

Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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1. UN suspends food aid to Ethiopia over diversion of supplies (June 12, 2023)

United Nations World Food Program

The **United Nations World Food Program** has temporarily **suspended food aid to Ethiopia** on June 9 because it is not reaching those in need in the African country.

An overview of the news

- America had also made a similar announcement a day earlier. WFP executive director **Cindy McCain** said the transfer of food aid is completely unacceptable.
- About **20 million Ethiopians** out of the country's population of about 120 million are dependent on food aid due to drought and conflict.
- Much of this aid comes from the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Food Program.**
- Ethiopia has a population of about **120 million**. This move by the United Nations agency is expected to increase malnutrition in Africa's second most populous country.

United Nations World Food Program

- It is an **international organization** within the **United Nations.**
- It provides **food assistance** worldwide.
- It is the world's largest **humanitarian organization** and the leading provider of school meals.
- It was **founded in 1961.**
- Its Headquarter is in **Rome, Italy.**
- **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** are the founders of WFP.

2. First edition of India, France and UAE maritime partnership exercise begins (June 10, 2023)

France-and-UAE

The **first edition of the India, France and UAE maritime partnership exercise** began in the **Gulf of Oman.**

An Overview of the News

- The exercise includes the participation of **INS Tarkash and French Ship Surcouf**, both equipped with integral helicopters, as well as **French Rafale aircraft and UAE Navy Maritime Patrol Aircraft.**

- The exercise focused on a wide range of naval operations, including surface combat, tactical firing, missile engagement on surface targets, helicopter cross deck landing operations, advanced air defence exercises and boarding operations.
- The primary objective of the exercise is to enhance trilateral cooperation between the three navies and address conventional and non-conventional threats in the maritime environment.
- The exercise serves as a platform for sharing of knowledge, experience and best practices in maritime security.
- The participating navies aim to strengthen ties, promote mutual understanding and promote regional security and stability in the maritime domain.

United Arab Emirates (UAE):

- Capital - **Abu Dhabi**
- Official language - **Arabic**
- Government - **Federal Islamic parliamentary elective semi-constitutional monarchy**
- President/Crown Prince - **Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**
- Prime Minister - **Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**
- Vice President - **Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan**

Oman:

- Capital - **Muscat**
- Currency - **Omani Rial**
- Official language - **Arabic**
- Sultan - **Haitham bin Tariq**
- Crown Prince - **Thiazin bin Haitham**

3. NATO plans German-led air force exercise, "Air Defender 23" (June 9, 2023)

NATO-plans-German-led-air-force-exercise-Air-Defender-23

NATO is set to commence its **largest air force deployment exercise in Europe**, known as "**Air Defender 23**," according to German and US officials.

An overview of the news

- The exercise will span approximately **10 days, starting from 12th June**, and will involve the participation of around **220 military aircraft from 25 NATO and partner countries**.

- The exercise will be conducted across Germany, with some of the training taking place at **Ramstein Air Base**, one of NATO's largest air bases.

Air Defender 23

- The exercise is purely **defensive in nature**.
- Its primary objective is to **enhance the defense capabilities of participating nations** and ensure preparedness to respond to potential security challenges.
- The exercise also intends to send a message to other countries including Russia.
- The demonstration of NATO's unity and collective defense posture serves as a reminder of the Alliance's commitment to address **potential threats and maintain regional stability**.
- By conducting this exercise, NATO seeks to improve interoperability and strengthen the effectiveness of its air defense capabilities.
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About NATO

- **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, is a military alliance between **North American and European countries formed in 1949** and headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.
- It was created during the Cold War as a defence pact to prevent Soviet expansion and protect member states from possible aggression.
- The founding members of NATO were the United States, **Canada, and ten European countries, including Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.**
- NATO Secretary General- **Jens Stoltenberg**

4. India & Serbia agree to set bilateral trade of 1 Billion Euros (June 9, 2023)

India-&-Serbia-agree-to-set-bilateral-trade-of-1-Billion-Euros

President **Droupadi Murmu** and her Serbian counterpart **Aleksandar Vucic** on 8 June in **Belgrade** agreed to set a target for **bilateral trade from the present 320 million euros to one billion euros by the end of the decade.**

An overview of the news

- President Draupadi Murmu is on a three-day state visit to Serbia from June 7 to 9.
- During the visit, President Draupadi Murmu highlighted that the relations between the two sides have a shared understanding of each other's core interests.

