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1. Defence Ministry signs contract to acquire additional Brahmos missiles (Sept. 23, 2022)

An agreement worth Rs 1,700 crore was signed between the acquisition arm of the Defence Ministry and M/s BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd on September 22 for additional supply of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- The total contract value signed so far for these missiles has exceeded Rs 38,000 crore.
- The induction of these missiles will further enhance the operational capability of the Navy.
- The contract will also promote indigenous production of critical weapon systems and ammunition with active participation of domestic industry.
- It may be mentioned that BAPL is a joint venture between India and Russia which is making a significant contribution in the development of a new generation of surface-to-surface missiles.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -

About BrahMos :

- BrahMos is a supersonic cruise missile.
- It is a joint collaboration between India and Russia.
- The missile is capable of being launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air against surface and sea-based targets.
- BrahMos was first flight tested at Pokhran test range in Rajasthan.

2. G4 group express concern over slow pace of reform on Security Council (Sept. 23, 2022)

The foreign ministers of Group of 4 (India, Japan, Brazil and Germany) met in New York on 22 September 2022 and expressed concern about the lack of meaningful progress in the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) on United Nations Security Council (SC) reform. They met on the sidelines of the [77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly](#) being held in New York, United States.

The meeting was attended by Indian External Affairs Minister **S.Jaishanker**, German foreign minister **Annalena Baerbock**, Brazilian foreign minister **Carlos Alberto Franco Franca** and Japanese foreign minister **Yoshimasa Hayashi**.

The G-4 was formed in 2005 to reform the UN Security Council and include four countries as **the permanent member of the United Nation Security Council.**

IMPORTANT FACTS -

China not in favour :

- According to the government of India, as told to Lok Sabha on 22 July 2022, only China is opposing India's candidature for the UN Security Council membership while the other permanent members of the Security Council, Russia, France, United Kingdom and the United States are in favour of India.
- China is also opposed to the membership of Japan and Germany.
- It has a difficult relationship with India and Japan and consider them as its rival while it opposes Germany as it is not a developing country.

UN Security Council :

- The UN Security Council is the main UN body which is responsible for maintaining peace and security in the world.
- It consists of 15 members. 10 members are non-permanent and are elected for 2 years.
- Five members are permanent members and they have veto power. The five permanent members are China, Russia, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

3. India and 4 other South Asian countries set up Asian Palm Oil Alliance (APOA) (Sept. 23, 2022)

The five palm oil importing countries of South Asia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal have announced the setting up of Asian Palm Oil Alliance (APOA) at Agra, to strengthen their bargaining power and make oil imports sustainable.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

First chairman of the APOA :

- **Atul Chaturvedi**, President, Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) has been appointed as the first chairman of the APOA.

Aim of the APOA :

- Elaborating the aim of the APOA, Chaturvedi said that "we aim at safeguarding the economic and business interests of the palm oil consuming countries and will work towards increasing the consumption of palm oil in member countries,"
- He said that membership of APOA would be further expanded to include companies or industry bodies associated with production or refining of palm oil across the continent.
- The next meeting of the APOA is expected to be held in **Indonesia** early next year.
- India is the **largest importer of palm oil in Asia and in the world** , accounting for 15% of global imports, followed by China (9%), Pakistan (4%) and Bangladesh (2%).

Palm Oil and India :

- Palm oil is used in a wide variety of products from cooking to making shampoos, breads, Ice creams etc.
- India imports about 8.3 million tonnes of palm oil including crude palm oil (CPO), Palmolein and PFAD (Palm Fatty Acid Distillate),
- Around 4 million tonnes of palm oil comes from **Indonesia** with Malaysia being the second largest source of palm oil (3.8 million tonnes) and Thailand accounting for the remaining half-a-million tonnes.
- **Indonesia and Malaysia** jointly produce 84 % of world palm oil.
- The largest producer of palm oil in India is **Andhra Pradesh** followed by **Telangana**.

4. First 'Global Clean Energy Action Forum -2022' starts at Pittsburgh, United States (Sept. 22, 2022)

The three day (21-23 September) 'Global Clean Energy Action Forum -2022 organised by the United States government's Department of Energy and Carnegie Mellon University, started on 21 September 2022 at Pittsburgh, United States .

Under the Global Clean Energy Action Forum a joint meeting of the **Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM13)** and **Mission Innovation (MI-7)** are being held.

It is being attended by energy and science ministers from **31 countries** to discuss ways to achieve a net zero carbon target for the world.

India is being led by Union Minister [Dr Jitendra Singh](#).

He met US Energy Minister Jennifer Granholm and other important dignitaries.

The **theme** for CEM13/MI-7 is **Rapid Innovation and Deployment**.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- Pittsburgh is also known both as "**the Steel City**" and as the "**City of Bridges**".
- **Jamshedpur** in India is also called as Pittsburgh of India.

5. UNEP and NCC join hand to tackle plastic pollution through 'Puneet Sagar Abhiyan' (Sept. 22, 2022)

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Cadet Corps (NCC) in New Delhi on September 22, 2022 to tackle the issue of plastic pollution and achieve the universal goal of clean water bodies through 'Puneet Sagar Abhiyan' and 'Tide Turners Plastic Challenge programme.

