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1. First China-Indian Ocean Region Forum on Development Cooperation held in China, India not invited (Nov. 27, 2022)

India not invited First in China-Indian Ocean Region Forum

According to the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) a meeting of the China-Indian Ocean Region Forum on Development Cooperation took place on 21 November 2022, in which 19 countries took part. **India was not invited by the Chinese.**

The meeting was held in a hybrid manner under the theme of “Shared Development: Theory and Practice from the Perspective of the Blue Economy” in Kunming, Yunnan Province of China.

According to CIDCA at the November 21 meeting, China has proposed to establish a marine disaster prevention and mitigation cooperation mechanism between China and countries in the Indian Ocean region.

Countries which participated in the Chinese forum

The following 19 countries participated in the meeting; Indonesia, Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Afghanistan, Iran, Oman, South Africa, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Seychelles, Madagascar, Mauritius, Djibouti, Australia and representatives of 3 international organisations.

Maldives denies participating in the meeting

The Maldives Foreign ministry in a statement issued on 27 November 2022 has denied participating in the meeting .It said that it had officially communicated to the Chinese government its inability to participate in the forum.

Chinese attempt to counter Indian influence in the region

According to experts, the Chinese forum is apparently aimed at countering India’s strong influence in the Indian Ocean region where India-backed organisations like the 23 members Indian Ocean Rim Association, (IORA) have taken strong roots. China is a dialogue partner in the IORA formed in 1997.

The Indian Navy-backed Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), established in 2007, is a premier forum for cooperation and collaboration among navies of littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.

Chinese effort to increase its influence in the Indian Ocean region

China is trying its influence in the strategic Indian Ocean region with substantial investments in ports and infrastructure investments in several countries, including Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

China has established a full-fledged naval base in Djibouti, its first outside the country. Beijing has acquired the Hambantota port in Sri Lanka on a 99-year lease besides building the port at Pakistan’s **Gwadar** in the Arabian Sea opposite India’s western coast.

2. US bans the use of Chinese companies Huawei, ZTE telecom equipment sales, citing national security risk (Nov. 27, 2022)

US bans Huawei, ZTE telecom citing national security risk

The United States government has banned the use of telecommunication equipment from China's **Huawei Technologies** and **ZTE** because they pose "an unacceptable risk" to U.S. national security.

The U.S. Federal Communications Commission in its order on 26 November 2022 also banned the sale or import of equipment made by Chinese surveillance equipment maker Dahua Technology Co ,video surveillance firm Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Co Ltd and telecoms firm Hytera Communications Corp Ltd.

In March 2021 the American government had designated five Chinese companies Huawei, ZTE, Hytera Communications Corp Hikvision and Dahua on the "covered list" as posing a threat to national security under a 2019 law aimed at protecting U.S. communications networks.

Chinese companies dominate the telecom equipment market in the world and many countries fear that the use of Chinese equipment will compromise its national security.

US security officials have warned that equipment from Chinese brands such as Huawei could be used to interfere with fifth-generation (5G) wireless networks and collect sensitive information.

India has also indirectly banned the use of Chinese telecom equipment in the country.

3. MoU signed between Ministry of Ayush and Department of Science and Technology (Nov. 25, 2022)

Ministry of Ayush signed (MoU) with the Department of Science and Technology

The **Ministry of Ayush** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 25 November with the **Department of Science and Technology** to explore cooperation, convergence, and synergy for evidence-based scientific intervention in the Ayush sector.

Important facts

- The MoU was signed by **Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha**, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush and **Dr. Srivari Chandrasekhar**, Secretary, DST.
- The MoU will identify the potential areas of research to explore cooperation, convergence, and synergy for evidence-based scientific intervention in the Ayush sector and further application of these into the public health care system.
- Ministry of AYUSH and DST have agreed to jointly undertake research and development activities on scientific validation of AYUSH concepts, processes and products.
- The ministry of Ayush would identify thrust areas involving Ayush-related systems that require understanding the basic concepts, procedures, development of newer tools, and so on in modern sciences.
- DST, through the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), would coordinate the implementation of thrust areas through well-chartered plans and mutual concerted actions.