- In a joint press statement, President Murmu highlighted the positive outcomes of the
- delegation-level talks and the resolve of the two countries to work on diverse areas of potential cooperation.

Official talks

- President Murmu's official engagements in Serbia included a guard of honor at the Serbia Palace, restricted-level talks, delegation-level talks, a joint media address, and a business event.
- These engagements aimed to foster closer ties and explore opportunities for collaboration between the two nations.
- During the bilateral interactions, both leaders emphasized their commitment to the rule of law, respect for sovereignty, and territorial integrity of nations.

Fraternal Relations

- President Vucic described Serbia's relationship with India as a fraternity, emphasizing the strong bond between the two countries.
- He expressed that India should consider Serbia as a second motherland, underscoring the warmth and depth of their bilateral ties.

Areas of Cooperation

- President Vucic identified six major areas of cooperation between India and Serbia, including defense and military technology cooperation, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, industrial cooperation, information technology, and cultural cooperation, including film production.
- These areas present potential avenues for collaboration and mutual benefits.

About Serbia

- Serbia is a **landlocked country** in the **west-central Balkans**. For most of the 20th century, it was a part of **Yugoslavia**.
- Prime Minister: **Ana Brnabic**
- Capital: **Belgrade**
- President: **Aleksandar Vučić**
- Currency: **Serbian dinar (RSD)**

5. India Sri Lanka Defense Seminar cum Exhibition to be held at Taj Samudra in Colombo (June 7, 2023)

India-Sri-Lanka-Defense-Seminar

India Sri Lanka Defence seminar cum exhibition to be held on 6 June at **Taj Samudra in Colombo.**

An overview of the news

- The seminar seeks to identify potential areas of cooperation for economic revival and capacity building of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces.
- It aims to strengthen the partnership between India and Sri Lanka in defence-related matters.
- The event will feature a comprehensive exhibition that showcases the capabilities of both countries in defence equipment manufacturing.
- The exhibition will be open to the public, offering them an immersive experience of various defence equipment on display.
- The exhibition promotes exchange of ideas and promotes dialogue and encourages meaningful partnerships in the defense sector.

Objective of the event

- The event aims to highlight and celebrate India's prowess in defence manufacturing while fostering a stable and peaceful Indian Ocean region.
- It aligns with India's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region.

Successful Utilization of Indian Defence Equipment

- The Sri Lankan Armed Forces have successfully utilized a wide range of Indian defence equipment, including the Indra Radar, Advanced Offshore Patrol Vessels, L 70 Guns, Dornier Aircraft, and Army training simulators.
- This highlights the effectiveness and reliability of Indian defence technology.

Mutual Benefits

- The Indian armed forces have also benefited from the use of Fast Interceptor Crafts and the refit of a Floating Dock in Colombo.
- In line with India's 'Neighborhood First' policy, the Government of India has committed to supplying additional equipment such as a Floating Dock, a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, and Dornier aircraft.
- This commitment further strengthens the capacity building of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces.

Significance of the Event

- The India-Sri Lanka Defence Seminar and Exhibition hold great importance as a landmark event.

- It fosters greater cooperation and collaboration between the two nations, ultimately contributing to regional peace and stability in the Indian Ocean.

Boost for Indigenous Defence Manufacturing

- With the Sri Lankan Armed Forces utilizing Indian defence equipment, the seminar and exhibition are likely to provide a boost for indigenous defence manufacturing.
- It showcases India's technological capabilities and encourages self-reliance in defence production.

