

## Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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### **1. India joins Biden's new trade initiative for Indo-Pacific ( May 24, 2022 )**

US President Joe Biden launched the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) along with 12 initial partners in Tokyo on May 23.

- The initial partner countries are India, Australia, Japan, Brunei, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
- These 13 countries together represent 40% of the world's GDP.
- **About IPEF initiative**
- It is expected to focus on four main pillars including trade, supply chain resilience, clean energy and decarbonisation, and taxes and anti-corruption measures.
- The group includes seven of the 10 members of the Association of SouthEast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and all four Quad countries and New Zealand.
- India will work closely with other IPEF countries to build an inclusive and resilient Indo-Pacific Economic Framework.
- The main roles of the IPEF in the Indo-Pacific will be to set and adhere to standards for the digital economy and cross-border data flows and data localization.
- **About Indo-Pacific**
- It covers half of the world's population and more than 60 percent of the global GDP.
- It is a geopolitical region that spans two regions of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.
- Extending from the west coast of the United States of America to the west coast of India, the Indo-Pacific is a regional structure of 24 countries.
- It includes the tropical waters of the Indian Ocean, western and central Pacific Ocean.

### **2. Indian Embassy in Ukraine to resume its operation in Kyiv from May 17 ( May 14, 2022 )**

India announced on 13 May that its embassy in Ukraine would resume its operations from the Ukrainian capital Kyiv from 17 May.

- The embassy was temporarily operating from Warsaw in Poland since mid-March.
- Several Western countries have also decided to resume the operation of the embassy from Kyiv.
- India had decided to temporarily relocate the embassy to Poland in view of the rapidly deteriorating security situation in the war-torn country.

- The Russian military was on offensive around Kyiv.
- India has moved the embassy after repatriating over 20,000 of its Indian nationals from across Ukraine as part of its mission 'Operation Ganga' launched on February 26 in the wake of the war in Ukraine.

- **About embassy**

- An embassy is the base for a country's diplomatic mission abroad – meaning all of the political, cultural and social relationships between the states.
- There is only one embassy for one country in another, this is where the country's ambassador works.
- One of the roles of embassies and consulates is to provide assistance to their national citizens abroad.
- A consulate is where consular services are performed.
- Embassies generally have a consular section.

### **3. Ministry of Skill Development signs MoU with ISRO to start Training Program ( May 11, 2022 )**

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch its training program aimed at augmenting the technical workforce in the Department of Space, ISRO.

- The MoU was signed by Shri Rajesh Agarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Shri S Somnath, Chairman, ISRO.
- The objective of this initiative is to establish a formal framework for short-term courses to provide training for skill development and capacity building of ISRO technical professionals in the space sector in the country as per the requirements of the industry.
- The training will take place at MSDE's National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) across India.

- **About Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) -**

- Established - 15 August 1969
- Headquarters- Bangalore, Karnataka
- Motto- Space Technology in the Service of Mankind
- Director- S Somnath

### **4. India, Oman to hold meeting to boost economic ties ( May 10, 2022 )**

The commerce and industry ministers of India and Oman will meet on May 11 to discuss ways to further boost economic ties between the two countries.

- The 48-member delegation will include senior officials and business representatives from health, pharmaceuticals, mining, tourism, energy, shipping, telecommunications and real estate.
- During the visit, senior officials from both sides will participate in the 10th session of the India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) to be held on May 11.
- The meeting will be co-chaired by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and his Omani counterpart.
- The India-Oman Joint Business Council (JBC) meeting will be organised jointly by FICCI and Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry on May 12.
- **Bilateral trade between India and Oman**
- Bilateral trade between the two countries has grown by 82 percent to \$9.94 billion in 2021-22.
- **Major items of Indian exports to Oman** - mineral fuels, textiles, machinery, electrical items, chemicals, iron and steel, tea, coffee, spices, rice, meat products and seafood.
- **Major import items from Oman to India** - urea, LNG, polypropylene, lubricating oil, dates and chromite ore.
- Various Indian financial institutions and PSUs have a presence in Oman.
- **Military exercises**
- Army exercise between both countries : Al Najah
- Air Force exercise between both countries : Eastern Bridge
- Naval Exercise between both countries : Naseem Al Bahr
- **About Oman**
- It is a country in Western Asia.
- It is located on the southeast coast of the Arabian Peninsula, and extends to the mouth of the Persian Gulf.
- Oman shares land borders with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen
- It shares maritime borders with Iran and Pakistan.
- Capital - Muscat
- currency - omani rial
- president - Haitham bin Tariq Al Said

## **5. 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.

## **6. 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

## **7. 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.

## **8. 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.

## **9. 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.

## **10. 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.