

Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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1. Pakistan and China sign \$4.8 billion nuclear power plant deal (June 27, 2023)

Pakistan and China recently have signed a **\$4.8 billion deal to construct a 1,200-megawatt nuclear power plant.**

An overview of the news

- The investment by China, which Pakistan considers its most dependable ally, is viewed as a significant achievement.
- The project, known as **Chashma 5**, will be located in the **central province of Punjab.**
- The **memorandum of understanding (MOU)** was signed between **China National Nuclear Cooperation and Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission**, marking the beginning of the project.
- The Chashma 5 project will aid Pakistan in transitioning away from reliance on fossil fuels and contribute to its **nuclear energy production capacity.**
- Pakistan's total nuclear energy production capacity reached **1,400 MW** with the opening of the country's sixth nuclear power plant in Karachi, which was also constructed with Chinese assistance.
- The investment is separate from the **\$65 billion** that China has pledged for infrastructure development in Pakistan under the **Belt and Road Initiative.**
- Chinese side has already disbursed an initial amount of **30 billion Pakistani rupees (\$104.53 million) for project initiation.**

Nuclear power plant in Pakistan

- The **Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission** states that the **four existing Chashma power plants** have a combined installed capacity of **1,330 megawatts.**
- Apart from the Chashma power plants, Pakistan also operates two other nuclear power plants known as **Karachi Nuclear Power Plants (KANUPP) 2 and 3.**
- The Karachi Nuclear Power Plants have a substantial capacity of **2,290 megawatts**, further enhancing Pakistan's nuclear energy generation capabilities.

2. Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare signed a MOU with Pixxel Space India Pvt Limited (June 27, 2023)

The **Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Pixxel Space India Pvt Limited.**

An overview of the news

- The MOU aims to develop various **geospatial solutions for the Indian Agriculture Ecosystem** using **Pixxel's hyperspectral dataset**.
- The project focuses on utilizing **Pixxel's pathfinder satellites' hyperspectral data** to develop analytics models for crop mapping, crop stage discrimination, crop health monitoring, and soil organic carbon assessments.
- The collaboration will enable the Government to leverage **hyperspectral data** provided by Pixxel for developing use cases and implementing suitable methodologies.
- The adoption of new technology will reduce dependence on manual surveys and measurements, which are time-consuming and prone to errors.
- The collaboration is expected to benefit millions of farmers by providing improved crop risk management solutions and strengthening the current advisory system of the Government.

Hyperspectral remote sensing technology

- Hyperspectral remote sensing technology, which involves **spectral measurements in narrow wavelength bands by satellites**, offers unique capabilities for monitoring agriculture.
- The application of hyperspectral data includes **crop health monitoring, early detection of crop stress, accurate diagnostics of crop stress** due to pests/diseases or water, and soil nutrient mapping, particularly soil organic carbon assessments.
- The collaboration with a young startup like Pixxel will help in developing innovative geospatial solutions using advanced satellite imaging technology.

3. Greece's centre-right leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis sworn in as Prime Minister (June 27, 2023)

Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the leader of **Greece's centre-right New Democracy party**, was sworn in as **Prime Minister for a second term** on 26th June.

An overview of the news

- The swearing-in ceremony took place at the presidential palace in the presence of the **leader of the Greek Orthodox Church**, following the country's tradition.
- Mitsotakis expressed his gratitude for the strong mandate given to him by the voters and pledged to accelerate institutional and economic reforms.
- He emphasized that major reforms would be implemented rapidly, and he had ambitious targets for his next four years in power that could bring transformative changes to Greece.
- With **99.67 percent of the vote counted**, New Democracy secured **40.55 percent** of the vote, **more than twice the percentage obtained by the main opposition party, Syriza**.

- Under the new electoral law that prioritizes the first party, New Democracy secured a comfortable majority of **158 seats in the 300-member Parliament, while Syriza obtained 48 seats.**
- Kyriakos Mitsotakis, aged 55 and a **Harvard graduate**, comes from a prominent political family in Greece, with his father serving as Prime Minister in the 1990s and his sister and nephew also holding political positions.

About Greece

- Greece is the **southernmost of the countries of the Balkan Peninsula.**
- Greece has more than **2,000 islands**, of which about **170 are inhabited.**
- President - **Katerina N. Sakellaropoulou**
- Prime Minister - **Kyriakos Mitsotakis**
- Capital - **Athens**
- Currency - **euro**

4. Parshottam Rupala launched NANDI Portal (June 27, 2023)

Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Parshottam Rupala on 26th June at **Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi** launched **NANDI** (NOC Approvals for New Drugs & Inoculation System).

