

## Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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### **1. Bill tabled in US House to terminate Pakistan's status as Major Non-NATO ally ( Jan. 18, 2023 )**

A **US lawmaker** has introduced a bill in the US House of Representatives that would **end Pakistan's designation as a major non-NATO ally** and require annual certification from the President with certain conditions for Islamabad to be granted such a designation.

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

- The bill said that giving such a status to Pakistan would require annual certification from the President, subject to certain conditions.
- The bill was introduced by **Andy Biggs**, who represents Arizona's Fifth District.
- The bill has been referred to the **House Foreign Affairs Committee** for necessary action.
- It will need to be passed by the **House and Senate** before the US President can sign it into law.
- Pakistan has always been giving shelter to terrorism in its country. Therefore, the US MP has introduced this bill.
- The bill states that Pakistan will have to prove that it has shown speed in action against senior leaders of the **Haqqani network** in its country and is conducting military operations against them.
- The US President's Office will certify Pakistan regarding this.

#### **Major Non-NATO ally**

- Major non-NATO ally (MNNA) is a designation given by the **United States** to close allies that have strategic working relationships with the **US Armed Forces**.
- They are not members of the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**.
- Major non-NATO allies are eligible for loans related to material, supplies or equipment for research, development, test or evaluation purposes.

#### **18 major non-NATO allies**

- Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, South Korea, Thailand and Tunisia.
- In September 2022, the US terminated the designation of **Afghanistan** as a major non-NATO ally.

## **2. First G20 Health Working Group Meeting begins in Thiruvananthapuram ( Jan. 18, 2023 )**

The **first G-20 Health Working Group (HWG)** meeting under India's G-20 presidency began on 18 January at **Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala**. This meeting will be held from January 18 to 20, 2023.

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

- These HWG meetings will be held in various places in the country including **Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala, Goa, Hyderabad in Telangana and Gandhinagar in Gujarat**.
- It will highlight PM Modi's call to showcase India's rich and diverse cultures.
- The meeting will be attended by representatives of **G-20 member states**, special invitees and relevant international organisations.
- India is currently part of the **G-20 Troika** which refers to the top grouping within the G-20 which includes countries like Indonesia, Brazil and India.
- This is the first time that three developing countries are part of this troika.
- Under the presidency of India, the G-20 health track will include four Health Working Group (HWG) meetings and a **Health Ministerial Meeting (HMM)**.

### **Three priorities for achieving India's G-20 Presidency mission**

1. Prevention, preparedness and response to health emergencies (with a focus on health and AMR).
2. Strengthening Cooperation in Pharmaceutical Sector with an emphasis on Access and Availability to safe, effective, quality and Affordable Medical Countermeasures (Vaccines, Therapeutics and Diagnostics).
3. Digital Health Innovations and Solutions to Aid Universal Health Coverage and Improve Healthcare Service Delivery.

## **3. "Virasat" - Handloom Home Decor Festival ( Jan. 18, 2023 )**

The Ministry of Textiles will organise a special handloom exhibition "VIRASAT" - from 20-30 January 2023 at Handloom Haat, New Delhi to showcase home decor products made from handlooms.

### **News Overview**

- The special handloom saree exhibition "Virasat" - a celebration of 75 handwoven sarees of India was organised by the Ministry of Textiles in two phases from 16 to 30 December and 3 to 17 January 2023 at Handloom Haat, Janpath, New Delhi.

- The Sari Mahotsav was inaugurated by Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman on 16 December 2022.
- In which 160 participants from different parts of the country displayed famous hand made sarees.
- A social media campaign was also launched on the occasion under a common hashtag #MySariMyPride to support handloom weavers.

#### **4. Think-20 group meeting concludes in Bhopal ( Jan. 18, 2023 )**

A two-day meeting of the **Think-20 group** was organised under the G-20 on 16-17 January 2023 in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**. Think-20 was launched by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**.

##### **An Overview of the news**

- Under the Think-20 grouping of the G-20, the overarching theme of the meeting is "**Global Good Governance with an Environment-Friendly Lifestyle, Moral Values and Well-Being**".
- A program of two **plenary sessions and round table meetings** was organised on the topics to be taken up in Think-20.
- In the first plenary session, the topic '**Role of Triangular Cooperation in Localization of SDGs**' was discussed, while in the second plenary session, the topic '**New Complementaries in Trade and Value Chains**' was discussed.
- Along with this, a round table meeting was also organised on '**Global South and Global Governance for Life**'.
- After the conclusion of the meeting on January 17, the representatives of the G20 countries visited the world-famous tourist destination **Sanchi in Raisen** district of Madhya Pradesh.

#### **5. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the second phase of Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 2022-23 ( Jan. 18, 2023 )**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the second phase of Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 2022-23 organised in Basti (Uttar Pradesh) district through conferencing on 18 January 2023.

- Sansad Khel Mahakumbh is being organised from the **year 2021 by Mr. Harish Dwivedi, Lok Sabha MP from Basti**.

The **first phase of Sansad Khel Mahakumbh 2022-23 was organised from December 10 to December 16, 2022** and the **second phase will be organised from January 18 to January 28, 2023.**

- Both indoor and outdoor sports events like Wrestling, Kabaddi, Kho Kho, Basketball, Football, Hockey, Volleyball, Handball, Chess, Carrom, Badminton, Table Tennis etc. are organised during Sansad Khel Mahakumbh.
- Apart from this, competitions for essay writing, painting, making Rangoli etc. are also organised.
- The objective of this unique initiative is to provide an opportunity and platform to the youth of Basti district and surrounding areas to showcase their sporting talent and also motivate them to take up sports as a career option.
- Through this, efforts are also being made to inculcate discipline, team spirit, healthy competition, self-confidence and sense of nationalism among the youth of the region.

