

## Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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### **1. India, Thailand jointly inaugurate Indian Embassy Residence Complex in Bangkok ( Aug. 18, 2022 )**

**External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar inaugurated the Indian Embassy Residence Complex in Bangkok along with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Thailand Don Pramudwinai on 17 August.**

#### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- **Jaishankar is on a visit to Thailand to attend the 9th India-Thailand Joint Commission meeting.**
- He also paid a visit to the Temple of Emerald Buddha in Bangkok.
- 9th India-Thailand Joint Commission Meeting was held in Bangkok on 17 August.
- The meeting was co-chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs of Thailand and S Jaishankar, the External Affairs Minister of India.
- Both countries discussed advancing contacts in political, economic, security as well as defence, connectivity and health domains.
- **The two sides also discussed cooperation within ASEAN and BIMSTEC and shared their perspectives on the Indo-Pacific.**

#### ***About Thailand :***

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

### **2. Amit Shah inaugurates National Security Strategies Conference ( Aug. 18, 2022 )**

**Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated a two day National Security Strategies (NSS) Conference 2022 in New Delhi on 18 August.**

#### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- 600 officials from across the country are participating physically and virtually in this conference.
- The conference is organized by the Intelligence Bureau.
- On the first day of the conference, various aspects of national security were discussed, including terrorism, radicalization, issues related to cryptocurrencies, unwanted drone technology and challenges posed by Maoist organisations.
- During the conference, the Home Minister emphasized the importance of human intelligence to combat terrorism.
- He underlined the important role of district level police officers in identifying emerging terror hotspots.

***National Security Strategy (NSS) :***

- It is an important framework for a country to meet the basic needs and security concerns of its citizens.
- It addresses external and internal threats to the country.
- Such a strategy should be executed within the parameters laid down by the Constitution of India and the democratic political system of the country.
- Previous exercises undertaken under NSS was the Kargil Review Committee report (2000), the Report of the Naresh Chandra Task Force on Security (2012).

***National Automated Fingerprint Identification System :***

- Amit Shah also inaugurated the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System.
- This system will help in quick and easy disposal of cases with the help of a centralized fingerprint database.
- It has been developed by the National Crime Records Bureau.

**3. Cabinet approves interest subvention of 1.5% per annum on Short Term Agriculture Loan upto Rs 3 lakh ( Aug. 18, 2022 )**

**The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved restoration of interest subvention on short-term agricultural loans to 1.5 percent for all financial institutions.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- This decision has been taken to ensure adequate credit flow to the agriculture sector.
- Against short term loans of up to Rs 3 lakh given to farmers for the financial years 2022-23 to 2024-25 to lending institutions (public and private sector banks, small finance

banks, regional rural banks, co-operative banks) 1.5 percent interest subvention will be given.

- Under this, an additional budgetary provision of Rs 34,856 crore would be required for the period from 2022-23 to 2024-25 for increasing the interest subvention.

***Background :***

- Ensuring uninterrupted credit to farmers at affordable rates has been the top priority of the Government of India.
- Keeping this in mind, the Kisan Credit Card scheme was launched for the farmers, to empower them to buy agricultural products and services by taking loans at any time.
- To ensure that farmers can pay the minimum rate of interest to the bank, the Government of India launched the Interest Subvention Scheme (ISS), which has now been renamed as the Revised Interest Subvention Scheme (RISS).
- Its objective is to provide short term loans to farmers at low interest rates.

***Benefit to farmers :***

- The increase in interest subvention will help in ensuring stability of credit flow to the agriculture sector.
- This will ensure the financial position and viability of the lending institutions especially the Regional Rural Banks and Co-operative Banks.
- This will ensure adequate agricultural credit to the rural economy.
- More and more farmers will get the benefit of agriculture loan.
- This will help in employment generation, as short term agricultural loans are provided for all activities including animal husbandry, dairy, poultry, fisheries.

