region of Samba making it the country's first 'carbon neutral panchayat.'

Palli, **according to the Prime Minister**, has shown the country the way by becoming carbon neutral. Palli residents have assisted with the project.

They've also fed those who are working on the project. Officials added that under the **national government's 'Gram Urja Swaraj' programme**, 1,500 solar panels with a total area of 6,408 square metres will provide clean electricity to 340 homes in the model panchayat.



As India's first carbon-neutral solar village, the village has made history. Officials said the project was finished in record time for a cost of 2.75 crore. The electricity generated will be distributed to the village through the local power grid station, which has a daily need of 2,000 units.

## KWAR HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER PROJECT

On 27th April 2022, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave its approval to invest Rs 4,526.12 crore for the 540 MW Kwar Hydro-electric project that is located on Chenab River, Kishwar district, Jammu & Kashmir.

This upcoming hydroelectric project is a part of the Indus basin. This project is a part of one of the four projects that are coming up in the district.



The projects include the 624 MWs run-of-the-river Kiru hydroelectric project and the 1,000 MWs Pakal Dul hydroelectric project.

### About Indus Water Treaty

Under the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) that was signed between India and Pakistan in 1960, both countries share the waters of six rivers in the Indus basin flowing through India towards Pakistan.

Out of these, India has complete rights over the three eastern rivers which are Beas, Sutlej, and Ravi, while Pakistan has rights over Jhelum, Chenab, and Indus which are the western rivers. However, India can build run-of-the-river projects on the western rivers whose rights are with Pakistan.

This project will be implemented by the Chenab Valley Power Projects Private Ltd (CVPPPL). It is a joint venture between Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC) and NHPC Ltd having an equity contribution of 49 percent and 51 percent respectively.

## SCORPENE CLASS SUBMARINE 'VAGSHEER'



The Indian Navy launched the sixth and last submarine, Yard 11880, of the French Scorpene-class under Project 75, at the Kanhoji Angre Wet Basin of Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) in Mumbai.

The submarine has been named 'Vagsheer'. The submarine will now undergo rigorous harbour trials and sea trials, before being commissioned in the Indian Navy.

These submarines are designed by French naval defence and energy company 'DCNS' while Mazagon Dock Limited, Mumbai has manufactured them.

*List of other submarines under Scorpene-class submarines:*

First submarine: INS Kalvari- commissioned on 14 December 2017.

Second : INS Khanderi – September 2019

Third: INS Karanj – March 2021

Fourth: INS Vela – November 2021

Fifth: INS Vagir- launched in November 2020 and is undergoing sea trials.

## PROJECTS WORTH RS. 22000 CRORE LAUNCHED IN GUJARAT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone and inaugurated the various projects worth 22,000 crore rupees at a function organized at Dahod in Gujarat.



Dahod District Southern Area Regional Water Supply Scheme, constructed at Narmada River Basin (Rs 840 crore); Dahod Smart City (Rs 335 crore).

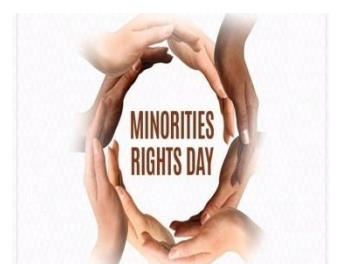
These projects include Integrated Command & Control Centre (ICCC) Building, Stormwater drainage system, Sewerage works, Solid Waste Management System and Rain Water Harvesting System.

Under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, benefits worth Rs. 120 crore were provided to 10,000 tribal of Panchmahal and Dahod districts.

Prime Minister also inaugurated 66 KV Ghodia substation, Panchayat Houses, and Anganwadis, among others. Manufacturing project of 9,000 HP Electric Locomotives at the Railway Production Unit in Dahod. 10,000 tribals of Panchmahal and Dahod districts (provided Rs 120 crore under PMAY).

## TAMIL NADU 'MINORITIES RIGHTS DAY'

The state government of Tamil Nadu has decided to observe the 18th of December annually as Minorities Rights Day at the state level. Around Rs 2.50 lakh will be earmarked by the state government for the purpose of observing this day.



This day is being observed at the district level of Tamil Nadu under the concerned collectors.



Henceforth, it will also be observed at the state level.  
**Education aid to minority girl students.**

Also, in order to ensure that the minority girl students who are residing in the rural areas of the state are able to pursue their studies without any hindrance, **the government of the state will be providing Rs 500 as education aid to the students studying classes 3 to 5 and Rs 1,000 to those in Class 6.**

A sum of Rs 2.75 crore will be provided by the state as an aid to the minority students. Guidelines regarding this will also be framed for providing minority status to various educational institutions of Tamil Nadu.

## PHONE TAPPING LAW IN INDIA



Recently, a political leader claimed that the Centre is protecting an Indian Police Service officer who is facing a **First Information Report (FIR)** in Mumbai and is being **probed for allegedly tapping the phones.**

*What is Phone Tapping and how are Phones Tapped in India?*

**Phone tapping or cell phone tracking/tracing is an activity where a user's phone calls, and other activities are tracked using different software.** This procedure is majorly carried out without the targeted person being notified of any such activity.

It can be done by authorities making a request to the service provider, which is bound by law, to record the conversations on the given number and provide these in real time through a connected computer.

However, **Article 21 of the Indian Constitution says that "No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law."**

The expression '**personal liberty**' includes '**right to privacy**'. A citizen has a right to safeguard his personal privacy and his family, education, marriage, motherhood, childbearing, and procreation, among other matters.

*Who can Tap Phones?*

**State Level:** In the states, police have the power to tap phones.

**Central Level:** Intelligence Bureau, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Enforcement Directorate, Narcotics Control Bureau, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, National Investigation Agency, Research and Analysis Wing

(R&AW), Directorate of Signal Intelligence, Delhi Police Commissioner.

*What are the Laws that govern Phone Tapping in India?*

**The Indian Telegraph Act, 1885:** According to Section 5(2) of the Act on the occurrence of any public emergency, or in the interest of public safety, phone tapping can be done by the Centre or states.

The order can be issued if they are satisfied it is necessary in the interest of public safety, "**sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States** or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of an offence".

## WHAT IS 'ENTERPRISE INDIA' INITIATIVE?

**Narayan Rane, Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises** inaugurated the MSME Ministry's Mega Event titled "**Enterprise India**" on the 27th of April 2022. This event is in line with the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.



It is a series of **entrepreneurship development activities and events that are being organized** from 27th April 2022 to 27th May 2022 with the aim of promoting entrepreneurship culture and generating awareness about the initiatives and schemes of the MSME Ministry across the nation.

**Aim of the event:** The event's aim is to create synergies between various concerned departments, ministries, and the Industry Associations.

This event is aimed at '**Jan Bhagidari**.' Some key activities that will be organized under this event include organizing **entrepreneurship awareness programmes through various field offices, conferences with Industry Associations, special campaigns on Udyam Registration, demonstration of Nukkad Nataks** in the country's aspirational districts.

## 100% HOUSEHOLD COVERED UNDER ABPMJAY-SEHAT SCHEME

In the **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir**, the Samba district of the Jammu division has become the first district in India to cover **100% of households under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPMJAY)-SEHAT scheme.**



The district achieved this milestone after the conclusion of a special registration drive organized by the **State Health Agency (SHA) from April 11 to April 21** in all BDO offices across the district which was aimed to cover all families under the ABPMJAY SEHAT scheme in the district.

The Samba district has a total of 62,641 families with 3,04,510 people eligible for ABPM-JAY SEHAT golden cards.

However, 100% family coverage for the Ayushman Bharat Golden card in the district is a major achievement for the UT Government.

#### *About the ABPMJAY SEHAT scheme:*

The **ABPMJAY SEHAT scheme is the world's largest health insurance scheme** fully financed by Government and the people with Ayushman Bharat Golden Card get free treatment up to Rs. 5 lakh in all government and empanelled private hospitals across India.

#### **AIR ASIA MERGER WITH AIR INDIA**

The Tata Group has been attempting to improve Air India's performance since its takeover in January 2022. **That includes its on-time performance.**



Tata's most recent job is to consolidate their aviation operations.

**The Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has already been notified of Air India's intention to merge with AirAsia India.

In December 2020, **Tata increased its stake in AirAsia India to 67 percent.** AirAsia India, which began operating in June 2014, provides scheduled passenger, cargo, and charter flight services throughout the country.

It does not operate on a global scale. In January of this year, Tata acquired Air India and Air India Express.

**Vistara Airlines is also owned by the Tata group,** although it has opted out of the merger plan so far.

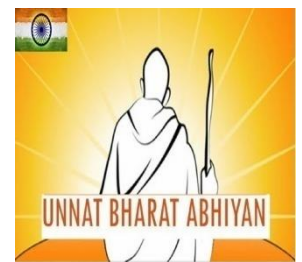
Singapore Airlines, a Vistara joint venture partner, is rumoured to be interested.

Vistara Airlines is also **owned by the Tata group,** although it has opted out of the merger plan so far.

Tata Group, **which includes Air India, Vistara, and AirAsia, has a combined market share of 9%,** making it the second-largest domestic airline business behind IndiGo.

#### **4 YEARS OF UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN (UBA 2.0)**

**Unnat Bharat Abhiyan 2.0 (UBA 2.0)** has successfully completed four years on 25th April 2022. On this day in the year 2018, UBA 2.0 was launched with the aim of bringing transformational changes in the processes of rural development processes.



#### *About Unnat Bharat Abhiyan*

The **Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA)** is a flagship programme that falls under the ambit of the Ministry of Education and aims to link the country's Higher Education Institutions with a set minimum of five villages so that these higher institutions can help in contributing to the social and economic betterment of the communities of these villages by using their knowledge base.

The National Coordinating Institute of the UBA programme is the **Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi).**

UBA's objective is to engage the students and the faculties of the **Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs)** to understand the country's rural realities.

Under this scheme, the students and the faculties **help in identifying the developmental issues** that are being faced in the rural areas and coming up with sustainable solutions.

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# INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

## RUSSIA SUSPENDED FROM UNHRC

Russia has been suspended from the **UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)** after there were allegations that its soldiers violated human rights in Ukraine.

The member nations of the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** voted to suspend Russia.



The UNHRC is an inter-governmental body under the United Nations. It is responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights across the world.

The UNHRC also investigates human rights breaches and addresses various human rights issues.

On 15th March 2006, this council was established by the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**. The UNHRC replaced the earlier formed United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

**There are 47-member states in the UNHRC** and they serve for three years. They cannot be re-elected immediately after serving two consecutive terms. Federico Villegas is the current president of the UNHRC.

### *The process of removal of a country*

**The UNGA** can suspend any Council member that committed human rights violations during its membership term. A two-thirds majority vote is required by the General Assembly to suspend a member.

**Suspension of Russia:** The United States first moved the resolution to suspend Russia over its military aggression in Ukraine.

The resolution to remove Russia was titled '**Suspension of the rights of membership of the Russian Federation in the Human Rights Council**'.

Under this resolution, grave concerns regarding human rights abuses committed by **Russia in Ukraine were highlighted**. The campaign to suspend Russia started after photos and videos of civilians killed by the Russian army in Bucha came to the fore.

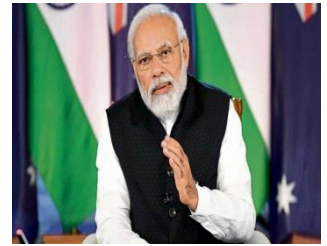
## 5TH BIMSTEC SUMMIT HELD IN SRI LANKA

The **5th BIMSTEC Summit** was held on **30th March 2022** in Sri Lanka in a hybrid mode. Prior to this on 28th and

29th March, preparatory meetings were held at the Foreign Minister and Senior Official levels.

**BIMSTEC Summit 2022's main outcome was the BIMSTEC Charter's**

adoption and signing. This charter formalizes the BIMSTEC grouping into an organization that will have a flag, an emblem, and formally listed principles that are to be adhered to by the member nations.



The **BIMSTEC leaders also oversaw the signing of 3 different BIMSTEC** agreements that represent the progress being achieved by the group in the ongoing cooperation activities.

Also, **USD 1 million** will be provided by India to the BIMSTEC secretariat for increasing its operational budget.

The **scope of the BIMSTEC scholarship program** that is offered by the Nalanda International University is also being expanded.

### *The agreements that were signed are:*

A BIMSTEC MoU on mutual cooperation for diplomatic training

A BIMSTEC convention on mutual legal assistance related to criminal matters

A MoA on the establishment of the BIMSTEC technology transfer facility.

Progress was also seen regarding the BIMSTEC connectivity agenda with the '**Master Plan for Transport Connectivity**', being adopted. This plan lays out a framework of guidance for all the connectivity-related activities that will be implemented in this region in the near future.

**Main topics of discussion:** In this summit, discussions were held regarding the challenges that were faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, BIMSTEC's progress as a regional group, the uncertainties that are being currently faced within the international system, as well as the establishment of basic mechanisms and institutional structures of the group.

The theme of the summit: "**Towards a Resilient Region, Prosperous Economies, Healthy People**" is the summit's theme.

BIMSTEC member countries: **India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, Myanmar, Bhutan, and Nepal** are member countries of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for

Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

## US & PHILIPPINES MILITARY DRILL BALIKATAN 2022



The United States military and the military of the Philippines kicked off the military drill Balikatan 2022. The Philippine-led annual exercise will take place across Luzon in the Philippines region near Taiwan, from March 28 to April 8, 2022.

Around 8,900 Filipino and American troops are participating in the military drill, making it the largest Balikatan military exercise ever.

According to the military, the drills will focus on “maritime security, amphibious operations, live-fire training, urban operations, aviation operations, counterterrorism, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief”.

The Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) gives US troops a legal basis to be in the Southeast Asian country for bilateral exercises and governs the conduct of American armed force personnel.

## 9TH INDIA-KYRGYZSTAN JOINT EXERCISE: KHANJAR



The 9th Edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise was held in March-April, 2022 at Special Forces Training School, Bakloh (HP).

Special Forces contingents from India and Kyrgyzstan have shared their experience and best practices in terms of tactics, techniques, and procedures for countering present and emerging threats throughout the conflict spectrum.

During the Exercise, combat shooting, sniping, mountain survival, hostage rescue drills, and unarmed warfare were all extensively performed.

The collaborative training reinforced the existing link between India and Kyrgyzstan, which has grown over years of mutual respect for strategic autonomy, democratic ideals, and zero tolerance for terrorism.

### What is a military Exercise?

or war game is the employment of military resources in training for military operations, either exploring the effects of warfare or testing strategies without actual

combat. This also serves the purpose of ensuring the combat readiness of garrisoned or deployable forces prior to deployment from a home base.

## VIKTOR ORBAN AS NEW PM OF HUNGARY

Viktor Orban has again been elected as the Prime Minister of Hungary for the fourth time. He won the 4th term by a huge margin more than what was predicted in the pre-election polls.



After the win, he addressed a jubilant crowd who were chanting his name. Many people in the gathering wore the orange party colour of Fidesz, the party of Viktor Orban.

He is the longest-serving head of a government in the European Union. Six oppositions united to challenge him in this election and they were seeking to roll back the illiberal policies of Orban's.

The opposition claimed that the vote was unfair as they were all banished from the state media.

Orban however said that the elections were conducted in a fair manner. Over 200 international observers monitored the Hungary elections along with thousands of volunteers from both electoral camps. 69 percent was the turnout for this year's election.

### Repeated confrontations with the European Union

The administration of Orban has had repeated confrontations with the European Union over matters that include the neutering of the country's press as well as the judiciary. His administration has also taken steps that target the LGBTQ community.

### About Hungary

Hungary is located in Central Europe and is bordered by Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Austria. The capital of the country is Budapest and it is also the country's largest city.

## STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED IN SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka's president Gotabaya Rajapaksa has declared a state of emergency in the country which gives sweeping powers to the country's security forces.



This was declared after hundreds of citizens of the country tried to storm his

house seething with anger over the economic crisis Sri Lanka is facing.

The tough laws that were invoked give powers to the military to detain and arrest any suspect without trial for long periods of time.

The citizens of the country are protesting and **calling for his resignation as the country is in turmoil**. The nation is facing severe essential shortages, rice prices, crippling power cuts, etc.

In the country, a night-time curfew has been imposed following continuous protests against the President of the country.

#### *Why was the emergency declared?*

The emergency has been declared so that public order in the country can be maintained **as well as the protection of services and supplies that are essential to the community**.

#### *The economic condition of the country*

Inflation in the country has hit 18.7 percent. **Food prices have soared by 30.1 percent**. Diesel shortages have also sparked outrage across the country. Daily 13-hours of a power cut is being imposed as there is no diesel for running the generators.

The state-run hospitals of the country are also facing shortages of life-saving medicines. **The International Monetary Fund** has been approached by the government while more loans have been asked for from India and China.

## PRESIDENT KOVIND VISIT TO NETHERLANDS



**President Ram Nath Kovind** landed in Amsterdam for the final leg of his two-nation journey — his first visit to the Netherlands in 34 years — during which he would hold talks with the **Dutch top leadership to name a new yellow tulip variety 'Maitri'**.

**President Kovind** arrived from Turkmenistan, where he met with his **Turkmen colleague Serdar Berdimuhamedov** and pledged to expand bilateral economic and energy cooperation to improve the multifaceted relationship.

He is the first Indian President to visit Turkmenistan since its independence.

**President Ram Nath Kovind** will meet with **King Willem Alexander and Queen Maxima**, as well as Prime Minister Mark Rutte, during his visit to the Netherlands from April 4 to 7.

His visit is significant since, in 2022, India and the Netherlands will commemorate 75 years of diplomatic relations.

Later, President Kovind paid a visit to Keukenhof, one of the world's largest flower gardens, named a new yellow tulip variety '**Maitri**', and **here was met by Dutch Foreign Minister Wopke Hoekstra**.

A **Strategic Partnership on Water** was started in 2021 during the **Virtual Summit between the Prime Ministers of the two countries** to increase the level of engagement between the two sides in this crucial sector.

Agriculture, health, urban development, science, and technology cooperation are all important pillars of the bilateral relationship.

The Netherlands is also an important economic and commercial partner of India since it is the country's fourth-largest source of foreign direct investment. **It is also home to the continent's largest Indian diaspora**.

