

# Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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## **1. Canada launches 'Digital Nomad Strategy' for foreign workers ( June 29, 2023 )**

Canada-launches-'Digital-Nomad-Strategy'-for-foreign-workers

Canada launched the "**Digital Nomad Strategy**" to address its **skilled labour shortage, particularly in the tech industry.**

### **An Overview of the News**

- The strategy aims **to attract talented individuals from around the world.**
- The shortage of skilled workers, particularly in the tech industry, has prompted Canada to take proactive measures.
- The announcement was made during **Collision's technical conference in Toronto.**
- The strategy focuses primarily on the technology industry, recognizing its importance in driving innovation and economic growth.

### **Digital Nomad Strategy**

- Foreign workers are allowed to stay in Canada for up to **six months under the Digital Nomad Strategy.**
- If digital nomads receive job offers during their stay, they have the option of extending their time in the country.
- The strategy aims **to address the shortage of skilled professionals in Canada's tech sector.**
- Digital nomads can continue their remote working arrangements while living in Canada.
- This strategy encourages networking and collaboration between foreign workers, local professionals and Canadian businesses.

### **About Canada**

- Capital - **Ottawa**
- Currency - **Canadian Dollar**
- Official languages - **English and French**
- National Symbol - **Maple Leaf**
- Prime Minister - **Justin Trudeau**

## **2. US decision to introduce in-country renewable of H-1B visas ( June 28, 2023 )**

The **Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC)** has welcomed the **US announcement to start in-country renewal of H-1B visas**, saying it will facilitate the movement of **Indian IT professionals and boost services exports**.

### **An overview of the news**

- The decision will make on-site customer engagement easier for **in-house IT professionals**.
- Quick travel to client locations abroad allows them to better understand client requirements, establish strong relationships, and provide tailored solutions.
- The US is a major market for India's IT exports, and this decision will have a significant positive impact on **IT services exports from India**.
- This will contribute to the timely completion of visa renewal projects in the country, **ensuring high quality outcomes and meeting customer expectations**.
- It also enhances India's reputation as a reliable **IT service provider**, thereby creating more export opportunities.

### **About H-1B Visa**

- The **H-1B visa** is a **non-immigrant visa** that allows **US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations**.
- It is designed to allow skilled foreign workers to come to the United States and **work for American companies**.
- This requires **theoretical or technical expertise**.

### **Other Visa Categories**

- **L-1B** - For Specialized Employees
- **L-1A** - For Managers and Executives
- **E-2** - Treaty Investor Visa
- **E-1** - Treaty Trader Visa
- **E-3** - for Australians etc.

### **3. Pakistan and China sign \$4.8 billion nuclear power plant deal ( June 27, 2023 )**

**Pakistan and China** recently have signed a **\$4.8 billion deal to construct a 1,200-megawatt nuclear power plant**.

### **An overview of the news**

- The investment by China, which Pakistan considers its most dependable ally, is viewed as a significant achievement.

- The project, known as **Chashma 5**, will be located in the **central province of Punjab**.
- The **memorandum of understanding (MOU)** was signed between **China National Nuclear Cooperation and Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission**, marking the beginning of the project.
- The Chashma 5 project will aid Pakistan in transitioning away from reliance on fossil fuels and contribute to its **nuclear energy production capacity**.
- Pakistan's total nuclear energy production capacity reached **1,400 MW** with the opening of the country's sixth nuclear power plant in Karachi, which was also constructed with Chinese assistance.
- The investment is separate from the **\$65 billion** that China has pledged for infrastructure development in Pakistan under the **Belt and Road Initiative**.
- Chinese side has already disbursed an initial amount of **30 billion Pakistani rupees (\$104.53 million) for project initiation**.

### **Nuclear power plant in Pakistan**

- The **Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission** states that the **four existing Chashma power plants** have a combined installed capacity of **1,330 megawatts**.
- Apart from the Chashma power plants, Pakistan also operates two other nuclear power plants known as **Karachi Nuclear Power Plants (KANUPP) 2 and 3**.
- The Karachi Nuclear Power Plants have a substantial capacity of **2,290 megawatts**, further enhancing Pakistan's nuclear energy generation capabilities.

### **4. Greece's centre-right leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis sworn in as Prime Minister ( June 27, 2023 )**

**Kyriakos Mitsotakis**, the leader of **Greece's centre-right New Democracy party**, was sworn in as **Prime Minister for a second term** on 26th June.

#### **An overview of the news**

- The swearing-in ceremony took place at the presidential palace in the presence of the **leader of the Greek Orthodox Church**, following the country's tradition.
- Mitsotakis expressed his gratitude for the strong mandate given to him by the voters and pledged to accelerate institutional and economic reforms.
- He emphasized that major reforms would be implemented rapidly, and he had ambitious targets for his next four years in power that could bring transformative changes to Greece.
- With **99.67 percent of the vote counted**, New Democracy secured **40.55 percent** of the vote, **more than twice the percentage obtained by the main opposition party, Syriza**.