***Kisan Credit Card Scheme :***

- It provides loans to farmers all over India so that farmers can reduce the financial crunch during farming.
- It was introduced in 1998 by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development on the recommendation of R V Gupta.
- In 2004, it was extended for investment in non-farm activities keeping in view the credit requirement of farmers.
- In Budget-2018-19, the government announced the extension of the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) facility to fisheries and animal husbandry farmers.

**4. London home of Dadabhai Naoroji gets Blue Plaque honour ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

Dadabhai Naoroji's south London home, where he lived for eight years in the late 19th century, has received a commemorative 'blue plaque' award.

**Important facts**

- Under the 'Blue Plaque' scheme, the English Heritage Charity honours historically significant buildings across London.
- Naoroji made seven trips to England and lived in London for more than three decades.
- Naoroji's plaque was unveiled on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Indian Independence.

**Dadabhai Naoroji**

- Dadabhai Naoroji (4 September 1825 – 30 June 1917) was a Parsi intellectual, educationist, cotton merchant and early political and social leader of British India.
- He is also known as 'Grand Old Man of India' and 'Official Ambassador of India'.
- He proposed the principle of economic exit or drain of money.
- Dadabhai Naoroji founded the East India Association in London in 1866.
- Poverty and UnBritish Rule in India is a major book written by him.

**5. Centre notifies India's 31st elephant reserve in Tamil Nadu ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

The Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change announced notification of one more elephant reserve (ER) in the country in Tamil Nadu on 12 August 2022.

**Important facts**

- The new reserve will be spread over an area of 1,197 sq km at Agasthyamalai.
- This will be the 31st ER of the country after the Singphan Elephant Reserve (ER) in Nagaland was notified in 2018.
- Agasthiyamalai is Tamil Nadu's 5th Elephant Reserve and also a Biosphere Reserve.
- The Indian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) is found in the central and southern Western Ghats, northeast India, eastern India and parts of northern India and southern peninsular India.
- It is included in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES).
- According to the 2017 Census the population of elephants in India has reached up to about 27,312.
- Karnataka has the highest number of elephants (6,049), followed by Assam (5,719) and Kerala (3,054).

**6. Italy's Lake Garda shrinks to historically low level due to drought ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

Italy's worst drought in a long time threatens to shrink the country's largest Lake Garda, pushing its lowest ever recorded.

**Important facts**

- Northern Italy received very little rainfall for months, and snowfall was also reduced by 70% in 2022, drying up important rivers such as the Po, which flow through Italy's agricultural and industrial region.
- The dry condition of Italy's longest river, the Po, caused billions of euros in damage to farmers who usually depend on the river to irrigate their fields.
- To make up for the loss, the authorities have allowed more and more water from Lake Garda to flow into the local rivers.
- But at the end of July 2022, less money was spent protecting the lake and its associated economically important tourism.
- Due to the diversion of large amounts of lake water into rivers, the lake has the lowest water level ever recorded.

**About Garda Lake**

- It is best known as the playground lake.
- Location - Veneto, Trentino Alto Adige and Lombardy regions in north-west Italy
- Best - For fun and games for kids of all ages

**7. North Korea fires two cruise missiles from west coast town of Onchon ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

**North Korea fired two cruise missiles from the west coast city of Onchon on the morning of August 17.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- The launch comes as South Korea and the United States begin a four-day preliminary joint exercise in preparation for the long-suspended live field training Ulchi Freedom Shield, which takes place from August 22 to September 1.
- South Korean President Yoon Sek-yol said that his country is ready to provide phased economic aid to North Korea if it ends the development of nuclear weapons and begins denuclearization.
- Unlike ballistic missiles, cruise missiles are powered by jet engines and remain close to the ground, making them difficult to detect.

• Most cruise missiles are not designed to carry nuclear warheads.

