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1. PM Modi attended FIPIC summit in Papua New Guinea (May 24, 2023)

India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)

PM Modi attended the **third India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit** in **Papua New Guinea** 23 May. **14 countries from the Pacific Islands (PICs)** attended the summit.

An overview of the news

- The summit was led by Papua New Guinea's **PM James Marape and PM Modi**.
- As part of **India's Act East Policy**, the Prime Minister of India announced a **12-point development plan** for the Pacific Island Nations.
- The 12-point development plan focuses on a number of areas including health care, renewable energy and cyber security.
- The two leaders also launched a translation of the Tamil classic '**Thirukkural**' to the Tok Pisin language of Papua New Guinea.
- The translated book is co-authored by linguist Subha **Sasindran and Sasindran Muthuvel**, Governor of West New Britain Province of Papua New Guinea.

PM Modi's 12-point action plan

- A 100-bed regional super specialty hospital in Fiji
- Setting up a regional IT and cyber security training hub in Papua New Guinea
- Sagar Amrut Scholarships-100 scholarships in the next five years
- Jaipur foot camp in Papua New Guinea in 2023
- FIPIC SME development project,
- A solar project for government buildings
- Provide desalination units for drinking water
- Supply sea ambulances
- Set up dialysis unit
- Emergency helpline number
- Set up Jan Aushadi kendras
- Set up yoga centres.

Pacific Island nations

- The Pacific Islands are island geographic regions of the **Pacific Ocean**.

- Pacific Island nations include the **Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.**

About India Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)

- It was launched during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Fiji in November 2014.
- FIPIC includes India and 14 of the island countries – **Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.**

About FIPIC summit

- FIPIC-I, in 2014, took place at **Suva, Fiji's capital city.**
- India announced various development assistance initiatives and other cooperation projects in areas of **climate change, trade, economy, telemedicine and tele education, IT, grants for community development projects, etc.**
- **FIPIC-II summit** took place in 2015 in **Jaipur.**
- In 2019, the Leaders of the **Indo-Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS)** meeting (consisting of delegations from 12 of the 14 Pacific Island countries) was held in **New York** on September 24, 2019.

2. 76th World Health Assembly at Geneva (May 23, 2023)

76th-World-Health-Assembly-at-Geneva

Union Health Minister **Mansukh Mandaviya** will represent India in the **76th World Health Assembly at Geneva, Switzerland** to be held from 21st to 30th May 2023.

An overview of the news

- In line with India's commitment to a healthier world, the Union Health Minister will deliver the keynote address at the side events of '**Heal in India and Heal by India**' as well as '**Together We Fight Against TB**'.
- During his stay till 24 May 2023, Mandaviya will participate in **various bilateral meetings with countries across the world.**
- He will promote opportunities for health-related cooperation among the participating countries.
- The bilateral meetings will engage representatives from **Singapore, France, Netherlands, USA, Bangladesh, Argentina, Brazil, Qatar and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.**
- Additionally, a multilateral meeting is also scheduled with representatives from **BRICS (Brazil, Russia, China and South-Africa).**

Key agenda for assembly

- Discussions and deliberations on the issues of Universal Health Coverage.
- Public Health Emergencies
- Health & Well-Being
- Emphasising the importance of global collaborations and partnerships for building resilient global health architecture.
- Collectively striving to achieve Universal Health Coverage through value-based healthcare.

About World Health Assembly

- The **World Health Assembly** is the **decision-making body of WHO**.
- It is attended by delegations from all WHO Member States and focuses on a specific health agenda prepared by the **Executive Board**.
- The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed programme budget.
- The Health Assembly is held annually in **Geneva, Switzerland**.

3. India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development virtually launched (May 23, 2023)

India-US-Working

The **Ministry of Education, Government** of India and US Department of State on 22 May launched the **India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development** in virtual mode.

An overview of the news

- Its aim is **to enhance cooperation and collaboration between the two countries** in the field of education and skill development.
- Both sides acknowledged the importance of **skilling and vocational education** in an industry-centric era.
- Recognizing the need to align skill training programs with industry requirements, both sides agreed to promote partnerships between educational institutions, industry stakeholders and relevant government agencies.
- The collaboration aims to bridge the skill gap, increase employability and promote entrepreneurship in both the countries.
- The delegations from both sides expressed their commitment **to strengthen cooperation in education and skill development between India and the United States**.

- The establishment of an India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development was
- **announced during the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue** held between India and the US in **Washington DC** in April 2022.

