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1. India and Israel sign MoU for cooperation on industrial research and development (May 5, 2023)

India and Israel sign MoU for cooperation on industrial research and development

India and Israel signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to enhance **industrial research and development cooperation** in high-tech areas such as **AI, quantum, semiconductors, healthcare, aerospace, sustainable energy and agriculture.**

An Overview of the News

- The partnership aims to facilitate **collaborative initiatives for industrial research and development** in a diverse range of high-tech domains, including **artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductor technology, synthetic biology, healthcare, aerospace, sustainable energy and agriculture.**
- The MoU will focus on specific projects and will be monitored by a **Joint Steering Committee** to ensure effective implementation.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

- It is a type of agreement between two or more parties that expresses a shared intention to take a **common line of action.**
- Memoranda of Understanding can be used in situations where the **parties do not intend a legal commitment or cannot form a legally enforceable agreement.**
- MOUs are often used by many companies and government agencies to **define relationships between departments, agencies, or closely related companies.**

About Israel

Israel is a **Middle Eastern country** on the **Mediterranean Sea.**

It is considered the **Holy Land of the Bible by Jews,** Christians and Muslims.

Tel Aviv is the financial centre of the country and is known for its **beaches and Bauhaus architecture.**

Capital and largest city - **Jerusalem**

Official language - **Hebrew**

Recognized Language - **Arabic**

Government - **Unitary parliamentary republic**

President - **Isaac Herzog**

Prime Minister - **Benjamin Netanyahu**

Chief Justice - **Esther Hayut**

2. Devendra Fadnavis unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Mauritius (May 5, 2023)

Devendra Fadnavis unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Mauritius

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister **Devendra Fadnavis** unveiled the **statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Mauritius.**

An Overview of the News

- The ceremony was attended by Prime Minister of Mauritius **Pravind Jugnauth** and members of the Mauritius Marathi Mandali Federation.
- Fadnavis highlighted Maharashtra's potential as a major industrial and investment destination in India.
- Fadnavis participated in the **Indo-Mauritius Business Forum** and **signed an MoU to promote trade between Mauritius and Maharashtra.**
- He also announced a grant of **Mauritius Rupees 44 million for the construction of a multi-purpose** hall and a scholarship for 10 students.
- Fadnavis also attended a cultural event with Prime Minister Jugnauth and interacted with members of the Maharashtrian community in Mauritius.

About Mauritius

It is an **island nation located in the Indian Ocean.**

The interior of the island is mountainous and contains the **Black River Gorges National Park.**

Capital - **Port Louis**

President - **Prithviraj Singh Rupan**

Prime Minister - **Pravind Kumar Jugnauth**

Mauritius currency - **Mauritian rupee**

3. 56th Annual General Meeting of Board of Directors of ADB (May 5, 2023)

56th Annual General Meeting of Board of Directors of ADB

Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** attended the **56th Annual General Meeting** of the **Board of Directors of the Asian Development Bank (ADB)** in **Incheon, South Korea** on May 2.

An overview of the news

- Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs **Nirmala Sitharaman** led the delegation from the Indian side.
- The meeting was attended by **official delegations of ADB members, observers, non-governmental and civil society organizations**, financial institutions and banks, and other private sector companies.
- Sitharaman also participated in the annual meeting and focal events such as Governors Business.
- She also participated as a panelist in the **ADB Governors' Seminar on Policies to Support Asia's Rebound**.

The functions of the Union Finance Minister included the following components:

- Interaction with global economists, governors/finance ministers of ADB member countries, etc.
- Bilateral engagement with countries and international organizations.
- Interact with global business leaders and investors in roundtables.
- Engagement with community diaspora.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- It is a **regional multilateral financial institution** which focuses on the countries of **Asia and Pacific region**.
- It was set up after a resolution was passed at the **first Ministerial Conference on Asian Economic Cooperation** held by the **United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East in 1963**.
- It started functioning from **19 December 1966 with 31 member countries**.
- At present it has **68 members—of which 49 members are from within Asia** and the Pacific and 19 outside.
- **Japan is the largest shareholder** of the ADB and a Japanese has always been the head of the ADB.
- President of ADB: **Masatsugu Asakawa**
- Headquarters: **Mandaluyong City, Manila, Philippines**

4. 'Machines can See' - Summit on Artificial Intelligence held at Dubai (May 4, 2023)

The UAE government launched the '**Machines Can See 2023**' summit in **Dubai**, one of the **first international conferences in Artificial Intelligence (AI) across the region**.