## 4TH INDIA-USA 2+2 MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE

**Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III** welcomed Ministers of Defense **Rajnath Singh** and External Affairs **Dr S. Jaishankar** to Washington, D.C. for the fourth US-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue.



A virtual conference **between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joseph Biden** preceded the Dialogue.

With a shared commitment to democracy and pluralism, a multifaceted bilateral agenda, and growing convergence of strategic interests, the **United States and independent India are celebrating 75 years of diplomatic relations**.

Both countries seek to maintain a resilient, rules-based international order that protects sovereignty and territorial integrity, upholds democratic values, and promotes peace and prosperity for all.

The **Ministers analysed the broader consequences of the deepening humanitarian catastrophe in Ukraine**, as well as their own attempts to respond to it. They demanded an immediate halt to hostilities.



The Ministers were unanimous in their condemnation of civilian deaths. They emphasised that the modern global order is **based on the UN Charter, international law, and all states' sovereignty and territorial integrity**.

The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to **work closely together at the UN Security Council** and in international organisations. The US reiterated its support for India's permanent membership in a reconstituted UN Security Council as well as its admission to the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The United States welcomed India's commitment to participate in multilateral peacekeeping training in 2022, **expand joint capacity-building efforts with third-country partners**, and launch a new joint National Investigation Officers Training of Trainers course in partnership with the United Nations, recognising India's distinguished history of leading peacekeeping missions.

## SHEHBAZ SHARIF AS 23RD PM OF PAKISTAN



On 11th April 2022, **Shehbaz Sharif took oath as Pakistan's 23rd prime minister**. Senate chairperson Sadiq Sanjarani administered the oath to Sharif.

After **Shah Mehmood Qureshi, the former foreign minister** announced that his party **Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf** will be boycotting the PM polls, Shehbaz Sharif was elected as the Prime Minister unopposed.

After securing **174 votes (the requirement for a majority is 172)**, Sharif was declared the prime minister of the country.

**Speaker Ayaz Sadiq** announced the result as he presided over the National Assembly session. Shehbaz Sharif is ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif's younger brother. He has also served as the Punjab province's chief minister for three terms.

The united opposition that deposed Imran Khan from the post of prime minister chose Sharif as their leader.

**Removal of Imran Khan:** Imran Khan was removed from the post on 9th April 2022 following a no-confidence vote in the night. After his removal, **Imran Khan has alleged a conspiracy by the US to topple his government**.

## HARSHWARDHAN SHRINGLA AS CHIEF COORDINATOR OF G20

For the **G20 summit**, which will be hosted in 2023 by India, **Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla** has been appointed as its chief coordinator.

Shringla will be retiring on 30th April 2022 and will take charge of this new role from 1st.

This role has been newly created by the government to organize the summit. The **G20 sherpa will remain to be Piyush Goyal, the Indian Commerce Minister**.



### About the 2023 G20 Summit:

The G20 summit that will be held in India in 2023 will be the **country's biggest-ever multilateral event** that has been hosted in recent years.

This summit provides a tremendous opportunity for the country to showcase the nation's rich culture, infrastructure, hospitality, and diversity on the global platform.

### About Harsh V. Shringla

**Harsh Vardhan Shringla** is an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer who has served as **India's 33rd Foreign Secretary**. He has also previously served as the Ambassador of India to Thailand, to the United States of America, and as the High Commissioner to Bangladesh.

He has also published papers related to economic diplomacy, conflict prevention, India-Bangladesh relations, and the Indian diaspora. He joined the Foreign Service in 1984 and has a career that spans over 35 years.

## TANZANIA'S FIRST FEMALE PRESIDENT

**Samia Suluhu Hassan** is a politician of Tanzania and is currently serving as the country's sixth. **She is a member of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party** that is currently ruling the country. She is Tanzania's first female president.



She is the third woman head of government of a country in the East African Community. The other two female heads of government are Agathe Uwilingiyimana in Rwanda and Sylvie Kinigi in Burundi.

On 19th March 2021 she took office after **President John Magufuli's death on 17th March 2021**.

**Political Career:** In the year 2000, she decided to run for public office and was elected as a member of the Zanzibar House of Representatives and **President Amani Karume appointed her as a minister**.

At that time, she was the only high-ranking female minister and her male colleagues looked down upon her.

In 2005 she was re-elected and was **re-appointed as a minister in another portfolio of the cabinet.**

In the year 2010, she sought election to the National Assembly, won by over 80 per cent of the votes and was then appointed by President Jakaya Kikwete as the Minister of State for Union Affairs.

In the year 2014, she was elected as the **constituent assembly's Vice-Chairperson and was tasked with drafting Tanzania's new constitution.** In 2015, for the 2015 election, **John Magufuli, the presidential nominee of CCM** chose her as his running mate thus making her the first female running mate in the history of the party.

On 5th November 2015, she became the country's first female vice-president after Magufuli's victory. In 2020, they were both re-elected for a second five-year term.

### UK PM BORIS JOHNSON VISIT TO INDIA



Recently, the UK Prime Minister (PM) visited India. In this visit, both the countries agreed on a joint statement titled **'Towards shared security and prosperity through national resilience'**.

**Respecting India-Russia Relations:** In the context of the Ukraine Crisis and India's neutral stance, the **UK PM asserted that India's position on Russia is 'well known' and is not going to change.**

India has a historic relationship with Russia and everybody respects it.

**Cooperation on Indo-Pacific:** The two countries had a **shared interest in keeping the Indo-Pacific region free and open**, particularly in the face of growing threats of Chinese coercion in the South China Sea.

Recently, the UK and India have agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the maritime domain as the **UK will join India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative and become a major partner on maritime security issues in Southeast Asia.**

**India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) is an open, non-treaty-based initiative** for countries to work together for cooperative and collaborative solutions to common challenges in the region.

**Extraditing Economic Fugitives:** India conveyed to the UK that bringing back economic fugitives to face justice was a "high priority" for the government. Britain responded that it is concerned about this and doesn't welcome people who want to use its legal system to evade the Indian laws.

### EMMANUEL MACRON RE-ELECTED AS PRESIDENT OF FRANCE

On 24th April 2022, **Marine Le Pen** was defeated by Emmanuel Macron to be re-elected as the President of France. Leaders across the world welcomed his re-election.



**Marine Le Pen is a far-right leader** who was defeated by Macron. Macron is the first French sitting president in the past 20 years to have been re-elected.

Both candidates did not receive any vote from one out of three voters. The turnout of the **election was just under 72 percent which is the lowest since 1969.**

Over three million people had cast blank or spoiled votes. Macron received 51.5 percent of the votes while Le Pen received 41.5 percent.

#### About Emmanuel Macron

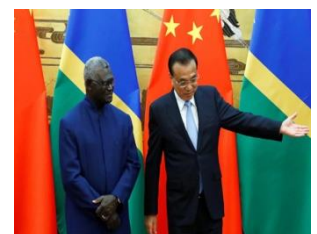
Since 14th May 2017, **Emmanuel Macron has been serving as the president of France.** During his presidency, he has overseen many reforms to taxation, labour laws, and pensions.

Renewable energy transitions were also pursued by him. A proposed fuel tax by him resulted in the yellow vests protests in 2018 yellow vests protests. Since 2020, he has been **leading the response of France to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rollout of vaccination.**

In his foreign policy, he asked for reforms in the European Union and also signed bilateral treaties with Germany and Italy.

### CHINA & SOLOMAN ISLANDS SECURITY AGREEMENT

A security pact has been signed between China and the Solomon Islands. This agreement has been signed to enhance the existing cooperation arrangements with the Solomon Islands.



The pact was announced a day after the U.S. made plans to send a delegation to the South Pacific nation to convince them to break the deal with China.

**Manasseh Sogavare, the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands stated that this pact was signed to improve security concerns in the nation.**

With the announcement of the pact, concerns are rising about the impact of this pact as it gives China a foothold in this **South Pacific region**.

The details of the pact have not been released, but a draft that was leaked suggested that **Chinese police will be deployed at the request of the archipelago to maintain social order and Chinese warships can stop at the Solomon Islands**.

Also, both parties will be requiring written consent from the other to disclose the details of the pact.

## ISSUES AT JERUSALEM'S AL AQSA MOSQUE



Recently, tensions flared up again at **Jerusalem's al-Aqsa Mosque between the Palestinians and Israeli police**.

Over the decades, this site in Jerusalem's Old City has frequently been a flashpoint for violence between Palestinians and Israeli forces and hardline groups and is at the heart of competing for historical claims. These recurring clashes are part of the ongoing **Israeli-Palestinian conflict**.

### *What is al-Aqsa Mosque & Associated Conflict?*

The **al-Aqsa Mosque is one of Jerusalem's most recognized monuments**. The site is part of the Old City of Jerusalem, sacred to Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**, has classified the Old City of Jerusalem and its walls as a **World Heritage Site**.

The mosque's complex is the reason for the conflict between Israel & Palestine (Islam & Judaism).

**Al-Aqsa Mosque is one of Islam's most revered locations, and the Temple Mount is the holiest site in Judaism**. The Temple Mount is a walled compound inside the Old City in Jerusalem, and is the site of two structures:

**The Dome of the Rock to the north and the Al-Aqsa Mosque to the south. To the southwest of the Temple Mount**, is the Western Wall, a remnant of the Second Temple and the holiest site in Judaism.

**In Islam, the Dome of the Rock is a seventh-century structure, an important Islamic shrine, believed to be where the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven.**

## RUSSIA WITHDRAWAL FROM UN TOURISM BODY

The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has announced that **Russia has decided to withdraw from the UNWTO**. The announcement was made by UN World Tourism Organization Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili.



According to the UNWTO, Russia decided to withdraw from this organization ahead of a vote by the body to **suspend Russia for its war against Ukraine**.

This **development comes amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war**. The UNWTO had earlier called the Russian aggression against Ukraine as being inconsistent with the United Nations Charter and being against the UNWTO's fundamental aim.

Even after Russia's decision to withdraw, the UNWTO will go ahead with the vote. This is the first time the UNWTO has met to discuss the **suspension of one of its member nations**.

### *About UNWTO*

The UNWTO is an organization of the United Nations that has been entrusted with the promotion of sustainable, responsible, and universally accessible tourism.

The **headquarters of this organization is located in Madrid, Spain**. It is an international organization that promotes tourism to drive economic growth, environmental sustainability, and inclusive development.

## ESTONIA HOSTS WORLD LARGEST CYBER EXERCISE

The Tallinn, Estonia NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, abbreviated as CCDCOE, is organising the Locked Shields 2022, the largest and most complex annual international live-fire cyber defence exercise in the world.



This year's exercise has particular importance as it takes place amid the **rising threat of cyber-attacks since the Russian invasion of Ukraine**.

Cyber experts practise the **protection of national civilian and military IT systems and critical infrastructure in a**



**large-scale cyber-attack.** It is conducted under conditions of intense pressure, with teams countering a series of sophisticated cyberattacks.

The exercise provides an opportunity to practice cooperation in a crisis situation between both civilian and military units, as well as public and private sectors, as in the event of a large-scale cyber-attack these tactical and strategic decision-makers must work together.

## CONTROVERSY OVER 'KURIL ISLANDS'

Japan has said that four islands near the **Kamchatka Peninsula have been illegally occupied by Russia.** The Japanese call these islands 'the Northern Territories' while Russia calls them 'Kurils.'

The islands stretch north across the Pacific Ocean from Japan's Hokkaido to Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula's southernmost tip.

These islands have been in the midst of a longstanding issue between Japan and Russia. The **Japanese government led by Fumio Kishida** has upped its ante over these islands' ownership.

For the first time in around 20 years Japan has called the islands to have been illegally occupied. This term was last used in 2003 by the foreign ministry of Japan.

## About the dispute

This dispute dates back to the end of the Second World War when the **Soviet Union, a part of the allied forces,** won the war against the Axis powers of Japan, Italy, and Germany.



Russia believes that since they won the Second World War the ownership of the islands is theirs as Japan lost the territory due to its loss in the war.

Japan argues that the **Japanese travelled to these islands** in the 16th century which is nearly 200 years before the arrival of the Russians and hence, the islands are rightfully theirs.

After the **end of the Second World War, Japan signed the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty** with the Allied Forces where Japan renounced all right, claim, and title to the Kuril Islands.

This **did not solve the issue as Russia was not a part of this treaty and the government of Japan** has never recognised the four islands occupied by Russia as part of the Kuril chain.

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# ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

## HURUN RICHEST SELF-MADE WOMEN IN THE WORLD



According to the list of **Hurun Richest Self-Made Women In The World 2022** released by the Hurun Research Institute.

According to the list, there are 124 **Self-Made Women**

**Billionaires in World and China** contributes to two-thirds of the world's self-made women billionaires with 78 followed by the United States with 25 and the United Kingdom with 5.

### Top 3 on the list:

**Wu Yajun** co-founder of Longfor (China has topped the list)

**Fan Hongwei**, Chairman/President, Hengli Petrochemical Co Ltd (China)

**Wang Laichun** of Luxshare Precision Industry (China).

### Indian Scenario:

**Falguni Nayar**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Nykaa, is ranked 10th with a wealth of USD 7.6 billion. She is the only Indian among the top 10.

**Radha Vembu**, co-founder & product manager of Zoho is the second-richest self-made woman billionaire in India with US\$ 3.9 bn & ranked 25th in the global list. Radha Vembu is top in India, and second across the world, in the list of Biggest Risers.

**Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw**, executive chairperson and founder of Biocon Limited and Biocon Biologics, is 26th on the list, down two places from last year. She has a wealth of US \$3.8 bn.

## ADB PROJECTED INDIA'S GDP GROWTH

Asian Development Bank projected a 7 per cent collective growth for South Asian economies in 2022 with the sub region's largest economy India growing by 7.5 per cent in the current fiscal year before picking up to eight per cent the next year.



However, uncertainties stemming from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the continuing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and tightening

by the United States Federal Reserve pose risks to the outlook.

The Manila-based multilateral funding agency, **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has projected the **GDP growth rate** of the Indian economy, in its flagship Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2022, as follows:

2022-23 (FY23): **7.5 per cent**

2023-24 (FY24): **8.0 per cent**

## FORBES BILLIONAIRES LIST 2022

The **Forbes billionaire's 2022** list is out, which compiles the list of the world's richest, who this time was hit by the impact of the **Russia-Ukraine conflict**, coronavirus pandemic and sluggish markets.

**Elon Musk**, the Tesla and SpaceX founder topped **Forbes' list** for the first time ever with a net worth of \$219 billion. Elon Musk is leading the Forbes billionaires list with a net worth of \$219 billion, followed by Amazon chief Jeff Bezos at \$171 billion.

America has the most number of billionaires at 735 with a collective net worth of \$4.7 trillion, including Elon Musk, who tops the **World's Billionaires list for the first time**. China (including Macau and Hong Kong) remains number two, with 607 billionaires worth a collective \$2.3 trillion.

Forbes uses stock prices and exchange rates from March 11, 2022, to calculate net worths.

## WTO PROJECTED GLOBAL TRADE GROWTH

The **World Trade Organization (WTO)** has revised its global trade growth forecast this year from 4.7 percent to 3 percent due to the impact of the **Russia-Ukraine war**. The **WTO** has also warned about a potential food crisis that might cause price surges.



This WTO report has stated that the conflict which is now in its seventh week has damaged the economy of the world that was at a critical point due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The **lockdowns in China** are also weighing down the **economic recovery**. The report has found that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine affects the whole world.

The pandemic along with the war has disrupted global supply chains, increased inflation, and lowered trade growth expectations.

The WTO has forecasted that the global trade growth in 2022 will be 3 percent while in 2023 it would rise to 3.4 percent. The forecasts for 2022 and 2023 are uncertain due to the conflict.

## WORLD BANK FORECASTED INDIA'S GDP GROWTH



For the fiscal year 2022-23, India's GDP forecast has been slashed by the World Bank from 8.7 percent to 8 percent. The reason given for the change in forecast is due to rising inflation and worsening global supply caused due to the Russia-Ukraine war.

### Asian Development Bank Outlook 2022

**Overview:** South Asia's growth outlook, excluding Afghanistan has also been slashed to 6.6 percent.

According to the World Bank, India's household consumption will be constrained due to the labour market's incomplete recovery from inflationary and COVID-19-related pressures.

High food and oil prices due to the war in Ukraine will also have a negative impact on the real incomes of the people. Asian Development Bank Outlook 2022

The Asian Development Bank Outlook 2022 had earlier said that India will be maintaining its position as the fastest-growing major economy.

The nation in 2022-23 will have a growth rate of 7.5 percent on the basis of strong investment prospects. In January to December 2022, the growth prospect of China has been stated to be 5 percent.

### India's Growth in 2023-24 according to the ADB

In the next fiscal of 2023-24, India's growth will be accelerating further to 8 percent while in 2023 China will be witnessing a decline in growth to 4.8 percent.

### World Bank's forecast for other regions

**Pakistan:** Pakistan's growth forecast for the current year which will be ending in June has been raised from 3.4 percent to 4.3 percent. Next year's growth outlook has been kept unchanged at 4 percent.

**Maldives:** The growth forecast of Maldives for this year has been slashed from 11 percent to 7.6 percent.

**Sri Lanka:** The growth forecast for Sri Lanka has been raised from 2.1 percent to 2.4 percent but has also issued a warning for the crisis-hit country that the outlook was uncertain due to fiscal imbalances.

## IMF SLASHED GDP GROWTH FORECAST

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has slashed the gross domestic product (GDP) growth forecast for India in FY23 to 8.2 percent in its latest World Economic Outlook report, released on April 19, 2022.



Earlier in January report, this was estimated at 9 percent. IMF has also cut India's FY24 GDP growth forecast to 6.9 percent. Earlier this was 7.1 percent.

In the case of the global economy, IMF has cut the growth forecast for the calendar year 2022 to 3.6 percent from 4.4 percent.

### FY23 forecasts by various institutions (in %)

World Bank — 8% — 8.7%  
IMF — 8.2% — 9%  
Fitch — 8.5% — 10.3%

## LAUNCH OF UPI IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

The international arm of the National Payment Corporation of India, NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL) has announced that across the UAE, BHIM UPI is live on NEOPAY terminals.



