



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 May-2022 eBook covers the current events that happened in the month of May. 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 May-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 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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# INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

**MAY 2022**





# INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

## #FINLAND & SWEDEN URGE TO JOIN NATO

Recently, Finland and Sweden have shown interest to join the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**.

### Why are Sweden and Finland Not NATO Members?

- **Finland:** It has stayed out of such alliances because it **always wanted to maintain cordial relations with its neighbour, Russia**.
- For a long time, the idea of not joining NATO or getting **too close to the West was a matter of survival** for the Finns.
- However, the change in perception and an overwhelming support to join NATO came about following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
- **Sweden:** Unlike Finland, whose policy stance was a matter of survival, Sweden has been opposed to joining the organisation for ideological reasons.



### What would a membership mean and will it benefit NATO as well?

- **Give Security Guarantee:** Being a member of NATO will **give the nations a security guarantee** under the alliance's "**Article 5**" on **collective defence**. The article essentially guarantees a **military response and protection by NATO countries** if any member of the organisation comes under attack.
- Finland's **geographical location plays in its favour** as once it becomes a member, the length of borders Russia shares with NATO would double and it would also **strengthen the alliance's position in the Baltic Sea**.
- Russia threatened to **take military measures if the membership goes through** and warned Finland to be aware of the consequences of this move.
- **Turkey:** Turkey opposes Finland and Sweden joining NATO.
- The Turkish government claimed that it could use its membership in the Western alliance to veto moves to admit the two nations.
- The Turkish government cited Sweden and other Scandinavian countries for supporting Kurdish militants and other groups it considers terrorist.

### RELATED: UKRAINE MEMBERSHIP OF NATO

- Ukrainian President urged the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** to speed up his country's membership in the alliance.
- Ukraine hopes to be invited this year to join a **NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP)**.
- **Reasons for Ukraine to Join NATO:**
- Ukraine is of the opinion that **joining NATO is the only way to end fighting with pro-Russia separatists**.
- There is an increase in clashes and Russian military movements on the border raise fears of an escalation of the **separatist conflict in eastern Ukraine**.
- Ukraine accuses Russia of massing thousands of military personnel on its northern and eastern borders as well as on the **Crimean peninsula** (annexed by Russia in 2014).

- Ukraine's Western allies have rushed to its defence, with a series of statements warning Russia against taking further action.
- **India did not join the Western powers' condemnation** of Russia's intervention in Crimea and kept a low profile on the issue.
- What is NATO?
- It is a military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of April, 1949, by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the **Soviet Union**.
- There are currently 30 member states.
- Its **original members were** Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States
- France withdrew from the integrated military command of NATO in 1966 but remained a member of the organization, it resumed its position in NATO's military command in 2009.
- **Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium.
- NATO has only once invoked Article 5, on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2001 following the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in the US.

## #CZECH REPUBLIC TO REPLACE RUSSIA IN UNHRC

- The **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** in a secret ballot voting elected the Czech Republic to replace Russia on the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).
- 157 countries voted in favor of the Czech Republic in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and there were 23 abstentions. **The Czech Republic retains the UNHRC seat till 31 December 2023.**
- Russia was suspended from UNHRC by a vote in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) for its human rights violations in Ukraine.
- Later, Russia **announced that it had withdrawn from UNHRC before the vote.**
- Although Russia is suspended from UNHRC, it can participate in the UNHRC sessions as it has observer status. The seats in **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** are divided among regional groups and a replacement for Russia had to come from an East European country.
- The Czech Republic, an East European country, submitted a candidacy proposal to UNHRC in April.
- In 2011, Libya was suspended from UNHRC because of the violence against protesters **by forces supporting then-leader Muammar Gaddafi.**



## What is UNHRC?

- The **United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)** is a **UN organization** that aims to protect human rights. It was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2006.
- It replaced the **United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR)**. The headquarters of UNHRC is in Geneva in Switzerland.
- The UNHRC has 47 members elected for three-year terms and the **seats are divided on a regional group**

**basis. No member can occupy the UNHRC seat for more than two consecutive terms.**

- The **UNHRC seats are divided into the following regional groups:** 13 for Africa, 13 for Asia, 6 for Eastern Europe, 8 for Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), and 7 for the Western European and Others Group (WEOG).