An overview of the news

- The conference is being held in partnership between **Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy, and Remote Work Applications Office** and '**Machines Can See**' company.
- The conference aims to bring together experts from around the world to discuss **the future of AI and its potential to contribute to the UAE's vision of creating the next Silicon Valley**.
- The event was organized in collaboration with the **Dubai Department of Economic and Tourism** and the **Dubai Future Foundation**.
- The summit included **presentations and panel discussions from various experts in the field of AI**.
- The **UAE is the only country with a state-level AI programme**, which is a testament to its commitment to supporting the progress of AI technology.

What is Artificial Intelligence?

- It is a broad branch of computer science that deals with the creation of smart machines capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence.

5. India to build Harbour for Maldivian Coast Guard (May 4, 2023)

India to build Harbour for Maldivian Coast Guard

India and Maldives launched construction of '**Ekatha Harbour**' for the Coast Guard of the **Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF)**.

An overview of the news

- The foundation stone for the Coast Guard '**Ekatha Harbour**' was laid by Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** and his Maldivian counterpart, **Mariya Didi**, at **Sifavaru in Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) atoll**, where India is assisting in construction of a **naval dockyard**.
- This is the **biggest grant-in-aid project of India in Maldives**.

UTF project

- The UTF project, announced during External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar's visit in February 2021**, has been at the centre of a political controversy in the Maldives.
- Allegations that the project was meant for Indian military presence in the Indian Ocean nation were part of an "India Out" campaign, which was supported by the country's opposition leader, **Abdulla Yameen**.

- Last April, Maldivian President Ibrahim Solih **banned anti-India protests** as a threat to national security.
- Anti-India campaigners allege that Indian troops were stationed in a fast patrol vessel India recently gifted to Maldives Coast Guard.

Recent gifts of India to Maldives

- India gifted a **Dornier aircraft** to Maldives in 2020 and a patrol ship in 2019.
- In 2022, India had also given **Coastal Radar System to Male**.
- Last year, Modi had announced that India would provide **24 vehicles** and a naval boat and build police facilities on the country's **61 islands**.

6. Paraguay's Colorado Party's Santiago Peña wins presidential election (May 3, 2023)

Paraguay's Colorado Party's Santiago Peña wins presidential election

Santiago Peña, an economist from **Paraguay's ruling conservative Colorado party**, won the **country's presidential election**.

An Overview of the News

- The election was decided in a single round of voting, and with nearly all ballots counted, **Santiago Peña received over 42% of the vote**.
- His main challenger, **Efraín Alegre**, who represented the **Concertación Nacional coalition**, received about **28% of the vote**.
- The Colorado Party has been the dominant political force in Paraguay for more than 70 years, and Santiago Peña's victory solidified its hold on power.
- Despite an expected economic growth of more than 4% this year, Paraguay still struggles with high levels of poverty and corruption.

About Paraguay

- It is a country **located in the middle of South America**. It is a landlocked country, bordered by **Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia**.
- **Asuncion is the capital of Paraguay** and is situated on the banks of the Paraguay River.
- Official languages - **Paraguayan Guarani, Spanish**

7. Maiden ASEAN-India Maritime exercise begins in Singapore (May 2, 2023)

Maiden ASEAN-India Maritime exercise begins in Singapore

The first ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise (AIME-2023) began on 2 May in Singapore.

An overview of the news

- The maiden exercise is being conducted **off the coast of Singapore**.
- It aims **to enhance interoperability and exchange of best practices** among the participating navies.
- **INS Satpura and INS Delhi**, accompanied by RADM Gurcharan Singh, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, have reached Singapore to participate in the exercise.
- AIME 2023 will provide an opportunity for **Indian Navy and ASEAN navies** to work together closely and conduct seamless operations in the maritime domain.
- Indian Navy ships will also participate in the **International Maritime Security Conference (IMSC)** and the **International Maritime Defense Exhibition (IMDEX-23)**.
- The Philippine Navy has deployed its **missile frigate BRP Antonio Luna (FF-151)** with a 140-man crew of Naval Task Group 80.5 onboard in the exercise.