This initiative will be empowering the millions of Indians who travel to the UAE to make payments in a convenient and safe manner.

The payments can be made using BHIM UPI across the NEOPAY-enabled merchant stores and shops. NEOPAY, Mashreq Bank's payment subsidiary, and NIPL partnered in 2021 to create the UPI acceptance infrastructure in the country.

NIPL has been consistently working to make digital payments simple by using the cutting-edge solutions of the organization.

### Reasons for this collaboration

NEOPAY partnered with NIPL with the aim of providing innovative payment solutions for the



customers of the country thus allowing them to make use of the UAE's thriving digital economy.

Millions of Indian travelers visit the UAE consistently and this collaboration with NIPL will allow the Indian tourists to access seamless monetary transactions.

#### About UPI

The NPCI developed the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) which is an instant real-time payment system that helps in facilitating inter-bank transactions.

The safe, simple, and cost-effective mobile-based payments system has quickly become one of the country's most used forms of digital payments.

In FY22, 45.6 billion UPI enabled transactions worth USD 1 trillion were performed thus making it the world's best performing real-time payment ecosystem.

#### ELON MUSK TAKEN CONTROL OF TWITTER

In one of the tech world's biggest deals, Elon Musk has taken control of the social media site Twitter.

Through this deal, he will be acquiring the social network for around USD 44 billion with the shares of the company being valued at \$54.20.

On 14th April 2022, Musk announced his plans of taking over Twitter. **Elon Musk has plans to make Twitter a private organization.**



**Chairman Bret Taylor and Chief Executive Officer Parag Agrawal** are still in their respective roles for now.

But, Musk has repeatedly expressed his dissatisfaction with the board of Twitter and the running of the company. After a change in a company's ownership, management changes are a common thing but **Musk is already CEO of SpaceX and Tesla**, so his capacity to function as the CEO of Tesla could be limited.

Musk plans to utilize this platform as a haven for free speech. He also has plans of turning the headquarters of the company into a homeless shelter. Ads will be removed for the paid users and there will be better authentication checks.

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# APPOINTMENTS

## MANOJ PANDE SET TO BECOME NEW ARMY CHIEF



Vice Chief Lieutenant General, Manoj Pande is all set to become Chief of the Army Staff as the incumbent Army Chief General M.M. Naravane, who is being seen as the frontrunner for the Chief of Defence Staff's post, is due to retire by the end of this month.

Being senior-most in the office after General Naravane, Lt Gen Pande will take over the reign.

Lt Gen Pande became the senior-most after a few top officers retired in the last three months. The incumbent Lt Gen Raj Shukla who was commanding Army's training command (ARTRAC) retired on March 31.

Meanwhile, present Army Chief, Gen MM Naravane is ahead in the race for the post of Chief of Defence Staff after the post fell vacant in December last year as the then Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat passed away in a helicopter crash near Coimbatore.

## VINAY MOHAN KWATRA AS NEW FOREIGN SECY.



The Government of India has appointed IFS Vinay Mohan Kwatra as the new Foreign Secretary of India. He is currently serving as India's envoy to Nepal, from March 2020.

He will replace the current foreign secretary, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, who will superannuate on April 30, 2022.

Kwatra is a 1988-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, having more than 32 years of experience in foreign service.

He has also worked in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office (PMO) from 2015 to 2017, as well as India's ambassador to France from August 2017 to February 2020.

## APPOINTMENT OF NEW PRINCIPAL SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR

Ajay Kumar Sood, an eminent physicist has been appointed as the central government's principal scientific advisor (PSA).



He is a member of the Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council to the prime minister. He has been appointed to the post for a three-year period.

He is known for his work on graphene. Also, he is a physics professor at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.

The appointment has been approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).

He will be succeeding renowned biologist K VijayRaghavan. In 2018, K VijayRaghavan was appointed as the PSA. He played a crucial role in leading the vaccine and the drug development task forces as well as the management of the pandemic.

In 2021, his term ended but he was given an extension.

The PSA's office has the aim of providing objective and pragmatic advice to the cabinet as well as the prime minister on matters that are related to the fields of technology, science, and innovation with a special focus on the application of technology and science in economic and social sectors and critical infrastructure in cooperation with the various government departments, industries, and institutions.

## SUMAN BERY APPOINTED AS VC OF NITI AAYOG

The government-run organisation, Niti Aayog's Vice Chairperson, Rajiv Kumar has resigned due to a government order. Suman Bery, an economist, will take over as the new head of the planning agency.



The government has authorised Rajiv Kumar's resignation and Suman Bery's appointment, according to an order issued by the Cabinet Appointments Committee. Rajiv Kumar will be relieved of his duties, according to the ruling.

The reason for Rajiv Kumar's resignation was not stated in the order. **After Arvind Panagariya resigned from the job in August 2017 to return to academia, Rajiv Kumar, an economist, was named vice chairman of the Niti Aayog.**

Suman Bery previously worked for the **National Council of Applied Economic Research in New Delhi as director-general (chief executive).**

He also served on the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, the Statistical Commission, and the Technical Advisory Committee on Monetary Policy of the Reserve Bank of India.

**Suman Bery formerly worked for the World Bank in Washington before joining the NCAER.** Macroeconomics, financial markets, and public debt management are among his specialties, with a concentration on Latin America.

## ANDY JASSY TO BECOME NEW CEO OF AMAZON

Andy Jassy will officially become the CEO of Amazon on July 5th, the company announced at a shareholder meeting.



Amazon announced that Jassy, who is the current CEO of Amazon Web Services (AWS), **would replace Jeff Bezos as CEO of the entire company** in February.

Bezos will become **executive chair of Amazon's board.**

Jassy joined the company in the late '90s and was tasked with exploring **what would become AWS around 2003.**

Amazon.com Inc Founded: **5 July 1994.**

Amazon.com Inc Headquarters: **Seattle, Washington, United States.**

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# AWARDS & HONOR

## PRESIDENT CONFERS NATIONAL WATER AWARDS



The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind has presented the 3rd National Water Awards in New Delhi. National Water Awards are given for exemplary work in the field of water resource management.

The first National Water Award was launched in 2018, by the Jal Shakti Ministry. A total of 57 National Water Awards for 2022 have been conferred to states, organizations and others in 11 different categories.

In the Best State category: **Uttar Pradesh has been awarded first prize**, followed by Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

In the Best District category: The 'Best District' awards for the north zone was bagged by **Muzaffarnagar** (Uttar Pradesh) and **Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar** (Punjab); For the south zone, it was **Thiruvananthapuram** (Kerala) and **Kadapa** (Andhra Pradesh);

For the east zone, **East Champaran (Bihar) and Godda (Jharkhand)** won the award;

**Indore** (Madhya Pradesh) and **Vadodara** (Gujarat) and **Banswara** (Rajasthan) won the awards in the west zone. **Goalpara** (Assam) and **Siang** (Arunachal Pradesh) won the awards for the northeast zone.

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF OSCAR AWARDS 2022



The 94th Academy Awards returned to the Dolby Theater in Hollywood as the top films from the last year were honoured by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

The show was hosted by Regina Hall, Amy Schumer and Wanda Sykes, the first time the award ceremony has had multiple hosts since **Anne Hathaway and James Franco co-hosted the 83rd instalment in 2011**.

The 94th Academy Awards are honouring the films released between January 1 and December 31, 2021.

The nominations were announced on February 8, by actors Tracee Ellis Ross and Leslie Jordan.

Netflix's **The Power of the Dog** leads the race with 12 nominations followed by sci-fi epic **Dune**, with 10 nods. Indian documentary **Writing With Fire** is also nominated for Best Documentary (Feature).

Awards will be presented across 23 categories, which are determined based on voting by members of the Academy.

This time, there are two new categories- Oscars Fan Favorite Award and Oscars Cheer Moment, which will be decided by fan voting, which was done online between February 14 and March 3, 2022.

*Check out the full list of winners*

Best Actor in a Leading Role: **Will Smith, "King Richard"**

Best Actress in a Leading Role: **Jessica Chastain (The Eyes of Tammy Faye)**

Best Picture: **CODA**

Best International Feature Film: **Drive My Car**

Documentary Short Subject: **The Queen of Basketball**

Best Directing: **Jane Campion (The Power of the Dog)**

Best Actress in a Supporting Role: **Ariana DeBose (West Side Story)**

Best Actor in a Supporting Role: **Troy Kotsur (CODA)**

## NILAMANI PHOOKAN AWARDED WITH JNANPITH AWARD

Assam Chief Minister, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma presented the country's highest literary award, the 56th Jnanpith for the year 2021 to one of the most celebrated poets of Assam, **Nilamani Phookan**.



**Nilmani Phookan is the third person to win the Jnanpith Award from Assam after Mamoni Roisom Goswami and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya**. The Award carried a Citation, a shawl, and Rs. 11 lakh.

The octogenarian was awarded the Padma Shri in 1990 and received the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship in 2002. He was selected as an 'Emeritus Fellow' for a period of two years by the Cultural Department, Govt. of India in 1998. Assam Sahitya Sabha also conferred 'Sahityacharya' honour to him.

The notable works of Phukan are 'Xurjya Henu Naami Aahe Ei Nodiyedi', 'Kabita' and 'Gulapi Jamur Lagna'.

**Notably:** Novelist Damodar Mauzo was chosen for the **57th Jnanpith Award 2022** for his contribution to Indian literature. The 77-year-old writer was conferred with the country's highest literary award for his "outstanding contribution to literature".

### 1ST LATA DEENANATH MANGESHKAR AWARD TO PM MODI



**Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will be honoured with the inaugural **Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award** which is instituted in the memory of the **veteran singer Lata Mangeshkar**.

PM Modi will receive the award for selfless service to the nation and society. The award ceremony will be held on April 24 which marks the 80th death anniversary of **Master Deenanath Mangeshkar (singing legend's father)**.

Among the other awardees will be singer **Rahul Desande**, who will receive the **Master Deenanath Award** besides three other special awardees including veteran actress **Asha Parekh**, actor **Jackie Shroff** and the **Mumbai Dabbawalas**, represented by **Nutan Tiffin Suppliers**.

### CHAMPIONS OF THE EARTH AWARD 2021



The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** has named **Sir David Attenborough**, English natural history broadcaster and naturalist, as the recipient of the **Champions of the Earth Award 2021** under the **Lifetime Achievement** category.

This award is given to him for his dedication to research, documentation, and **advocacy for the protection of nature and its restoration**.

**Sir David Attenborough** is well known for his innovative educational television programs, especially the nine-part **Life series** forming the **Life collection**.

His well-known documentaries include **The Green Planet** and **A Plastic Ocean**. **He was knighted twice by Queen Elizabeth II in 1985 and again in 2020**.

He has won **3 Emmy Awards** and **8 British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) awards**.

### UKRAINE'S PRESIDENT AWARDED JOHN F KENNEDY AWARD

The **John F. Kennedy Library Foundation**, for the first time ever, awarded the **John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award 2022** to five individuals.

The award will be presented by **Caroline Kennedy** and her son, **Jack Schlossberg** on **May 22, 2022, at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, USA**.



*These five individuals are:*

Ukrainian President: **Volodymyr Zelenskyy**

United States (US) Representative: **Liz Cheney**

Michigan Secretary of State: **Jocelyn Benson**

Arizona Representative: **Russell "Rusty" Bowers**

Fulton County, Georgia, elections worker: **Wandrea "Shaye" Moss**

**Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukrainian President** is named for his valour to protect the Ukrainian people during the **Russia-Ukraine Conflict**.



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# SPORTS

## AUSTRALIA WINS ICC CRICKET WOMEN'S WC



Australia beat England by 71 runs in the finals to claim their seventh Women's World Cup on April 03, 2022, at Hagley Oval in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Australia posted a record of 356 on the board. In reply, Nat Sciver waged a lone battle and remained unbeaten on 148 but it was not enough as England was bowled out for 285 in 43.4 overs.

Alyssa Healy of Australia scored 170 runs in the match, the highest individual score made by any cricketer, male or female, in the World Cup Final. She was also the leading run-scorer in the tournament with 509 runs.

The Player of the Tournament went to Alyssa Healy. Sophie Ecclestone of England was the leading wicket-taker in the tournament, with 21 dismissals.

The 2022 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup was the 12th edition of the Women's Cricket World Cup. The tournament was held in New Zealand from 4 March to 3 April 2022.

## AUSTRALIA TO HOST 2026 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The Victoria state of Australia will be hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games. During the games focus will also be given to boosting the economy of the region.

An exclusive negotiating period was granted to the capital of Victoria, Melbourne, to secure the hosting rights for the Commonwealth Games.

The Commonwealth Games are losing relevance, with four of the last five editions being held in Britain or Australia. To host the 2026 editions of the Games, no other nation expressed interest except Australia.



The 2026 Games will be spread across the cities of Bendigo, Geelong, Gippsland, and Ballarat thus a new multi-city model will be implemented.

Earlier editions of the Commonwealth Games in Australia: In 2018, Australia hosted the Games on the Gold Coast and the 2006 edition of the games was hosted in Melbourne.

2022 Edition of the Commonwealth Games: Birmingham, England will be hosting the 2022 edition of the games from 28th July to 8th Aug. Earlier, South Africa was supposed to host this year's edition but was stripped of hosting rights due to a lack of progress in their preparations.

### About Commonwealth Games

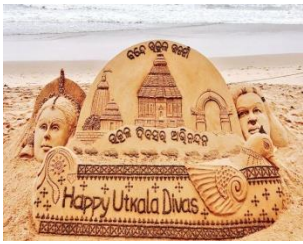
The Commonwealth Games are also referred to as the Friendly Games. It is an international multi-sport event that is held every four years and involves athletes participating from the Commonwealth of Nations. The first such games were held in 1930.





# DATES & DAYS

## UTKAL DIVAS OR ODISHA DAY: 1ST APRIL



**Utkal Divas or Utkala Dibasha or Odisha Day** is celebrated on April 1st every year to remember the formation of the Odisha state after a struggle to be recognised as an independent state.

The state was originally called Orissa but the **Lok Sabha passed the Orissa Bill, and Constitution Bill (113rd amendment)**, in March 2011 to rename it Odisha.

### *The History Behind Odisha Day*

History beckons that the present-day Odisha used to form a major portion of the ancient Kalinga. The **region witnessed the epic "Kalinga War"** led by King Ashoka who invaded and conquered the region in 260 BC.

Later, the state was invaded and taken over by the **Mughals till the British took over the administrative powers** of the region and divided it into small units in 1803.

The western and northern districts became a part of the state of Bengal while the coastal **region formed the basis of Bihar and Odisha (then known as Orissa)**.

After decades of struggle under the leadership of Odisha's eminent leaders, the new province came into existence on the 1st of April 1936. The state saw another facelift, now in terms of its name being changed from Orissa to Odisha.

### *More about Odisha:*

The earlier **capital city of Odisha was Cuttack** whereas the current capital city is Bhubaneswar. In terms of tribal population, Odisha is the 3rd state in the country. Various rulers ruled the state.

**More than 31% of the state has been covered with forests.** On 9 November 2010, the Parliament of India renamed Orissa as Odisha. The Oriya language was also retitled as Odia.

## WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY: 2ND APRIL

**World Autism Awareness Day** is observed annually on 2nd April by the member states of the United Nations.

The day is observed to raise awareness among its citizens about people with **Autism Spectrum Disorder** throughout the world.

**World Autism Awareness Day** is organized by the UN Department of Global Communications and UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with the support of civil society partners including the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, the Global Autism Project and the Specialisterne Foundation.



**The theme of the day:** The theme for 'World Autism Awareness Day 2022' is **"Inclusive Quality Education for All"**. Access to education that was made easy for years, especially for autistic persons was disrupted after 2020 with the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**History of the day:** The United Nations General Assembly designated a resolution (A/RES/62/139). The council passed **'World Autism Awareness Day'** on November 1, 2007, and adopted it on December 18, 2007.

The purpose was to highlight the need to help improve the quality of life of autistic people. The **very first World Autism Day** was observed in the year 2008 on April 2. **World Autism Day is one of only seven official health-specific UN Days.**

### *What is Autism?*

**Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD)**, refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviours, speech and nonverbal communication. Autism is a development disorder.

The disorder is characterized by difficulties with **social interaction and communication** which may also include restricted and repetitive behaviour.

The signs of Autism are often noticed by the parents of the child during the first three years. **These signs develop gradually.**

## NATIONAL MARITIME DAY OBSERVED ON 5TH APRIL

**National Maritime Day in India** is observed on 5 April every year. This year is the 59th edition of the National Maritime Day.

The **National Maritime Day** is celebrated every year to **illustrate the awareness** in supporting intercontinental commerce and the global economy as the most well-organized, safe and sound, environmentally responsive approach of transporting goods from one corner to another corner of the world.



On this day 'NMD Award of Excellence' is usually given during the celebrations and there is a trophy and citation, given to recognize and honour individuals for their lifetime distinguished and exceptional achievements

and performances in the Indian Maritime sector at a senior level.

The theme of the National Maritime Day is "**Sustainable Shipping beyond Covid-19**".

#### *History of National Maritime Day of India:*

National Maritime Day was first celebrated on April 5, 1964. The saga of Indian shipping first started on April 5, 1919, when the **SS Loyalty, the first ship of The Scindia Steam Navigation Company Ltd travelled from Mumbai to the United Kingdom (London).**

On this day an award called "**Varuna**" is conferred to those who made an outstanding **contribution to the Indian maritime sector.**

#### **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CONSCIENCE: 5TH APRIL**



The **United Nations General Assembly has designated 5 April** to be observed as an International Day of Conscience every year.

The resolution was **adopted on 31 July 2019 by the UN General Assembly.** The year 2022 marks the third edition of the celebrations.

This day serves to remind people to self-reflect, follow their conscience, and do the right things. This Day is observed every year on the 5th of April and the **first International Conscience Day was observed in 2020.**

**Importance of Conscience:** Conscience refers to a person's inner self that is abstract, a virtual entity, but it plays an important role in the actions of a person.

A human being cannot ignore the mystic side of his personality that usually becomes the chief motivator behind every action a person performs.

**Morality, ethics, and virtue are guided by conscience** and conscience stops people and nations from exploiting others. When conscience becomes inactive, people become materialistic, cruel, senseless, and scoundrels. Eventually, jungle law starts prevailing in the society which leads to the absolute damnation of society.

