

## Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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### **1. UAE and India launch the UAE Chapter of the Business Council ( Feb. 19, 2023 )**

The **UAE and India** launched the **UAE India Business Council - UAE Chapter (UIBCUC)** on 18 February to strengthen economic ties and enhance **bilateral trade and investment**.

#### **An overview of the news**

- It was launched by **Dr Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi**, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Trade in Dubai.
- One year of signing of the **India-UAE comprehensive free trade agreement**, completed.
- The UIBCUC aims to increase bilateral trade to \$100 billion and attract investments of **\$75 billion** from the UAE to India.
- The council will bring together key partners and stakeholders from both countries and encourage innovative collaboration between Emirati and Indian businesses.
- The Council will play a key role in supporting the two governments in their joint mission to promote bilateral trade and investment.
- It will operate under the supervision of the **Federation of UAE Chambers of Commerce and Industry**.
- It is registered with the **Dubai Chamber of Commerce** as a legal and financial entity.
- UIBC-UC will have its office in **Dubai**.
- **Faizal Kottikollon** of Kef Holdings has been appointed as the **Chairman of UIBC-UC**.
- **Major General (Retd.) Sharafuddin Sharaf**, the Chairman of the UIBC (India Chapter), will serve as the **Vice Chairman**.

#### **Key partners and stakeholders**

- Sovereign Wealth Funds from the UAE and large conglomerates from India such as - TATA group, Reliance, and Adani, as well as tech innovators like OLA, Zerodha, and EaseMyTrip.

#### **The founding members of the UIBC-UC from the UAE side**

- Mubadala - Sovereign Wealth Fund of the UAE, Wizz Financial, DP World, EMAAR, Emirates Airlines, Emirates NBD Bank.

#### **The founding members of the UIBC-UC from Indian side**

- TATA, Reliance, and Adani, OLA, Zerodha, Udaan, and EaseMyTrip.
- Prominent Indian entrepreneur-led corporations based in the UAE such as KEF Holdings, Buimark Corporation, Apparel Group, EFS and Lulu Financial.

## **2. Qatar lifts ban on frozen seafood from India ( Feb. 18, 2023 )**

**Marine Products Exports Development Authority (MPEDA)** has said that **Qatar** partially lifted a ban imposed last year on the import of **frozen seafood** from India on 18 February.

### **An overview of the news**

- The ban will continue on exports of **chilled seafood**, which accounts for about a third of the West Asian country's total seafood exports in 2021-22 with the worth of **Rs 143 crore**.
- Frozen seafood is stored at **minus 20 degrees**, while chilled seafood is stored at **3-4 degrees Celsius**.
- In the current financial year, India's seafood exports to the West Asian country stood at around **Rs 90 crore**, with prawns taking the number one spot.
- **China** has also lifted the suspension of shipments from 99 Indian seafood processing and export units.
- Now seafood exports are expected to cross **USD 8 billion** in the current fiscal.

### **Why was the ban imposed?**

- This ban was imposed in **November 2022**.
- *Vibrio cholerae*, the bacteria that causes cholera infection, was reportedly detected in consignments exported from India to Qatar ahead of the FIFA World Cup. After this these food products were banned.

## **3. Jaishankar unveils bust of Sardar Vallabhai Patel in Fiji's capital Suva ( Feb. 18, 2023 )**

External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** unveiled the **bust of Sardar Vallabhai Patel** at **India House in Fiji's capital Suva** on 17 February.

### **An overview of the news**

- Jaishankar was in Fiji from February 15 to 17, where he participated in the **12th World Hindi Conference**.

- He held bilateral meetings with Fiji's leadership during his first visit to Suva on 16 February.
- Jaishankar met the President of Fiji, **Ratu William Katonivere**, at State House and along with the President of Fiji launched a Government of India funded project for **solarization of the Pacific Heads of State Residence at State House in Suva**.
- The project is a Solar Head of State initiative launched by the **Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF)** in Fiji and funded by the India-UN Development Partnership Fund.
- The leaders of the two countries took stock of bilateral relations and discussed ways to further strengthen the development partnership between India and Fiji in various sectors including capacity building, health, education, agriculture and information technology.
- The External Affairs Minister inaugurated the renovated **Girmit Gallery at the Fiji Museum**.
- The gallery depicts the journey of **Girmits (Indian indentured labourers)** in Fiji.
- India and Fiji signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on **visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and official passports**.