Union Minister of Ayush - **Sarbananda Sonowal**

4. India wins vice presidency of International Electrotechnical Commission (Nov. 25, 2022)

India wins vice presidency of International Electrotechnical Commission

India has won the post of **Vice-Chairman** of the **International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)** and **Chairman of the Strategic Management Board (SMB) for the term 2023-25.**

Important facts

- The meeting of the **International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)** was recently held in **San Francisco, USA**, which was voted on by all the members of the IC. India got more than 90 percent votes.
- India's representative in the IC and various technical committees of the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** were elected.
- **Vimal Mahendru** will be the IEC Vice President representing India.
- BIS has representation in the policy and administrative bodies of the International Organization for Standardization (ISVO) and the IC.
- BIS ensured that India's point of view was understood on important strategic and policy issues. It also provided opportunities for harmonisation with international best practices of national standardisation.

International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)

- **Founded in 1906**, the IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) is the world's leading organisation for the preparation and publication of international standards for all electrical, electronic and related technologies.
- The Standardization Management Board is the apex administrative body of the IC, responsible for technical policy matters.

5. Former ISI chief Asim Munir appointed new chief of Pakistan Army (Nov. 25, 2022)

Lt Gen Asim Munir appointed new chief of the Pakistan Army

Former Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency chief **Lt Gen Asim Munir** has been appointed as the **new chief of the Pakistan Army** on 24 November by Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif**, succeeding **Gen Qamar Bajwa**.

Important facts

- He replaced outgoing General **Qamar Javed Bajwa** on 29 November.
- Bajwa was appointed army chief in 2016 for three years. In the year 2019, he was given a three-year extension.
- Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif wrote to **President Alvi** to appoint Lt. Gen. Munir as the **Chief of Army Staff (COAS)** and Lt. Gen. Sahir Shamshad Mirza as the **Chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC)**.
- With the approval of Munir's name by the President, the process of appointment was completed.
- Lt Gen Munir has served as the chief of the two most powerful intelligence agencies **Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)** and **Military Intelligence (MI)**.
- However, his tenure as ISI chief was the shortest ever and within eight months he was replaced by **Lt Gen Faiz Hameed** in 2019 at the behest of the then Prime Minister **Imran Khan**.
- The CJCSC is the highest authority in the hierarchy of the armed forces, but major powers, including deployment, appointments and transfers of troops, rest with the Chief of Army Staff. Because of these powers, the army chief is the most powerful.
- Pakistan has been in existence for more than **75 years** and the country has been under military rule for more than half of that time. In such a situation, the army has been interfering a lot in the security and foreign policy matters of the country.

6. Second stealth-guided missile destroyer delivered to Indian Navy (Nov. 25, 2022)

second ship of Project 15B stealth guided missile destroyer

The **second ship of Project 15B stealth guided missile destroyer** being built at **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL)**, was delivered to the **Indian Navy** on 24 November.

Important facts

- When commissioned, the ship will be christened **INS Mormugao**.
- The contract for four ships of **Project 15B** was signed on January 28, 2011.
- The project is a follow-up to the **Kolkata class (Project 15A)** destroyers commissioned in the last decade and the lead ship of the project - **INS Visakhapatnam** has already been commissioned into the Indian Navy on November 21, 2021.
- Designed by the Warship Design Bureau, Indian Navy's in-house organisation and built by **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd** in Mumbai, the four ships of the project are christened after cities from four corners of the country — **Visakhapatnam, Mormugao, Imphal and Surat**.

- The foundation stone of Mormugao was laid in 2015 and the ship was launched on 17 September 2016.

About Second stealth-guided missile destroyer

- The ship is **163 metres long** and **17 metres wide**, **displaces 7400 tonnes** when fully loaded and has a maximum speed of 30 knots.
- The overall indigenous content of the project is around **75 per cent**.
- The class of destroyers armed with indigenous weapons includes-

1. Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missiles (BEL, Bangalore)
2. BrahMos Surface-to-Surface Missiles (BrahMos Aerospace, New Delhi)
3. Indigenous Torpedo Tube Launchers (Larsen & Toubro, Mumbai)
4. Anti-Submarine Indigenous Rocket Launchers (Larsen & Toubro, Mumbai)
5. 76mm Super Rapid Gun Mount (BHEL, Haridwar)

7. India expresses commitment to peace, security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region (Nov. 25, 2022)

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

India participated in the **22nd Council of Ministers's meeting** of the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)** held at **Dhaka in Bangladesh** on 23 November, 2022.