## #RUSSIA SUSPENDED FROM UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 violation 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.**

## #PM MODI IN TOKYO FOR QUAD SUMMIT

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Tokyo** early on May 23, 2022, to attend the second in-person Quad Summit 2022.
- The **Indian Prime Minister** has a schedule for the next two days as he will meet the newly-elected Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, US President Joe Biden, and the Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida.
- Quad Summit 2022 will also be the new Australian PM's first Quad meet just a day after his swearing-in.
- Quad Summit 2022 will provide an opportunity to the four leaders of the leading economies to review the progress of the grouping's initiatives as well as exchange views on the developments in the **Indo-Pacific as well as the global issues of mutual interest.**
- PM Modi's visit to Japan from May 23-24 will also be crucial amid the Russia-Ukraine war where India's stand at the UN is playing an important role in its relations with Russia and the United States.



### PM Modi in Japan and Quad Summit

- On May 23, Prime Minister Modi will attend an event convened by the **US President Joe Biden to launch the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF).**
- US President and PM Modi will hold a bilateral meeting where they will discuss the further consolidation of India's multifaceted bilateral relations with the US.
- The two leaders will also continue the dialogue on regional development and contemporary global issues. It will be a continuation of the **conversation they already had on how they see the picture in Ukraine.**
- The **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity** aims at binding regional countries more closely through common standards in the areas including clean energy, supply-chain resilience, infrastructure and digital trade.
- Ahead of the Quad Summit 2022, China had also hit out saying **that the US-led Indo-Pacific strategy is a ploy to create divisions and incite confrontation in the region.**



## #DIFFERENCE BETWEEN QUAD & AUKUS?

- **Prime Minister Modi** has 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?

- 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.

AUKUS	Quad
It is a security pact between three countries	It is a dialogue between 4 countries
The countries under it are Australia, USA and UK	United States, India, Japan and Australia come under it
It was announced on 15th September 2021	It was initiated in 2007
The treaty covers AI, Cyber warfare, underwater capabilities etc	The alliance envisions a shared vision for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific
Australia would be helped to develop nuclear powered submarines	Here military exercises like Malabar are conducted but no nuclear submarines are developed

## #INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK (IPEF)

Recently, India's Prime Minister participated in an event in Tokyo to launch the **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)**.



- This economic initiative came a day before the **second in-person summit** of the **Quad leaders** (India, the US, Australia and Japan) in Tokyo.

### What is QUAD?

- It is the grouping of **four democracies** –India, Australia, the US, and Japan.
- All four nations find a common ground of being democratic nations and also support the common interest of unhindered **maritime trade and security**.
- The Quad is billed as four democracies with a shared objective to ensure and support a “**free, open and prosperous**” Indo-Pacific region.
- The idea of Quad was first mooted by **Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007**. However, the idea couldn't move ahead with Australia pulling out of it, apparently due to Chinese pressure.

### What is the Significance of IPEF?

- It is a US-led initiative that aims to strengthen economic partnership among participating countries to enhance resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness, and competitiveness in the **Indo-Pacific region**.
- The IPEF was launched with a dozen initial partners who together represent **40% of the world GDP**.
- Opportunity for Indo-Pacific Region:** It is a declaration of a collective desire to make the Indo-Pacific region an engine of global economic growth.
- An Economic Vision:** The Indo-Pacific covers half the population of the world and more than **60% of the global GDP** and the nations who will join this framework in the future, are signing up to work toward an economic vision that will deliver for all people.

### What is India's Vision for Indo-Pacific Region?

- India's trade in this region is growing rapidly, with overseas investments being directed towards the East, e.g., the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements** with Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, and the Free Trade Agreements with **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** and Thailand.
- India has been active in **championing a Free and Open Indo-Pacific**.
- The US, Australia, and the members of the ASEAN have all expressed a common view that **India plays a greater role in the region**.
- India, along with its **Quad partners**, is upping its game in the Indo-Pacific.
- India's view is to work with other like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region to cooperatively manage a rules-based multipolar regional order and **prevent any single power from dominating the region or its waterways**.

## #US ANNOUNCED INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

- Recently, the US administration has announced its long-awaited **Indo-Pacific strategy**. The document focuses on building **collective capacity** to deal with challenges in the region.
- These include a focus on **challenges from China**, advancing the US relationship, a **'Major Defense Partnership' with India** and supporting its role as a net security provider in the region.
- What are the Key Points of US' Indo-Pacific strategy?
- **Vision of Indo-Pacific:** The US will seek an Indo-Pacific that is **free and open, connected, prosperous, secure and resilient**.
- **Free:** One of the strategic actions outlined is investing in civil society, a free press and democratic institutions.
- **AUKUS**, a security alliance between Australia, the UK and the US has also been recently launched.

