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1. Government launches Mission on Advanced and High-Impact Research, MAHIR (June 7, 2023)

High-Impact-Research,-MAHIR

The government launched the Mission on **Advanced and High-Impact Research, MAHIR**, in the power sector.

An Overview of the News

- The objective of the mission is **to identify emerging technologies and develop them indigenously** for use within and outside the country.
- It focuses on facilitating indigenous research, development and demonstration of latest technologies in the power sector.
- It aims to leverage these technologies for future economic growth and make India a global manufacturing hub.
- The mission is planned for an initial period of five years **from 2023-24 to 2027-28**.
- Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy - **RK Singh**

Make in India:

- Launched on **25 September 2014**.
- **Objective:** To facilitate investment, promote innovation and create best-in-class infrastructure.
- **Goal:** To make India a manufacturing, design and innovation hub.

Startup India:

- Launched on **January 16, 2016**.
- **Objective:** To nurture and support startups, encourage entrepreneurship and innovation.
- **Benefits:** Tax exemptions, simplified rules and access to funding opportunities.

2. India Sri Lanka Defense Seminar cum Exhibition to be held at Taj Samudra in Colombo (June 7, 2023)

India-Sri-Lanka-Defense-Seminar

India Sri Lanka Defence seminar cum exhibition to be held on 6 June at **Taj Samudra in Colombo**.

An overview of the news

- The seminar seeks to identify potential areas of cooperation for economic revival and capacity building of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces.
- It aims to strengthen the partnership between India and Sri Lanka in defence-related matters.
- The event will feature a comprehensive exhibition that showcases the capabilities of both countries in defence equipment manufacturing.
- The exhibition will be open to the public, offering them an immersive experience of various defence equipment on display.
- The exhibition promotes exchange of ideas and promotes dialogue and encourages meaningful partnerships in the defense sector.

Objective of the event

- The event aims to highlight and celebrate India's prowess in defence manufacturing while fostering a stable and peaceful Indian Ocean region.
- It aligns with India's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region.

Successful Utilization of Indian Defence Equipment

- The Sri Lankan Armed Forces have successfully utilized a wide range of Indian defence equipment, including the Indra Radar, Advanced Offshore Patrol Vessels, L 70 Guns, Dornier Aircraft, and Army training simulators.
- This highlights the effectiveness and reliability of Indian defence technology.

Mutual Benefits

- The Indian armed forces have also benefited from the use of Fast Interceptor Crafts and the refit of a Floating Dock in Colombo.
- In line with India's 'Neighborhood First' policy, the Government of India has committed to supplying additional equipment such as a Floating Dock, a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, and Dornier aircraft.
- This commitment further strengthens the capacity building of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces.

Significance of the Event

- The India-Sri Lanka Defence Seminar and Exhibition hold great importance as a landmark event.
- It fosters greater cooperation and collaboration between the two nations, ultimately contributing to regional peace and stability in the Indian Ocean.

Boost for Indigenous Defence Manufacturing

- With the Sri Lankan Armed Forces utilizing Indian defence equipment, the seminar and exhibition are likely to provide a boost for indigenous defence manufacturing.
- It showcases India's technological capabilities and encourages self-reliance in defence production.

3. Five new countries elected as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council (June 7, 2023)

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Algeria, Guyana, the Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone and Slovenia were elected **non-permanent members** of the **UN Security Council** on 6 June for a **two-year term**.

An overview of the news

- The newly elected members will take up their new responsibilities on **January 1, 2024 and serve till December 31, 2025**.
- **Slovenia defeated Belarus by a vote of 153 to 38**, while Algeria, Guyana, Sierra Leone and the Republic of Korea were elected unopposed.
- These new members will replace **Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates** at present when their two-year term ends on **31 December 2023**.

Election of non-permanent members

- Voting is done by **secret ballot** and candidates have to get a **two-thirds majority, or 128 votes**.
- In all, **192 countries** voted to fill five seats on the council allocated to the Africa and Asia-Pacific groups, and one each to Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean.