6. Five new countries elected as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council (June 7, 2023)

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Algeria, Guyana, the Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone and Slovenia were elected **non-permanent members** of the **UN Security Council** on 6 June for a **two-year term**.

An overview of the news

- The newly elected members will take up their new responsibilities on **January 1, 2024 and serve till December 31, 2025**.
- **Slovenia defeated Belarus by a vote of 153 to 38**, while Algeria, Guyana, Sierra Leone and the Republic of Korea were elected unopposed.
- These new members will replace **Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates** at present when their two-year term ends on **31 December 2023**.

Election of non-permanent members

- Voting is done by **secret ballot** and candidates have to get a **two-thirds majority, or 128 votes**.
- In all, **192 countries** voted to fill five seats on the council allocated to the Africa and Asia-Pacific groups, and one each to Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean.

About United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

- It was **established in 1945** by the **United Nations Charter**.
- It is one of the six major organs of the United Nations.
- The other 5 organs of the United Nations are - the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat**.
- It has five permanent members - **China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States**, collectively known as the **P5**.

- Any one of them can **veto** a resolution.
- Headquarters - **New York**

7. Oil tanker breaks down in Egypt's Suez Canal (June 6, 2023)

On 4 June, an **oil tanker broke down** in the **Suez Canal**, a major global waterway, **disrupting traffic and temporarily halting the transit of other ships.**

An overview of the news

- As a result of the breakdown, **eight other vessels in the convoy were affected by the disruption.**
- The **Seavigour** was part of the north convoy, which moves from the **Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea.**
- The Suez Canal Authority deployed three **tugboats** to tow the stranded tanker away from the single-lane area.
- The goal was to move the tanker to a double-lane section at the **17 kilometer mark**, allowing other vessels to continue their transit.

About Seavigour

- According to MarineTraffic, the Seavigour is a tanker **built in 2016**, measuring 274 meters (899 ft) in length and 48.63 meters (159 ft) in width.

Previous Incidents in the Suez Canal

- The recent incident adds to a series of vessels encountering difficulties in the vital waterway.
- Notably, in **March 2021**, the Panama-flagged Ever Given, a massive container ship, blocked the canal for six days, causing significant disruptions to global trade.

About Suez Canal

- The Suez Canal, **operational since 1869**, serves as a **crucial link for oil, natural gas, and cargo transportation.**
- The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south from the Isthmus of **Suez in Egypt to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.**
- This canal separates the continent of **Africa from Asia.**
- It provides the shortest sea route between **Europe and the lands surrounding the Indian and Western Pacific Oceans.**
- The Suez Canal is one of the **busiest trade routes in the world.** About **12 percent of the world's total trade** passes through this canal daily.

8. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh holds talks with his US counterpart Lloyd Austin (June 6, 2023)

Defence-Minister-Rajnath-Singh

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh**, held discussions with **US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin** in New Delhi on 5th June.

An overview of the news

- The meeting focused on **strengthening defence cooperation** in various areas, including aligning strategic interests and enhancing security cooperation.
- During the talks, Minister Singh emphasized the significance of the **India-US partnership** in ensuring a free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific region.
- He expressed India's commitment to closely collaborate with the United States across different domains, aiming for capacity building and further **strengthening strategic partnership**.
- Both ministers explored opportunities to build resilient supply chains and identified areas for co-development of new technologies and co-production of existing and new systems.
- Facilitation to enhance cooperation between the **defense start-up ecosystems** of the two countries was also discussed.
- A roadmap for **US-India defense industrial cooperation** was agreed upon, which will shape their cooperation in the years to come.
- They welcomed the recent dialogues focused on **Defense Artificial Intelligence and Defense Space**.
- Regional security issues were also discussed, reflecting their shared interest in promoting **peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region**.
- The meeting was attended by senior officials of the Ministry of Defense including Chief of Defense Staff General **Anil Chauhan**, Defense Secretary **Giridhar Armane** and DRDO Secretary and Chairman **Dr Sameer V Kamat**.