## #WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM MEETING IN DAVOS

- The annual meeting of the **World Economic Forum (WEF)** in **Davos, Switzerland** is scheduled from May 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> 2022.
- The **meeting was originally scheduled for January 17-21<sup>st</sup>** but was postponed due to the outbreak of the Omicron variant.



### What are the focus areas of the WEF meeting?

- The following topics will be focused on at the WEF meeting:
  - Pandemic recovery
  - Tackling climate change
  - Building a better future for work
  - Accelerating stakeholder capitalism
  - Harnessing the technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

### Who are attending the meeting from India?

- **Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas** will attend the event on Energy Outlook: Overcoming the Crisis
- **YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, CM of Andhra Pradesh**, will attend the event on Future-proofing Health Systems
- **Aaditya Thackeray, Tourism Minister of Maharashtra** will attend Forum Initiative Briefing – Global Plastic Action Partnership event, and Embracing Climate Adaptation Action event
- **KT Rama Rao, Information Technology Minister of Telangana** will attend the event on AI on the Street: Managing Trust in the Public Square.

### Key points of Previous WEF meeting

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

- India is the **world's third-largest pharmaceutical producer** and is considered 'pharmacy to the world'.
- **Pro-Planet People (P3) Approach:**
- Proposed the idea of the "P3 (Pro-Planet-People) movement" that underscores **India's commitments to climate change at the global forum (UNFCCC COP 26)**.
- Reiterated India's "clean, green, sustainable, and reliable" energy goals which dwell on **achieving a net-zero carbon emission target by 2070**.
- **Making LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment - given by the Indian PM at UNFCCC COP 26 Conference) into a mass movement can be a strong foundation for P3.**
- LIFE is a vision of a resilient and sustainable lifestyle that will come handy in dealing with the climate crisis and other unpredictable challenges of the future.
- Throwaway culture and consumerism has enhanced the climate challenge.
- What is the theme of the WEF meeting in 2022?
- The theme for WEF annual Meeting 2022 is 'working Together, restoring Trust'. This year's WEF meeting will be the first global in-person leadership event since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## World Economic Forum

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a **Swiss nonprofit foundation established in 1971**, based in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Recognized by the Swiss authorities as the international institution for public-private cooperation.
- **Founder and Executive Chairman:** Klaus Schwab.
- **Some major reports published by WEF are:**
- **Energy Transition Index.**
- **Global Competitiveness Report.**
- **Global IT Report**
- **Global Gender Gap Report.**
- **Global Risk Report.**
- **Global Travel and Tourism Report.**



## #INDIA JOINED FIRST MOVERS COALITION

- India recently joined a global public-private partnership **initiative called the First Movers Coalition**.
- The initiative was launched by **President of the USA Joe Biden and the World Economic Forum (WEF) at COP26**.
- It was joined by 50 new corporate members **with a collective market capitalization of USD 8.5 trillion**.



- The **First Movers Coalition aims to decarbonize the most carbon-intensive sectors** such as the heavy industry and long-distance transport sectors, which are responsible for 30% of global emissions.
- It is expected that emissions from these sectors will increase to around 50% by mid-century unless urgent actions are taken on clean technology innovation. The targeted sectors of the **First Movers Coalition include aluminum, aviation, chemicals, concrete, shipping, steel, and trucking**.

### Which countries joined the coalition and what are their commitments?

- Apart from **India, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, and the UK** joined the First Movers Coalition as government partners. India, Japan, and Sweden also joined the steering board of the First Movers Coalition.
- The member countries pledged to create early markets **for clean technologies through appropriate policies and engagements with the private sector**.
- They also committed to purchasing a certain percentage from suppliers using zero-carbon solutions, even at a premium cost. If purchases from public and private sectors increase in this decade it will ensure affordability of clean technologies and also ensures long-term transformation.

### World Economic Forum

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a **Swiss nonprofit foundation established in 1971**, based in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Recognized by the Swiss authorities as the international institution for public-private cooperation.
- **Mission:** Committed to **improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society** to shape global, regional, and industry agendas.