#### **4. World Hindi Conference concludes in Fiji ( Feb. 17, 2023 )**

The **12th World Hindi Conference** concluded on 17 February in **Nadi, Fiji**. It was held from 15 to 17th February.

##### **An overview of the news**

- Fiji's Deputy Prime Minister **Biman Prasad**, External Affairs Minister **Dr S Jaishankar**, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan and Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Mishra addressed the closing ceremony.
- The three-day conference was organised by the **Indian Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with the Government of Fiji**.
- The main theme of the conference was "**Hindi - Traditional Knowledge of Artificial Intelligence**".
- In addition to the theme-based plenary sessions, **10 parallel sessions** were held.
- Representatives of **50 countries** participated in the World Hindi Conference.
- The conference was inaugurated by External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar along with Fijian Prime Minister **Sitwini Rabuka**.
- This program will be used to promote Hindi as a global language.

##### **World Hindi Conference**

- The first World Hindi Conference was held in Nagpur in **1975** to popularise Hindi as a global language. At that time Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister of India.
- **11th World Hindi Conference** was held at **Port Louis, Mauritius** between 18-20 August' 2018.

### **Hindi Diwas**

- Every year **14 September** is observed as **Hindi Diwas** in India.
- On this day in 1949 the Constituent Assembly adopted Hindi as the official language of the country.

### **Republic of Fiji**

- It is an archipelago consisting of around 300 islands in the **South Pacific Ocean**.
- Capital: **Suva**
- Currency: **Fijian Dollar**
- Prime Minister: **Sitiveni Rabuka**

## **5. Spanish government passes law providing 'menstrual leave' for the first time in Europe ( Feb. 17, 2023 )**

**Spain's government** approved a law providing **paid medical leave** for women suffering from **severe menstrual pain**, a **first in any European country**.

### **An overview of the news**

- Such facilities are currently available in **Japan, Indonesia and Zambia**.
- According to the law, as much leave is needed for any female employee in case of illness, as much leave is required to deal with the pain during periods, no matter what field it is related to.
- According to the rules like paid leave found in other health related problems, approval should be given to get treatment from the doctor even during the period.
- However, the new law does not specify the number of days leave should be given by doctors during periods.

### **Other countries providing menstrual leave**

- **Indonesia** passed a law in 2003 that gives women the right to two days of paid menstrual leave per month without prior notice.

- In **Japan**, a 1947 law states that companies must agree to provide women with menstrual leave if they request for it.
- In **South Korea**, women are entitled to one day of unpaid menstrual leave per month. Employers who refuse face fines.
- In **Taiwan**, the Gender Equality in Employment Act entitles women to three days of menstrual leave per year.
- **Zambia** passed a law in 2015 allowing women to take a day off without notice during menstruation.

## **6. India Japan joint training exercise "Dharma Guardian" to begin at Camp Imazu in Shiga Prefecture, Japan ( Feb. 16, 2023 )**

The **4th edition** of the **joint military exercise** between **India and Japan**, "**X Dharma Guardians**" will be conducted from **17 February to 2 March 2023** at **Camp Imazu, Shiga Prefecture, Japan**.

### **An overview of the news**

- Soldiers from the **Garhwal Rifles Regiment of the Indian Army** and an **infantry regiment from the Japan Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF)** are participating in the exercise this year.
- They will share experiences gained during operations in order to enhance **inter-operability** in planning and execution.
- The Indian Army contingent reached the exercise site on **12 February 2023**.

### **Focus area of training**

- The training will mainly focus on high level of **physical fitness and sharing of exercises at tactical level**.
- During the exercise, the participants will engage in various missions including **joint planning, joint tactical exercise, integrated surveillance grid**.
- The joint exercise will help both the armies to know each other better, share their vast experiences and enhance situational awareness.

### **What is Exercise Dharma Guardian?**

- It is an annual joint military exercise conducted between India and Japan **since 2018**.
- **It aims** to share experience gained during various Counter Terrorism Operations in respective Countries.
- The exercise assumes immense significance in the context of the security challenges faced by both the countries in the backdrop of the current global situation.