According to the Defence Ministry the goal of the MoU is to achieve the universal goal of clean water bodies through 'Puneet Sagar Abhiyan' and 'Tide Turners Plastic Challenge programme'.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

Puneet Sagar Abhiyan :

- **It was launched by NCC on 1 December 2021** to raise awareness about cleanliness and clean sea shores of plastic & other waste material. Initially the programme was for one month but was extended as a Pan-India round-the-year campaign to cover rivers and other water bodies as well.
- According to the Defence ministry Since the launch of 'Puneet Sagar Abhiyan', over 100 tonnes of plastic waste have been collected from nearly 1,900 locations by more than 12 lakh NCC cadets, alumni and volunteers,

Tide Turners Plastic Challenge programme :

- The UNEP has its own Tide Turners Plastic Challenge programme, where it encourages the global youth to fight plastic pollution around the world.
- Now both the UNEP and the NCC will jointly work to achieve the goal of fighting plastic pollution and cleaning water bodies .The MoU will be of **three years**.

United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP) :

- The United Nations Environment Programme was set up in 1972 after the United Nation Conference on Human Environment was held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1972.
- In 1988 it set up Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) with World Meteorological Organisation
- Headquarters: **Nairobi, Kenya**
- Director: Inger Andersen

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -

National Cadet Corps (NCC) :

- The NCC in India was formed under the National Cadet Corps Act of 1948 and was raised on 15 July 1948.
- It was set up on the recommendation of **Pandit H.N. Kunzru committee**.
- The NCC is a voluntary military cadet corps under the Union Ministry of Defence and is open to school and college students.
- It was set up to create a human resource of organized, trained and motivate youth to provide leadership in all walks of life and always available for the service of the nation
- The motto of NCC is: **"Unity and Discipline"**.
- Headquarters: **New Delhi**
- Director General: **Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh**

6. A special tourist train to cover the Ambedkar Circuit (Sept. 22, 2022)

Union Tourism and Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy recently announced a special tourist train to cover the “Ambedkar Circuit”.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

About Ambedkar Circuit :

- The central government first proposed the **Ambedkar Circuit or Panchteerth** in 2016.
- Prime Minister had said the Panchteerth would include-
 1. Janma Bhoomi, Ambedkar’s birthplace in Madhya Pradesh’s Mhow;
 2. Shiksha Bhoomi, the place in London where he stayed while studying in the UK;
 3. Deeksha Bhoomi in Nagpur where he embraced Buddhism;
 4. Mahaparinirvan Bhoomi or the place of his demise in Delhi
 5. Chaitya Bhoomi, the place of his cremation, in Mumbai.
- The idea is to attract tourists from beyond the Dalit community, who mostly come to these places for pilgrimage.
- Travel will include food, transportation and entry to the sites.

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8. 10th IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission meeting held in New York (Sept. 22, 2022)

The 10th India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA) Trilateral Ministerial Commission meeting was held in New York on 21 September.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- The meeting was chaired by External Affairs Minister **Dr S Jaishankar**.
- Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil Carlos Alberto Franco França and Minister of Health of South Africa Dr Joe Phaahla were also present during the meeting.
- The Ministers reviewed the entire gamut of **IBSA cooperation**.
- The aspirations of African countries to have a permanent presence on the UN Security Council were endorsed by the ministers.
- They also supported the efforts of India and Brazil to obtain permanent membership in the Security Council.
- India will host the sixth IBSA summit on the sidelines of the G20 summit in November this year.

Agenda of the meeting :

- The agenda of the meeting was on mutual interests including cooperation in multilateral organizations, South-South cooperation, UNSC reform, 2030 agenda, Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, countering terrorism, and financing for developmental activities.
- They held discussions on regional issues like the African Union, the Middle East peace process, and the situation in Ukraine.

About IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission :

- It is a trilateral, developmental initiative between India, Brazil and South Africa to promote South-South cooperation and exchange.
- This grouping was formally renamed the IBSA Dialogue Forum when the foreign ministers of the three countries met in Brasilia (Brazil) on 6 June 2003 and issued the Brasilia Declaration.

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10. First Advance Estimates of production of major kharif crops released (Sept. 22, 2022)

First Advance Estimates of production of major Kharif crops for 2022-23 have been released by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare on 21 September.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- According to the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare ministry, foodgrain production of 149.92 million tonnes is estimated in the kharif season.
- It is higher by 6.98 million tonnes than the average foodgrain production of previous five years' from 2016-17 to 2020-21.
- The total production of Kharif rice during 2022-23 is estimated to be 104.99 million tonnes, an increase of 4.40 million tonnes over the last five years.
- Maize production in the country is estimated to be a record 23.10 million tonnes during 2022-23, which is higher by 3.21 million tonnes than the average maize production of 19.89 million tonnes.
- The production of Kharif nut/coarse cereals is estimated at 36.56 million tonnes, which is higher by 2.92 million tonnes than the average production of 33.64 million tonnes.

First Advance Estimates of major kharif crops for 2022-23 :

- Foodgrains - 149.92 million tonnes
- Rice - 104.99 million tonnes
- Nutri / Coarse Cereals - 36.56 million tonnes
- Maize - 23.10 million tonnes. (record)
- Pulses - 8.37 million tonnes
- Tur - 3.89 million tonnes
- Oilseeds - 23.57 million tonnes
- Groundnut - 8.37 million tonnes
- Soyabean - 12.89 million tonnes
- Cotton - 34.19 million bales (of 170 kg each)
- Jute & Mesta - 10.09 million bales (of 180 kg each)
- Sugarcane - 465.05 million tonnes (record)