Topic of discussion

- Skilling and vocational education
- Certification and recognition
- Matchmaking between U.S. and Indian higher educational institutions
- Engaging with the Private Sector

4. WHO warns of possible rise in dengue cases in Afghanistan (May 23, 2023)

dengue-cases-in-Afghanistan

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has **issued an alert** on the recent cases of **dengue fever in Afghanistan.**

An overview of the news

- The organization said that their medical staff has enough equipment to control the disease.
- The organization said that the **number of dengue patients may increase during the rainy season.** Twelve groups of **65 women health professionals** are participating in the three-day program to protect against dengue patients.
- The WHO also urged the people of Afghanistan to avoid mosquito bites and adopt necessary safety measures to prevent dengue.

What is Dengue?

- Commonly known as **break bone fever**, it is a flu-like illness caused by the **dengue virus.**
- It occurs when an Aedes mosquito carrying the virus bites a healthy person.
- The disease is mainly found in tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world.

Causes of Dengue

- It is caused due to four viruses, namely - **DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3, and DENV-4.**
- The virus enters the mosquito when it bites an already infected person.
- The disease is transmitted when it bites a healthy person, and the virus is spread through the person's bloodstream.

Symptoms of Dengue

- Headache, Muscle, bone and joint pain, Nausea, Vomiting, swollen glands, Rash.

Treatment

- There is no specific treatment for dengue.
- Early detection of severe dengue-associated illness and access to appropriate medical care reduce deaths from severe dengue.
- Diagnosis of dengue infection is done with a blood test.

5. AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023 Naval Exercise (May 23, 2023)

AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023 Naval Exercise

Indian Navy ships **INS TARKASH** and **INS SUBHADRA** arrived at **Port Al-Jubail in Saudi Arabia** on 21st May.

An overview of the news

- The visit of these ships marks the beginning of the **harbor phase of the second edition of the naval exercise** between the two countries, known as '**Al-Mohad Al-Hindi 2023**'.
- This year the naval exercise also includes the **participation of a Maritime Patrol Aircraft**.
- During the exercise, naval forces from both countries will engage in **joint maneuvers, training activities, and exchange of expertise**.
- The exercise will focus on enhancing maritime security capabilities and promoting interoperability between the two navies.
- The **inaugural edition** of the exercise was **successfully conducted in 2021**.

About Al-Mohed Al-Hindi Exercise

- The decision on this bilateral exercise between India and Saudi Arabia was taken at the **Riyadh summit held in 2019**.
- Its aim is to carry out **tactical maneuvers, search and rescue operations, and an electronic warfare drill** to enhance interoperability.
- It aims to strengthen the **defense ties between India and Saudi Arabia**.

Importance of the Exercise

- AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023 signifies the **growing strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia** in the defense sector.
- The exercise will provide an opportunity for both navies to learn from each other's experiences and improve their **operational capabilities**.

- The naval exercise also serves as a platform for fostering diplomatic relations and strengthening regional security cooperation.
- The successful conduct of **AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023** may pave the way for future collaborations in defense technology, intelligence sharing, and joint defense projects.
- The exercise contributes to maintaining **stability and security in the region** by promoting cooperation and mutual understanding between the Indian and Saudi Arabian navies.

6. 5000 year old tree from Chile recognized as the oldest tree in the world (May 22, 2023)

5000-year-old-tree

A giant tree in **southern Chile**, known as the "**Great Grandfather**" and this tree, a **Patagonian cypress**, located in the **Alerce Costero National Park** is the **oldest tree in the world**.

news overview

- The trunk of the tree has a **diameter of four metres (13 ft) and it is 28 metres tall**.
- It is over 5,000 years old, surpassing the oldest tree currently known as the **Methuselah, which is 4,850 years old**.
- It is located in a forest in the **southern Los Ríos region**, 800 kilometres (500 mi) south of the **capital Santiago**.
- This tree belongs to the species **Fitzroya cupressoides**, which is also known as **Patagonian cypress**.
- **Fitzroya cupressoides is the largest tree species in South America**.

About Chile

- It is a long, narrow country located on the **western edge of South America**.
- **Santiago** is the **capital of Chile** and is located in a valley surrounded by the **Santiago Andes and Chilean Coast Range mountains**.
- The city's central square is called the **Plaza de Armas and has palm-lined streets**.
- The Plaza de Armas houses the **Neoclassical Cathedral and the National History Museum**.
- There is a huge park in Santiago called **Parque Metropolitano**.

President - **Gabriel Boric**

7. Amy Pope became the first woman Director-General of the United Nations Migration Agency (May 22, 2023)

first-woman-Director-General-of-the-United-Nations

Amy Pope of the United States has been selected as the **first female Director-General of the United Nations Migration Agency.**

An Overview of the News

- She will head the **Geneva-based International Organization for Migration (IOM).**
- Pope is currently serving as **deputy to Director General Antonio Vitorino.**
- Her five-year term as director general will begin on October 1, replacing Vitorino.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- It is an **agency of the United Nations** and provides **services and advice related to migration.**
- The agency provides assistance to governments and expatriates.
- It caters to the needs of diverse groups including **internally displaced persons, refugees and migrant workers.**

Formation - **6 December 1951**

Headquarters - **Geneva, Switzerland**

Membership (2023) - **175 member states and 8 observer states**

8. PM Modi conferred with highest civilian honours by Fiji, Papua New Guinea (May 22, 2023)

Narendra Modi

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** was conferred with the **highest honor by Fiji and Papua New Guinea** on 21 May.