***Recent missile launches by North Korea :***

- North Korea has recently conducted a flurry of missile tests, making its 18th launch on August 17 this year.
- North Korea only has four tests in 2020, and eight in 2021.
- The last missile launch was on June 5 with eight short-range ballistic missiles – which were responded to by South Korea and the US firing eight more missiles into the waters off the eastern coast of the Korean peninsula.

***About North Korea :***

- Capital - Pyongyang
- Official Language - Korean
- President - Kim Jong-un

**8. US President signs major climate change and health care legislation ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

**US President Joe Biden has signed a historic climate change and healthcare spending bill into law on August 16.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- This law will go a long way in reducing health care costs and combating climate change.
- According to the White House, the **\$740 billion investment** bill is the largest commitment to combat climate change in the country's history.
- The White House claimed that Biden's **Inflation Reduction Act** would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by nearly a billion tons in 2030.
- This law is ten times bigger than any climate law ever enacted.
- The bill provides for significant investment in renewable energy through wind and solar power projects and heavy tax credits for electric vehicles.
- The law would also stipulate the cost of the drug for Medicare recipients in excess of \$2,000 annually.
- The new law will also help the nearly 13 million Americans pay for their health insurance.

***Similar climate packages announced by other countries :***

- In May 2022, **Japan** announced an '**Invest in Kisida**' plan.

- 'Invest in Kisida' plan aims for a \$1.1 trillion investment to bolster the Japanese economy.
- Japan aims to transition to clean energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by **46 percent by 2030**.
- In June 2021, the **European Union (EU)** proposed a similar '**Fit for 55**' plan to reduce emissions by 55% by 2030.

## **9. Ministry of AYUSH signs MoU with MeitY for digitalisation of AYUSH sector ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

**The Ministry of AYUSH and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the AYUSH Grid project.**

### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- As a part of the MoU, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology will provide technical assistance to the Ministry of AYUSH to digitise the AYUSH sector for a period of 3 years.
- This MoU is a continuation of an MoU signed in 2019.
- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology will provide technical support including adoption of emerging technologies for the AYUSH Grid project.
- Advisory input on the AYUSH Grid project will be provided by a high level advisory committee. The committee will be headed by Secretary AYUSH and co-chaired by Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

### ***Ayush Grid Project :***

- AYUSH Grid is a proposed central information and communication platform that will provide various technical services for standardisation of all systems of medicine (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Homoeopathy) under AYUSH.
- The AYUSH Grid project was launched by the Ministry of AYUSH in 2018 to form a backbone for the IT sector.
- The project was launched under the Digital India program which supports 'Information and Technology' to enhance service quality and improve service delivery.
- The project will allow integration of all stakeholders and services or functions related to AYUSH systems of health care.

## **10. India contributes USD 400,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

**Reflecting its commitment to global promotion and protection of human rights and support of UN human rights, India has contributed USD 400,000 to four voluntary trust funds.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- As a founding member of the United Nations, India strongly supports the objectives and principles of the United Nations and has made significant contributions to the implementation of the goals of the Charter and the development of specialized programs and agencies of the United Nations.
- India's deep engagement with the United Nations is based on its strong commitment to multilateralism.
- India firmly believes that the United Nations and the standards of international relations that it has promoted are the most effective tools to address today's global challenges.
- These global challenges are poverty eradication, environment, climate change, peace building and peacekeeping, terrorism, disarmament, human rights, migration and health and pandemics.
- The United Nations also has an important role to play in newly emerging areas such as cyber security, space and frontier technologies such as artificial intelligence.

***Purpose of the fund :***

- The fund is meant to support victimization of atrocities, technical cooperation, implementation of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs)/Small Island Developing States (SIDs).
- Global promotion and protection of human rights.
- In 2007, India became the first country to deploy a women's contingent for a police unit set up for the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia.

***United Nations Human Rights Council :***

- It is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system.
- It is responsible for strengthening the spread and protection of human rights around the world.
- It was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006.
- It has been created in place of the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
- It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.