- **Founder and Executive Chairman:** Klaus Schwab.
- **Some major reports published by WEF are:**
- **Energy Transition Index.**
- **Global Competitiveness Report.**
- **Global IT Report**
- WEF along with INSEAD and Cornell University publishes this report.
- **Global Gender Gap Report.**
- Global Risk Report.
- Global Travel and Tourism Report.

## REALTED: INDIA TO REACH CARBON NEUTRALITY BY 2070

India announced that it will **reach carbon neutrality by 2070** as part of a **five-point action plan** that included reducing emissions to 50% by 2030.

- India made this pledge at the **Conference of the Parties (COP) 26 climate summit in Glasgow**, where it also urged developed countries to deliver on their promise of **climate financing**.
- However, India hasn't submitted an updated **Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs)** with these commitments to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** yet.
- More than **70 countries have promised to become Net Zero by the middle of the century**, and this is being considered vital for meeting the Paris Agreement goal of keeping global temperatures within 2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial times.
- India's Net Zero target of 2070 silences its critics but it is along expected lines.
- The big thing here is not the target itself but the fact that **India finally relented and decided to take up a target**, something it had been holding back on for quite some time.
- In its climate action plan submitted under the **Paris Agreement**, India had promised to reduce its emissions intensity, or emissions per unit of **Gross Domestic Product**, by 33 to 35% by the year 2030 compared to 2005 levels.

## Reducing India's Emissions:

- India **has the lowest per capita emissions** of the world's major economies -- emitting **5% of the total**, despite accounting for **17% of the world's population**.
- According to the **World Resources Institute**, India's total **greenhouse gas** emissions were about 3.3 billion tonnes in 2018.
- It's **projected to rise above 4 billion tonnes per year by 2030**.
- That would mean between now and 2030, **India could be emitting anywhere between 35 to 40 billion tonnes** at the current rates of growth.
- Cutting 1 billion tonnes would, therefore, represent a reduction of **2.5 to 3% in its absolute emissions** in the business-as-usual scenario in the next nine years.

## #WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY HELD IN GENEVA

- From 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> May 2022, the **75<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly** is being held in Geneva, Switzerland. This is the first in-person Health Assembly since the COVID-19 pandemic began.



### What is the theme of this year's health assembly?

- "Health for peace, peace for health" is the theme for this year's assembly.
- The **COVID-19 along with other health emergencies** has showcased the WHO's role in coordinating all forms of response to put a check on such events.
- A key theme of the Health assembly is to strengthen the preparedness mechanism for responding to health emergencies.

### What were the important decisions taken?

- On the first day of the **75<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly**, the member states agreed to adopt policies that will be improving the financing model of the World Health Organization.
- The Sustainable Financing Working Group is made up of the member states of WHO and was set up in January 2021 **and chaired by Björn Kümmel, from Germany** recommended the improvement of the financial model.

### What is World Health Assembly?

- World Health Assembly (WHA)** is WHO's decision-making body attended by delegations from all of WHO's member states,
- It is held yearly at the HQ of WHO, i.e., **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- Specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board remains the focus of this assembly.
- Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022's assembly is the first in-person assembly.
- In Geneva, Switzerland, the Health Assembly is held every year.

### Functions of WHA:

- Deciding on Organization's policies.
- Appointment of the Director-General of WHO.
- Administration of financial policies.
- Review and approval of the proposed programme budget.

### World Health Organization (WHO)

- World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations' specialized agency for Health was founded in 1948.
- Its **headquarters** are situated in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- There are 194 Member States, 150 country offices, six regional offices.
- It is an inter-governmental organization and works in collaboration with its member states usually through the Ministries of Health.

- The WHO provides leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends.
- It began functioning on **April 7, 1948** – a date now being celebrated every year as **World Health Day**.

## #SRI-LANKAN ECONOMIC CRISIS & PM RESIGNATION

- Recently, the **Sri Lankan Prime Minister (PM) Mahinda Rajapaksa** **tendered his resignation** as Prime Minister to the Sri Lankan President.
- Also, **Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa** wanted Prime Minister to resign, as it will enable him to form an interim government and **pave the way for a solution to the present crisis in Sri Lanka**.



