

Current Affairs search results for tag: international-news

1. U.S. President signs executive order on environmental justice (April 22, 2023)

U.S. President signs executive order on environmental justice

U.S. President Joe Biden signed an **executive order** on 21st April.

An overview of the news

- The executive order directs every single federal agency to work toward **environmental justice** for all and improve the lives of communities hit hardest by toxic pollution and climate change.
- The order would **establish a new Office of Environmental Justice** within the White House that aims to coordinate the government's efforts.
- Federal agencies will work to notify communities when a **toxic substance** is released from a federal facility.
- Disasters such as the February derailment of a freight train in **East Palestine, Ohio**, have drawn attention to environmental damage from hazardous chemical spills.

What is environmental justice?

- Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful participation of all people, regardless of race, color or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.

2. Rowan Wilson Appointed As New York's First Black Chief Justice (April 21, 2023)

Rowan Wilson Appointed As New York's First Black Chief Justice

Rowan Wilson was **appointed as the first black Chief Justice of New York** on April 18, 2023 by the State Senate.

An Overview of the News

- **Wilson has been an Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals** since 2017.
- Wilson's confirmation as the state's **first black chief justice followed the resignation of Judge Janet DiFiore in August.**
- Wilson's appointment comes two months after the initial nomination of **Governor Kathy Hochul** for the position was rejected by lawmakers.
- **In 2014, Kathy Hochul was elected Lieutenant Governor of New York, serving alongside Governor Andrew Cuomo.**
- After Cuomo's resignation in August 2021, **Hochul became the governor of New York and became the first woman in the state's history to hold the office.**

About New York

- It is located in the **northeastern part of the country**, in the state of New York and it is the **most populous city in the United States**.
- The city is served by three major airports: **John F. Kennedy International Airport, LaGuardia Airport, and Newark Liberty International Airport**.
- The city is divided into five boroughs: **Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island, each with its own unique character and charm**.

Mayor - **Eric Adams**

Capital - **Albany**

3. AIIB to open its first overseas office in Abu Dhabi (April 21, 2023)

AIIB to open its first overseas office in Abu Dhabi

The **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** signed an agreement to **set up its first overseas office in Abu Dhabi Global Market**.

An Overview of the News

- The AIIB is a **multilateral development bank** that prioritises financing infrastructure projects focused on sustainability.
- The new foreign office in Abu Dhabi will support the AIIB's development agenda by funding sustainable economic development projects, primarily in areas where it is most needed.
- The **strategic location of the office in the Middle East** will enable AIIB to make a **global impact in achieving its goals**.
- AIIB was **established in 2016** with a mission to promote sustainable economic growth, create wealth and improve infrastructure connectivity in Asia by investing in productive sectors.
- It is **headquartered in Beijing, China** and has over **100 member countries**, including major economies such as the **United Kingdom, Germany and Australia**.

About United Arab Emirates (UAE)

- Location: **It is located in Western Asia**.
- Geographical Boundaries: **It shares borders with Oman and Saudi Arabia**.
- Maritime Borders: **It also has maritime borders with Qatar and Iran in the Persian Gulf**.
- Religion: **Islam is the dominant religion in the UAE, with the majority of the population being Sunni Muslim**.

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**

4. Miguel Diaz-Canel re-elected as the President of the Republic of Cuba (April 21, 2023)

Miguel Diaz-Canel re-elected as the President of the Republic of Cuba

Miguel Díaz-Canel has been re-elected as **President of the Republic of Cuba** for a **second five-year term** on April 19, 2023 by the **National Assembly of the People's Power**.

An Overview of the News

- **Salvador Valdés Mesa** has also been re-elected as **Vice President**.
- **Díaz-Canel** received **97.66% of the vote**, while **Valdés Mesa** received **93.4%**.
- The leadership body of the National Assembly was re-elected by parliamentarians.
- **Juan Esteban Lazo Hernández, Ana María Mari Machado and Homero Acosta Álvarez** were re-elected as **President, Vice President and Secretary of the National Assembly, respectively**.
- The deputies also elected 18 members to the Council of State, including eight re-elections and ten new appointments.