#### **INT. DAY OF SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT & PEACE**

The **International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP)** is observed globally on April 6. To raise awareness of this potential, 6 April was declared as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) by the UN General Assembly.



The adoption of this Day **signifies the increasing recognition by the UN** of the positive influence that sport can have on the advancement of human rights, and social and economic development.

Sport has the power to change the world; it is a fundamental right and a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and promote sustainable development and peace, as well as solidarity and respect for all.

#### *What is the theme of the day:*

The global theme of IDSDP 2022 is, "**Securing a Sustainable and Peaceful Future for All: The Contribution of Sport,**" which creates an opportunity for the Day's celebrations to promote the use of sport as a tool to advance human rights and sustainable development.

Under this theme, UN Headquarters in New York will recognize the role of sport in addressing the climate crisis and will highlight actions to lower greenhouse gas emissions and **mitigate against climate change.**

#### **WORLD HEALTH DAY: 7TH APRIL**

Annually on the **7th of April World Health Day** is observed across the globe. This day is celebrated with the aim of discussing health-related issues and also draws attention to specific health issues from across the world.



On **22nd July 1949, the first World Health Day was celebrated.** The date was later changed to 7th April with the aim of increasing student participation.

61 countries had signed the agreement for the implementation of the **World Health Organization on 7th April 1948**.

In 1950, the first World Health Day was observed after it was decided that 7th April will be the designated date to celebrate this day in **commemoration of the creation of the World Health Organization**. Hence, this day also marks the anniversary of WHO.

**Significance of this day:** The aim of celebrating this day is to raise awareness among the public about ongoing health issues across the world. This day is also used as an opportunity to generate and spread awareness about the well-being and overall health of people.

**The theme for this year: "Our Planet, Our Health"** is the theme for this year's World Health Day.

Through this theme, the World Health Organization is aiming to focus on the actions that are needed to keep the humans as well as the planet healthy.

## WORLD HOMEOPATHY DAY OBSERVED ON 10TH APRIL



**World Homeopathy Day** is observed every year on April 10 to spread awareness about homeopathy and its contribution to the world of medicine.

The day is also celebrated to commemorate the **birth anniversary of Dr Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann**. Hahnemann, born in Paris in 1755, founded this branch of medicine and is considered the father of Homeopathy.

**The theme of the day:** This year, the theme for World Homeopathy Day 2022 in India is **'People's Choice For Wellness.'** The theme, like every year, is decided by the Ministry of AYUSH.

On this day, a documentary made on Homeopathy, its benefits, and its contribution to medicine, will be released.

**Significance:** The day signifies the strong and stable grounds this branch stands on, due to which, the branch still enjoys substantial trust among the masses, despite being flooded with questions and doubts, **especially by the allopathic community**.

The day, **observed on the birth anniversary of the father of Homeopathy**, is aimed at raising awareness among people about the benefits of what is touted as the pseudoscientific system of alternative medicine.

## AMBEDKAR JAYANTI CELEBRATED ON 14TH APRIL

**Ambedkar Jayanti (also known as Bhim Jayanti)** is celebrated on 14 April to commemorate the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar.



The Day has been observed as an official public holiday throughout India since 2015. In 2022, we are **marking the 131st birth anniversary of Babasaheb**.

**Dr Ambedkar is known as the Father (chief architect) of the Indian Constitution.** He was the first Law and Justice Minister of the country after the independence.

Dr Bhim has been bestowed with the country's highest civilian honour, Bharat Ratna in 1990 posthumously.

### Significant Contributions Of Dr B R Ambedkar:

The **contributions of Dr B R Ambedkar have been significant**. He fought for protecting the rights of the Dalit community through organising several events. The notable events include Equality Janta, Mook Nayaka, etc.

The Congress Government had invited him to become the **first Law Minister when the country was freed from the British administration** on 15 August 1947.

He was deputed as a **Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee** on 29 August 1947. He crafted the new constitution for the country.

The Constituent Assembly had adopted the new constitution on 26 November 1949.

His contributions have been enormous in establishing the **Central Bank of India, which is the Reserve Bank of India**, as he was an economist.

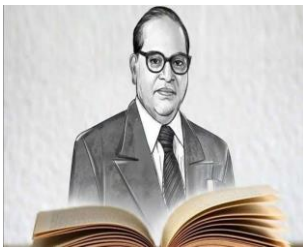
He authored three books: **"The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and its Solution," "Administration and Finance of East India Company,"** and **"The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India."**

Since he was an economist, Dr B R Ambedkar played a vital role in comprehending the Indian economy. People were motivated by him for the growth of the agricultural sector and industrial activities. He **also motivated people for better education and community health**.

The Dalit Buddhist Movement was inspired by him.



## BR AMBEDKAR BIRTH ANNIVERSARY AS 'EQUALITY DAY'



Tamil Nadu celebrated 14th April 2022, the birth anniversary of Dr. BR Ambedkar as 'Equality Day' from this year onwards. A pledge was also taken across the state on this day.

The pledge was taken in all government offices across the state. The **pledge's crux was upholding and following equality** and the oath against caste discrimination was taken.

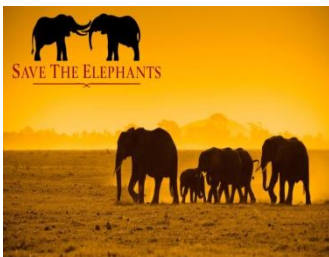
Selected works of Dr. Ambedkar will also be translated and published in Tamil. Social justice's goal is to achieve equality. MK Stalin also announced that the state government will take quick action on any policies that are aimed toward the growth of all Tamilians of the state.

In an **Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department meeting** the representation was made to declare the birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar as Equality Day.

On 13th April 2022, **MK Stalin, the chief minister of Tamil Nadu** announced the decision of celebrating **Equality Day annually on 14th April**.

**Social Justice Day:** The birth anniversary of Periyar on 17th September has already been declared the **Social Justice Day** by the government of Tamil Nadu.

## SAVE THE ELEPHANT DAY: APRIL 16TH



**Save the Elephant Day** is celebrated on **April 16** every year to raise awareness about the dangers elephants face and the various difficulties they have to overcome to live.

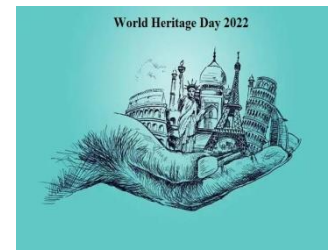
Save The Elephant Day aims to change this **alarming trend by educating people about elephants and the plights they face**, encouraging everyone to do their bit and helping save them from extinction.

The Day is established by the Thailand-based Elephant Reintroduction Foundation, to spread awareness among the general people about the significance and consequences of their actions, or inactions on the future of elephants.

**According to WWF data**, at present, the population of Pachyderms in India is around 20,000 to 25,000.

## UNITED NATIONS COMMEMORATES WORLD HERITAGE DAY

Every year on April 18, the **United Nations commemorates World Heritage Day**. The Day is observed to preserve human heritage and recognize the efforts of the organizations working for it.



Monuments and ancient buildings are an asset to the world. They make for the rich heritage of the nation.

Since 1983, the **International Council on Monuments and Sites** has set a theme around which events are centred on the day. The theme for **World Heritage Day 2022** is "**Heritage and Climate**".

### History of the day:

The **International Day for Monuments and Sites** was proposed by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on 18 April 1982 and approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.

The aim is to promote awareness about the diversity of cultural heritage of humanity, their vulnerability and the efforts required for their protection and conservation.

Later in 1983, **UNESCO adopted the idea during the 22nd General Conference**. In order to restore and conserve historical cities, and dying ancient tribes, World Heritage Day is being observed. The day also sheds light on history.

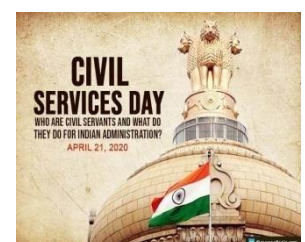
### World Heritage Sites in India

India is home to a total of 3691 monuments and sites. Of these 40 are designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including places like the **Taj Mahal, Ajanta Caves and Ellora Caves**.

World Heritage Sites also include natural sites like the **Kaziranga National Park in Assam**.

## NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICES DAY: 21ST APRIL

On the **21st of April every year, National Civil Services Day** is observed to acknowledge the work of all the officers across the country who are engaged in various public service departments.



This day also acts as a reminder to the civil servants to run the administration of the nation with the dedication to serving the citizens.

This date was chosen to commemorate the day when **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Independent India's first Home Minister**, in 1947 addressed the probationers of Administrative Services Officers at Delhi's Metcalf House in Delhi.

Civil servants were referred to as the 'steel frame of India' by him as they act as the supporting pillars of the country's administrative system.

On 21 April 2006, the **first such function was held in New Delhi's Vigyan Bhawan** and since then this day has been celebrated as National Civil Service Day.

Father of Indian Civil Service title has been given to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

*About the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration*

On the **Civil Services Day**, this award is awarded to the districts/implementing units for innovation categories and priority programme implementation.

These awards bring together the civil workers from across the nation to learn about the best practices in the **field of public grievances that are being implemented across India** and also to connect among them.

## WORLD BOOK & COPYRIGHT DAY: 23RD APRIL

Every year on April 23, **World Book and Copyright Day is observed to promote the love of reading**. April 23 is significant in world literature because it **commemorates the death on this date of prominent writers such as Miguel de Cervantes and William Shakespeare**.

*23rd April 2022 World Book And Copyright Day Importance:*

This date was an obvious option for UNESCO's **General Conference**, which was convened in Paris in 1995, to pay a worldwide tribute to books and authors on this day, urging everyone to read.

**Books have long symbolised humanity's ability to conjure up worlds**, both real and imagined, and to give voice to the diversity of human experience.

They provide far-reaching kinds of conversation between individuals beyond distance and time by allowing us to share ideas, receive information, and inspire admiration for diverse cultures.

**Guadalajara, Mexico, will be the World Book Capital in 2022**, with a year-long programme focusing on the role of books and reading in inspiring social change, combating violence, and cultivating a culture of peace.

On World Book and Copyright Day, UNESCO encourages its partners to spread the message that **books can help people address current issues, grasp political and economic realities, and battle inequities and disinformation**.

## EARTH DAY OBSERVED ON 22ND APRIL

On 22nd April 2022, the 52nd anniversary of Earth Day was celebrated. **Earth Day is an international event celebrated around the world to pledge support for environmental protection**.



The theme for Earth Day 2022 is **"Invest In our Planet"**.

**Earth Day was first observed in 1970** when 20 million took to the streets to protest environmental degradation on the call of **US Senator Gaylord Nelson**.

**The event was triggered by the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill, as well as other issues such as smog and polluted rivers**.

In 2009, the United Nations designated 22nd April as **'International Mother Earth Day'**.

It recognizes a collective responsibility, as called for in the **1992 Rio Declaration (Earth Summit)**, to promote harmony with nature and the Earth to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations of humanity.

**The landmark Paris Agreement, which brings almost 200 countries together in setting a common target to reduce global greenhouse emissions**, was also signed on Earth Day 2016.

*What are some Other Important Days?*

22nd March: **World Water Day**

22nd April: **Earth Day**

22nd May: **World Biodiversity Day**

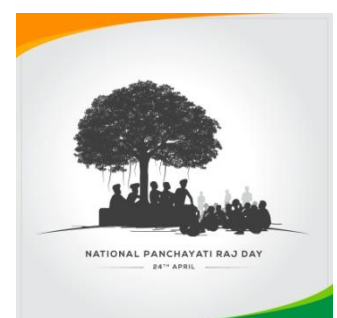
5th June: **World Environment Day**

**Earth Overshoot Day**

## 12TH NATIONAL PANCHAYATI RAJ DAY

India commemorates the **12th National Panchayati Raj day on 24th April 2022**.

The Prime Minister has launched the distribution of e-property cards under the **SWAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas)** scheme on the Day.



The first National Panchayati Raj Day was celebrated in 2010. Since then, the National Panchayati Raj Day is celebrated on 24th April every year in India.

The day marks the enactment of the 73rd amendment of the constitution in 1992.

Awards Presented on the Day:

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been awarding the best performing Panchayats/States/UTs across the country in recognition of their good work.

Awards are given under various categories namely, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar, Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar, Child-friendly Gram Panchayat Award, Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award and e-Panchayat Puraskar (given to States/UTs only).

*What are the Salient Features of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment*

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment added Part IX titled "The Panchayats" to the Constitution. Basic unit of democratic system-Gram Sabhas (villages) comprising all the adult members registered as voters.

Three-tier system of panchayats at village, intermediate block/taluk/mandal and district levels except in States with population is below 20 lakhs (Article 243B). Seats at all levels to be filled by direct elections (Article 243C (2)).

## INT. DAY OF MULTILATERALISM & DIPLOMACY



On December 12, 2018, the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace was established.

To promote and maintain the UN's three pillars of peace and security, development, and human rights, it is critical to preserve the values of multilateralism and international cooperation that underpin the UN Charter and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

To address the rising challenges of protectionism and isolationism, the international norms and rules-based system that have guided states for seven decades must rise to the occasion.

Climate change, geopolitical conflicts, humanitarian and migration crises are global concerns that cut beyond states' beliefs and interests, necessitating collective attention and action.

The political and socio economic landscape, as well as inter-state interactions, have all been influenced by technological growth.

## WORLD MALARIA DAY OBSERVED ON 25TH APRIL

Annually on the 25th of April World Malaria Day is observed across the world to highlight the need for sustained political commitment and continued investment so as to prevent and control malaria across the world.



The World Health Organization has continuously highlighted the need for and also called for innovations and investments to bring in new vector control approaches, antimalarial medicines, diagnostics, and other tools that will help in fighting against malaria.

**The theme of World Malaria Day 2022:** The theme for this year's world malaria day is "Harness innovation to reduce the malaria disease burden and save lives."

### History of this day

In 2007, WHO got the idea of observing this day from Africa Malaria Day, which has been observed by the African government since 2001.

At the WHO-sponsored World Health Assembly's 60th session it was proposed to change the Africa Malaria day to World Malaria Day. This was done with the aim of generating greater awareness regarding the fight against malaria.

## WORLD IMMUNIZATION WEEK 2022

Recently, World Immunization Week 2022 was celebrated from 24th to 30th April 2022.

The theme of 2022 is Long Life for All and it aims to unify people around the idea that vaccines make it possible for us to follow our dreams, protect our loved ones and live a long, healthy life.



### What is World Immunization Week?

World Immunization Week is a health campaign coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and celebrated in the last week of April, every year.



It aims to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease. Immunization saves millions of lives and is widely recognized as one of the world's most successful and cost-effective health interventions.

Yet, there are still nearly 20 million unvaccinated and under-vaccinated children in the world today.

#### *Why Does Immunization Matter Now More Than Ever?*

For over 200 years, vaccines have protected us against diseases that threaten lives and prohibit our development.

For more than two centuries, vaccines have helped keep people healthy – from the very first vaccine developed to protect against smallpox to the newest vaccines used to prevent severe cases of Covid-19.

#### **WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DAY: 26TH APRIL**

Every year on the 26th of April, World Intellectual Property Day is observed across the globe. This day is celebrated with the aim of raising awareness regarding the impact of how copyright, patents, designs, and trademarks affect our day-to-day life.

**Intellectual property (IP) rights** are used to encourage creativity and innovation in societies across the world.

The day looks to find the potential of the world's younger generation to find a better solution for the transition to a future that is sustainable.



#### *About Intellectual properties*

**Intellectual Properties refer to the creations of the mind** and they can be in many fields like literary, inventions, artistic works, symbols, designs, images, and names. IP is a type of non-physical asset that is owned by an individual or a company.

#### *The theme of 2022 World Intellectual Property Day*

'IP and Youth innovating for a better future' is the theme of this year's World Intellectual Property Day. The theme is focusing on the positive changes that are being brought by young minds via energy, innovation, and creativity.

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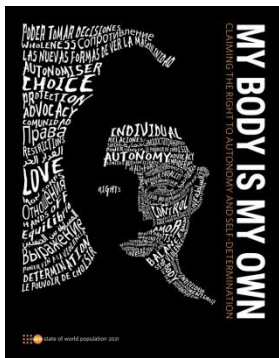


# REPORT & INDEXES

## STATE OF WORLD POPULATION REPORT 2022

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) publishes the State of World Population (SoWP) report annually. The 2022 version of this report has been released recently.

The recently released State of World Population Report 2022 has been titled "Seeing the Unseen: The case for action in the neglected crisis of unintended pregnancy."



### Findings related to unintended pregnancies

Between the years 2015 to 2019, there was a rise in unintended pregnancies which numbered around 121 million across the globe annually.

### Findings related to lack of contraception

There was a lack of modern and safe methods of contraception and across the globe, around 257 million women are not using such methods of contraception to avoid pregnancies.

During the first 12 months of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a disruption in contraceptive supplies due to which around 1.4 million unintended pregnancies were reported.

### Findings related to rape-related pregnancies

The report states that there has been a rise in rape-related pregnancies. Among women who have experienced partner violence contraceptive use is 53 percent lower. There is more chance of pregnancies occurring due to rape than consensual sex.

### Findings related to abortions

A rise in abortion has been noticed with more than 60 percent of pregnancies that are unintended, and around 30 percent of all pregnancies, ending in abortion.

Across the globe, 45 percent of all abortions performed were unsafe. USD 553 million per year in treatment costs is the cost of unsafe abortion in developing countries.

### About United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

In 1967, UNFPA was established. It is a sexual and reproductive health agency of the United Nations. In 1969, the UNFPA became operational and it works as a subsidiary under the UN General Assembly.

Its earlier name was United Nations Fund for Population Activities and in 1987 it was renamed as United Nations Population Fund but retained the abbreviation 'UNFPA.'

## DHAKA HAS BEEN RANKED MOST NOISE POLLUTED CITY

Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, has been ranked as the most noise polluted city globally, according to the recent 'Annual Frontier Report, 2022' published by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).



As per the report, the city recorded noise pollution of 119 decibels at its highest (dB) in 2021.

Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad came second in the list with noise pollution of 114 decibels. Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan is third, with maximum noise pollution of 105 dB.