### Why are the earlier positions held by Mahinda Rajapaksa?

- **Mahinda Rajapaksa also served as a President.** During his term, Sri Lanka witnessed the defeat of Tamil Tiger rebels in 2009. His term is marked by allegations of corruption, human rights abuses, and nexus with China, which led the country into a debt trap.
- The Sri Lankan cabinet will be dissolved and a new Prime minister will be selected. A unity government with the Opposition can be formed by the President. The Parliament may be dissolved and fresh elections can be conducted for the Parliament.

### How the new Prime Minister will be selected?

- A national council appointed by the President will select the new prime minister and Cabinet comprising all parties in the Sri Lankan Parliament.
- ***Can the Sri Lankan President dissolve Parliament?***
- President can dissolve the Parliament. But as per the constitution of Sri Lanka, the president cannot dissolve parliament until midway through its five-year term (until February 2023). **To dissolve the parliament before February 2023, the parliament has to pass a resolution.**

### What is the crisis in Sri Lanka?

- **Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis.** The nation does not even have enough foreign exchange reserves to import essential items like fuel, medicines, and food. It also defaulted on its foreign debts.
- The economic turmoil gave rise to **political instability and civil strife**.
- The economy was already in decline and the Covid-19 pandemic further worsened the **economic situation**.
- Exports like **tea drastically fell due to the pandemic, and the remittances were also reduced**.
- The tourism sector on which the Sri Lankan economy is dependent also suffered. Decisions like reducing corporate income tax, and abruptly moving towards organic farming also aggravated the economic crisis.



## #RELATED: RANIL WICKREMESINGHE AS 26<sup>TH</sup> PM OF SRI-LANKA

- On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022, **Ranil Wickremesinghe** was sworn in as the 26<sup>th</sup> prime minister of Sri Lanka.
- He was sworn in as the PM to steady the **nation's economy which is debt-ridden and to end the ongoing political turmoil.**
- Wickremesinghe has replaced former **PM Mahinda Rajapaksa** who had recently resigned from this post. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa administered for the new PM of the country.
- Former **PM Rajapaksa is currently hiding in an undisclosed location as the country is boiling with anti-government protests.**

### Which party is headed by Ranil Wickremesinghe?

- The **United National Party's head is Ranil Wickremesinghe.** This party is the current main opposition party in Sri Lanka. Ranil Wickremesinghe had already served as the nation's Prime Minister four times and this will be his fifth time in office.

### Why are there ongoing protests in Sri Lanka?

- The country is facing widespread shortages of food, and fuel as well as rising inflation and skyrocketing prices of essential commodities.
- The nation is also facing hours-long power cuts and **hence the citizens of the nation are protesting all across the country against the government.**
- **In Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka,** groups of anti and pro-government activists had clashed after the protestors were demanding the resignation of **President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.**
- The protestors had set fire to the **ancestral home of the Rajapaksa family.**

### What are Some Major Issues in India-Sri Lanka Relations?

- **Killing of Fisherman:** Killing of Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy is a lingering issue between these two nations.
- In 2019 and 2020, a total of 284 **Indian fishermen were arrested** and a total of 53 Indian boats were confiscated by the Sri Lankan authorities.
- In the current meeting both the countries **discussed the Palk Bay fisheries conflict and reiterated the longstanding consensus** to handle fishermen issues through **"humanitarian approach and refrain from the use of violence"**.
- **East Coast Terminal project:** This year (2021) Sri Lanka cancelled an MoU signed with India and Japan for the **East Coast Terminal project.**
- India protested the cancellation though it later agreed to the West Coast Terminal being developed by the Adani group.
- **Influence of China:** China's rapidly growing economic footprint (and political clout as a corollary) in Sri Lanka is straining India-Sri Lanka relations.
- China is already the largest investor in Sri Lanka, accounting for 23.6% of the total **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** during 2010-2019 as against 10.4% from India.

- China is also one of the largest export destinations for Sri Lankan goods and holds over 10% of its external debt.
- 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Sri Lankan Constitution:** It envisages devolution of necessary powers to the provincial councils to address the just demand of the Tamil people for equality, justice, peace, and respect within a united Sri Lanka.