About Cuba

President - **Miguel Diaz-Canel**

Capital - **Havana**

Currency - **Cuban peso**

Prime Minister - **Manuel Marrero Cruz**

Official language - **Spanish**

5. Exercise INIOCHOS-23 (April 21, 2023)

EU-India Aviation Summit begins in New Delhi

The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** will be participating in **Exercise INIOCHOS-23**, a **multi-national air exercise** hosted by the **Hellenic Air Force, the air force of Greece**.

An overview of the news

- The exercise will be conducted at the **Andravida Air Base in Greece from 24 Apr 2023 to 4 May 2023**.
- The Indian Air Force will be participating with **four Su-30 MKI and two C-17 aircraft**.
- The exercise will be conducted in a **realistic combat scenario** involving a wide variety of air and surface assets.
- It will also enable participating parties to engage in professional interactions, providing valuable insight into each other's best practices.

Objective of Exercise INIOCHOS-23

- The exercise aims to enhance **international cooperation, synergy and interoperability** among the participating air forces.

About exercise INIOCHOS-23

- This exercise to be held at **Greece's Andravida Air Base** is considered to be **Europe's biggest air exercise**.
- Many countries like **France, Italy** are participating in this. **The Indian Air Force will participate in this exercise for the first time**.
- The exercise will see participation of air assets from countries like **France, USA, Italy, Saudi Arabia and Jordan** apart from India's Su-30MKIs.

6. 8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue (April 20, 2023)

8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue

The **8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue** was held in **Bangkok on 20th April**.

An overview of the news

- The meeting was co-chaired by **Nivedita Shukla**, Special Secretary in the Ministry of Defense and **General Nuchit Sribunsong**, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Defense of Thailand.
- They reviewed defence cooperation between the two countries and explored **new initiatives to further strengthen bilateral ties**.
- The two sides also exchanged views on regional and global issues of common interest.

- India and Thailand share a **strategic partnership and defense** is a major pillar of this cooperation.

India-Thailand relations

- India and Thailand share a maritime boundary in the **Andaman Sea**.
- Thailand was one of the first countries to establish **diplomatic relations with India in 1947**.
- Since 2001, **India-Thailand economic and commercial relations** have grown significantly.
- India and Thailand have been cooperating in various multilateral fora such as **ASEAN and BIMSTEC**, a sub-regional grouping consisting of Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan.
- India is a member of the **Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)** initiated by Thailand in 2002 and the **Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC)** grouping of six countries.
- The **India-AESAN Agreement on Trade in Goods** was implemented in January 2010.
- Since 2015, India has been participating in the largest Asia Pacific military exercise **X-Cobra Gold**.
- Exercise **MAITREE (Army)** and exercise **SIAM BHARAT (Air Force)** are Bilateral exercises between both countries.

About Thailand

- Prime minister - **Prayuth Chan-ocha**
- Capital - **Bangkok**
- Head of State - **King Vajiralongkorn**
- Official Language - **Thai**
- Official Name - **Ratcha Anachak Thai (Kingdom of Thailand)**

7. China launched Fengyun-3 satellite (April 19, 2023)

On 16th April 2023, China successfully launched the **Fengyun-3** meteorological satellite using **Chang Zheng-4B carrier rocket** from Jiuquan Cosmodrome in **Gansu Province**.

An Overview of the News

- The primary objective of the **Fengyun-3 satellite** is to monitor and provide information on severe weather conditions, especially heavy rainfall, which can cause natural disasters such as floods and landslides.
- This was the **471st mission for the Chang Zheng rocket family**.

China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC)

- It is a state-owned organisation that serves as the primary contractor for **China's space program**.
- CASC has several subsidiaries that specialise in the **design, development and manufacture of a variety of space-related technology**, including **spacecraft, launch vehicles, missile systems and ground equipment**.
- The organisation is responsible for overseeing all aspects of **China's space program**, from research and development to mission planning and execution.

