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1. UAE withdraws from US-led Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) (June 2, 2023)

United Arab Emirates (UAE)

Recently the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** has announced its **withdrawal from the US-led Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)**, a maritime alliance.

An overview of the news

- A few weeks ago, Iran seized two tankers within a week in **Gulf waters near the Strait of Hormuz**.
- The second tanker, Niovi, was on its way from Dubai to the port of **Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates**.
- The UAE was disappointed by the lack of US response to the recent tanker seizures, saying it was a "**misrepresentation**" of the talks between the two countries.

Why did UAE withdraw from this alliance?

- The UAE did not give any specific reasons for withdrawing from the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) in an official statement.
- This could be part of a broader strategy by the UAE to assert its own regional influence, pursue independent foreign policies, or rebalance its relations with China and Iran.

About Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)

- It was **established in 2002**.
- Its objective is promoting **security, stability, and prosperity across maritime regions**.
- **Member Nations** - 34 member nations: Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, UAE, United Kingdom, United States, and Yemen.
- Its main operations are **counter-narcotics, counter-smuggling, suppressing piracy, encouraging regional cooperation**.
- Focus Areas - **Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, Indian Ocean, Arabian Gulf, and surrounding areas**.
- In **April 2022**, India had announced that it would join the CMF as an **Associate Partner**.

2. South Korea launches first commercial-grade satellite (June 1, 2023)

South Korea to launch its first commercial-grade satellite on May 25, 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The **commercial-grade satellite** was launched by the **Naro Space Center in Gohang, South Korea**, using a Launch **Nuri rocket**.
- The main satellite, called "**Next Generation Small Satellite 2**", was accompanied by seven cube-shaped satellites.
- The main satellite objectives include verifying **imaging radar technology and observing cosmic radiation** in near-Earth orbit.
- South Korea's Science Minister Lee confirmed the successful launch of all seven secondary satellites from the rocket.
- South Korea plans to launch **three more Nuri rockets by 2027**.
- In the past year, South Korea became the **10th country to send a satellite into space** using its technology, with a "**performance verification satellite**" launched via a Nuri rocket.

South Korea

- It is an **East Asian nation** located in the **southern part of the Korean Peninsula**.
- It shares a heavily militarised border with North Korea.
- President - **Yoon Suk Yeol**
- Capital - **Seoul**
- Prime minister - **Han Duck-soo**

3. South Korea offers KSS-III batch-II submarine to India (June 1, 2023)

Recently **South Korea** has made an exclusive offer to provide its advanced **KSS-III Batch-II submarines to India**.

An overview of the news

- The proposal comes at a time when Germany is about to complete India's submarine acquisition programme, **Project 75I**.

About KSS-III Batch-II submarine

- The KSS-III is the largest submarine to ever be built by South Korea, is being developed in two phases, **Batch-I and Batch-II**.
- It is part of the Korean Attack Submarine program and represents a significant advancement in the country's naval capabilities.

- The KSS-III Batch-II submarine is an advanced version of its predecessor submarine in terms of **combat management system, firepower and sonar capabilities**.
- It is jointly developed by **Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering (DSME) and Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI)**.
- The KSS-III submarine is a series of **diesel-electric attack submarines**.

Features of KSS-III batch-II submarine

- It is equipped with advanced technologies and facilities to enhance **operational effectiveness**.
- The submarine has a **length of approximately 84 m (275 ft)** and a **submerged displacement** of approximately **3,000 tonnes**.
- The KSS-III Batch-II submarine utilizes a combination of **air-independent propulsion (AIP) system** and diesel-electric propulsion.
- The submarine is capable of reaching **speeds of over 20 knots (37 kilometers per hour)** while submerged.
- The submarine is equipped with a **range of armaments and sensors** to fulfill its mission requirements.
- It includes **torpedoes** for anti-submarine warfare, **anti-ship missiles** for surface engagement, and **land-attack capabilities**.
- The submarine also features **advanced sensor systems**, such as **sonar and radar**, to detect and track underwater and surface targets.
- The KSS-III Batch-II submarine has a crew capacity of around **50 personnel**.

Export Potential

- South Korea aims to promote the KSS-III Batch-II submarine for potential export to other countries.
- The advanced features, operational capabilities, and competitive pricing make it an attractive option for nations seeking to modernize their naval forces.

4. Edinburgh University launches Hindi course (June 1, 2023)

The **University of Edinburgh** and the **Indian Consulate in the UK** collaborated to create the **first open access course in the Hindi language**.

An Overview of the News

- The course, entitled "**Climate Solutions**", was developed with the help of translators and in partnership with the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute and the Government of India.

- Professor Dave Ray, Executive Director of the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute, and other climate change experts collaborated to design and deliver the course.
- The Climate Solutions Course syllabus is available in **Hindi, English and Arabic**.
- It focuses on the causes, implications and solutions related to climate change in India.

