

Current Affairs search results for tag: international-news

1. Russia Withdraws From UN World Tourism Organisation (April 29, 2022)

The Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation Zurab Pololikashvili announced that Russia has decided to withdraw from the UNWTO.

- The UNWTO announced earlier in March that it wanted to suspend Russia over the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- The UNWTO had previously described the Russian invasion of Ukraine as inconsistent with the United Nations Charter and against the fundamental purpose of the UNWTO.
- Russia has decided to withdraw from the organisation even before the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's vote in the UN on 27 April 2022.
- This is the first time the UNWTO has met to discuss the suspension of one of its member states.
- **About United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) -**
- Formation- 1 November 1975
- Headquarters- Madrid, Spain
- Secretary General- Zurab Pololikashvili
- Member Countries- 160
- So far, 17 member states have withdrawn from the organisation at various times.
- UNWTO is a United Nations organisation that promotes tourism to promote economic growth, environmental sustainability and inclusive growth.

2. India Tops The World In Real-Time Payment Volumes In 2021 (April 28, 2022)

According to the ACI Worldwide Report on Real-time Transactions, India's real-time transactions are ranked first in the world.

- In the year 2021, India's real-time transactions have grown to 48.6 billion.
- China ranks second after India with 18 billion real time transactions.
- India's transaction volume is more than seven times that of the US, UK, Canada, Germany and France combined (7.5 billion).
- Brazil, Thailand and South Korea lag behind India and China in terms of real-time transactions of 8.7 billion, 9.7 billion and 7.4 billion respectively.
- This research has found that more than half (52.71 percent) of consumers worldwide use mobile wallets.
- Real-time payment transactions worldwide crossed 118.3 billion in the year 2021, a growth of 64.5% on a year-on-year basis.

Reason to increase in real-time transactions

- The rise in the use of digital payments during the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the growth of QR code payments and UPI-based mobile payment apps among merchants, propelled real-time payments into 2021.
- Consumers are moving from cash to digital real-time payment methods, which means that the share of real-time payments in total payment volume will exceed 70% in 2026.

3. Myanmar court sentences Suu Kyi to 5 years in jail for corruption (April 27, 2022)

A court in military-ruled Myanmar found deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi guilty of corruption and sentenced her to five years in jail.

- The case was the first of 11 corruption charges against the Nobel laureate, each carrying a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.
- A Myanmar junta court accused the 76-year-old leader of accepting a bribe of \$600,000 cash and gold bars.
- He has already been sentenced to six years in prison in other cases and is facing 10 more corruption charges.
- Suu Kyi has been under house arrest since February 2021, when a military coup toppled her elected government.

• About Aung San Suu Kyi

- Aung San Suu Kyi born on June 19, 1945, Rangoon, Burma is politician and opposition leader of Myanmar.
- She was the winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1991.
- She has held several government positions since 2016, including that of state counsellor, which essentially made her the de facto leader of the country.
- She was sidelined when the military seized power in February 2021.

4. Countries will have to 'justify' Veto Votes at UN (April 27, 2022)

The 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly unanimously passed a resolution calling on the five permanent members of the Security Council to justify the use of the veto.

- The move was for reform in the United Nations security council in the light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- The United States, China, Russia, France and Britain have veto power

• What is the Veto Power at the UN ?

- The veto power of the United Nations Security Council is the power of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to veto any "substantive" resolution.

- Any member abstaining from voting cannot prevent the draft resolution from being passed.
- Procedural votes are not counted for the exercise of veto power.
- One of the major uses of veto power may be to block the selection of the Secretary General of the Council.

- **Issues with Veto Power**

- The veto power is controversial.
- Supporters see it as a promoter of international stability, a check against military interference, and an important safeguard against US domination.
- Critics say the veto is the most undemocratic element of the United Nations, as well as the main cause of inaction on war crimes and crimes against humanity.
- It effectively prevents UN action against permanent members and their allies.