## #BANGLADESH OFFERED TO USE CHITTAGONG PORT

- Bangladesh Prime Minister offered India the **use of the Chittagong Port in Bangladesh.**
- Access to the Chittagong Port will benefit India's northeastern states like **Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Mizoram.**



### Why the offer is significant?

- Before independence, the northeastern part of India had access to **Chittagong Port** via the Brahmaputra and Barak River systems.
- After partition in 1947, India's Northeast lost access to the sea.
- The Chittagong Port had gone to East Pakistan and India lost a major trade route.**
- However, India continued to use the ports of East Pakistan until the 1965 war with Pakistan. After that, the northeast had to depend on the '**chicken's neck**' (a narrow strip in West Bengal) to carry out trade.
- However, in recent years India got access to **some ports of Bangladesh including Chittagong Port.**
- Further revival of pre-Partition trade routes would improve the trade for the Northeast region and generate revenue for Bangladesh.

### What are the other initiatives to revive these trade routes?

- In March 2021, the Prime **Ministers of India and Bangladesh inaugurated the Maitri Setu Bridge.** It was built over the Feni River and reduced the distance between (Tripura) and the Chittagong port in Bangladesh.
- Road infrastructure in Meghalaya's Dawki, Assam's Sutarkandi, and Tripura's Akhaura linking Bangladesh is also being improved.
- Mizoram is planning to build bridges across the **Khawthlangtuipui river** for faster access to the Chittagong port.

### Where is Chittagong Port located?

- Chittagong Port, Bangladesh's principal seaport is built on the Karnafuli River. It is the busiest port along the coastline of the Bay of Bengal. It is **also used for transshipment by India, Nepal, and Bhutan.**

### Recent Areas of Cooperation

- Bilateral Ties:** The year 2021 marks the **50<sup>th</sup> year** of the establishment of bilateral ties between India and Bangladesh.
- The Prime Minister of India will also be visiting the country for the **centenary celebrations of Father of the Nation, Mujibur Rehman.**

- The Bangladesh Army contingent had also participated in the Republic Day 2021.
- Moreover, India's commitment to remove non-tariff barriers has reset the positive course of bilateral ties.
- **Swarnim Vijay Varsh:** As part of the 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh' (50<sup>th</sup> year of independence), Indian Naval Ships are scheduled to make their first visit to the Mongla port in Bangladesh.
- The indigenously developed **Sumedha** (Offshore Patrol vessel) and **Kulish** (guided missile corvette) will be heading to the port to commemorate the day.
- **Other Major Progress:** A trial run of container cargo has been conducted through Bangladesh's Chattogram (Chittagong) port to Agartala
- Two new protocol routes to inland waterways have been added connecting Tripura with the national waterways through Bangladesh.
- **The Maitri Setu:** The PM of India will inaugurate 'Maitri Setu' bridge built over the Feni river which flows between the Indian boundary in Tripura and Bangladesh.
- The name 'Maitri Setu' symbolizes growing bilateral relations and friendly ties between India and Bangladesh.
- **Train and Bus Routes:** In December 2020, rail connectivity between **Haldibari** in West Bengal and **Chilahati** in Bangladesh was resumed after almost 55 years.

## #RUSSIA CELEBRATES VICTORY DAY AMID WAR WITH UKRAINE

- Russia celebrates 'Victory Day' every year on May 9.
- Victory Day is one of the most significant national holidays in Russia as it marks the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany during the Second World War.
- **During the Victory Day 2022 parade in Russia**, President Putin flaunts Russia's military capabilities and the bravery of the soldiers fighting for the country.
- **Victory Day 2022 in Russia** will also be different this year as the country's war on Ukraine continues and the President justifies the war by comparing it with the **previous struggle against Nazism in Germany**.



## When is Victory Day 2022?

- Victory Day is a grand celebration and **one of the most significant national holidays that takes place every year in Russia on May 9.**
- Victory Day is celebrated in Russia with a massive military parade and other festivities organised on this day to celebrate the victory over the Nazis.

## Why this day is important this year?

- Over the last few years, **Russian President Vladimir Putin** during his address on Victory Day has warned of new battles ahead.
- Victory Day 2022 in Russia is expected to be a turning point in the Ukraine war. Till now, Putin has justified the war on Ukraine claiming that **he was denazifying the country and continuously used World War II, Holocaust, and Nazism to legitimize the attack on Ukraine.**

## Why is Victory Day celebrated in Russia?

- **Every year on May 9, Russia celebrates Victory Day** to commemorate the defeat of the Nazis during the Second World War.
- Notably, while the allies celebrate Victory Day or Victory in Europe Day on May 7 - the day Nazis surrendered in France- Joseph Stalin, Soviet Union Leader, chose to celebrate the victory over Nazis in Soviet-controlled Berlin, Germany the next day.
- **Later, Russia's first post-Soviet President Boris Yeltsin** made the victory day celebration an annual affair; however, it was Soviet Leonid Brezhnev who announced May 9 as the national holiday.

