

Testwale Current Affairs PDF

Current Affairs search results for tag: international-relations

1. France pulls out from India's P-75I Project (May 4, 2022)

Ahead of Modi's scheduled visit to France, French defence major Naval Group has announced that it is unable to participate in the P-75 India (P-75I) project, which seeks to build six conventional submarines in India for the Indian Navy.

Why did France pull out?

- The French firm pulled out of the project as it could not fulfil the conditions of the Request for Proposal (RFI) placed by the Indian Navy.
- Request for Proposal (RFP) requires that the fuel cell be AIP Sea Proven, which is difficult for India as the French Navy does not use such a propulsion system.
- AIP refers to Air-Independent Propulsion.
- AIP technology allows a conventional submarine to remain submerged for much longer than ordinary diesel-electric submarines.
- India wants AIP technology as none of its existing ships have it while Pakistan and China both have AIP-equipped submarines.

• What is Project 75?

- In June 1999, the Cabinet Committee on Security had approved a plan for the Indian Navy to indigenously build submarines by 2030.
- Under the first phase of the P-75 in 2005, India and France signed a \$3.75 billion contract to build six Scorpene-class submarines.
- The executing company on the Indian side was Mazagon Docks Limited, and on the French side was DCNS, now called Naval Group.
- The first submarine under the project was commissioned in December 2017.
- Thereafter, another five were built and on 20 April, INS Vagsheer was launched which will be commissioned by 2023.

• What is P-75I?

- The Project 75I-class submarine is a follow-up to the Project 75 Kalvari-class submarine for the Indian Navy.
- In the late 1990s, at the time of the Kargil War, a three-decade plan for indigenous construction of submarines took shape.
- This is known as Project 75 and Project 75I, two separate series of submarine building lines in collaboration with foreign entities.
- Under this project, the Indian Navy intends to acquire six diesel-electric submarines, which will also include advanced air-independent propulsion systems.

2. India and Germany ink agreement for cooperation in agro-ecology (May 3, 2022)

India and Germany agreed to sign a Joint Declaration on Agro-Ecology and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in the Agriculture Sector.

- A declaration in this regard was signed by India's Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Germany's Economic Cooperation and Development Minister Svenja Schulz in a virtual meeting.
- Through this MoU, both the countries have agreed to promote joint research, knowledge sharing and innovation between academic institutions and agricultural people including farmers.
- Under this agreement, Germany will provide coordinated support to India for this initiative by supporting the agro-ecosystem transformation process through the Technical Cooperation Project.
- Under this initiative, Germany's Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development intends to provide 300 million euros by the year 2025 to provide financial and technical support to the projects.

• About Germany

- Germany is a country located in the continent of Europe.
- Capital - Berlin
- President- Frank Walter Steinmeier
- Currency - euro
- Chancellor- Olaf Schultz

3. India, Germany signs joint declaration of Intent on Forest Landscape Restoration (May 3, 2022)

India and Germany have signed a Joint Declaration of Intent on Forest Landscape Restoration.

- The joint declaration was signed between Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhupender Yadav and Germany's Minister of Environment and Nature Conservation Steffi Lemke.
- The Joint Declaration will provide a platform to further enhance partnership and support in areas such as climate protection and conservation of biodiversity.
- This will also help in strengthening Indo-German cooperation.
- The joint declaration will enable the two countries to successfully partner with each other and expand bilateral cooperation in the areas of forest landscape restoration, environment and climate change.

• About Forest Landscape Restoration

- It is an ongoing process of regaining ecological functionality and enhancing human well-being in deforestation or degraded forest landscapes.
- It is much more than just planting trees – it is restoring entire landscapes to meet current and future needs and for many benefits and land uses over time.
- This manifests through various processes such as: new plantations, managed natural regeneration, agroforestry, or better land management to accommodate the land use mosaic, including agriculture, protected wildlife reserves, managed plantations, riverside plantings, etc.