5. Twitter confirms sale of company to Elon Musk for \$44 billion (April 26, 2022)

One of the world's biggest deals in the tech world, billionaire Elon Musk, has taken control of Twitter. He has signed an agreement to buy Twitter for about \$ 44 billion.

- The deal has given the Tesla CEO ownership of the company with 217 million users.
- Musk will have to pay \$ 54.20 (Rs 4148) for every share of Twitter.
- Twitter plays an influential role in shaping the political and media agenda on both sides of the Atlantic.

- **About Elon Musk**

- He was born on 28 June 1971 Pretoria, South Africa
- Mr. Musk is the world's wealthiest person, according to Forbes, with a nearly \$279 billion fortune.
- Mr. Musk began making his fortune in 1999, when he sold Zip2, an online mapping and business directory, to Compaq for \$307 million.
- He used its stock to become PayPal, an Internet service that went beyond banks and allowed consumers to pay businesses directly.
- That same year, Musk founded Space Exploration Technologies, or SpaceX.
- The company developed cost-effective reusable rockets.
- In 2004, Musk invested in Tesla, then in a startup trying to build electric cars.
- Eventually he was made CEO of Tesla and led the company to astronomical success as the world's most valuable automaker and largest seller of electric vehicles.

6. Japan has described the Kuril Islands as being under Russia's "illegal occupation" (April 26, 2022)

Japan recently described the Kuril Islands (which Japan calls the Northern Territory and Russia calls the South Kurils) as an "illegal occupation" of Russia.

- This is the first time in nearly two decades that Japan has used the phrase in relation to the dispute over the Kuril Islands.
- **About Kuril Islands/ Northern Territories**
 - These are a group of four islands located between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean, north of Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost prefecture.
 - Both Moscow and Tokyo claim sovereignty over it, although the islands have been under Russian control since the end of World War II.
 - The islands were occupied by the Soviet Union at the end of World War II.
 - Tokyo claims that these disputed islands have been part of Japan since the early 19th century.
- **The reason behind the dispute**
 - Japan's sovereignty over the islands is confirmed by a number of treaties since 1855.
 - Russia, on the other hand, claims the Yalta Agreement (1945) and the Potsdam Declaration (1945) as proof of its sovereignty.
 - It argues that the 1951 San Francisco Treaty is legal evidence that Japan acknowledged Russian sovereignty over the islands.
 - Under Article 2 of the treaty, Japan had "renounced all rights, entitlements and claims to the Kuril Islands."
 - However, Japan argues that the San Francisco Treaty cannot be used here because the Soviet Union never signed a peace treaty.
 - In fact, Japan and Russia are technically still at war because they haven't signed a peace treaty since World War II.

7. India becomes third highest military spender (April 26, 2022)

According to the report released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), America is at the forefront of military spending among all the countries of the world, followed by China and India.

- According to the report, US military spending amounted to \$801 billion in the year 2021, a decline of 1.4 percent compared to the year 2020.

- The US, China, India, Britain and Russia are among the five largest military spenders this year, accounting for 62 per cent of the total expenditure.
- Total global military expenditure increased by 0.7 per cent in real terms in 2021, to reach \$2113 billion.
- India ranks third in the world with military spending of \$76.6 billion, an increase of 0.9 percent compared to 2020 and 33 percent higher than 2012.
- China, the world's second-largest spender, allocated an estimated \$293 billion to its military in 2021, up 4.7 percent from 2020.
- Russia's military expenditure in the year 2021 increased to 65.9 billion, which is 2.9 percent more than the year 2020.
- Nigeria increased its military spending by 56 percent to \$4.5 billion in 2021 in response to several security challenges such as violent extremism and separatist insurgency.

- **About 'SIPRI'**

- Full form - Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
- Formation- 6 May 1966
- Founders- Tage Erlander, Alva Myrdal
- Headquarters- Solna ,Stockholm (Sweden)
- Director- Dan Smith

8. India has suspended tourist visas issued to Chinese nationals (April 25, 2022)

According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) India has suspended tourist visas issued to Chinese nationals.