## #SCO'S RATS MEETING HELD

Recently, a meeting held between the member nations of the **SCO** under the framework of the **SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)**. It is the first such meeting in India since Russia's evasion of Ukraine and China's transgression along the Line of actual control.



- SCO-RATS meeting agenda is to boost cooperation in fighting different global and regional security challenges.
- **India has chaired** the Council of Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO (RATS SCO).
- Situation of Afghanistan and security concerns raised due to the fall of Afghanistan in the hands of the Taliban was the main agenda of the meeting.

## What is Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure-SCO?

- **SCO-RATS** is a permanent body of the **Sanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)**.
- It is promoting coordination and interaction between the **SCO** member states as per as fight against **terrorism, extremism** and **separatism** are concern.
- The main functions of **SCO-RATS** are **information sharing**.
- As a member, India has actively participated in the activities of **SCO-RATS**.



- India's permanent membership would enable it to generate greater understanding among members for its perspective.

## What is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization?

- SCO was created in 2001.
- The **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)** was established as a **multilateral association** to ensure security and maintain stability across the vast **Eurasian region**.
- It envisages joining forces to counteract emerging challenges and threats, and enhance trade, as well as cultural and humanitarian cooperation.
- Prior to the creation of SCO in 2001, **Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan** were members of the **Shanghai Five**.
- **Shanghai Five (1996)** emerged from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks which the four former Soviet republics held with China to ensure stability along the borders.
- Following the accession of **Uzbekistan** to the organization in 2001, the **Shanghai Five** was renamed the SCO.
- The SCO Charter was signed in 2002 and entered into force in 2003. The SCO's official languages are **Russian and Chinese**.
- SCO has two Permanent Bodies:
  - SCO Secretariat in Beijing,
  - Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent.
- **Member Nations:** Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan.
- Recently, **Iran's bid to become a full member of the SCO has been approved.**

## ANTI TERRORISM DAY: 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY

- Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has asked all the States, Union Territories (UTs), Central Government departments, and also ministries to observe the day in a "befitting manner".
- It is necessary to follow the preventive measures, **including maintaining social distance, wearing masks, etc., while organising the appropriate programme for the occasion.**

## When is Anti-Terrorism Day 2022 observed in India?

- **Anti-Terrorism Day is observed on May 21** every year with the objective of promoting national harmony, mitigating terrorism, and unity among people of all castes, creeds, etc.
- The day also raises awareness about the violence perpetrated by terrorists and provides knowledge to the youth about terrorism and its impact on human suffering and lives. Also, make them aware of an anti-social act of terrorism.

## Why is Anti-Terrorism Day 2022 observed in India?

- On May 21, 1991, the official announcement was made following the assassination of India's former Prime Minister **Rajiv Gandhi**. He was killed in **Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, during a terrorist operation by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)**.
- After the **assassination, the V.P. Singh government** decided to observe May 21 as Anti-Terrorism Day. On

this day, a pledge is taken in all government offices, public undertakings, and other public institutions.

## #CHINA'S GLOBAL SECURITY INITIATIVE

- Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) **Annual Conference 2022**, Chinese President Xi Jinping has put forward a new Global Security Initiative.

- The initiative is aimed at countering the initiatives of west like the Indo-Pacific strategy of the USA, the Quad and the AUKUS (Australia-U.K.-U.S.) security pact.

- **What are the six areas defined by Chinese president?**

- Stay committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative peace & security.
- Stay committed to respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries.
- Stay committed to abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.
- Stay committed to taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously.
- Stay committed to peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries.
- Stay committed to maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional domains.



## What is Quad?

- Quad is an informal **strategic security dialouge comprising of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States**. Quad is viewed as a response to increased Chinese economic and military power.
- China responded to the Quad by issuing formal diplomatic protests to its members. **China called the Quad as "Asian NATO"**.
- Quad members rejected the notion that it is an Asian NATO or a military alliance. The members pointed to the broad-based cooperation of the members, including on vaccines and technology.