4. India, Germany sign agreement on green hydrogen TaskForce (May 3, 2022)

India and Germany agreed to form a task force on green hydrogen. Both the countries have signed a joint declaration in this regard.

- The Joint Declaration was signed by the Union Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy RK Singh and Germany's Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Change Robert Habeck in a virtual way.
- India has emerged as a global leader in energy transformation. India is at the forefront of the growth of renewable energy capacity in the world.
- India has a transparent bidding system, an open market, an accelerated dispute resolution system, and is globally regarded as one of the most attractive destinations for investment in Renewable Energy (RE).
- India has launched the National Green Hydrogen Mission with the goal of making the country a global hub for green hydrogen production and export.
- Trading in Green Hydrogen and/or its derivatives such as Green Ammonia/Green Methanol will form the cornerstone of the cooperation.
- Institutional cooperation in joint research, lighthouse projects, innovation clusters and hydrogen hubs will catalyze synergistic efforts of the two countries.
- **Capacity of India in renewable energy sector**
- India currently ranks fourth in renewable energy capacity globally.
- India will add 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030.
- Presently the renewable energy capacity in India is 136 GW, which is 36% of the total energy capacity in India.
- Solar and wind energy are the main sources of renewable energy.
- Other alternatives such as biomass energy, methanol-based blending and hydrogen are considered the fuel of the future.

5. Sheikh Hasina offered Chittagong port to India (May 2, 2022)

In a major development in India-Bangladesh ties, India has now gained significant access to the Chittagong port after it was offered to India by Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

About Chittagong Port

- The Chittagong Port is the major seaport of Bangladesh.
- It is situated in the port city of Chittagong and on the banks of river Karnaphuli.
- Due to the sea port's proximity to the North-East Indian states, it has the potential to boost economic activity in the North-East Indian states, providing access to global shipping lanes.
- In the year 2010, India and Bangladesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to allow the use of Chittagong and Mongla ports in Bangladesh for movement of goods to and from India.
- In 2018, the Bangladesh cabinet approved a proposed agreement with New Delhi to allow the use of the two ports for the transport of goods.
- The port handles eighty percent of Bangladesh's export-import trade, and is used for transshipment by Bhutan, Nepal and India.
- Chittagong port is being developed and modernised with Chinese investment.
- **Benefits for India**
- An additional connectivity route which is economical and environment friendly.
- States like Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura get access to a port for transportation of goods.
- Promote multi-modal connectivity between India and Bangladesh.
- Important route for India to reach Southeast Asia, East Asia and beyond.

6. Biggest bilateral trade pact between India, UAE comes into force (May 2, 2022)

The historic India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) which was signed between the two countries on 18 February 2022, officially came into force from 1 May.

- Under the agreement, domestic exporters of products of textiles, agriculture, dry fruits, gems and jewellery will get duty-free access to the UAE market.
- In a symbolic start to the implementation of the agreement, Commerce Secretary BVR Subramaniam handed over the place of origin certificates to three exporters from the gems and jewellery sector.
- Under the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), these consignments sent to Dubai will not attract customs duty.

- **Background**

- CEPA, a comprehensive path-breaking trade agreement between India and the United Arab Emirates, was signed on February 18 during a virtual summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.
- The agreement was signed and exchanged by Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and UAE Minister of Economy Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri.
- **Significance of the agreement**
- The agreement will provide significant benefits to Indian and UAE businesses, including increased market access and lower tariffs.
- Through CEPA, the target is to increase bilateral trade from the current \$60 billion to \$100 billion in the next five years.
- Overall, India will benefit from the preferential market access provided by the UAE on over 97% of its tariff lines.

7. Cabinet approves opening of Indian Mission in Lithuania (April 28, 2022)

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the opening of a new Indian Mission in Lithuania in 2022.

- It will help expand India's diplomatic footprint, deepen political ties and strategic cooperation, enable the growth of bilateral trade, investment and economic engagement.
- It will facilitate stronger people-to-people contacts, allow more sustained political access in multilateral fora and help mobilise support for India's foreign policy objectives.
- The Indian Mission in Lithuania will better assist the Indian community and protect their interests.
- This will have a direct impact in increasing domestic production and employment in line with our goal of self-reliant India.