An overview of the news

- The **NANDI portal** has been developed to digitize and streamline the regulatory approval process in **India's Animal Health Sector.**
- The development of the NANDI portal was carried out in collaboration with the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) and the Center for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC).**
- The portal aligns with the vision of **Digital India** and embodies the principles of **Minimum Government and Maximum Governance** by leveraging IT systems.
- The primary objective of the portal is to **expedite the assessment and examination of veterinary product proposals**, ensuring their safety, efficacy, and essentiality.
- The Minister emphasized the transformative impact of the portal and the government's decision to launch **Mobile Veterinary Units**, which will contribute to vaccinating all livestock in the country.
- The NANDI portal is expected to support the development of India as a **global manufacturing hub for veterinary products** and encourage research and development efforts to enhance animal health.

5. Greece's conservative New Democracy party wins landslide election victory for second 4-year term (June 26, 2023)

Greece's-conservative-New-Democracy

Greece's conservative New Democracy party has emerged **victorious in the parliamentary election**, securing another **four-year term** for reformist **Kyriakos Mitsotakis as the Prime Minister**.

An overview of the news

- According to interior ministry figures with most votes counted, **New Democracy**, a centre-right party, **led with 40.5 percent** of the vote, securing **158 seats in the 300-seat parliament**.
- New Democracy's lead of more than **20 points over Syriza**, a radical leftist party that governed Greece from **2015 to 2019** during a severe debt crisis, marked a significant victory for Mitsotakis.
- Mitsotakis, a former banker, has pledged to boost revenue from Greece's crucial tourist industry, generate employment opportunities, and raise wages to approach the European Union average.
- The election result dealt a humiliating blow to Syriza, which suffered the **loss of over 30 Members of Parliament**.
- This election was the **second within five weeks**, as the initial poll on May 21, conducted under a different electoral system, failed to grant any single party an outright majority in Parliament.

About Greece

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6. IAF conducts Rannvijay exercise with focus on integrated operations (June 26, 2023)

IAF-conducts-Rannvijay

The **Indian Air Force** recently conducted **Exercise Ranvijay**, a series of **integrated wargames** aimed at **enhancing the skills of fighter pilots through day and night operations involving combat aircraft like Su-30s**.

An overview of the news

- The exercise took place in the **UB Hills and Central Air Command Area of Responsibility** from **June 16 to June 23**.
- It involved the execution of full spectrum operations by all combat assets, with a particular emphasis on integrated operations and the **optimal utilization of the Indian Air Force's electronic warfare capabilities**.
- The exercise was carried out from various air bases under the **Central Air Command**, which is **headquartered in Prayagraj**.
- Different commands within the **Indian Air Force, along with the Army and Navy**, have been conducting **wargames** to enhance coordination and strengthen integration among the forces.
- After addressing various concerns, the **Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force** have reached a consensus to proceed with the plan for establishing theatre commands, which will further **enhance coordination and synergy among the three services**.

7. PM Modi conferred Egypt's highest state honour (June 26, 2023)

PM-Modi-conferred-Egypt's-highest-state-honour

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** was awarded the '**Order of the Nile**,' Egypt's highest honor, by President **Abdel Fattah El-Sisi** during a ceremony at the Presidential palace in Cairo on 25th June.

An overview of the news

- The '**Order of the Nile**' was established in **1915** and is bestowed upon **heads of states, crown princes, and vice presidents** who have rendered invaluable services to Egypt or humanity.
- This is the **13th highest state honor** conferred upon Prime Minister Modi.
- During the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Egypt in 26 years, India and Egypt elevated their relationship to a 'Strategic Partnership' following extensive discussions between Modi and El-Sisi.

Political and security cooperation

- The talks focused on enhancing **political and security cooperation**.
- Modi and El-Sisi signed a **strategic partnership document**, which encompassed various areas of collaboration such as political and security cooperation, defense collaboration, trade and investment ties, scientific and academic exchanges, and strengthening people-to-people contacts.
- The two countries signed three more pacts covering agriculture and allied sectors, **protection and preservation of monuments and archaeological sites, and competition law**.

- Modi and El-Sisi also discussed further cooperation within the G-20 framework, emphasizing issues such as **food and energy insecurity, climate change**, and the need for the **Global South** to have a unified voice.
- Modi extended an invitation to El-Sisi to attend the **G-20 Summit in New Delhi in September**.

Egypt's historic Al-Hakim Mosque

- Before returning to India, Modi visited Egypt's historic **Al-Hakim Mosque** in Cairo, which dates back to the **11th century**.
- The mosque has been restored with the assistance of India's **Dawoodi Bohra community**.
- Modi admired the intricate carved inscriptions on the walls and doorways of the mosque, which was **constructed in 1012**.
- Al-Hakim Mosque is the **fourth oldest mosque** in Cairo and the **second Fatimid mosque built in the city**.