## What is new Indo-Pacific strategy of USA?

- In February 2022, USA announced its new strategy for a "free and open Indo-Pacific" region. The strategy pledges support for regional connectivity, trade, and deepening bilateral and multilateral partnerships in the Indo-Pacific.
- The new strategy puts greater emphasis on cooperation with regional allies & partners.
- It also mentions plans for forthcoming **"Indo-Pacific Economic Framework" that will emphasize new approaches to trade.**

## What is AUKUS?

- AUKUS is a trilateral security pact between **Australia, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (USA) for the Indo-Pacific region**. Under this, the US and the UK will help Australia to acquire nuclear-powered submarines.
- China accused that the three western powers are having a "cold-war mentality", as the deal was widely viewed as a response to China's status as an emerging superpower. To mark the protest, France recalled its ambassadors from Australia and the US; **French foreign minister called the pact a "stab in the back"** as Australia cancelled French-Australian submarine deal without notice.

- It was also criticized for not including New Zealand, & Quad members like India & Japan.
- Some experts argue that the deal may lead to nuclear arms race in the Indo-Pacific.

### What is Boao Forum for Asia?

- It is a non-profit organisation **that hosts high-level forums for leaders from government, business and academia** to share their vision on the most pressing issues. It is modelled on the World Economic Forum (WEF) held annually in Davos, Switzerland.
- Thus the forum is also known as the “Asian Davos”. The forum takes its name from the town of Boao, located in China’s southern Hainan province.

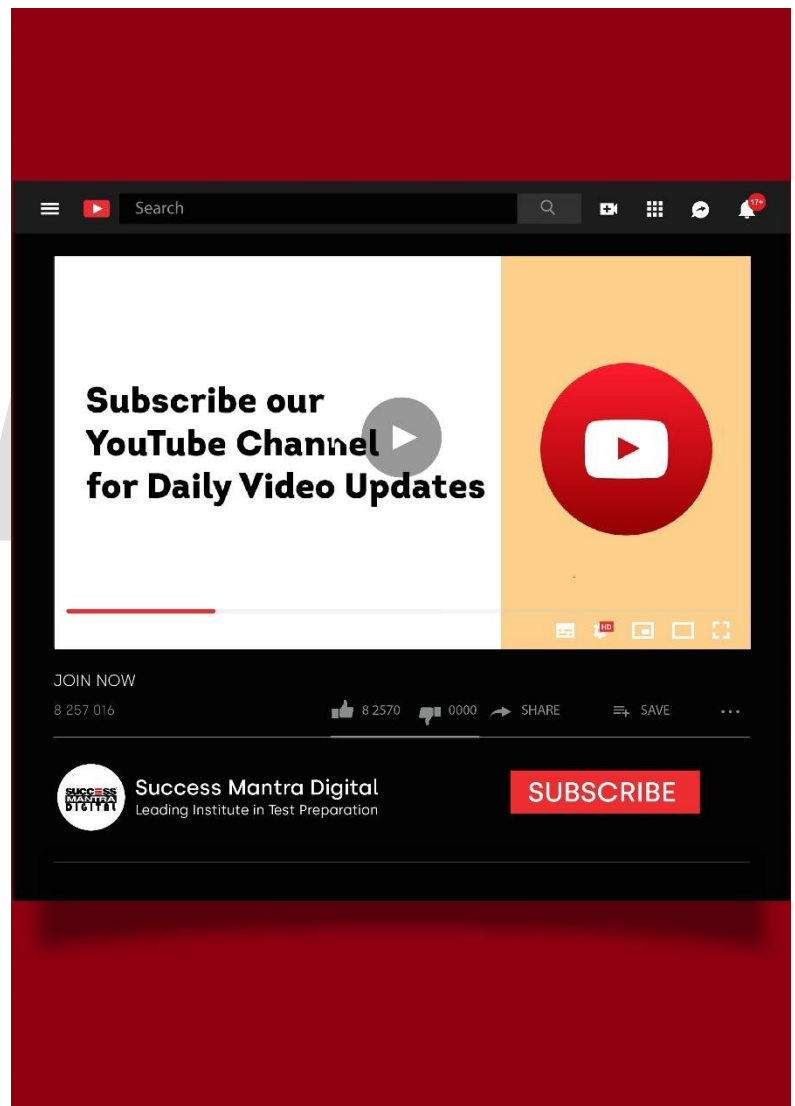
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