University of Edinburgh:

- It is a public research university located in **Edinburgh, Scotland**.
- It was **established in 1582** by the city council under a royal charter granted by **King James VI**.

United Kingdom:

- It is an island nation located in **northwestern Europe**. It consists of four countries: **England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland**.
- Capital - **London**
- Prime Minister - **Rishi Sunak**
- Emperor - **Charles III**

5. Sakhalin-1 Project (June 1, 2023)

Sakhalin-1-Project1

ONGC Videsh, a subsidiary of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, recently said that oil production from the **Sakhalin-1 project in Russia** is back from **zero to a high of around 200,000 barrels per day (bpd)**.

An overview of the news

- ONGC expressed confidence that it would be able to retain its **20 per cent stake** in the Sakhalin-1 project.
- ONGC last year applied to the new Russian operator of Sakhalin-1 to retain its stake in the oil and gas project in the country's Far East.
- ONGC Videsh also has a **26% stake in Russia's Vankorneft**, a company that owns Vankor Field and the North Vankor licence.
- ONGC, which has set a **net zero target by 2038**, is expecting gas production from its **Mozambique project** to begin by 2026-27.

About Sakhalin-1 project

- The Sakhalin-1 project is an **oil and gas exploration and production project** located on the **northeastern coast of Sakhalin Island in Russia**.
- It is one of the largest foreign direct investments in Russia's energy sector.

- The Sakhalin-1 project is estimated to have significant oil and gas reserves.
- **Consortium:** The project is operated by Exxon Neftegas Limited, a subsidiary of ExxonMobil, in cooperation with other international partners, including Rosneft, ONGC Videsh Limited, and SODECO (a consortium of Japanese companies).
- **Technological Challenges:** The project faced numerous technological challenges due to its location in a remote and harsh environment.
- The offshore fields are located in the subarctic region, where ice and extreme weather conditions pose significant operational difficulties.
- **Socio Economic Impact:** The Sakhalin-1 project has had a significant socioeconomic impact on the region and Russia as a whole.
- It has contributed to job creation, infrastructure development, and technology transfer, stimulating economic growth in the area.
- **Future Expansion:** Additional exploration activities are being conducted to identify new reserves and expand production capacity.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** The Sakhalin-1 project serves as an example of successful international collaboration in the energy sector.
- It has brought together major international oil companies and Russian partners to leverage their expertise, resources, and technology.

About ONGC Videsh

- ONGC Videsh Limited is a **Miniratna Schedule "A" Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE)** of the Government of India under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**.
- It is a wholly owned subsidiary and overseas arm of **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC)**.
- ONGC Videsh Limited's primary business is to explore possibilities for **oil and gas production outside India**, including exploration, development and production of oil and gas.

6. India, Vietnam hold 3rd Maritime Security Dialogue (June 1, 2023)

India and Vietnamese officials held the **third Maritime Security Dialogue** in New Delhi on 31st May.

An overview of the news

- Both sides discussed ways to better maintain the marine environment which is helpful for the **inclusive development** of both the countries.
- Senior officials from ministries and services dealing with **maritime affairs participated in the dialogue**.

- The two sides also reviewed initiatives for maritime cooperation and ways to strengthen international and regional mechanisms for comprehensive maritime security.
- The **second India-Vietnam Maritime Security Dialogue** was to be held in virtual format in **April 2021** after the **first round was held in Hanoi in March 2019**.

India, Vietnam Relation

- Vietnam has become an important partner in **India's Act East policy** and the **Indo-Pacific vision** as both countries have disputes with China.
- Vietnam is involved in a dispute with China on the **South China Sea Island**. China claims nearly all of the disputed South China Sea islands, though **Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam** all claim parts of it. Beijing has built artificial islands and military installations in the South China Sea.
- India favours free and open navigation right in the South China Sea which is threatened by China.
- India has oil exploration projects in the **Vietnamese waters** in the South China Sea. India and Vietnam are boosting their maritime security cooperation in the last few years to protect common interests.
- **In 2016**, during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Vietnam, the bilateral relations were further elevated to a "**comprehensive strategic partnership**".
- India and Vietnam signed an important **Joint Vision Statement on defence partnership** during the visit of the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to Vietnam on 8 June 2022.
- During the defence minister's visit India provided a **\$500 million defence loan to Vietnam**.

About Vietnam

- It lies in **South East Asia** and it is a member of **Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN)**
- Prime Minister: **Pham Minh Chinh**
- Capital: **Hanoi**
- President: **Vo Van Thuong**
- Currency: **Dong**

7. Recep Tayyip Erdogan becomes the President of Türkiye (May 31, 2023)

Justice and Development Party (AK Party) leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan became the President of Turkey.