- India has been raising with China the problems of about 22,000 Indian students registered in Chinese universities, these students are unable to go there and take classes.
- China has not yet allowed these students to come to the country.
- In the year 2020, due to the Kovid-19 epidemic, these students had to leave their studies midway and return to India.
- In a circular issued on April 20 about India, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said, Tourist visas issued to citizens of China are no longer valid.
- Nationals of Bhutan, India, Maldives and Nepal, passengers with a residence permit issued by India, passengers with visa or an e-visa issued by India, passengers with an overseas citizen of India (OCI) card or booklet, passengers with a persons of Indian origin (PIO) card and passengers with a diplomatic passport can enter into india.
- Tourist visas with a validity of ten years are no longer valid.

- **What is Tourist visa**

- A tourist visa is an official document or stamp authorising a person to enter a foreign country for the purpose of leisure and tourism.
- It may also be called “travel visas”, “visitor visas”, or “temporary stay visas”.
- This allows the holder to stay in the host country for a short period of time. This can range from several months to several days.
- During the stay, holders of tourist visas are not allowed to work or engage in non-tourist activities.

9. UK to issue Open General Export Licence (OGEL) to India (April 23, 2022)

In a statement, the British High Commission said the UK will issue an Open General Export Licence (OGEL) to India to cut the delivery period for defence purchases.

- The British Prime Minister arrived in India on a two-day visit in the backdrop of the Russo-Ukraine War.
- The UK is creating an Open General Export Licence (OGEL) for India to reduce bureaucracy and reduce delivery times for defence procurement.
- It will partner with India in the maritime domain along with new fighter jet technology to detect and respond to threats.
- **What is Open General Export Licence (OGEL)?**
- It is a type of licence that is used for the export licence that is issued by the government for domestic suppliers.
- The goods exported to India are classified into three types.
- They are prohibited items, restricted items and freely importable items.
- These classifications are made on the basis of the nature and use of the products.
- OEGL's application process and grant will be looked after by the Department of Defence Production.
- The primary objective of OEGL is to boost India's defence exports.
- Belgium, France, Germany, Japan, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, UK, USA, Canada, Italy, Poland and Mexico are allowed under the OGELs.

10. Global sanctions on Russia may help spur Indian exports: EEPC (April 23, 2022)

According to Engineering Exports Promotion Council (EEPC) India The Russo-Ukraine war has posed risks to economies and trade globally, but sanctions imposed by several developed countries on Russia could bring opportunities for Indian engineering exporters in the global market.

- The Russia-Ukraine conflict is currently the most sensitive issue plaguing the global economy, while the sudden rise in COVID cases in China is also a major concern on the global supply chain.
- Inflationary pressures in the US and real estate volatility in China will have an impact on business growth.
- Rising steel prices and some financial issues are also expected to act as a hindrance to exports in the coming months.

- **India's engineering exports**

- India's engineering exports registered 19.7% growth in March 2022 by climbing up to \$11.13 billion from \$ 9.29 billion in March 2021.
- Exports during April-March stood at \$112.10 billion, registering 46.12% growth over the previous year.
- In financial year 22, the share of engineering in total merchandise exports was 26.7%.
- Out of 34 engineering product panels, 32 showed positive growth during 2021-22 as compared to 2020-21.
- India's engineering exports surpassed the target of \$107.34 billion for Financial year 2021-22 set by the Government of India.
- Among the top 25 major markets for Indian engineering goods, exports to the US jumped 61 per cent to \$2.02 billion in March from \$1.26 billion in the same month last year.
- Engineering exports to UAE surged 78.9% in March, 2022 to US\$ 553 million.
- The top 25 countries such as the US, UAE, China, Germany, Italy and Singapore account for about 75% of the total engineering exports from the country.
- Italy, UAE and Belgium were the top three importers of Indian Iron and Steel during 2021-22.
- The US was the largest importer of Indian 'industrial machinery' during 2021-22 in the global imports of India's product group.
- South Africa, Mexico and Nigeria were the top three importers of automobiles from India during 2021-22.