India America relations

Historical Background

- The establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the United States **dates back to 1947**.
- Both countries share common values of **democracy, pluralism and rule of law**.

Strategic Partnership

- India and the United States have developed a strong strategic partnership based on shared interests and values.

- The partnership has seen significant growth in various areas including defence, trade and technology.

Defense and Security Cooperation

- Defense cooperation between India and the US has expanded significantly in recent years.
- Both countries engage in joint military exercises, defense equipment cooperation and intelligence sharing.
- Defense ties have been strengthened by the signing of the **US-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)**.

Economic and trade relations

- Economic relations between India and America have grown steadily.
- The US is one of India's largest trading partners and bilateral trade has grown over the years.
- Both the countries have signed various agreements to enhance economic cooperation and promote investments.

Technology and Innovation

- India and the US cooperate in the fields of **science, technology and innovation**.
- Cooperation has been promoted in areas such as space exploration, clean energy and information technology.
- The US has supported India's initiatives like **Digital India and Skill India**.

9. Bangladesh records highest inflation rate in over a decade (June 6, 2023)

Bangladesh-records-highest-inflation-rate-in-over-a-decade

Bangladesh recently experienced its **highest monthly inflation rate in over a decade**, with inflation reaching **9.94 percent in May**.

An overview of the news

- This rate is the **highest since 2010-11** when it was recorded at **10.11 percent**.
- The data was released by the **Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)**.
- The increase in inflation is primarily attributed to the rise in both **food and non-food prices during this period**.
- The average inflation rate for the period between **June 2022 and May 2023** has risen to **8.84 percent**, surpassing the budgetary target of **5.6 percent**.

- In comparison, the inflation rate in April 2023 was reported at **9.24 percent, and in March, it was 9.33 percent.**
- These figures indicate higher inflation compared to the corresponding months in **April 2022 (6.29 percent) and March 2022 (6.22 percent).**
 - To calculate inflation, the BBS has changed the base index from 2005-06 to 2021-22 and adopted a revised methodology for the compilation of the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** based on the latest 2020 CPI manual of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

People's Republic of Bangladesh

- Capital: **Dhaka**
- Prime Minister: **Sheikh Hasina Wazed**
- President: **Abdul Hamid**
- Currency: **Taka**

10. 1st India-Namibia Joint Commission of Cooperation (June 6, 2023)

External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** recently **co-chaired** the **first India-Namibia Joint Commission** with Namibian Foreign Minister **Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah** in **Windhoek**.

An overview of the news

- In his opening remarks, Dr. Jaishankar highlighted the special place Namibia holds in the hearts of Indians.
- He emphasized that India supports Namibian independence and expressed happiness at Namibia's rightful place in the international community.
- Dr. Jaishankar underlined the **strong bond between India and Namibia**, which is characterized by developmental cooperation, capacity building programs and political solidarity.
- The Joint Commission will assess the progress of India-Namibia relations. In addition, high-level visits and ongoing interactions will strengthen the **India-Namibia partnership** in the future.
- During his visit, the External Affairs Minister inaugurated the **India-Namibia Center of Excellence in Information Technology** in Windhoek. The center will contribute to research, cyber security and good governance.

About Namibia

- Namibia is a country located in **southwestern Africa**, bordering the **Atlantic Ocean** to the west.
- It shares borders with **Angola, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa.**

- The country's diverse geography includes the **Namib Desert** along the **Atlantic coast**, the **Kalahari Desert** to the east, and the **central plateau**.
- Namibia gained independence from South Africa on **March 21, 1990**, becoming the last African country to gain independence from colonial rule.
 - **Windhoek is the capital and largest city of Namibia.**
 - Namibia is known for its stunning **natural landscapes and diverse wildlife.**
 - **Etosha National Park**, located in the north of the country, is a popular destination for wildlife enthusiasts, offering the chance to see **elephants, lions, giraffes, rhinos** and various bird species.