- Under the new electoral law that prioritizes the first party, New Democracy secured a
- comfortable majority of **158 seats in the 300-member Parliament, while Syriza obtained 48 seats.**
  - Kyriakos Mitsotakis, aged 55 and a **Harvard graduate**, comes from a prominent political family in Greece, with his father serving as Prime Minister in the 1990s and his sister and nephew also holding political positions.

## **About Greece**

- Greece is the **southernmost of the countries of the Balkan Peninsula.**
- Greece has more than **2,000 islands**, of which about **170 are inhabited.**
- President - **Katerina N. Sakellaropoulou**
- Prime Minister - **Kyriakos Mitsotakis**
- Capital - **Athens**
- Currency - **euro**

## **5. Greece's conservative New Democracy party wins landslide election victory for second 4-year term ( June 26, 2023 )**

### **Greece's-conservative-New-Democracy**

**Greece's conservative New Democracy party** has emerged **victorious in the parliamentary election**, securing another **four-year term** for reformist **Kyriakos Mitsotakis as the Prime Minister.**

### **An overview of the news**

- According to interior ministry figures with most votes counted, **New Democracy**, a centre-right party, **led with 40.5 percent** of the vote, securing **158 seats in the 300-seat parliament.**
- New Democracy's lead of more than **20 points over Syriza**, a radical leftist party that governed Greece from **2015 to 2019** during a severe debt crisis, marked a significant victory for Mitsotakis.
- Mitsotakis, a former banker, has pledged to boost revenue from Greece's crucial tourist industry, generate employment opportunities, and raise wages to approach the European Union average.
- The election result dealt a humiliating blow to Syriza, which suffered the **loss of over 30 Members of Parliament.**
- This election was the **second within five weeks**, as the initial poll on May 21, conducted under a different electoral system, failed to grant any single party an outright majority in Parliament.

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## **6. PM Modi conferred Egypt's highest state honour ( June 26, 2023 )**

PM-Modi-conferred-Egypt's-highest-state-honour

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** was awarded the '**Order of the Nile,**' Egypt's highest honor, by President **Abdel Fattah El-Sisi** during a ceremony at the Presidential palace in Cairo on 25th June.

### **An overview of the news**

- The '**Order of the Nile**' was established in **1915** and is bestowed upon **heads of states, crown princes, and vice presidents** who have rendered invaluable services to Egypt or humanity.
- This is the **13th highest state honor** conferred upon Prime Minister Modi.
- During the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Egypt in 26 years, India and Egypt elevated their relationship to a 'Strategic Partnership' following extensive discussions between Modi and El-Sisi.

### **Political and security cooperation**

- The talks focused on enhancing **political and security cooperation.**
- Modi and El-Sisi signed a **strategic partnership document**, which encompassed various areas of collaboration such as political and security cooperation, defense collaboration, trade and investment ties, scientific and academic exchanges, and strengthening people-to-people contacts.
- The two countries signed three more pacts covering agriculture and allied sectors, **protection and preservation of monuments and archaeological sites, and competition law.**
- Modi and El-Sisi also discussed further cooperation within the G-20 framework, emphasizing issues such as **food and energy insecurity, climate change**, and the need for the **Global South** to have a unified voice.
- Modi extended an invitation to El-Sisi to attend the **G-20 Summit in New Delhi in September.**

### **Egypt's historic Al-Hakim Mosque**

- Before returning to India, Modi visited Egypt's historic **Al-Hakim Mosque** in Cairo, which dates back to the **11th century**.
- The mosque has been restored with the assistance of India's **Dawoodi Bohra community**.
- Modi admired the intricate carved inscriptions on the walls and doorways of the mosque, which was **constructed in 1012**.
- Al-Hakim Mosque is the **fourth oldest mosque** in Cairo and the **second Fatimid mosque built in the city**.

## About Egypt

- Egypt is a country located in **North Africa**.
- Egypt is home to famous monuments such as the **Giza Pyramid Complex**. One of the **Seven Wonders of the World**, the Pyramids of Giza are located on the banks of the **Nile River**. The Great Pyramid of Giza was built in **2560 BC**.
- Capital - **Cairo**
- President - **Abdel Fattah el-Sisi**
- Currency - **Egyptian pound**

## 7. INS Sunayna visits Mombasa, Kenya to strengthen bilateral ties ( June 26, 2023 )

### **INS-Sunayna-visits-Mombasa,-Kenya-to-strengthen-bilateral-ties**

**INS Sunayna** visited **Mombasa, Kenya**, with the aim of strengthening bilateral ties with maritime neighbors under the theme of **Ocean Ring of Yoga**.

### **An overview of the news**

- The Commanding Officer of INS Sunayna held a meeting with **Brigadier Y S Abdi**, Deputy Commander of the Kenya Navy, and emphasized the significance of Yoga in fostering unity and bringing the world closer together.
- On the occasion of the International Day of Yoga on June 21, 2023, a joint Yoga session was conducted onboard INS Sunayna, involving Indian Navy personnel and members of the **Kenyan Defence Forces**.
- A Maritime Partnership Exercise took place between the Indian and Kenyan navies, where drills related to firefighting, damage control, boarding exercises, asymmetric threat simulations, and VBSS (Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure) operations were carried out during the harbor phase.
- An onboard **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** capsule was also conducted to enhance the capabilities of the Kenya Navy.