An overview of the news

- PM Modi was honored with the island nation's highest civilian award during his visit to Papua New Guinea to attend the **3rd India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) summit.**
- PM Modi was awarded "**The Companion of the Order of Fiji**" by his Fijian counterpart **Sitweni Rabuka** for his global leadership, a rare honor for a non-Fijian.

- Papua New Guinea conferred its highest civilian honour, **Grand Companion of the Order of Loghu (GCL)** on PM Modi for his efforts towards unity of the Pacific island nation.

Republic of Fiji

- It is an archipelago consisting of around **300 islands in the South Pacific Ocean.**
- Capital: **Suva**
- Currency: **Fijian Dollar**
- Prime Minister: **Sitiveni Rabuka**

Papua New Guinea

- Prime Minister: **James Marape**
- Capital: **Port Moresby**
- Currency: **kina (K)**

9. Mahatma Gandhi Scholarships awarded to 300 students in Sri Lanka (May 21, 2023)

Recently **three hundred school students** from all **25 districts of Sri Lanka** have received the prestigious **Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship.**

An overview of the news

- Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka **Gopal Baglay**, Sri Lankan Education Minister **Dr. Sushil Premjayantha** and Minister of State for Education **A.K. Arvind Kumar** provided scholarships to the students.
- The scholarship provides **2500 Sri Lankan Rupees per student per month** to the top six students from each district based on merit.
- This year, two batches of scholarships were awarded simultaneously to compensate for the disruptions caused by **COVID-19** during the period 2021-2022.
- During the ceremony, the High Commissioner emphasized the importance of bilateral cooperation in the education sector for the bright future of the youth in Sri Lanka and India.
- Drawing parallels between the philosophies of **Mahatma Gandhi and Buddha**, he said Gandhi's ideals remain relevant even in a rapidly changing world.

Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship

- Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship plays a vital role in **promoting educational opportunities for students in Sri Lanka.**

- By providing financial support, these scholarships enable students to pursue their
- **academic aspirations and fulfill their potential.**
 - In addition to the Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship, the Government of India offers about **210 scholarships annually to Sri Lankan students** in fields such as **engineering, technology, arts, science and indigenous medicine.**
 - The **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Scheme** offers over **400 scholarships** to Sri Lankan government officials to enhance their domain knowledge.
 - Furthermore, there are thousands of seats available for Sri Lankan students in India under the Study in India program.

10. Panel discussion on 'Role of G20 in creating global economic stability' (May 21, 2023)

A recent panel discussion held in **Dubai** highlighted the **important role of the G20 in creating global economic stability.**

An overview of the news

- A panel discussion held in Dubai shed light on the vital role of the G20 in creating global economic stability.
- The event took place on the sidelines of the International Conference jointly organized by the Indian Institute of Management Rohtak, Academy for Global Business Advancement, and Council for Strategic Affairs.

Importance of the G20

- The panelists highlighted the significance of the G20 in the current international order.
- The group plays a multifaceted role in creating global economic stability, fostering inclusive growth, ensuring financial stability, promoting balanced and sustainable growth, and effectively managing and preventing crises.

Panelists and insights

- The panel consisted of Manjeev Singh Puri, former ambassador of India to Nepal, Prof Tatiana Karabchuk from UAE University, and Prof Mayssa Banat from Rafik Hariri University in Lebanon.
- They provided valuable insights into the G20's role and its impact on global economic stability.
- The discussion was moderated by Prof. Dheeraj Sharma, the Director of IIM Rohtak.

G20 as a platform for decision-making

- Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri highlighted the G20's ability to bring together leaders from the world's largest economies and facilitate effective decision-making and implementation through national and multinational systems.

- Despite lacking de jure power, the G20 possesses significant de facto power, making it
- influential in driving positive change globally.

Specific areas of impact

- The panelists delved into specific areas where the G20 can make a significant impact.
- Prof Tatiana Karabchuk emphasized the importance of public opinion polls for informed decision-making and suggested the G20's role in implementing necessary changes in online education.
- Prof Mayssa Banat emphasized the power of language education in overcoming barriers and shaping global economic policies.

G20's contribution to global economic stability

- The panel discussion showcased the diverse aspects of the G20's role in fostering cooperation among major economies and driving sustainable development.
- The group's focus on inclusive growth, financial stability, crisis management, and balancing de jure and de facto power within global institutions is essential for global economic stability.