Establishment - **1 July 1999**

Headquarters - **Beijing, China**

President - **Zhang Zhongyang**

About China

Government - **Unitary Marxist-Leninist One Party Socialist Republic**

President - **Xi Jinping**

Capital - **Beijing**

Official language - **Standard Chinese**

Currency - **Renminbi**

8. Kenya Launched Its First Operational Earth Observation Satellite "Taifa-1" (April 19, 2023)

Kenya launched its **first operational Earth observation satellite "Taifa-1"** on a rocket of **Elon Musk's rocket company 'SpaceX'** from **Vandenberg Base in California** on 15 April 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The launch rocket carried **50 payloads** from various countries, including **Turkey, under SpaceX's 'rideshare programme'**.
- Taifa-1 was designed and developed by **SayariLabs and EnduroSat** and the satellite was built over two years at a cost of **50 million Kenyan shillings (\$372,000)**.
- The satellite's primary purpose is to collect agricultural and environmental data, including floods, droughts and wildfires, to help Kenya deal with disaster management and food insecurity.

Taifa-1

- It is an optical camera that can take pictures in both multispectral and panchromatic modes.

- The satellite can operate in and out of the visible light spectrum, allowing it to capture images even in low light conditions.
- **Taifa-1** is capable of capturing images in five different multispectral bands.
- The **Ground Sampling Distance (GSD) of Taifa-1 is 32 m** for the multispectral band and 16 m for the panchromatic band.

About Kenya

Republic - **12 December 1964**

Capital - **Nairobi**

Official languages - **Swahili, English**

Currency - **Kenyan shilling (Kesia)**

Government - **Unitary presidential republic**

President - **William Ruto**

Deputy President - **Rigathi Gachagua**

Senate President - **Amason Kingi**

Assembly Speaker - **Moses Wetangula**

Chief Justice - **Martha Koome**

9. Efforts to revive the India-Brazil-South Africa Forum (April 19, 2023)

Diplomatic focus is likely to increase on the long-dormant **trilateral India-Brazil-South Africa forum**.

About India-Brazil-South Africa forum (IBSA)

- It is a trilateral dialogue forum of **India, Brazil and South Africa** which was **created in the year 2003**.
- The grouping was formalized under the name of the **IBSA Dialogue Forum under the Brasilia Declaration**.
- On **June 6, 2003**, at a meeting of the foreign ministers of the three countries in **Brasilia (Brazil)**, the Brasilia Declaration was issued and the grouping was formalized and named the **IBSA Dialogue Forum**.
- It brings together **India, Brazil and South Africa, three large democracies and major economies from three different continents**, facing similar challenges.
- **IBSA Fund was established in 2004** which facilitates the execution of human development projects to advance the fight against poverty and hunger in developing countries.

- **IBSAMAR is a joint multinational maritime exercise, among the Indian, Brazilian and South African navies.**

Forum Meetings

- **Between 2011 and 2022**, the forum has held **only four trilateral ministerial commission meetings**.
- The latest is in **September 2022**, when **senior ministers from the three countries meet in New York**.
- However, there has not been a meeting of their heads of state or government **since 2011**.
- The meetings have become inactive in recent years.

10. Syria is the world's largest 'narco-state' (April 18, 2023)

Syria has **become the world's largest 'narco-state'** and most of its foreign exchange earnings come from the **production and export of Captagon**, a highly addictive amphetamine commonly referred to as "**poor man's coke**".

An Overview of the News

- Drug trafficking, is especially **Captagon**, which is a **significant part of Syria's economy**.It accounts for more than **90 percent of the country's foreign exchange** earnings according to criteria to be classified as a narco-state.
- Experts have indicated that Syria is the **major producer of Captagon**, with much of it exported to the Gulf region. Following a crackdown on protesters by **President Bashar al-Assad in 2011** and subsequent sanctions or trade embargoes with Syria, the Lebanese regime along with Hezbollah increased the production and **export of Captagon** to the Gulf countries.
- The US enacted the **Captagon Act** last year, linking the drug trade to the Assad regime in Syria and labelling it an "**international security threat**".

About Syria

Capital - **Damascus**

Official language - **Arabic**

President - **Bashar al-Assad**

Vice President - **Najah Al-Attar**

Prime Minister - **Hussain Arnoos**

Speaker of the People's Assembly - **Hammouda Sabbagh**