About United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

- It was **established in 1945** by the **United Nations Charter**.
- It is one of the six major organs of the United Nations.
- The other 5 organs of the United Nations are - the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat**.
- It has five permanent members - **China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States**, collectively known as the **P5**.
- Any one of them can **veto** a resolution.
- Headquarters - **New York**

4. Oil tanker breaks down in Egypt's Suez Canal (June 6, 2023)

On 4 June, an **oil tanker broke down** in the **Suez Canal**, a major global waterway, **disrupting traffic and temporarily halting the transit of other ships.**

An overview of the news

- As a result of the breakdown, **eight other vessels in the convoy were affected by the disruption.**
- The **Seavigour** was part of the north convoy, which moves from the **Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea.**
- The Suez Canal Authority deployed three **tugboats** to tow the stranded tanker away from the single-lane area.
- The goal was to move the tanker to a double-lane section at the **17 kilometer mark**, allowing other vessels to continue their transit.

About Seavigour

- According to MarineTraffic, the Seavigour is a tanker **built in 2016**, measuring 274 meters (899 ft) in length and 48.63 meters (159 ft) in width.

Previous Incidents in the Suez Canal

- The recent incident adds to a series of vessels encountering difficulties in the vital waterway.
- Notably, in **March 2021**, the Panama-flagged Ever Given, a massive container ship, blocked the canal for six days, causing significant disruptions to global trade.

About Suez Canal

- The Suez Canal, **operational since 1869**, serves as a **crucial link for oil, natural gas, and cargo transportation.**
- The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south from the Isthmus of **Suez in Egypt to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.**
- This canal separates the continent of **Africa from Asia.**
- It provides the shortest sea route between **Europe and the lands surrounding the Indian and Western Pacific Oceans.**
- The Suez Canal is one of the **busiest trade routes in the world.** About **12 percent of the world's total trade** passes through this canal daily.

5. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh holds talks with his US counterpart Lloyd Austin (June 6, 2023)

Defence-Minister-Rajnath-Singh

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh**, held discussions with **US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin** in New Delhi on 5th June.

An overview of the news

- The meeting focused on **strengthening defence cooperation** in various areas, including aligning strategic interests and enhancing security cooperation.
- During the talks, Minister Singh emphasized the significance of the **India-US partnership** in ensuring a free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific region.
- He expressed India's commitment to closely collaborate with the United States across different domains, aiming for capacity building and further **strengthening strategic partnership**.
- Both ministers explored opportunities to build resilient supply chains and identified areas for co-development of new technologies and co-production of existing and new systems.
- Facilitation to enhance cooperation between the **defense start-up ecosystems** of the two countries was also discussed.
- A roadmap for **US-India defense industrial cooperation** was agreed upon, which will shape their cooperation in the years to come.
- They welcomed the recent dialogues focused on **Defense Artificial Intelligence and Defense Space**.
- Regional security issues were also discussed, reflecting their shared interest in promoting **peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region**.
- The meeting was attended by senior officials of the Ministry of Defense including Chief of Defense Staff General **Anil Chauhan**, Defense Secretary **Giridhar Armane** and DRDO Secretary and Chairman **Dr Sameer V Kamat**.

India America relations

Historical Background

- The establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the United States **dates back to 1947**.
- Both countries share common values of **democracy, pluralism and rule of law**.

Strategic Partnership

- India and the United States have developed a strong strategic partnership based on shared interests and values.
- The partnership has seen significant growth in various areas including defence, trade and technology.

Defense and Security Cooperation

- Defense cooperation between India and the US has expanded significantly in recent years.
- Both countries engage in joint military exercises, defense equipment cooperation and intelligence sharing.
- Defense ties have been strengthened by the signing of the **US-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)**.

Economic and trade relations

- Economic relations between India and America have grown steadily.
- The US is one of India's largest trading partners and bilateral trade has grown over the years.
- Both the countries have signed various agreements to enhance economic cooperation and promote investments.