The quietest cities in the world as per the report are Irbrid at 60 dB, Lyon at 69 dB, Madrid at 69 dB, Stockholm at 70 dB, and Belgrade at 70 dB.

The other four most noise polluted cities in India in the list are Kolkata (89 dB), Asansol (89 dB), Jaipur (84 dB), and Delhi (83 dB).

A total of 61 cities from around the world have been ranked in the report, out of which 13 cities are from South Asia, while 5 among them are from India.

### Guidelines of WHO:

The WHO guidelines state that sounds with a frequency of over 70 dB are considered harmful to health. For residential areas, the sound limit of 55-dB is standard, while for traffic and business sectors, this limit is 70 dB.

## NITI AAYOG'S STATE ENERGY & CLIMATE INDEX

The State Energy and Climate Index (SECI) has been launched by NITI Aayog. It is a first-of-its-kind index that

aims to track the efforts made in the **energy and climate sector by the states and UTs of India.**



This index's parameters have been devised while keeping in mind the country's goals regarding clean energy transition and climate change.

This index has ranked the states and the UTs of India based on the efforts they have put towards improving energy consumption, energy access, safeguarding the environment, and energy efficiency.

This index has also helped to move toward the agenda of the **accessible, affordable, clean, and efficient energy transition at the State level.**

This index has also encouraged healthy competition among the states and UTs of the nation in different fields of climate and energy.

#### *Parameters of the Index*

*Six parameters have been used by this index that are:*

Access Affordability and Reliability of Energy  
Discoms' (Power distribution companies) Performance  
Energy Efficiency  
Clean Energy Initiatives  
New Initiatives  
Environmental Sustainability

**These parameters have been further divided into 27 indicators.** Based on SECI Round I's composite score the states and UTs of the country have been ranked as smaller states, larger states, and UTs, based on geographical differences and size.

The States and the UTs have been categorized into three groups i.e. Achievers, Front Runners, and Aspirants.

#### *Top 3 performers among the larger states*

Gujarat  
Kerala  
Punjab

#### *Top 3 performers among the smaller states*

Goa  
Tripura  
Manipur

#### *Top 3 performers among UTs*

Chandigarh  
Delhi  
Daman & Diu/Dadra & Nagar Haveli

## US REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDIA 2021

Recently, the **US State Department** released a strong and critical report on **human rights in India in 2021.**

The report is submitted each year to the US Congress which is retrospective and contains a country-wise discussion of the state of internationally recognised **individual, civil, political and worker rights**, as set forth in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and other international agreements.



In December 2021, data related to human rights violations in states was provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs in Rajya sabha.

#### *What are the Key Highlights of the Report?*

**Arbitrary Arrest and Detention:** Indian law **"prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention but both occurred during the year"**, with police using "special security laws to postpone judicial reviews of arrests".

Pretrial detention was arbitrary and lengthy, sometimes exceeding the duration of the sentence given to those convicted.

**Violations of Privacy:** Citing media reports on journalists being targeted for surveillance through the Pegasus malware, the report flagged violations of privacy by government authorities, **"including the use of technology to arbitrarily or unlawfully surveil or interfere with the privacy of individuals"**.

**Curbs on Free Expression and Media:** The report highlighted instances in which the government or actors considered close to the government allegedly pressured or harassed media outlets critical of the government, **including through online trolling.**

It detailed the government's order of February, 2021 **directing Twitter to block accounts of journalists** covering protests against the three (later repealed) farm laws.

**On Freedom of Association:** The report highlighted the cases of Amnesty International India, whose assets were frozen by the Enforcement Directorate, and the suspension of the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) license of Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)** for alleged violations.



## REPORT ON STATE OF INDIA'S CHILDREN



The latest report on the **State of India's Children: Status and Trends in Multidimensional Child Development** will be jointly developed and **launched by NITI Aayog and UNICEF India.**

This was determined when the two organisations **signed a Statement of Intent (SoI)**, reiterating their joint commitment to achieving children's rights in India.

The report will create frameworks for understanding **health and nutrition, education, water and sanitation, household living standards**, and a child-friendly environment across states.

This endeavour will contribute to India's commitments to the 2030 Agenda by providing a set of **policy suggestions for concerted action in terms of speeding progress toward the SDGs** and ensuring holistic development for all children.

One in every third person in India is a juvenile under the age of 18, while one in every fifth person is an adolescent between the ages of 10 and 19.

The **NITI Aayog and UNICEF India** collaboration will develop the methods, technical analysis, reporting, and action planning for the **first report on the 'State of India's Children,' focusing on multidimensional aspects of child development** such as health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, protection, and other relevant issues.

This project will take a whole-of-society approach, incorporating all stakeholders, including Union Ministries, State Governments, Academia, Civil Society Organisations, child rights and civil rights groups.

## SIPRI REPORT ON WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURE

A report by the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** on World Military Expenditure stated that India was the world's third-highest military spender behind the US and China.



The global defence expenditure in 2021 reached an all-time high and stood at USD 2.1 trillion despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Top 5 military spenders*

According to the **SIPRI data**, the top five military spenders in the world are:

The United States  
China  
India  
The United Kingdom  
Russia

### *Military spending of India*

According to the **data released by SIPRI**, the military spending of India stood at USD 76.6 billion in 2021, which is a 0.9 percent increase from 2020 and a 33 percent increase from 2012.

India is facing ongoing border tensions and **disputes with Pakistan and China that occasionally cause armed conflicts.** Hence, India is constantly modernizing its armed forces and is increasing its self-reliance in the production of armaments.

### *Military spending across the world*

In 2021, the US accounted for 38 percent of the world's military spending. China accounts for around 14 percent and the UK has moved up two ranks as it spent USD 68.4 billion.

According to the report, China's military spending has increased for the 27th year in a row. The **growing assertiveness of China in the region of the East and South China seas** has become a major military spending driver in countries such as Japan and Australia.

Russia also witnessed an increase in its military expenditure for the third year in a row.

There was a decline in Russia's military expenditure between 2016 to 2019 due to sanctions that were **imposed by the West in response to the annexation of Crimea by Russia.** In 2021, high gas and oil revenues helped the country to boost its military spending.

## REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Recently, the **US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)** has recommended for the second year in the row to put India on a list (Countries of Particular Concern or CPCs) for the worst violations of religious freedoms in 2021.

Earlier, the US State Department released a strong and critical report on human rights in India in 2021.

*What is USCIRF?*



USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan US federal government commission, dedicated to defending the universal right to freedom of religion or belief abroad.

It is an **advisory body to the US Congress**. USCIRF's **2022 Annual Report** provides recommendations to enhance the U.S. government's promotion of freedom of religion or belief abroad.

It is **headquartered in Washington DC**. Established by the US government in 1998 after the inaction of the International Religious Freedom Act, recommendations of USCIRF are non-binding on the state department.

Traditionally, India does not recognize the view of USCIRF.

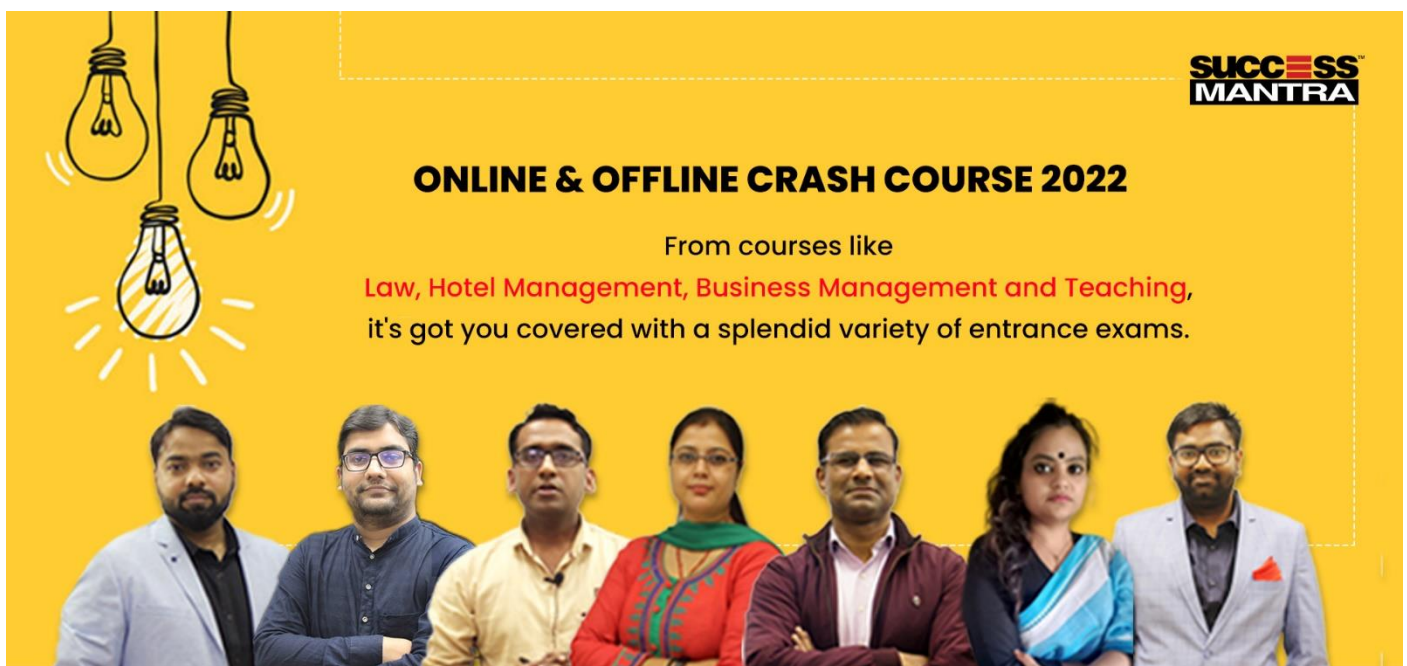
*What are the Key Highlights of the Report?*

*The Report's primary focus is on two groups of countries:*

**Country of Particular Concern (CPC):** It is a designation by the US Secretary of State of a nation engaged in severe violations of religious freedom under IRFA (International Religious Freedom Act of 1998).

**Special Watch List:** A "Special Watch List" country is one that is deemed not to meet all the CPC criteria but engages in or tolerates severe violations of religious freedom.

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# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## NASA & SPACE-X CREW-4 MISSION



SpaceX and NASA are gearing up to launch astronauts to the **International Space Station (ISS)** as part of the Commercial Crew Program of NASA. This will be the fourth crew rotation mission and will be carrying an international crew consisting of four astronauts on a science expedition to the ISS.

This mission will be **launched on 20th April from NASA's Kennedy Space Center's Launch Complex 39A**. The Kennedy Space Center is located in Florida.

The crew that will be sent aboard the ISS will be spending several months conducting various maintenance and science aboard the orbiting space station. The **astronauts will be returning to Earth in the fall of 2022**.

The crew will be riding on a new Crew Dragon spacecraft and will be launched on a Falcon 9 booster.

As a tradition of naming a new capsule by the first riding astronauts, the crew chose the name "**Freedom**" to **celebrate the fundamental human right**.

After docking at the space station, the Crew-4 astronauts will be welcomed by Expedition 67's seven-member crew. Several days after **Crew-4's arrival the astronauts of the Crew-3 mission** will be undocking from the ISS and will splash down off Florida's coast.

## CHINA'S NEW EARTH OBSERVATION SATELLITE



China has launched a **new Earth observation satellite** on 7th April 2022. This satellite will become a part of the country's land-sea radar satellite constellation.

It will capture images to help **China safeguard its maritime interests**.

The satellite has been named Gaofen-3 03. It was from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre with the **use of a Long March-4C rocket**.

The satellite has been successfully inserted into the planned orbit. This newly launched satellite will be

networked with the already **orbiting Gaofen-3 and Gaofen-3 02 satellites**.

These 3 satellites will form a land-sea radar satellite constellation and will be capturing stable, reliable, **synthetic aperture radar (SAR) images**.

### About SAR Images

A lot of SAR images are captured by **Earth Observation (EO) satellites** every day. SAR images have the capabilities to process images during all-weather operations.

The images produced have a high spatial resolution. These images boast a 1-meter resolution thus, improving China's monitoring capabilities.

## DRDO FLIGHT TESTED 'SOLID FUEL DUCTED RAMJET'

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested the "**Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet**" (SFDR) booster off the coast of Odisha at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur.



All of the **mission's goals were met throughout the test**. The missile's SFDR-based propulsion can intercept aerial threats at supersonic speeds over extended distances. It has an estimated range of 350 kilometers, which is exceptionally long.

The **missile's SFDR-based propulsion** can intercept aerial threats at supersonic speeds over extended distances. Data from various range instruments, including **Telemetry, Radar, and Electro-Optical Tracking Systems installed by ITR**, has corroborated the system's performance.

Defense Research and Development Laboratory, Hyderabad, developed the SFDR in partnership with other DRDO institutes such as Research Centre Imarat, Hyderabad, and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, Pune.

## PINAKA MK- 1 ENHANCED ROCKET SYSTEM

The **Defence Research and Development Organisation** and Indian Army successfully flight-tested a new version of the **Pinaka rocket system** at the Pokhran firing ranges.



These included **Pinaka Mk-I (Enhanced) Rocket System (EPRS)** and Pinaka Area Denial Munition (ADM) rocket systems.



With these trials, the initial phase of technology absorption of EPRS by the industry has successfully been completed and the industry partners are ready for user trials/series production of the rocket system.

The Pinaka rocket system has been developed by DRDO lab- **Armament Research and Development Establishment, Pune** in collaboration with High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, Pune.

#### *About the EPRS system:*

The EPRS is the upgraded version of the Pinaka variant, which has been in service with the Indian Army for the last decade. The system has been upgraded with advanced technologies enhancing the range to meet the emerging requirements.

After establishing the performance efficacy of the enhanced range version of Pinaka, the technology was transferred to the industries viz. **Munitions India Limited (MIL)** and **Economic Explosives Limited Nagpur**.

Rockets manufactured by **MIL under Transfer of Technology from DRDO** were flight tested during this campaign. Different variants of munitions and fuzes which can be used in the Pinaka rocket system were also successfully test evaluated in the Pokhran Field Firing Range.

### HELINA: ANTI-TANK GUIDED MISSILE

**Helina, the Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM)** which is the Nag missile's helicopter-launched version was again tested on 12th April 2022.

The testing was conducted in the **country's northern high-altitude mountain regions** after it was successfully tested on 11th April 2022 in Pokhran's desert region.

The test was conducted as part of the ongoing user validation trials of this **missile's third-generation 'fire-and-forget' class missile**.

This missile has been developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**.

During testing, a simulated tank target was engaged accurately by the missile. **Scientists of DRDO along with senior Army Commanders witnessed the test.**

This missile has been developed to be integrated with choppers in both the Air Force and the Army. Dhruvastra is the name that is sometimes used to refer to the Air Force version of this missile.

### ISRAEL SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRED MISSILE DEFENCE SYSTEM

Israel successfully tested a **new laser missile-defence system 'Iron Beam'** which can destroy any airborne object including drones.

Iron Beam is the **world's first energy-based weapons** system that uses a laser beam to shoot down incoming UAVs, rockets, mortars, long-range missiles, anti-tank missiles etc.



The **Iron Beam** which is developed by the **Rafael Advanced Defense Systems** is using a directed-energy weapon system and can go a long way in providing aerial defence.

Iron Beam works on a fibre laser system to destroy any airborne object. The Iron Dome defense system has been a great success, with a **90% interception rate against incoming rocket fire**.

### NEPTUNE: UKRAINE ANTI-SHIP CRUISE MISSILE

**Neptune** is the name of a **Ukrainian anti-ship cruise missile** that was developed by the Luch Design Bureau. The design of this missile is based on the Soviet Kh-35 anti-ship missile. Compared to the Kh-35 it has improved electronics and range.

This missile system has been developed to destroy transport vessels and surface warships. This **missile system entered the service of the Ukrainian Navy in March 2021**.



#### *Development of the missile*

In the Weapons and Security 2015 exhibition that was held in Kyiv, this missile was first revealed. This **cruise missile's first flight samples** were manufactured in 2016's second quarter.

The production of the advanced missile systems was developed in collaboration with other Ukrainian enterprises like Kharkiv State Aircraft Manufacturing Company, Artem Luch GAhK, Pivdenne YuMZ PivdenMash, Motor Sich (MS-400 turbofan engine),

Vyshneve ZhMZ Vizar Kyiv, Radionics (seeker), Lviv LORTA and other radar electronics, Arsenal SDP SE (navigation system), etc.

**MoU with Indonesia:** In April 2019, the missile was again successfully tested. In 2020, an MoU was signed by Ukraine with Indonesia to supply a number of Neptune missiles, thus **Indonesia became the first foreign buyer of this missile.**

On 13th April 2022, the **Russian cruiser Moskva was hit by two Neptune missiles** during the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

## SARMAT: RUSSIA'S INTER-CONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE



Amidst harsh sanctions imposed by the West due to the Ukraine invasion, Russia has tested its **new Inter Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) Sarmat** on 20th April 2022.

This was **ICBM Sarmat's first test launch after the launch was in 2021.** The test was earlier pushed to December 2021 and then later to April 2022.

The ICBM was from Plesetsk in Russia's North-West. The target was set in the Kamchatka peninsula which is around 6,000 km away.

### About the missile

The **RS-28 Sarmat** whose **NATO name is Satan-II** is able to carry a minimum of ten decoys and warheads. It has the capability of firing over either pole of the earth and has a range of 11,000 to 18,000 km.

This missile will also be posing a challenge to the western powers' ground-and-satellite-based radar tracking systems.

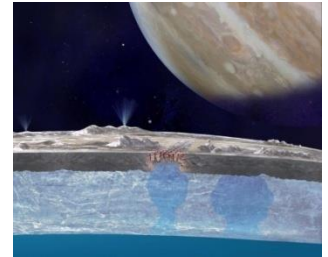
The **Sarmat will be Russia's first ICBM** that can carry smaller hypersonic boost-glide vehicles. These are hard to intercept as they are manoeuvrable. This ICBM is much more lethal than the **R-36M Voyevoda ICBMs (NATO name Satan)** as it has upgraded guidance systems, electronic countermeasures, and alternative warhead carrying capacity.