About Egypt

- Egypt is a country located in **North Africa**.
- Egypt is home to famous monuments such as the **Giza Pyramid Complex**. One of the **Seven Wonders of the World**, the Pyramids of Giza are located on the banks of the **Nile River**. The Great Pyramid of Giza was built in **2560 BC**.
- Capital - **Cairo**
- President - **Abdel Fattah el-Sisi**
- Currency - **Egyptian pound**

8. INS Sunayna visits Mombasa, Kenya to strengthen bilateral ties (June 26, 2023)

INS-Sunayna-visits-Mombasa,-Kenya-to-strengthen-bilateral-ties

INS Sunayna visited **Mombasa, Kenya**, with the aim of strengthening bilateral ties with maritime neighbors under the theme of **Ocean Ring of Yoga**.

An overview of the news

- The Commanding Officer of INS Sunayna held a meeting with **Brigadier Y S Abdi**, Deputy Commander of the Kenya Navy, and emphasized the significance of Yoga in fostering unity and bringing the world closer together.
- On the occasion of the International Day of Yoga on June 21, 2023, a joint Yoga session was conducted onboard INS Sunayna, involving Indian Navy personnel and members of the **Kenyan Defence Forces**.

- A Maritime Partnership Exercise took place between the Indian and Kenyan navies, where drills related to firefighting, damage control, boarding exercises, asymmetric threat simulations, and VBSS (Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure) operations were carried out during the harbor phase.
- An onboard **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** capsule was also conducted to enhance the capabilities of the Kenya Navy.
- In honor of **General Francis Ogolla**, the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) of the Kenyan Defence Forces, a reception was hosted onboard INS Sunayna by **Vice Admiral Sanjay Mahindru**, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff.
- The event was attended by **Namgya Khampa**, the High Commissioner of India in Nairobi.
- As a symbol of goodwill, the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff gifted **200 life jackets to Major General Jimson Muthai**, Commander of the Kenya Navy.
- Prior to departure from Mombasa, INS Sunayna conducted a **Passage Exercise (PASSEX)** with the Kenya Naval Ship Jasiri on June 23, 2023, further strengthening the maritime cooperation between the two navies.

9. Asian Development Bank to provide 400 million US dollars in loans to Bangladesh (June 26, 2023)

Asian-Development-Bank-to-provide-400-million-US-dollars

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has signed a **loan agreement** with the government of **Bangladesh** to provide **\$400 million** for the construction of a dual gauge railway between **Chattogram and Cox's Bazar**.

An overview of the news

- The purpose of the railway project is to **promote trade, investment, and tourism in Bangladesh**.
- The new rail link is expected to open this year and aims to transport approximately **2.9 million passengers** annually between Chattogram and Cox's Bazar by 2024.
- The ADB is supporting the government's shift from road to rail transport, as rail is considered a **climate-friendly, safe, affordable, and efficient mode of transportation**.

Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway

- The Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway is part of the **Trans-Asia Railway (TAR) network**, which is an initiative led by the **United Nations**.
- The TAR network aims to establish seamless rail links between Asia and Europe to enhance **connectivity between people and markets**.
- The TAR network covers a total of **128,000 kilometers** and passes through **28 countries**.

- It was formalized through an Inter-governmental Agreement on **Trans-Asian Railway network in 2009**.
- The assistance provided by ADB for the Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway Project is the third part of a \$1.5 billion loan package for the **South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) initiative**.

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**

10. Telangana CM inaugurates Medha Rail Coach Factory at Sangareddy (June 24, 2023)

Telangana-CM-inaugurates-Medha-Rail-Coach-Factory-at-Sangareddy
Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) inaugurated the Medha Rail Coach Factory in Sangareddy district.

An Overview of the News

MoU signed with Government of Telangana

- Medha signed an MoU with the **Government of Telangana in 2017**.
- The objective of the MoU is **to set up a coach factory in the state**.
- The land was allotted by the **Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TSIIC)**.
- TSIIC allotted **100 acres of land for Rail & Metro coach manufacturing**.
- Medha Rail Coach Factory is located **in Kondakal village**.

Joint Venture Agreement with Stadler Rail

- Medha and **Swiss railway rolling stock manufacturer Stadler Rail** signed a **joint venture (JV) agreement**.
- The joint venture Telangana unit is meant to cater to its tenders from the Indian market and exports from customers in the **Asia Pacific region**.
- The joint venture aims **to serve tenders from the Indian market and export to the Asia Pacific region**.

History of Medha from Indian Railways

- Medha has been supplying various products to **Indian Railways since 1990**.
- It is the largest electronics supplier of **propulsion equipment to Indian Railways**.

Company size and employment

- Medha's annual turnover is **Rs. 2500 crores**.
- It employs around 5000 people, most of whom are from the local areas.
- Medha is the only Indian company with **in-house R&D facilities**.
- Medha will start production of the complete **Mumbai monorail trainset**.