An Overview of the News

- In the parliamentary elections, the **AK Party** and its allies **won 323 out of 600 seats.**
- Erdogan has been in power for two decades after becoming prime minister in **March 2003.**
- Erdogan won the presidential election, defeating **Kemal Kilikdaroglu**, the opposition leader of the **Republican People's Party (CHP).**
- Erdogan's government aims to prioritise fighting inflation and dealing with the aftermath of the devastating February 6 earthquake.

About Türkiye

- It is officially known as the **Republic of Turkey, a transcontinental country.**
- It is located mainly on the **Anatolian Peninsula in Western Asia**, with a small portion on the **Balkan Peninsula in Southeast Europe.**
- **Ankara is the capital of Türkiye.**
- **Istanbul** is the largest city in Turkey and serves as the main financial center.

President - **Fuat Octay**

Assembly Speaker - **Mustafa Sentop**

Chief Justice - **Zuhu Arslan**

Official languages - **Turkish**

8. Sri Lanka's National Poson Week begins (May 31, 2023)

Sri-Lanka's-National-Poson-Week-begins

In **Sri Lanka, the National Poson Week began on 31 May.**

An overview of the news

- The Posan festival will be held till **June 6** and will be centered around the holy city of **Mihinthalaya, Thanthirimalaya and Anuradhapura.**
- The festival celebrates the introduction of Buddhism to **Sri Lanka in 236 BCE by Arhat Mahinda, the son of Emperor Ashoka.**
- A large number of devotees are expected to visit Anuradhapura for the festival this year and steps have been taken to provide all facilities to the devotees.
- Due to economic crisis and lockdown in the last few years the festival could not be celebrated on a large scale.
- Apart from this, the traffic police have implemented a special traffic plan to make travel easier in Anuradhapura.

About Poson Festival

- Posan, also known as Poson Poya, is an **annual festival held by Sri Lankan Buddhists** celebrating the arrival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka in the 3rd century BCE.
- The festival is the most important **Poya (full moon) holiday** of the year and the second most important Buddhist holiday of the year.
- Posan is celebrated throughout the island, with **Anuradhapura and Mihintale** holding the most important celebrations of the festival.
- The festival is held in early June, coinciding with the June full moon.

9. Bola Tinubu of Nigeria sworn in as President (May 31, 2023)

Bola Tinubu was sworn in as the **President of Nigeria** on 29 May.

news overview

- Tinubu was inaugurated at **Eagles Square in Abuja**, which was attended by local and foreign dignitaries.
- Tinubu's presidency is marked by economic crisis, security concerns, and the need for political stability.
- Economic challenges in Nigeria include the need for diversification to reduce dependence on oil revenues.

Nigeria

- It is an **African country** located on the **Gulf of Guinea**.
- Capital - **Abuja**
- Vice President - **Kashim Shettima**
- Senate President - **Ahmed Lawan**
- House Speaker - **Femi Gbajamila**
- Chief Justice - **Olukayode Arivula**

10. New Liberation War Gallery Inaugurated at the Indian Cultural Centre in Dhaka (May 31, 2023)

New-Liberation-War-Gallery-Inaugurated-at-the-Indian-Cultural-Centre-in-Dhaka
On 30 May a new **Liberation War Gallery of 1971** was inaugurated at the **Indian Cultural Center of the Indian High Commission in Dhaka**.

An overview of the news

- Bangladesh Home Minister **Asaduzzaman Khan** was the chief guest on the occasion.

- India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma joins **Home Minister in inauguration of Liberation War Gallery**
- The War Gallery houses some rare photographs of the **Liberation War of 1971**, which culminated in the liberation of then East Pakistan and its rise as the newest nation of South Asian countries.
 - The inaugural program was attended by many freedom fighters, Bir Muktijodha, and distinguished guests, including many eminent personalities of Bangladesh, representatives of the cultural and educational fields of Bangladesh, and youth.
 - The gallery displays heroic photographs and documents from the Bangladesh Liberation **War of 1971** as a testament to the enduring bond of friendship between India and Bangladesh.
 - It pays tribute to the brave freedom fighters who fought against oppression and tyranny.
 - The gallery honors the memory of the unknown millions who laid down their lives during the **Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971**.

Liberation War of 1971

- In the 1950s, Pakistan was ruled by a military-bureaucratic rule that ruled the entire **country (East and West Pakistan)** in an undemocratic manner.
- The Bengalites had no political representation in this system of governance.
- This dominance of West Pakistan was challenged by the Bengalis during the general elections of 1970.
- In the general election of **1970, the Awami League of East Pakistan's Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** got a clear majority.
- West Pakistan was not ready for any leader of East Pakistan to rule the country.
- On **March 26, 1971**, West Pakistan launched Operation Searchlight in East Pakistan.
- As a result, lakhs of Bangladeshis had to take refuge in India.
- The Pakistani army had to face defeat due to the bravery of the '**Muktiwahini Sena**' and Indian soldiers who fought for the independence of Bangladesh.
- On 6 December 1971, a new nation Bangladesh was born out of 13 days of war with the intervention of India.