## WHAT IS JUPITER'S MOON EUROPA?

**A team of researchers from Stanford University have found the possibility of water on one of Jupiter's moons Europa, a prime candidate for life in the solar system.**

Earlier, NASA's Dawn spacecraft, dwarf planet Ceres, reportedly found salty water underground.

Earlier, Scientists also found signatures of water vapor in the atmosphere of K2-18b.



### What is Europa?

**Europa is slightly smaller than Earth's moon and its diameter is about one-quarter that of the Earth.** Even though Europa has a very thin oxygen atmosphere, **it is considered one of the most promising places in the solar system to find present-day environments** that are suitable for life beyond the Earth.

**It is also believed that underneath Europa's icy surface the amount of water is twice that on Earth.**

**NASA is expected to launch its Europa Clipper in 2024.** The module will orbit Jupiter and conduct multiple close flybys to Europa to gather data on the moon's atmosphere, surface and its interior.



# MISCELLANEOUS

## MINISTRY OF CULTURE LAUNCHED 'TEMPLE 360' SITE

The Minister of State for Culture and External Affairs, Meenakshi Lekhi has **launched a website 'Temple 360'**.



During an event organized by the Ministry of Culture at IGNCA Amphitheatre, **Indira Gandhi National Centre of Arts, New Delhi** under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

**About the Temple 360:** Temple 360 is a digital platform where anyone can visit or **do darshan of 12 Jyotirlinga and Char Dham** from any location, making everyone's life convenient while also keeping people connected.

The website also allows a devotee to **perform e-Darshan, e-Prashad, e-Aarti and several other services**. Temple 360 is a website where one can visit a temple of their choice, anytime and from anywhere from India.

With the help of this website, one can digitally witness the magnificence of some of the **most pious Hindu pilgrimages that exist**. The website also allows a devotee to perform e-aarti and several other services.

## INDIA & FRANCE NAVAL EXERCISE 'VARUNA'



The **20th edition of the bilateral naval exercise that is named 'Varuna'** is being conducted by India and France in the Arabian Sea from 30th March till 3rd April 2022.

In this exercise, various units of the two navies which include **submarines, ships, fighter aircraft, maritime patrol aircraft**, and helicopters are participating.

### Why is this exercise conducted?

This exercise is conducted so that the participating units can sharpen and **enhance their operational skills in the maritime sector**.

The participating units also look to improve their interoperability so that they can undertake various maritime security operations. The units also demonstrate their commitment, **as an integrated force, to the promotion of the region's security, peace, and stability**.

### History of this exercise

In 1993, these bilateral naval exercises between the Navies of the two countries were first initiated. In 2001, **the name of the exercise was christened 'Varuna'** and it has become an important part of the bilateral strategic relationship between India and France.

### The objective of the exercise

The scope of this exercise has grown over the years. These exercises provide the navies of both nations with various opportunities to get the best possible practices from each other.

This exercise plays the role of the significant driver for interactions at the **operational level between the navies of India and France**. Also, this exercise has highlighted the shared commitment of both countries to the safety, security, and freedom of the global maritime sector.

## IONS MARITIME EXERCISE (IMEX-2022)

From 26th to 30th March 2022, the maiden edition of the **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Maritime Exercise 2022 (IMEX-22)** was conducted in the Arabian Sea and at Goa.

This exercise was conducted with the aim of enhancing the interoperability of the participating nations in the area of **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations**.



Out of the 24-member nations of IONS, 15 took part in this exercise.

### Phases of the exercise

This exercise consisted of a **Harbour Phase that was conducted at the Mormugao port in Goa from 26th to 27th March**. This was followed by a Sea Phase that was conducted at the Arabian Sea from 28th to 30th March.

**Participants of this exercise:** The Navies of India, Australia, France, Bangladesh, Maldives, Indonesia, Mozambique, Mauritius, Qatar, Oman, Sri Lanka, Singapore, UAE, Thailand, and the UK participated in this exercise.

The IONS HADR guidelines were validated and response mechanisms were developed under this exercise for providing HADR from the sea to the shore.



Ways for rendering assistance to ships in distress were also practiced.

### *About Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)*

IONS was established in 2007 and the first symposium was held in 2008. It is a forum for collaboration as well as cooperation among the navies of the **Indian Ocean Region's littoral countries**.

This forum promotes friendly relationships and also looks to improve maritime security.

**Member States:** India, Bangladesh, Maldives, Seychelles, Pakistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Oman, France, UAE, Mauritius, Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique, Eritrea, Tanzania, Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Myanmar, Timor Leste, and Thailand are the member of IONS.

### MUMBAI & HYDERABAD AS 2021 TREE CITY OF THE WORLD



The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and Arbor Day Foundation have jointly recognised **Mumbai and Hyderabad** as the '2021 Tree City of the World'.

The two Indian cities have won the recognition for their **"commitment to growing and maintaining urban trees and greenery in building healthy, resilient and happy cities"**.

It must be noted that Hyderabad has been recognised for a second consecutive year. In 2021, Hyderabad was the only city in India to be **recognised as a '2020 Tree City of the World'**.

Apart from **Hyderabad and Mumbai 136 other cities from 21 countries** have been recognised in the third edition of the Tree City of the World list.

### *About the programme:*

The United Nations' **'Tree City of the World' programme** provides direction, assistance, and worldwide recognition for communities' dedication to its urban forest, and provides a framework for a healthy, sustainable urban forestry.

### 1ST COUNTRY TO GIVE LEGAL RIGHT TO WILD ANIMALS

**Ecuador, a South American Country**, became the first country in the world to give legal rights to wild animals.

The highest court in the country has ruled in favour of the case that focused on a woolly monkey named **"Estrellita"** who was taken from her home to a zoo, where she passed just a week later.

The court decided to rule in favour of Estrellita and said that her rights had been violated by the government.



However, they added that the animal's rights were also violated by the owner when she removed her from her natural habitat at a young age. **The Court has finally stated that animals are subject to rights protected by the rights of nature.**

**About the Estrellita:** Estrellita was just a month old when she was taken away from the wild so that she could become a pet for librarian Ana Beatriz Burbano Proaño.

**Proaño took care of Estrellita for 18 years**, however, was seized by authorities in 2019, as owning wild animals are illegal in the South American country.

After being relocated to a zoo, the monkey sadly died. Following the tragic incident, the owner Ana Beatriz Burbano Proaño filed a habeas corpus asking the court to rule that the monkey's rights were violated.

### 103 YEARS OF JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE

The **Jallianwala Bagh massacre**, also known as the **Amritsar massacre**, took place on 13 April 1919. This year we commemorate the 103rd anniversary of the terror that shook the entire country to a standstill.



The **Jallianwala Bagh garden** has been converted into a memorial. And thousands of people on this day come to pay their respects to the **martyred men, and women, who were killed on that fateful day for the nation.**

### *What Happened in Jallianwala Bagh in 1919?*

On 13 April 1919, thousands of people were gathered at **Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, Punjab.**

This day marks the beginning of New Year for the Sikhs and is also celebrated as the Baisakhi festival all over Punjab. People travel days to reach **Punjab on this auspicious day to celebrate Baisakhi with their family and loved ones.**

On the morning of Baisakhi, Colonel Reginald Dyer had announced the implementation of a curfew throughout

Amritsar and a ban on all processions that even prohibited a group of 4 or more people to meet publicly.

At about 12:40 PM, Dyer received confidential information about the meeting taking place at Jallianwala Bagh that may result in riots and protests.

The main entrance was also guarded by the armed troops. There were armoured cars accompanying the troops that were supposedly carrying machine guns and explosives.

On Dyer's orders, there was ruthless firing done on the uninformed crowd. There were about 25,000 people present there at the time of the firing. **Some tried to escape while some choose to jump in the solitude well built in the premises of Jallianwala Bagh.**

The troops were ordered to start shooting from the most densely crowded spot to harm the maximum number of people. **This heinous act of violence resulted in extreme mass killing.**

The firing continued for about 10 minutes, **and it only ceased when the ammunition supplies were almost exhausted.**

## WORLD'S HIGHEST TUNNEL AT SHINKU LA PASS

The world's highest tunnel will be constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) at Shinku La Pass at 16,580 feet. This **tunnel will connect Himachal Pradesh to Ladakh.**



The construction of this tunnel by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) will begin by July 2022.

This tunnel will connect **Ladakh's Zaskar Valley to Himachal Pradesh.** Project Yojak has been set up by the central government to execute this ambitious project.

By the year 2025, the construction of this tunnel will be completed. The tunnel's south portal will be at Shinku La. The tunnel's north portal will be at Lhachang.

This tunnel will help in boosting the economy of the **Zaskar Valley as the travel time between Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh** will be reduced after this tunnel is opened.

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# IMPORTANT ARTICLES OF THE MONTH

## #1. PM MODI IN QUAD LEADERS' VIRTUAL MEETING

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in a **Quad Leaders' virtual meeting** along with US President Joe Biden, Australian PM Scott Morrison, and Japanese PM Fumio Kishida. The Quad Leaders will also review **ongoing efforts to implement the Leaders' initiatives** announced as part of the Quad's contemporary and positive agenda. The QUAD leaders will have an opportunity to continue their dialogue after the September 2021 Summit in Washington DC. The meeting was not previously scheduled, as **Japan is scheduled to host the next in-person summit of the Quad in the first half of 2022**. The four QUAD nations are yet to finalise a date for this meeting due to a variety of scheduling reasons.



### KEY AGENDA OF THE SUMMIT

The **main agenda of the current virtual summit is to discuss developments in the Indo-Pacific**. MEA said in a statement that the virtual summit will provide the leaders with an opportunity to continue their dialogue and they will exchange views **about important developments in the Indo-Pacific**.

**Significance:** The QUAD leaders' virtual summit will be held at the **backdrop of the Russian invasion of Ukraine**. The agenda, however, does not include the Ukraine crisis. India had chosen to abstain three times in a vote against Russia at the United Nations, **while other three QUAD members had voted in favour of Ukraine**. India has though repeatedly urged Russia to cease its military operations in Ukraine.



**Background:** The QUAD leaders had met last in September 2021 at Washington DC. The latest meeting comes as the **United States and its Western allies are leading the international community** in bringing crippling sanctions against the Vladimir Putin-led Russian regime.

### QUAD FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING AT MELBOURNE

On 11th February 2022, **Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar** attended the **Fourth Quad Foreign Ministers Meeting** held at Melbourne – Australia. The meeting was attended by his counterparts from the US, Australia and Japan. At the **4th Quad Foreign Ministers Meeting**, **EAM Jaishankar** called for a free and open Indo-Pacific and urged member nations to work towards ensuring a rule-based international order.



### QUAD FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING

Australia is hosting the **4th Quad Foreign Ministers Meeting in Melbourne**. Foreign Ministers from all 4 members' nations of Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) – i.e., **Australia, India, Japan and the United States** are meeting to discuss global order and rising geo-political and geo-economic challenges in the global order. Australia was being represented by Foreign Minister Marise Payne who was joined by Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi Yoshimasa, and United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

### EAM'S 1ST OFFICIAL VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

**External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar** is also on his 1st Official Visit to Australia from 10th to 13th February 2022. During his visit, Mr Jaishankar will also co-chair the 12th Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue on 12th February 2022. On 12th February, Foreign Ministers of India and Australia will also co-chair the inaugural **Foreign Ministers' Cyber Framework Dialogue (FMCyFD)** with Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne. During the dialogue, ministers will assess the implementation of **India-Australia Framework Arrangement on Cyber and Cyber-Enabled Critical Technology Cooperation** which was signed in June 2022 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison.



## RELATED: 1ST IN-PERSON QUAD SUMMIT

The **first in-person meeting of Quad leaders was hosted by the US**. Issues like climate change, Covid-19 pandemic and challenges in the Indo Pacific, amidst China's growing military presence in the strategic region, were discussed in the meeting.

**Background:** In November 2017, India, Japan, the US and Australia gave shape to the long-pending proposal of setting up the Quad to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the **Indo-Pacific free of any influence**. China claims nearly all of the disputed South China Sea, though **Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam** all claim parts of it. The South China Sea is an arm of the Western Pacific Ocean. In 2020, the trilateral India-US-Japan Malabar naval exercises expanded to include Australia, marking the first official grouping of the Quad since its resurgence in 2017. Further, it is the **first joint military exercises among the four countries in over a decade**. In March 2021, the Quad leaders met virtually and later released a joint statement titled 'The Spirit of the Quad,' which outlined the group's approach and objectives. Further, just before this meeting, the US has announced a new trilateral security partnership for the **Indo-Pacific, between Australia, the UK and the US (AUKUS)**.



## MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS OF THE QUAD SUMMIT

- Discussed Afghanistan and agreed to deepen their cooperation in South Asia. Quad Vaccine Initiative: Under this, the Quad countries have **pledged to donate more than 1.2 billion Covid-19 vaccine** doses globally, in addition to the doses financed through Covax.
- **Building Back Better Health Security:** Supported the call for a "global pandemic radar" to improve viral genomic surveillance and expand the **WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)**.
- **Quad Infrastructure Coordination Group:** The G7 grouping has recently announced the Build Back Better World (B3W) initiative.

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN QUAD & AUKUS?

**Prime Minister Modi** arrived in Washington DC for his visit to the United States of America. **He was invited by US President Joe Biden**. This is PMs first visit to any country beyond the neighbourhood since Covid-19 pandemic. He would also **attend the QUAD summit along with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga**. However, this is different from the AUKUS (Australia- UK-US) Alliance that was recently announced.



### What is QUAD?

The **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or QUAD** is a strategic dialogue between four countries. These are **the United States, India, Australia and Japan**. The dialogue began in 2007 by the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe along with the US Vice President Dick Cheney, Australian PM John Howard and Indian PM Manmohan Singh. The military exercise associated with it was the **Malabar exercise**.

### What is AUKUS?

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AUKUS is a trilateral security alliance between the **United States, United Kingdom and Australia**. It was initiated on September 15, 2021. The pact would allow the US and UK to help Australia develop **nuclear powered submarines and deploy them in the Pacific region**. This would increase the presence of Western military in the Pacific. As of now no other country has been mentioned by the founding countries to be a party in this alliance and it is speculated that it may be a counter to **China's increasing presence in the region**.

**Nuclear Submarine Alliance:** AUKUS Recently, Australia, the US and the UK signed an agreement allowing the exchange of sensitive “naval nuclear propulsion information” between their nations. It is the first agreement on the technology to be publicly signed since the three countries **announced the formation of a defence alliance, AUKUS**, to confront strategic tensions in the Pacific where China-US rivalry is growing. Under the **AUKUS deal, Australia would obtain eight state-of-the-art, nuclear-powered** but conventionally armed submarines capable of stealthy, long-range missions.

### Five Eyes Alliance

The Five Eyes alliance is an intelligence-sharing arrangement between five English-speaking democracies: the **US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand**. The alliance was created during the Cold War (1946-1991) that was fought between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as their respective allies. The alliance was needed to share sensitive information regarding their adversaries on all possible fronts available. It is often described as the **world's most successful intelligence alliance**.

## #2. ONGOING CONFLICT B/W RUSSIA & UKRAINE

Recently, **Russia recognized two independent republics out of Ukraine (Donetsk and Luhansk - Donbass region)**, signaling the inevitable war that followed. In the declaration of war, the Russian President described Ukraine with no history or identity, and was entirely and fully created by the former Soviet Union (USSR). **Ukraine and Russia share hundreds of years of cultural, linguistic and familial link.**



### WHAT IS THE EARLY HISTORY OF UKRAINE?

A **millennium ago, what is Ukraine today lay at the heart of the Kyivan Rus' (Rus' land)**. Kyivan Rus was a federation of the East Slavic, Baltic, and Finnic peoples of eastern and northern Europe, with its capital in Kyiv. **Modern Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus all trace their cultural ancestry to the Kyivan Rus'**. The Kyivan Rus' reached its greatest size and power in the 10th and 11th centuries. In the **mid-13th century, the Kyivan Rus', weakened by the decline of trade as the Byzantine Empire collapsed, fell apart under the onslaught of the Mongol Golden Horde, who sacked Kyiv in 1240**. The Byzantine Empire, also called Byzantium, was the eastern half of the Roman Empire, based at Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) that continued on after the western half of the empire collapsed. The Golden Horde was the group of settled Mongols who ruled over **Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Moldova, and the Caucasus** from the 1240s until 1502.

### WHAT ARE OTHER SALIENT FEATURES OF UKRAINE?

Ukraine is in the **east of Europe**, and is bound by Russia to its northeast, east, and southeast, and the **Black Sea in the south**. In the southwest, west, and north, Ukraine shares borders, in the anticlockwise direction, with **Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, and Belarus**. In July 2021, Ukraine's population was estimated at 43.7 million. Of this, 77.8% was of Ukrainian ethnicity and 17.3% was Russian and Ukrainian and Russian speakers made up 67.5% and 29.6% of the population respectively.

**Relations with India:** India is Ukraine's largest export destination in the Asia Pacific region. The **country's major export to India is sunflower oil**, followed by inorganic chemicals, iron and steel, plastics, and chemicals. Ukraine's major import from India is pharmaceutical products.

### WHEN DID UKRAINE INCORPORATE INTO RUSSIA?

In the **18th century**, Empress Catherine the Great (1762-96) of **Russia absorbed the entire ethnic Ukrainian territory into the Russian Empire**. The Tsarist policy of Russification led to the suppression of ethnic identities and languages, **including that of the Ukrainians**. Within the Russian Empire though, many Ukrainians rose to positions of prosperity and importance, and significant numbers migrated to **settle in other parts of Russia**. More than 3.5 million Ukrainians

fought in World War I on the side of the Russian Empire, but a smaller number fought against the Tsar's army with the Austro-Hungarians.

**Ukraine Becoming part of USSR:** The World War I led to the end of both the Tsarist and Ottoman empires. As a mainly **communist-led Ukrainian national movement emerged**, several small Ukrainian states sprang up. Months after the Bolsheviks took power in the October Revolution of 1917, an independent **Ukrainian People's Republic was proclaimed**, but a civil war continued between various claimants to power, including Ukrainian factions, anarchists, Tsarists, and Poland. In 1922, Ukraine became part of the **Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)**. The Soviet Union had its roots in the October Revolution of 1917, when the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, **overthrew the Russian Provisional Government that had replaced Tsar Nicholas II**.