Phase of the exercise

- **Harbour Phase** - to be conducted at Changi Naval Base.
- **Sea Phase** - to be conducted in the South China Sea.

INS Delhi and INS Satpura

- **INS Delhi** is **India's first indigenously-built guided missile destroyer**.
- **INS Satpura**, is an **indigenously built guided missile stealth frigate** and are fitted with **state-of-the art weapons and sensors**.
- Both are part of the **Eastern Fleet based at Visakhapatnam** and are under the operational command of the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command.

8. India to hand-over fast Patrol Vessel ship & landing Craft to Maldives (May 2, 2023)

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** will hand over a **fast patrol vessel and a landing craft to the Maldives** as India's "**gift**" during his visit to the island nation from May 1 to 3.

An overview of the news

- It will be an "**important landmark**" in building "**strong bonds**" of friendship between the two countries.

- Maldives is one of India's major maritime neighbors **in the Indian Ocean region and overall bilateral relations** between the two countries, including in the areas of **defense and security**, have been on the rise over the years.
- Singh will also review the implementation of various **India-aided projects in the Maldives** and interact with the Indian expatriate.
- India and Maldives are working together to effectively address common challenges including **maritime security, terrorism, radicalism, piracy, smuggling**, organized crime and natural disasters.

About Maldives

- It is also called **Maldives Islands**, an independent island country in the **north-central Indian Ocean**.
- It extends more than **510 miles (820 km)** from north to **south and 80 miles (130 km)** from east to west.
- Basis of economy - **fisheries, tourism**
- Industries - **handicraft or cottage including the making of coir (coconut-husk fibre) and coir products, fish canning, and boatbuilding**.
- Capital - **Male**
- President - **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih**
- Official Language - **Dhivehi (Maldivian)**
- Official Religion - **Islam**
- Currency - **Rufiyaa**

9. Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh visits Science Museum (May 1, 2023)

Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh visits Science Museum

Union Minister of State for Science and Technology **Dr Jitendra Singh** inspected the operations of the **175 year old London Science Museum**.

An Overview of the News

- The objective of setting up such museums in India is **to enable the citizens, especially the youth, to discover their hidden potential and abilities and develop their scientific temper, creativity and innovation**.
- The Science Museum, **established in 1857**, is located in **South Kensington, London** and is a major museum on Exhibition Road.
- The museum management was impressed by **India's success in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic**.

- The Science Museum became one of the city's most popular tourist attractions, **with 3.3 million visitors in 2019.**
- As a publicly funded national museum in the **UK, the Science Museum does not charge admission**, but visitors are encouraged to make a donation if possible.
- The Science Museum is part of a group of five museums known as the **Science Museum Group.**

About the United Kingdom (UK)

- It is a country in Europe made up of **England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.**
- It has a **constitutional monarchy** and a **parliamentary democracy** with the monarch as the head of state and the prime minister leading the government.
- The UK has a mixed economy and is known for its strengths in the **service sector, manufacturing and technology.**

Prime Minister- **Rishi Sunak**

Capital- **London**

Currency- **Pound Sterling (GBP)**

Emperor- **Charles III**

Government- **Parliamentary System, Unitary State, Constitutional Monarchy**

10. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to visit Maldives (April 30, 2023)

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** is set to embark on a **three-day official visit to Maldives** on 30th April.

An overview of the news

- During the visit, Rajnath Singh will hold **bilateral talks** with Maldivian Defense Minister **Ms. Maria Ahmed Didi** and Foreign Minister **Abdulla Shahid.**
- All aspects of defense relations between the two countries will be reviewed during the consultations.
- Rajnath Singh will also meet Maldivian President **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih.**
- In line with India's commitment to capacity building of friendly countries and partners in the region, Rajnath Singh will gift a **Fast Patrol Vessel ship and a landing craft to the Maldivian National Defense Forces.**
- India and Maldives are working together to effectively address common challenges including **maritime security, terrorism, radicalism, piracy, smuggling, organized crime and natural disasters.**

- India's vision of **SAGAR** (Security and Growth for All in the Region) along with its
- **'Neighbourhood First'** policy as well as Maldives' **'India First'** policy seek to work together to jointly develop the capabilities within the Indian Ocean Region.

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