Technology and Innovation

- India and the US cooperate in the fields of **science, technology and innovation**.
- Cooperation has been promoted in areas such as space exploration, clean energy and information technology.
- The US has supported India's initiatives like **Digital India and Skill India**.

6. Bangladesh records highest inflation rate in over a decade (June 6, 2023)

Bangladesh-records-highest-inflation-rate-in-over-a-decade

Bangladesh recently experienced its **highest monthly inflation rate in over a decade**, with inflation reaching **9.94 percent in May**.

An overview of the news

- This rate is the **highest since 2010-11** when it was recorded at **10.11 percent**.
- The data was released by the **Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)**.
- The increase in inflation is primarily attributed to the rise in both **food and non-food prices during this period**.
- The average inflation rate for the period between **June 2022 and May 2023** has risen to **8.84 percent**, surpassing the budgetary target of **5.6 percent**.
- In comparison, the inflation rate in April 2023 was reported at **9.24 percent**, and in **March, it was 9.33 percent**.
- These figures indicate higher inflation compared to the corresponding months in **April 2022 (6.29 percent) and March 2022 (6.22 percent)**.

- To calculate inflation, the BBS has changed the base index from 2005-06 to 2021-22 and
- adopted a revised methodology for the compilation of the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** based on the latest 2020 CPI manual of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

People's Republic of Bangladesh

- Capital: **Dhaka**
- Prime Minister: **Sheikh Hasina Wazed**
- President: **Abdul Hamid**
- Currency: **Taka**

7. 1st India-Namibia Joint Commission of Cooperation (June 6, 2023)

External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** recently **co-chaired** the **first India-Namibia Joint Commission** with Namibian Foreign Minister **Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah** in **Windhoek**.

An overview of the news

- In his opening remarks, Dr. Jaishankar highlighted the special place Namibia holds in the hearts of Indians.
- He emphasized that India supports Namibian independence and expressed happiness at Namibia's rightful place in the international community.
- Dr. Jaishankar underlined the **strong bond between India and Namibia**, which is characterized by developmental cooperation, capacity building programs and political solidarity.
- The Joint Commission will assess the progress of India-Namibia relations. In addition, high-level visits and ongoing interactions will strengthen the **India-Namibia partnership** in the future.
- During his visit, the External Affairs Minister inaugurated the **India-Namibia Center of Excellence in Information Technology** in Windhoek. The center will contribute to research, cyber security and good governance.

About Namibia

- Namibia is a country located in **southwestern Africa**, bordering the **Atlantic Ocean** to the west.
- It shares borders with **Angola, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa**.
- The country's diverse geography includes the **Namib Desert** along the **Atlantic coast**, the **Kalahari Desert** to the east, and the **central plateau**.
- Namibia gained independence from South Africa on **March 21, 1990**, becoming the last African country to gain independence from colonial rule.
- **Windhoek is the capital and largest city of Namibia.**

- Namibia is known for its stunning **natural landscapes and diverse wildlife**.
- **Etosha National Park**, located in the north of the country, is a popular destination for wildlife enthusiasts, offering the chance to see **elephants, lions, giraffes, rhinos** and various bird species.

8. President Droupadi Murmu conferred with highest civilian honour of Suriname (June 6, 2023)

President-Droupadi-Murmu

Suriname awarded **President Draupadi Murmu** its **highest civilian honour**, the **Grand Order of the Chain of Yellow Star**, on 5 June, making her the **first Indian to receive the award**.

An overview of the news

- President Murmu was presented with the award by **Chandrikaprasad Santokhi**, President of the Republic of Suriname.
- He dedicated the award to successive generations of the **Indian-Surinamese community**, in recognition of the important role of the Indian diaspora in strengthening the fraternal ties between the two countries.
- During her state visit to Serbia and Suriname, President Draupadi Murmu arrived in **Paramaribo, Suriname** on 4 June.
- In addition, **India and Suriname signed four important Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs)** in the fields of health, agriculture and capacity building.
- The agreements were finalized after delegation level talks between President Murmu and President Santokhi.