## WHAT WAS THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE?

An empire created by **Turkish tribes in Anatolia (Asia Minor)** that grew to be one of the most powerful states in the world during the 15th and 16th centuries. The Ottoman period spanned more than 600 years and came to an end only in 1922, when it was replaced by the Turkish Republic and various **successor states in southeastern Europe and the Middle East**. At its height the empire encompassed most of southeastern Europe to the gates of Vienna, including present-day Hungary, the Balkan region, Greece, and parts of Ukraine, portions of the **Middle East now occupied by Iraq, Syria, Israel, and Egypt**, North Africa as far west as Algeria, and large parts of the Arabian Peninsula.

## STATUS OF UKRAINE AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF USSR



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In 1991, the **USSR was dissolved**. The Demands for independence had been growing in Ukraine for a couple of years previously, and in 1990, over 300,000 Ukrainians created a human chain in support of freedom. **This was followed by the Granite Revolution when students sought to prevent the signing of a new agreement with the USSR**. On 24th August, 1991, after the failure of the coup to remove President Mikhail Gorbachev and restore the communists to power, the parliament of Ukraine adopted the **country's Act of Independence**. Subsequently, Leonid Kravchuk, head of the parliament, was elected Ukraine's first President. In December 1991, the leaders of **Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine** formally dissolved the Soviet Union and formed the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). However, **Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada**, never ratified the accession, so Ukraine was legally never a member of the CIS.



## RECENT HISTORY OF RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT?

In 2014, **Russia had annexed Crimea from Ukraine following a hastily called referendum**, a move that sparked fighting between **Russia-backed separatists and government forces in eastern Ukraine**. Recently, Ukraine has urged the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** to speed up his country's membership in the alliance. Russia declared such a move a "red line", and worried about the consequences of the US-led military alliances expanding right up to its doorstep. **This has led to the present war between Russia and Ukraine**.

## WHAT IS NATO & WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

NATO is a military alliance that was formed in 1949 by 12 countries, including the US, Canada, the UK and France. **NATO's full form is the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation**. NATO was formed largely to counter the threat from the Soviet Union post World War II. The USSR had created its own **military alliance in 1955 to counter NATO**, called



**the Warsaw pact.** Warsaw got disbanded with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990 and several Warsaw pact countries became NATO members. The **NATO alliance has a total of 30 member countries.** Under the alliance, the member countries have agreed to come to one another's aid in the event of armed attack against any one member state.

#### *What is the Purpose of NATO?*

NATO's purpose is to implement the **North Atlantic Treaty that was signed on April 4, 1949.** NATO constitutes a system of collective security. Under the system, an attack on one member state is considered as an attack on all and it calls for a collective response. This ensures collective security of all NATO member states. **NATO's headquarters** are located in **Brussels, Belgium.**



**NATO Member Countries:** NATO member countries include 2 North American countries, 27 European countries and 1 Eurasian country.

## #3. RUSSIA SUSPENDED FROM UNHRC

Russia has been suspended **from the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)** after there were allegations that its soldiers violated human rights in Ukraine. The member nations of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) voted to suspend Russia. **The UNHRC is an inter-governmental body** under the United Nations. It is responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights across the world. The **UNHRC also investigates human rights breaches and addresses** various human rights issues. On 15th March 2006, this council was established by the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).** The UNHRC replaced the earlier formed United Nations Commission on Human Rights. There are 47-member states in the UNHRC and they serve for three years. They cannot be re-elected immediately after serving two consecutive terms. **Federico Villegas is the current president of the UNHRC.**



### PROCESS OF REMOVAL OF A COUNTRY

The UNGA can suspend any Council member that committed human rights violations during its membership term. A **two-thirds majority vote** is required by the General Assembly to suspend a member.

#### *Suspension of Russia*

The **United States first moved the resolution to suspend Russia over its military aggression in Ukraine.** The resolution to remove Russia was titled 'Suspension of the rights of membership of the Russian Federation in the Human Rights Council'. Under this resolution, grave concerns regarding human rights **abuses committed by Russia in Ukraine were highlighted.** The campaign to suspend Russia started after photos and videos of civilians killed by the Russian army in Bucha came to the fore.

### INDIA AND UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (UNHRC)

Recently, a **group of Special Rapporteurs to the United Nations (UN)** has written to the Indian government expressing concerns over the draft **Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) notification 2020.** In 2020, India's National Human Rights Commission submitted its mid-term report to the Council as a part of the third round of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process. India was elected to the Council for a period of three years beginning 1st January 2019.

### BACKGROUND OF RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

**Ukraine and Russia** share hundreds of years of cultural, linguistic and familial links. For many in **Russia and in the ethnically Russian parts of Ukraine,** the shared heritage of the countries is an emotional issue that has been exploited for electoral and military purposes. As part of the Soviet Union, **Ukraine was the second-most powerful Soviet republic** after Russia, and was crucial strategically, economically and culturally.

#### Cause of Conflict:

- **Balance of Power:** Ever since Ukraine split from the Soviet Union, both Russia and the West have vied for greater influence in the country in order to keep the balance of power in the region in their favour.

- **Buffer Zone for Western Countries:** For the US and the European Union, Ukraine is a crucial buffer between Russia and the West. As tensions with **Russia rise, the US and the EU** are increasingly determined to keep Ukraine away from Russian control.
- **Russian Interest in Black Sea:** The unique geography of the Black Sea region confers several geopolitical advantages to Russia. Firstly, it is an important crossroads and strategic intersection for the entire region. Access to the **Black Sea is vital for all littoral and neighboring states**, and greatly enhances the projection of power into several adjacent regions. Secondly, the region is an important transit corridor for goods and energy.

## UKRAINE'S URGE FOR NATO MEMBERSHIP

Ukraine has urged the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** to speed up his country's membership in the alliance. Russia has declared such a move a "red line", and worried about the consequences of the **US-led military alliances expanding right up to its doorstep**. The Black Sea is bordered by **Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine**. All these countries are NATO countries. Due to this faceoff between NATO countries and Russia, the Black sea is a region of strategic importance & a potential maritime flashpoint.



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## SIGNING OF MINSK AGREEMENTS:

**Minsk I:** Ukraine and the Russian-backed separatists agreed a 12-point ceasefire deal in the **capital of Belarus in September 2014**. Its provisions included prisoner exchanges, deliveries of humanitarian aid and the withdrawal of heavy weapons. The agreement quickly broke down, with violations by both sides.

**Minsk II:** In 2015, an open conflict was averted after the 'Minsk II' peace agreement was signed, **under the mediation of France and Germany**. It was designed to end the fighting in the rebel regions and hand over the border to Ukraine's national troops. It was **signed by Representatives of Russia, Ukraine, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)** and the leaders of two pro-Russian separatist regions. OSCE is the **world's largest security-oriented intergovernmental organisation**. Its mandate includes issues such as arms control, promotion of human rights, freedom of the press, and fair elections.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIA AND RUSSIA

- **Diplomatic Ties:** India and Russia are together in multiple forums including **BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)**. India helped the induction of Russia as a dialogue partner in the **Indian Ocean Rim Association** which may give Russia a major role in the Indian Ocean. Russia also helped Indian and Chinese Foreign Ministers to meet and diffuse the stalemate in Ladakh on the sidelines of the **SCO Summit in Moscow**. Also, in the UNSC conference on maritime security chaired by India, Russia displayed its proximity to the former.

- **India-Russia Annual Summit:** It is the highest institutionalized dialogue mechanism in the strategic partnership between India and Russia. The latest summit is an institution of a new "two plus two" mechanism bringing the foreign and defence ministers from both sides into a single forum. There is **also speculation about a new 10-year defence pact between the two countries**. Russia became the fourth nation, along with the US,



Japan and Australia, with which India has such a joint structure in place.

- **Recent Cooperation in Defence:** Currently, 65% of Indian armed forces equipment is of Russian origin and India continues to rely on Russia for spares. Despite strong US opposition, **India procured the S-400 Triumf Missile from Russia**. A deal worth over ₹5,000 crore with Russia for the manufacture of AK 203 assault rifles is also in the pipeline. For now, India has escaped the **US sanctions on the purchase of S-400 missiles**, however, India's deepening defence ties with Russia will continue to trouble the USA as well as China.
- **Economic Domain of Relations:** India and Russia have greater freedom in the economic domain but their failure to boost the commercial relationship has been stark. **India-Russia annual trade** is worth about only **\$10 billion** whereas the latter's annual trade with China is a little more than \$100 billion. India's goods trade with the US and China is at the level of **\$100 billion**.

## #4. INDIA AT 5TH BIMSTEC SUMMIT 2022

India will provide the BIMSTEC secretariat USD 1 million to increase its operational budget, announced PM Narendra Modi at 5th BIMSTEC Summit on March 30, 2022. He urged that it is important to strengthen the capacity of the BIMSTEC secretariat and suggested the Secretary-General create a roadmap for the same. PM Modi said that the time has come to make the Bay of Bengal the bridge of connectivity, prosperity and security. He called on BIMSTEC nations to dedicate themselves to working with new enthusiasm to achieve the goals they achieved together in 1997. **The BIMSTEC Summit 2022** is being hosted in a hybrid mode by Sri Lanka, the current chair of BIMSTEC. **Sri Lankan President is chairing the 5th BIMSTEC Summit** with the virtual participation of leaders of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Thailand. The Myanmar Foreign Minister is representing the nation at the summit. **The BIMSTEC Senior Officials (SOM) meeting** had taken place on March 28, followed by meetings of the BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers on March 29 to prepare for the summit.

### *BIMSTEC Summit 2022 Theme*

The BIMSTEC Summit 2022 theme was **"Towards a Resilient Region, Prosperous Economies, Healthy People"**. The theme captures the main current priorities of member states.

The main topic of deliberations during the BIMSTEC Summit 2022 included:



COVID-19 pandemic related challenges.

-Uncertainties within the international system.

- Progress of BIMSTEC as a regional group.

-Establishment of basic institutional structures and mechanisms of the group.

### *Key Outcome*

The **main outcome of the BIMSTEC Summit 2022** was the adoption and signing of the BIMSTEC Charter, which formalizes the grouping into an organization with an emblem, flag and formally listed principles to be adhered to. Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with other BIMSTEC leaders also witnessed the signing of **3 BIMSTEC agreements** that represent progress being achieved in ongoing cooperation activities.



## BIMSTEC AGREEMENTS

The five documents that are to be signed are:

- MoU on mutual cooperation between diplomatic training or academies institutions of **BIMSTEC Member States**,
- BIMSTEC convention on criminal matters mutual legal assistance,
- **Memorandum of Association (MoA)** BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility establishment in Colombo,
- BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity,
- Reorganization and Rationalization of BIMSTEC's sub-sectors and sectors.

The Summit also saw considerable progress in BIMSTEC connectivity agenda with adoption of the 'Master Plan for Transport Connectivity', which lays out a guidance framework for connectivity related activities in the region in the future.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMIT?

**BIMSTEC Charter:** The signing of the BIMSTEC Charter was the main outcome of this summit. Under this Charter, the members were expected to meet once every two years. With the Charter, the BIMSTEC now has an international personality. It has an emblem, it has a flag. It has a formally listed purpose and principles that it is going to adhere to. In line with the development of the organisation into a formal structure, the leaders of the member-countries have agreed to divide the working of the grouping into seven segments, with India providing leadership to the security pillar.

## PILLARS OF BIMSTEC

**Master Plan for Transport Connectivity:** The summit saw the declaration of the Master Plan for Transport Connectivity that would provide a framework for regional and domestic connectivity.

**Other Agreements:** Member countries also signed a treaty on mutual legal assistance on criminal matters.

A Memorandum of Association (MoA) on the establishment of **BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility (TTF) in Colombo, Sri Lanka**. India will provide the (BIMSTEC) secretariat USD 1 million US dollars to increase its operational budget.



## WHAT IS BIMSTEC?

The **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)** is a regional organisation comprising seven Member States: five deriving from South Asia, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and two from Southeast Asia, including Myanmar and Thailand. This sub-regional organisation came into being on 6 June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration. With 21.7% of the world's population and a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of USD 3.8 trillion, BIMSTEC has emerged as an influential engine of economic growth. The BIMSTEC Secretariat is in Dhaka.

**Institutional Mechanisms:**

- BIMSTEC Summit
- Ministerial Meeting
- Senior Officials' Meeting
- BIMSTEC Working Group
- Business Forum & Economic Forum



## IS BIMSTEC AN ALTERNATE OF SAARC?

The PM of India had invited **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries** for his swearing in ceremony in 2014, including Pakistan on the lines of his Neighbourhood first policy.

The Prime Minister had also participated in the 18th SAARC summit at Kathmandu in November 2014. However, **post Uri attack (on an Indian military base)** in October 2016, India gave a renewed push for the BIMSTEC that had existed for almost two decades but been largely ignored. Alongside the BRICS summit in Goa, PM hosted an outreach summit with BIMSTEC leaders. **BIMSTEC countries had supported India's call for a boycott of the SAARC summit** scheduled

in Islamabad in November 2016. As a result, the SAARC summit was postponed for an indefinite period. Thus, with work on several key initiatives under SAARC stymied because of the breakdown of the relationship with Pakistan, India began focusing on other regional groupings such as **BIMSTEC** and **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established with the signing of the SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985. The **idea of regional cooperation in South Asia** was first raised in November 1980. After consultations, the foreign secretaries of the seven founding countries – **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka** – met for the first time in Colombo in April 1981. Afghanistan became the newest member of SAARC at the 13th annual summit in 2005. The Headquarters and **Secretariat of the Association are at Kathmandu, Nepal**.

## PRINCIPLES OF SAARC

Cooperation within the framework of the SAARC shall be based on:

Respect for the **principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference** in the internal affairs of other States and mutual benefit. Such cooperation shall not be a substitute for bilateral and multilateral cooperation but shall complement them. Such cooperation shall not be inconsistent with bilateral and multilateral obligations.

Members of SAARC

*SAARC comprises of eight member States:*

- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- India
- Maldives
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Sri Lanka

**There are currently nine Observers to SAARC**, namely: (i) Australia; (ii) China; (iii) the European Union; (iv) Iran; (v) Japan; (vi) the Republic of Korea; (vii) Mauritius; (viii) Myanmar; and (ix) the United States of America.



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## #5. 103 YEARS OF JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE

Recently, the **Prime Minister** paid tributes to people killed in the **Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919**. He asserted that their unparalleled courage and sacrifice will keep motivating the coming generations. 13th April, 2022 marks the 103 years of the incident. Earlier, the Gujarat government marked **100 years of the Pal-Dadhvav killings**, calling it a massacre “bigger than the Jallianwala Bagh”.



### WHAT IS THE JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE?

The **Jallianwala Bagh massacre** or the **Amritsar massacre** of 13th April 1919 accounts for the gruesome execution of hundreds of innocent people by the Gurkha British Indian army on the orders of the then **Anglo-Indian Brigadier R.E.H. Dyer**. These people were protesting peacefully **against the Rowlatt Act 1919**.

### WHAT WAS THE ROWLATT ACT 1919?

- **During World War I (1914-18)** the British government of India enacted a series of repressive emergency powers that were intended to combat subversive activities. In this context, this act was passed on the **recommendations of the Sedition Committee chaired by Sir Sidney Rowlatt**. It gave the government enormous powers to repress political activities and allowed detention of political prisoners without trial for two years.
- **Background:** Mahatma Gandhi wanted non-violent civil disobedience against such unjust laws, which would start with a hartal on 6th April 1919. In Punjab, on 9th April 1919, **two nationalist leaders, Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal**, were arrested by the British officials without any provocation except that they had addressed protest meetings, and taken to some unknown destination. This caused resentment among the **Indian protestors who came out in thousands on 10th April** to show their solidarity with their leaders. To curb any future protest, the government put martial law in place and law and order in **Punjab was handed over to Brigadier-General Dyer**.
- **Day of the Incident:** On 13th April, Baisakhi day, a large crowd of people mostly from neighbouring villages, unaware of the prohibitory orders in **Amritsar gathered in the Jallianwala Bagh**. **Brigadier-General Dyer** arrived on the scene with his men. The troops surrounded the gathering under orders from General Dyer and blocked the only exit point and opened fire on the unarmed crowd killing more than 1000 unarmed men, women, and children.



### Aftermath/Significance of the Incident:

Jallianwala Bagh became a key point in the history of India's struggle for independence and it is now an important monument in the country. The Jallianwala Bagh tragedy was one of the causes that led **Mahatma Gandhi to begin organising his first large-scale and sustained nonviolent protest (satyagraha) campaign**, the Non Cooperation Movement (1920-22). The Bengali poet and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore renounced the knighthood that he had received in 1915. The then government of India **ordered an investigation of the incident (the Hunter Commission)**, which in 1920 censured Dyer for his actions and ordered him to resign from the military.

### RELATED: 100 YEARS OF PAL DADHVAV KILLINGS

Recently, the **Gujarat government** marked **100 years of the Pal-Dadhvav killings**, calling it a massacre “bigger than the Jallianwala Bagh”. A Gujarat government release on the centenary of the massacre described the **incident as “more brutal than the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919**. Earlier, Bihar Chief Minister announced that 15th February would be commemorated as “**Shahid Diwas**” in memory of the **34 freedom fighters** who were killed by police in Tarapur town (now subdivision) of Bihar's Munger district 90 years ago.

### WHAT WAS THE PAL-DADHVAV MASSACRE?

The **Pal-Dadhvav massacre** took place on **7th March, 1922**, in the Pal-Chitariya and Dadhvaav villages of Sabarkantha district, **then part of Idar state (Now Gujrat)**. The day was Amalki Ekadashi, which falls just before Holi, a major festival for tribals. **Villagers from Pal, Dadhvav, and Chitariya** had gathered on the banks of river Heir as part of the ‘Eki movement’, led by one **Motilal Tejawat**. The impact of the protest was felt in Vijaynagar, Dadhvaav, Poshina and



Khedbrahma, which are now talukas of Sabarkantha; the Aravalli districts, Banaskantha and Danta of Banaskantha district; and **Kotda Chhavni, Dungarpur, Chittor, Sirohi, Banswara and Udaipur of Rajasthan**, all of which were then princely states. The movement was to protest against the land revenue tax (lagaan) imposed on the peasants by the British and feudal lords. The British Paramilitary force was on hunt for Tehawat. It heard of this gathering and reached the spot. Nearly 200 bhils under the leadership of Tehawat lifted their bows and arrows. But, the Britishers opened fire on them. Nearly 1,000 tribals (Bhils) fell to bullets. While the **British claimed some 22 people were killed, the Bhils believe 1,200-1,500 of them died**. Tejwat, however, escaped and later returned to the spot to christen it 'Veer Bhumi'.