- In honor of **General Francis Ogolla**, the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) of the Kenyan Defence Forces, a reception was hosted onboard INS Sunayna by **Vice Admiral Sanjay Mahindru**, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff.
- The event was attended by **Namgya Khampa**, the High Commissioner of India in Nairobi.
- As a symbol of goodwill, the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff gifted **200 life jackets to Major General Jimson Muthai**, Commander of the Kenya Navy.
- Prior to departure from Mombasa, INS Sunayna conducted a **Passage Exercise (PASSEX)** with the Kenya Naval Ship Jasiri on June 23, 2023, further strengthening the maritime cooperation between the two navies.

## **8. Asian Development Bank to provide 400 million US dollars in loans to Bangladesh ( June 26, 2023 )**

Asian-Development-Bank-to-provide-400-million-US-dollars

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has signed a **loan agreement** with the government of **Bangladesh** to provide **\$400 million** for the construction of a dual gauge railway between **Chattogram and Cox's Bazar**.

### **An overview of the news**

- The purpose of the railway project is to **promote trade, investment, and tourism in Bangladesh**.
- The new rail link is expected to open this year and aims to transport approximately **2.9 million passengers** annually between Chattogram and Cox's Bazar by 2024.
- The ADB is supporting the government's shift from road to rail transport, as rail is considered a **climate-friendly, safe, affordable, and efficient mode of transportation**.

### **Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway**

- The Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway is part of the **Trans-Asia Railway (TAR) network**, which is an initiative led by the **United Nations**.
- The TAR network aims to establish seamless rail links between Asia and Europe to enhance **connectivity between people and markets**.
- The TAR network covers a total of **128,000 kilometers** and passes through **28 countries**.
- It was formalized through an Inter-governmental Agreement on **Trans-Asian Railway network in 2009**.
- The assistance provided by ADB for the Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway Project is the third part of a \$1.5 billion loan package for the **South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) initiative**.

## **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**

- It is a **regional multilateral financial institution** which focuses on the countries of **Asia and Pacific region**.
- It was set up after a resolution was passed at the first Ministerial Conference on Asian Economic Cooperation held by the United Nations Economic Commission for **Asia and the Far East in 1963**.
- It started functioning from **19 December 1966 with 31 member countries**.
- At present it has **68 members**—of which **49 members are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside**.
- **Japan is the largest shareholder** of the ADB and a Japanese has always been the head of the ADB.
- President of ADB: **Masatsugu Asakawa**
- Headquarters: **Mandaluyong City, Manila, Philippines**

## **9. New Russian frigates will be armed with hypersonic Zircon missiles ( June 24, 2023 )**

New-Russian-frigates-will-be-armed-with-hypersonic-Zircon-missiles

The **Commander-in-Chief** of the **Russian Navy** has recently made an announcement stating that all **new frigate and corvette class vessels of the Russian Navy** will be **equipped with hypersonic Zircon missiles**.

### **About Zircon Missile**

- The Zircon Missile, also known as the **3M22 Zircon or SS-N-33**, is a **hypersonic cruise missile developed in Russia**.
- It is designed as an **anti-ship missile** with advanced capabilities.

### **Characteristics of Zircon Missile**

- The Zircon Missile can achieve **speeds of over 9,500 kilometers per hour (6,000 miles per hour)**, which is approximately nine times the speed of sound.
- It is a **two-stage missile**, utilizing solid fuel in the **first stage and a scramjet motor in the second stage**.
- The missile has a range of more than **1,000 kilometers (620 miles)** and is capable of accurately pinpointing targets within that range.
- The Zircon Missile employs an **active and passive radar seeker as its guidance system**.

### **Hypersonic Cruise Missiles**



- Hypersonic cruise missiles are a type of missile designed to travel at extremely **high speeds, typically exceeding Mach 5 (five times the speed of sound)**.
- They are propelled by rocket engines and are equipped with **guidance systems for target navigation**.
- One notable characteristic of hypersonic cruise missiles is their ability to maneuver during flight, making them difficult to track and intercept.

## **10. US agrees to provide market access to India's steel and aluminum products ( June 24, 2023 )**

US-agrees-to-provide-market-access

The **United States** on 23 June has **agreed to grant market access to India's steel and aluminium products**, according to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

### **An overview of the news**

- As per the agreement, the US Department of Commerce will clear **70 percent of steel and 80 percent of aluminium applications** for products originating in India.
- The decision was made during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the United States.
- The **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** expects this agreement to **boost India's steel and aluminium exports by approximately 35 percent**.
- The **US had restricted market access for Indian steel and aluminium products since June 14, 2018**, under the exclusion process of Section 232 of the **Trade Expansion Act 1962**.
- Under this restriction, additional duties of **25 percent and 10 percent** were imposed on steel and aluminium products, respectively.
- In response, India had implemented retaliatory tariffs on certain products, which it has now agreed to remove.
- However, the **basic import duties applicable** to all imports of steel and aluminium products will continue.