About Suriname

- Suriname is a country located on the **northern coast of South America**. It is one of the **smallest countries in South America**.
- Formerly known as **Dutch Guiana**, Suriname was a plantation colony of the **Netherlands** that gained its independence on November 25, 1975.
- President: **Chandrikapersad Santokhi**
- Capital: **Paramaribo**
- Official Language: **Dutch**
- Currency: **Suriname dollar**

9. RBI Governor launches financial inclusion dashboard Antardrishti (June 6, 2023)

RBI-Governor-launches-financial-inclusion-dashboard-Antardrishti
Reserve Bank of India Governor **Shaktikanta Das** launched a **financial inclusion dashboard** named '**Antardrishti**' on 6 June.

An overview of the news

- The dashboard will provide necessary insights to assess and monitor the progress of financial inclusion by capturing relevant parameters.
- The progress of financial inclusion will be assessed against set parameters through an **Antardrishti dashboard**. Along with this, it will also help in monitoring.
- With the help of the dashboard, the areas of lack of **financial services on a large scale** in the country can be detected and then work will be done on the basis of this.
- Currently, the **Antardrishti Dashboard** will be used **internally by RBI**.
- Multi stakeholder approach will be adopted for the Antardrishti Dashboard to enhance **financial inclusion in future**.

Financial Inclusion Index

- The **Financial Inclusion Index was launched in 2021** to measure financial inclusion.
- In this, financial inclusion is measured on the basis of **access, utility and quality**.
- This index also includes information related to **banking, investment, insurance and postal services** etc. of an area.
- This index ranges from 0 to 100.
- **0 indicates complete financial exclusion**, while **100 indicates complete financial inclusion**.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

- Reserve Bank of India was set up under the **Reserve Bank of India act 1934**. It started functioning from **1 April 1935**.
- It was **nationalized in 1949** and now the government of India is the owner of RBI.
- It has the power to regulate Banks under the **Banking Regulation Act 1949**.
- It has the power to regulate the **Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)** under the **RBI act 1934**.
- RBI is also the regulator of the digital payment system under the **Payment and settlement act 2007**.
- Headquarters of RBI: **Mumbai**
- Governor of RBI : **Shaktikanta Das**

10. 3rd Health Working Group Meeting at Hyderabad (June 5, 2023)

3rd-Health-Working-Group-Meeting-at-Hyderabad

The **third meeting of the G20 Health Working Group (HWG) was held at Hyderabad** from June 4 to 6.

An overview of the news

- Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare **Dr. Bharti Praveen Pawar** addressed the 3rd Health Working Group meeting under the G20 India Presidency.
- The 3rd meeting of the HWG held a main event focusing on **cooperation in R&D of Medical Counter Measures (MCMs)**.

Highlights of the event

Co-branded events

- The meeting included co-branded events with the **Global Vaccine Research Collaborative and the Joint Finance Health Task Force** meeting.
- The objective of these events is to increase cooperation in the field of healthcare.

Participant

- The meeting was attended by representatives of **19 G20 member states, 10 invited countries and 22 international organizations**.

Proposed deliverables

- The HWG has proposed a number of deliverables, including a mapping of ongoing initiatives in **health emergencies, prevention, preparedness and response**.
- The launch of a **Climate Change and Health Centre**, regional networks for vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics (VTD) research and development, and the creation of a global medical countermeasure coordination platform were also discussed.

Global Initiative on Digital Health

- Another proposed '**Global Initiative on Digital Health**' was launched.
- The initiative aims to establish an institutional framework for convergence of existing digital health initiatives.

Past HWG Meetings

- Health priorities were introduced and discussed in detail during the HWG meetings held in **Thiruvananthapuram and Goa** earlier this year, emphasizing the importance of advancing health objectives.

Showcasing India's Life Sciences and Pharmaceutical Manufacturing

- Delegates will have the opportunity to visit '**Genome Valley**' in **Hyderabad**, a well-known hub for global life science companies.
- The visit will highlight India's expertise in life science research and drug manufacturing.
- Genome Valley is responsible for 33% of global vaccine production, including vaccines for diseases such as **COVID-19, polio and rotavirus.**