## WHO WAS MOTILAL TEJAWAT?

Born into a merchant (Baniya) family in the **adivasi-dominated Koliyari village**, Tejawat was employed by a landlord, where he worked for eight years. During this period he saw closely how the landlords exploited tribals and would threaten to beat them with shoes if they did not pay the tax. **Outraged by the atrocities and exploitation of the tribal people**, Tejawat quit the job in 1920 and devoted himself to social work and reform. To this day, local tribals recount the Pal-Dadhav massacre in songs sung at weddings and fairs. **One such song is 'Hansu dukhi, duniya dukhi'**.

## #6. US REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDIA

Recently, the **US State Department released a strong and critical report** on human rights in India in 2021. The report is submitted each year to the US Congress which is retrospective and contains a country-wise discussion of the state of internationally recognised individual, civil, political and worker rights, as set forth in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreements**. In December 2021, data related to human rights violations in states was provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs in Rajya sabha.



## WHAT ARE THE KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT?

- **Arbitrary Arrest and Detention:** Indian law "prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention but both occurred during the year", with police using "**special security laws to postpone judicial reviews of arrests**". Pretrial detention was arbitrary and lengthy, sometimes exceeding the duration of the sentence given to those convicted.
- **Violations of Privacy:** Citing media reports on journalists being targeted for surveillance through the Pegasus malware, the report flagged violations of privacy by government authorities, "including the use of technology to arbitrarily or unlawfully surveil or interfere with the privacy of individuals".
- **On Freedom of Association:** The report highlighted the cases of Amnesty International India, whose assets were frozen by the Enforcement Directorate, and the suspension of the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA)** license of Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) for alleged violations.
- **What are Human Rights:** These are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. These include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Nelson Mandela had stated '**To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity**'.

## HUMAN RIGHTS RELATED PROVISIONS IN INDIA


- **Fundamental Rights:** Articles **12 to 35 of the Constitution**. These include the Right to Equality, Right to Freedom, Right against Exploitation, Right to Freedom of Religion, Cultural & Educational Rights, Saving of Certain Laws and Right to Constitutional Remedies.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy:** Article 36 to 51 of the Constitution. These include 'right to social security, right to work, to free choice of employment, and protection against unemployment, right to equal pay for equal work, right to existence worthy of human dignity, right to free & compulsory education, equal justice & free legal aid and the principles of policy to be followed by the State.

Statutory Provisions:

**Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993 (as amended in 2019)** provided for the constitution of a National Human Rights Commission at the Union level, which steers State Human Rights Commission in States and Human Rights Courts for better protection of Human Rights and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. Section **2(1)(d) of the PHRA defines Human Rights as the rights** relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India. India took an **active part in drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**. These 30 rights and freedoms include civil and political rights, like the right to life, liberty, free speech and privacy and economic, social and cultural rights, like the right to social security, health and education, etc.

**RELATED: HUMAN RIGHTS DAY: 10TH DECEMBER**

Every year **Human Rights Day is celebrated on 10th December** all around the world. Freedom in the World 2021 report released earlier this year had downgraded **India's status from 'Free' to 'Partly Free'**.



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**World Human Rights Day:** On that day, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**. The UDHR established a set of common basic values both with regard to the view of human beings and to the relationship between the state and the individual.



Theme 2021: **"EQUALITY – Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights"**.

International Human Rights Conventions and Bodies:

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):** The 30 rights and freedoms include civil and political rights, like the right to life, liberty, free speech and privacy and economic, social and cultural rights, like the right to social security, health and education, etc. India took an active part in drafting of the UDHR. The **UDHR is not a treaty**, so it does not directly create legal obligations for countries. The UDHR, together with the International Covenant on **Civil and Political Rights and its two Optional Protocols (on the complaints procedure and on the death penalty)** and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and its Optional Protocol, form the so-called International Bill of Human Rights.

**Other Conventions:** These include the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), among others. India is a party to all these Conventions.

**Human Rights Council:** The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights. It is **made up of 47 United Nations Member States** which are elected by the UN General Assembly. The most innovative feature of the Human Rights Council is the **Universal Periodic Review**. This unique mechanism involves a review of

the human rights records of all 192 UN member states once every four years. The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** serves as the secretariat for the Human Rights Council.

**Amnesty International:** An international organisation of volunteers who campaign for human rights. This organisation brings out independent reports on the violation of human rights all over the world.

## NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (NHRC)

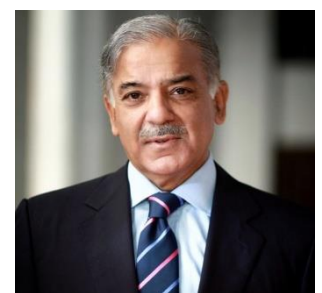
- **Statutory Body:** NHRC was established on 12th October, 1993. The statute under which it is established is the **Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993** as amended by the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act, 2006. The PHRA Act also provides for the creation of a State Human Rights Commission at the state level.
- **In Line with Paris Principles:** Paris Principles were adopted for the promotion and protection of human rights in October 1991, and were endorsed by the **General Assembly of the United Nations in 1993**.
- **Watchdog of Human Rights in the country:** The NHRC is an embodiment of India's concern for the promotion and protection of human rights. **Section 2(1)(d) of the PHRA** defines Human Rights as the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India.
- **Composition:** The commission is a multi-member body consisting of a chairman and four members. A person who has been the **Chief Justice of India or a judge of the Supreme Court is a chairman**.
- **Appointment:** The chairman and members are appointed by the President on the recommendations of a six-member committee **consisting of the Prime Minister as its head, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, leaders of the Opposition** in both the Houses of Parliament and the Union Home Minister.
- **Tenure:** The chairman and members hold office **for a term of three years or until they attain the age of 70 years**, whichever is earlier. The President can remove the chairman or any member from the office under some circumstances.



**National  
Human  
Rights  
Commission  
(NHRC)**

## #7. SHEHBAZ SHARIF AS NEW PM OF PAKISTAN

Shehbaz Sharif, the 70-year-old younger brother of **former Pakistani PM Nawaz Sharif**, has been elected as the 23rd Prime Minister of Pakistan. Sharif was elected unopposed as the new Pakistani PM with 174 votes in favour amid a walkout by **Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MLAs**. The ousted Pakistan PM Imran Khan announced his resignation as a member of the National Assembly saying that he will not sit in the assemblies with 'thieves'. **Shehbaz Sharif has been the Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly** since August 2018. He is also the President of **Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)**. His candidature for Prime Minister was revealed by PPP Chairman **Bilawal Bhutto Zardari** during a joint press conference of the opposition parties earlier. His election comes after Imran Khan lost the no-confidence motion tabled against him in the assembly, becoming the first Pakistan PM to do so. He will formally take the oath of office later today. The **Imran Khan-led coalition government lost the no-trust vote** with 174 votes in favour of the motion in the 342 member assembly. The voting took place after midnight on April 9th despite several attempts to block it. The members of the ruling PTI including Pakistan PM Imran Khan were absent during the voting.



## WHO IS SHEHBAZ SHARIF?

**Shehbaz Sharif** is the younger brother of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who served as Pakistan PM for three terms. Born in Lahore in 1950, Sharif is a graduate of Government College University, Lahore. Shehbaz Sharif had been serving as the **Chief Minister of the crucial Punjab province of Pakistan** for the previous three terms. He had last staked a claim for the position of the PM in 2018 but PPP's decision to abstain from the PM vote had paved the way for the election of **PTI's Imran Khan as the Prime Minister**. Shehbaz Sharif was nominated as the leader of the opposition



in the National Assembly. He initially joined his family's steel business and then became the president of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industries in 1985.

His elder brother **Nawaz Sharif was inducted into the Punjab Provincial Cabinet as Finance Minister in 1983** under the dictatorship of Zia-ul-Haq. He entered the Punjab Provincial Assembly in 1988 and was elected to the National Assembly in 1990. He became the leader of the **Opposition in the Punjab Assembly in 1993**. He became the Chief Minister of Punjab for the first time in 1997 but his term was cut short by Pervez Musharraf's military coup of 1999. He became the Punjab CM again in 2008, returning from political exile after almost a decade. Shehbaz Sharif was elected as the **President of PML-N unopposed** in February 2018 after his brother, then Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was disqualified from **key positions after being named in the 'Panama Papers'**.

## CORRUPTION CHARGES

**Shehbaz Sharif** also faces serious corruption charges similar to his elder brother. The **National Accountability Bureau (NAB)** had frozen 23 properties belonging to Shehbaz Sharif and his son, Hamza in December 2019 accusing them of money laundering. The NAB arrested him in the same case in September 2020 and he was **released on bail in April 2021 by the Lahore High Court**.

## PAKISTAN SUPREME COURT VERDICT

**Pakistan's Supreme Court** in a historic judgment on April 8th had declared **Imran Khan's decision to advise the President** to dissolve the National Assembly as unconstitutional and had also set aside the ruling of the Deputy Speaker rejecting the no-trust vote against the Imran Khan government. The top court had called for the **convening of the session of the National Assembly** "not later than 10:30 AM on Saturday" and for the election of the new PM in the same session if in case of Imran Khan's removal.

## PAKISTAN IN GRAVE ECONOMIC CRISIS

**Pakistan is in a grave crisis** caused by the incumbent government. Well, some of the major problems the country is currently facing are the rising levels of inflation and the government's inability to deal with it, the chaos caused by the **withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan**, retainment of Pakistan in the **Greylist of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, and the skirmish between Prime Minister Imran Khan and the Pakistani Army. It is to be noted that the next general elections in Pakistan are 2 years away from now and the Prime Minister is looking towards winning another term.



### *The Afghan-factor*

While many countries have applauded the help Pakistan had extended to various countries by **evacuating their citizens from Afghanistan in August last year**, very few have forgotten the fact that Pakistan itself sponsored the **growth of terrorism on Afghan soil**. Besides this, Afghanistan is now ruled by the Taliban who are extremely unpredictable. Pakistan has its **Embassy and other diplomatic channels open in Afghanistan**, and there has been no air of hostility between the two countries as of now. But there could be any adverse consequences due to the terror activities carried out by the Taliban inside Pakistan. It is also of significant importance to talk about the US-Pakistan relations **post the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan**. The 2-decade long friendship between the US and Pakistan has been majorly shaped by the former's interest in Afghanistan. With the fall of the civilian government in Afghanistan and the rise of the Taliban, the US certainly does not need to endure its friendship with Pakistan. **Prime Minister Imran Khan**, in his speech at the **United Nations General Assembly** after the Taliban's capture of power, said that there is a chance that the instability in Afghanistan spills over into Pakistan and called the global community to recognize the Taliban regime and help it gain stability.

## FATF GREY-LISTING OF PAKISTAN & TURKEY

While the **USA and Turkey have been allies for decades**, they have been witnessing the nadir of their relations lately. While Pakistan has been retained on the **grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, the global terror financing watchdog, Turkey is a new entrant on the list. This is **obviously due to the weakening of the latter's ties with the USA** as well as its ineffectiveness in tackling money laundering and counter-terrorism cases. The retainment of Pakistan in this list has severe consequences for the country since it shall not be provided aid from external sources. Even if provided, there shall be many



reforms sought from the country. There will be **greater surveillance of activities being carried out on Pakistani soil**. Though there shall be no legal consequences for being retained in the list, Pakistan shall be facing backlash from the **international community for not taking adequate steps to combat terrorism**.

## CONCLUSION

Pakistan has **received backlash from the global community** for its inefficiency in combatting terrorism. It needs to mend its ways in order to have other countries aid it in times of distress. Pakistan now has very few allies, out of which Turkey is itself not in a **position to help Pakistan, and China never gives grants but only loans**. For Pakistan's economy to stabilize, it has only one option - that is, the implementation of stringent measures to fight terrorism in the region. It is only then that the global community would be willing to help **Pakistan overcome its economic crisis**.

## #8. SC ON KRISHNA RIVER WATER DISPUTE

On February 18, 2022, the **government of Karnataka** moved to the Supreme Court and sought to set up a bench to hear a plea **related to a dispute over allocation of water of Krishna River**. The Krishna River flows in states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana. **SC bench comprising Justice D Y Chandrachud from Maharashtra, and Justice A S Bopanna from Karnataka, had recused itself from the case on January 10, 2022**, arising out of the decision of the water tribunal. The judges recused themselves, because they were upset with the tone of mails and letters against them for being part of this bench on water dispute.



### WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

Karnataka had sought the vacation on a SC order of November 16, 2011, that restrained the Central government from publishing the **final order of Krishna Water Dispute Tribunal II (KWDT)** in official gazette. This order was pronounced in 2010 and allocated the river water to Karnataka, Maharashtra and erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. **KWDT had further modified its final order and reported in November 2013**, to allocate surplus water to Karnataka, Maharashtra, and erstwhile Andhra Pradesh, while preserving the allocation of 2,130 TMC. However, after the **bifurcation of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh, Telangana & Andhra Pradesh** had moved to the Supreme Court and challenged the allocation share of the KWDT.

**Stalled projects:** Karnataka argued that its dam and irrigation projects to provide water in its parched northern areas were stalled for all **these years due to the 2011 order of not publishing KWDT decisions in the Official Gazette** in line with Section 6(1) of the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956.

### RECUSAL OF JUDGES FROM THE CASE

Recently, two judges of the Supreme Court have recused themselves from hearing a matter related to the distribution of Krishna water dispute between **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra and Karnataka**. They cited the reason that they did not want to be the target of partiality since the dispute is related to their home states.

**Recusal of Judges:** It is the act of abstaining from participation in an official action such as a legal proceeding due to a **conflict of interest of the presiding court official or administrative officer**. When there is a conflict of interest, a judge can withdraw from hearing a case to prevent creating a perception that he carried a bias while deciding the case. There are no formal rules governing recusals, although several SC judgments have dealt with the issue. **In Ranjit Thakur v Union of India (1987)**, the SC held that the test of the likelihood of bias is the reasonableness of the apprehension in the mind of the party. The judge needs to look at the mind of the party before him, and decide that he is biased or not.



### BACKGROUND OF THE DISPUTE

**Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal:** In 1969, the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal (KWDT) was set up **under the Inter-State River Water Dispute Act, 1956**, and presented its report in 1973. At the same time, it was stipulated that the KWDT order may be reviewed or revised by a competent authority or tribunal any time after 31st May, 2000.

**Second KWDT:** The second KWDT was instituted in 2004. It delivered its report in 2010, **which made allocations of the Krishna water at 65 % dependability and for surplus flows as follows:** 81 TMC for Maharashtra, 177 TMC for Karnataka, and 190 TMC for Andhra Pradesh.

## CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS REGARDING THE ISSUE

**Article 262** of the Constitution provides for the **adjudication of inter-state water disputes**. Under this, Parliament may by law provide for the adjudication of any dispute or complaint with respect to the use, distribution and control of waters of any inter-state river and river valley. The Parliament has enacted the **two laws, the River Boards Act (1956) and the Inter-State Water Disputes Act (1956)**. The River Boards Act provides for the establishment of river boards by the Central government for the regulation and development of Inter-state River and river valleys. The **Inter-State Water Disputes Act** empowers the Central government to set up an ad hoc tribunal for the adjudication of a dispute between two or more states in relation to the waters of an inter-state river or river valley. Neither the **Supreme Court nor any other court is to have jurisdiction** in respect of any water dispute which may be referred to such a tribunal under this Act.



## KRISHNA RIVER

- **Source:** It originates near Mahabaleshwar (Satara) in Maharashtra. It is the **second biggest river in peninsular India** after the Godavari River.
- **Drainage:** It runs from four states Maharashtra (303 km), North Karnataka (480 km) and the rest of its 1300 km journey in **Telangana and Andhra Pradesh before it empties into the Bay of Bengal**.
- **Tributaries:** Tungabhadra, Mallaprabha, Koyna, Bhima, Ghataprabha, Yerla, Warna, Dindi, Musi and Dudhganga.

## RELATED: TELANGANA-ANDHRA PRADESH WATER DISPUTE

**Telangana and Andhra Pradesh** share stretches of the Krishna and the Godavari and own their tributaries. Both states have proposed several new projects without getting clearance from the river boards, the **Central Water Commission and the Apex Council**, as mandated by the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014. **The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014** mandates for the constitution of an Apex Council by the Central Government for the supervision of the functioning of the Godavari River Management Board and Krishna River Management Board. **The Apex Council** comprises the **Union Water Resources Minister and the Chief Ministers** of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

The Andhra Pradesh government's proposal to increase the utilisation of the Krishna water from a section of the river above the **Srisailem Reservoir led to the Telangana government** filing a complaint against Andhra Pradesh. The Srisailem reservoir is constructed across the Krishna River in Andhra Pradesh. It is located in the Nallamala hills. The **Andhra Pradesh government retaliated with its own complaints saying that Palamuru-Rangareddy, Dindi Lift Irrigation Schemes** on the Krishna River and Kaleshwaram, Tupakulagudem schemes and a few barrages proposed across the Godavari are all new projects.



# CAREER OPTION

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Government/ Private  
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Coaching Centres  
Education  
Consultancies  
Publishing Houses  
Colleges/ Universities  
Research &  
Development  
Agencies  
Private Tuition/ Home  
Tuition

## BJMC

Journalist, Columnist  
or Reporter  
Feature Writer  
Photojournalist  
Staff or Freelance  
Writer  
Illustrator  
Public Relations  
Officer  
TV Correspondent  
Video Jockey (VJ)  
Radio Jockey (RJ)

## CLAT

Litigation  
Judiciary  
Corporate Lawyers  
Intellectual Property  
Lawyers  
Law firms  
Legal Process  
Outsourcing (LPO)  
Miscellaneous

## HOTEL MANAGEMENT

Airline Catering (flight kitchen)  
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Club management  
Cruise Ship Hotel Management  
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