## **6. B-20 inception meeting to be organised in Gandhinagar from January 22 ( Jan. 18, 2023 )**

As part of India's G-20 chairmanship, a **Business-20 (B-20)** founding meeting will be held in **Gandhinagar, Gujarat** from January 22 to 24.

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

- The main program of the B-20 Founding Meeting prepared by the **B-20 India Secretariat** in accordance with the theme of the conference "**R.A.I.S.E: Responsible, Accelerated, Innovative, Sustainable and Equitable Businesses**".
- The meeting will be held to prepare policy recommendations to be presented to the G20 ahead of the G20 Leaders' Summit.
- This will be the **first of 15 events** that the other country is set to host as part of **India's G20 presidency.**
- The opening ceremony of the B-20 founding meeting will be attended by Union Ministers **Piyush Goyal and Ashwini Vaishnav**, state Chief Minister **Bhupendra Patel**, India's Sherpa to G-20 **Amitabh Kant** and Tata Sons Chairman **N Chandrasekaran.**
- The inaugural meeting will be participated by more than **150 policy-makers**, business executives, CEOs and senior executives representing enterprises from G-20 countries.

### **Issues to be discussed**

- Climate change,
- Digital collaboration across borders in times of wars and pandemics,
- Sustainable and flexible value chain,

- Innovation among netizens,
- Financial Inclusion to Empower Communities in Different Socio-Economic Conditions

## **7. Vietnam President Nguyen Xuan Phuc resigns amid allegations of corruption and scandals ( Jan. 18, 2023 )**

**Vietnam's** President **Nguyen Xuan Phuc** has submitted his resignation on January 17 after the ruling Communist Party found him responsible for **corruption, scandals and wrongdoings**.

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

- The anti-corruption campaign has led to the sacking of several ministers in Vietnam.
- Earlier, **two deputy prime ministers** who served under President Phuc had quit.
- The resignation of the President requires approval from the **National Assembly**.
- Former Prime Minister **Phuc** had assumed the office of **President from 2021**.
- Phuc, 69, served as Vietnam's prime minister **from 2016 until April 2021**, when he was elected president.
- Vietnam is a country with **single party rule** and any political changes are very carefully managed for political stability and continuity.
- However, it is not clear who will be the new President.

### **About Vietnam**

- It lies in **South East Asia** and it is a member of **Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN)**
- Capital: **Hanoi**
- Currency: **Dong**

## **8. India-South Korea holds 5th Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue ( Jan. 18, 2023 )**

**Saurabh Kumar**, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), made an official visit to South Korea and co-chaired the **5th Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD)** with his Korean counterpart **Cho Hyundong**.

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

- During the two-day talks that ended on January 17, the two sides agreed to deepen cooperation in the areas of **trade and investment, security and defence, science and technology as well as cultural and people-to-people exchanges**.
- India and South Korea agreed to work to make **global supply chains** more resilient and robust.
- Both the countries agreed to take bilateral trade to **US\$ 50 billion by 2030** from an all-time high of **US\$ 28 billion** at present.
- Both sides also discussed opportunities for cooperation in new and emerging technologies.
- India has offered investment to Korean companies in manufacturing, infrastructure and other sectors.

### **About South Korea**

- South Korea is a country located in **East Asia** that is known as the '**Land of Quiet Mornings**'.
- The Korean peninsula was divided into communist **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)** and **Republic of Korea (South Korea)** after the **Korean War in 1953**.
- The nation's capital, **Seoul**, is the world's second largest metropolitan area and a major global city.
- North Korea is the only country bordering this country.
- **Martial arts Taekwondo** originated in Korea.
- President- **Yoon Suk-yol**
- Currency- **South Korean won**

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### **10. Environment Ministry included Neelakurinji in the list of protected plants ( Jan. 17, 2023 )**

Neelakurinji in the list of protected plants

The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF)** has listed **Neelakurinji (Strobilanthes kunthiana)** in the list of **protected plants** under **Schedule III** of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.

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

- According to the Environment Ministry, those who uproot or destroy the plant will be **fined Rs 25,000** and **imprisoned for three years**.
- **Cultivation** and possession of this plant is not allowed.

- Neelakurinji has been included in the list after the Center expanded the earlier protected
- list of **six plant species to 19.**

### **About Neelakurunji**

- Neelakurinji is a **tropical plant species** and is native to the **shola forests in the Western Ghats.**
- It is also found in **Shevaroy Hills in the Eastern Ghats, Annamalai Hills in Kerala and Sanduru Hills** in Karnataka.
- It grows on mountain slopes at an altitude of **1300 to 2400 meters** to a **height of 30 to 60 cm.**
- The flowers of Neelakurinji are **violet-blue in colour** and bloom once in 12 years. The flower has no scent or any medicinal value.
- Because of these flowers, the Nilgiri hills at the southern end of the Western Ghats are called the **Blue Mountains.**
- It is one of the **rarest plant species** that grows in the Western Ghats and does not grow in any other part of the world.
- It is classified as an **endangered species.**