• India - Lithuania

- India recognized Lithuania (along with the other Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia) on 7 September 1991 following the acceptance of their independence by the then USSR.
- India's diplomatic relations with Lithuania were established on 25 February 1992.
- The Lithuanian language, the oldest surviving Indo-European language, has great similarities with Sanskrit, so it reflects ancient links with India.

8. Visit of Prime Minister of Mauritius to India (April 18, 2022)

Prime Minister of Mauritius, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth arrived in Mumbai on an eight-day visit to India.

- Mr Jugnauth is accompanied by his wife Kobita Jugnauth and a high-level delegation.

- He has visited India with an aim to further strengthen the ties between the two countries.
- He will attend the inaugural program of Global Centre of Traditional Medicine in Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- After this, on April 20, he will also attend the Global AYUSH Investment and Innovation Summit in Rajkot.

• **Bilateral relations between India and Mauritius**

-India-Mauritius relationship is very significant for India's geostrategic policies in the Indian Ocean Region.

-India and Mauritius jointly inaugurated an India-assisted social housing units project in Mauritius.

-both the countries signed a USD 100 million Defence Line of Credit agreement

-in 2019, the main import partners of Mauritius were India (13.85%), China (16.69%), South Africa (8.07%), and UAE (7.28%).

-India has been one of the largest trading partners and exporter of goods and services to Mauritius since 2007.

-India's exports to Mauritius are largely of petroleum products.

9. Prime Minister Modi and President Biden hold Virtual Summit (April 12, 2022)

The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a virtual summit meeting on 11 April 2022, with American President Joe Biden ahead of the 2+2 dialogue between India and the United States of America.

The situation in Ukraine and Russia was the main agenda of their discussion. Amongst the QUAD group of countries only India has not condemned and imposed any sanction on Russia. The other QUAD members like the US, Australia and Japan have imposed sanctions on Russia for its attack on Ukraine.

- The United States wants India to condemn Russia for its attack on Ukraine, not to buy any oil from Russian companies, and put pressure on Russian President Putin to stop the war against Ukraine.
- India has very close ties with Russia with around 60 to 70 % of its defence equipment are of Russian origin. Russia has also supported India in the past on crucial issues like Kashmir and against Pakistan.
- India has so far abstained on every anti-Russian resolution in the United Nations and has remained neutral on the issue.
- President Biden welcomed India's humanitarian support for the people of Ukraine and called the Russian invasion a "horrific assault". He said that the US and India are going to continue "close consultation on how to manage the destabilising effects of this Russian war".

- Prime Minister Modi highlighted India's humanitarian aid to Ukraine and condemned the killing of civilians allegedly by the Russian troops in the Ukrainian city of Bucha.

10. 48th Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC held in Islamabad (March 25, 2022)

The 48th Council of Foreign Ministers meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was held in Islamabad, Pakistan on 22 -23 March 2022. The session coincides with the 75th-anniversary celebrations of Pakistan's Independence Day.

- The theme of the conference was : "Building Partnerships for Unity, Justice, and Development."
- The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan raised the Kashmir issue at the conference, saying the 57-member body has not been able to make any impact at all as it's a "divided house".
- China, though not a member of the OIC, was represented by its foreign minister Wang Yi who supported Pakistan's stance on Kashmir .
- India rejected the reference to Kashmir in the OIC declaration issued after the conference saying Kashmir was an integral part of India .

Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC)

The Organisation of the Islamic Conference was established by the First Islamic Summit Conference held in Rabat, Morocco, in September 1969.

- It was set up to protect the interest of Muslims in the world.
- Total Members : 57 countries
- Headquarters : **Jeddah**, Saudi Arabia
- India which has the third largest muslim population in the world after Indonesian and Pakistan is not the member of OIC.