Important facts

- India voiced its strong commitment to the strengthening of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to promote peace, security and prosperity in the **Indian Ocean Region and in the Indo-Pacific**.
- The Indian delegation was led by Minister of State for External Affairs **Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh**.
- He also highlighted India's contribution as coordinator of IORA priority areas of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and science, technology and innovation for capacity building and strengthening of IORA Secretariat.
- On the challenges posed by climate change, the Minister highlighted the **initiatives of LiFE** - Lifestyle for Environment and International Year of Millet in 2023.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

- It is an international organisation consisting of coastal states bordering the Indian Ocean.

- It has been formed with the aim of increasing cooperation among the countries of the Indian Ocean Region and making joint efforts for sustainable development.
- It includes **21 countries** along the coast of the Indian Ocean including India and **7 dialogue partners**.
- **These 21 countries** include India, Australia, Iran, Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Malaysia, South Africa, Mozambique, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Singapore, Mauritius, Madagascar, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Seychelles, Somalia, Comoros and Oman.
- It was formed in 1997 and its secretariat is in **Mauritius**.

8. Anwar Ibrahim sworn in as the country's new prime minister in Malaysia (Nov. 25, 2022)

Anwar Ibrahim new prime minister of Malaysia

Malaysia's opposition leader **Anwar Ibrahim** was sworn in as the country's tenth Prime Minister on 24 November.

Important facts

- The new leader was appointed by **King Al-Sultan Abdullah**.
- With this, the political uncertainty that continued for several days after the general elections with a fractured mandate in Malaysia has come to an end. Anwar took oath in a simple ceremony at the National Palace.
- Anwar's Alliance of Hope won the election with 82 seats but fell short of the 112 seats needed for a majority.
- Former Prime Minister Muhyiddin's Malay-centric Perikatan Nasional (National Alliance) managed to win 72 seats due to unprecedented support from the Malay community in the election.
- The Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party emerged as the largest party in the coalition, winning 49 seats.
- The coalition led by the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), which won 30 seats in the election, agreed to support the coalition led by Anwar.

About Malaysia

- Capital : **Kuala Lumpur**
- Currency : **Malaysian ringgit**

9. Sher Bahadur Deuba elected for consecutive 7th time from Dadeldhura district (Nov. 24, 2022)

Sher Bahadur Deuba elected for consecutive 7th

Prime Minister and President of the Nepali Congress **Sher Bahadur Deuba** on 23 November was elected for the consecutive **7th time** from the home district of Dhankuta.

Important facts

- The counting of votes continues for parliamentary and provincial elections in the country.
- Senior Nepali Congress leader Deuba defeated an independent candidate Sagar Dhakal by a margin of over 12 thousand votes.
- The parliamentary and provincial elections were held on 20th of November in Nepal.
- It was the second general election since the promulgation of the constitution in 2015.
- The first round of elections held in 2017 did not live up to the expectations of Nepalese voters as the government did not last long.

10. Europe announces name of world's first disabled astronauts (Nov. 24, 2022)

Europe announces name of world's

The European Space Agency announced the name of the **first "parastronaut"** on 23 November in a major step towards allowing people with **physical disabilities to work and live in space.**

Important facts

- The 22-nation European Space Agency said it selected former British Paralympic runner **John McFall** as part of a new generation of 17 recruits selected for astronaut training.
- He will participate in a feasibility study designed to allow ESA to assess the conditions needed for people with disabilities to participate in future missions.
- Five new astronauts have been roped in to take part in the training after ESA replenished its astronaut ranks for the first time since 2009.
- The EAS received 257 applications for the role of an astronaut with a disability, designated a "parastronaut".
- McFall, who lost his right leg due to a motorcycle accident at the age of 19, won a **bronze medal** in the 100 metres at the 2008 **Beijing Paralympic Games.**