- The scope of the exercise includes platoon level joint training on operations in **jungle and semi-urban/urban terrain.**

### **Other Exercises Between India and Japan**

- **SHINYU Maitri** - A bilateral exercise between the Indian Air Force and the Japanese Air Self Defense Force (JASDF).
- **JIMEX**- A bilateral maritime exercise between India and Japan.
- **Sahyog-Kaijin** - Joint Bilateral Exercise between Indian Coast Guard and Japan Coast Guard.

### **7. India and Fiji sign MoU on visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and official passports ( Feb. 16, 2023 )**

#### **memorandum of understanding (MoU)**

**India and Fiji** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** on **visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders** on 16 February in presence of External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** and Fiji Prime Minister **Sitiveni Rabuka**.

#### **An overview of the news**

- Under this agreement, holders of diplomatic and official passports will be able to **enter, transit and stay** in each other's territory without a visa for a **period of 90 days**.
- India and Fiji share close and long-standing relations and the two countries also reviewed bilateral relations.
- India and Fiji have inaugurated the **solarisation of the State House in Suva** and this is the first of a series that India is supporting in the **Pacific Islands**.
- It shows India's commitment towards **climate action**.
- The **Visa Waiver Agreement** will be helpful in encouraging greater travel between the two countries.

#### **Republic of Fiji**

- It is an archipelago consisting of around **300 islands** in the South Pacific Ocean.
- Capital: Suva
- Currency: **Fijian Dollar**
- President : **Wiliame Katonivere**
- Prime Minister: **Sitiveni Rabuka**

### **8. India and Spain agreed to cooperate in digital infra, climate action, clean energy ( Feb. 16, 2023 )**

digital infrastructure, climate action, clean energy and sustainable development Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** and his **Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez** on February 15 agreed to collaborate on issues such as **digital infrastructure, climate action, clean energy and sustainable development.**

### **An overview of the news**

- They also discussed several bilateral and international issues of **mutual interest.**
- They reviewed bilateral initiatives and expressed satisfaction at the growing cooperation in the **defence, economic and commercial sectors.**
- Sanchez extended full support to India's initiative of chairing the **global bloc G20.**

### **India-Spain Relations**

- Relations between the two countries have been cordial since the establishment of **diplomatic relations in 1956.**
- To give impetus to trade and investment ties, the **India-Spain Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation (JCEC)** was established in **1972.**
- The commission was established under the **Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement** and has met ten times since then.
- Spain is India's **7th largest trading partner** in the European Union.
- **India's exports to Spain** include organic chemicals, textiles, iron and steel products, motor vehicle components, marine products and leather goods.
- Spain is the **15th largest investor** in India.

### **Bilateral Agreements between India and Spain**

- Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation, 1972
- Agreement on Cultural Cooperation, 1982
- Civil Aviation Agreement, 1986
- Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, 1993
- Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement, 1997
- Extradition Treaty, 2002
- MoU on Institutionalisation of Political Dialogue, 2006

### **9. Prominent Indian-American politician Nikki Haley announces US Presidential bid ( Feb. 15, 2023 )**

US President

Former South Carolina Governor, Indian-American leader and Ambassador to the United Nations **Nikki Haley** announced her candidacy for the **US President** on 14 February.

### **An overview of the news**

- In this way, she has become the first Republican to challenge former US President Donald Trump to become her party's nominee for the White House in 2024.
- Haley, 51, has been a **two-time governor of South Carolina and the US ambassador to the United Nations**.
- Before entering the presidential election, Haley must win the primary vote for the Republican presidential candidate, which begins in January next year.
- The next US presidential election will be held on **November 5, 2024**.

### **About Nikki Haley**

- Helly is the child of migrant **Punjabi Sikh parents**.
- Haley was born in **Bamberg, South Carolina**, and became the **state's first female governor and the first Indian-American** to lead the state.
- If she wins the Republican presidential nomination in 2024, she will make history as the first woman and the **first Asian-American**.

## **10. New Zealand declares national emergency after Cyclone Gabrielle lashes North Island ( Feb. 14, 2023 )**

New Zealand government

The **New Zealand government** has declared a **national emergency** after **Cyclone Gabrielle** hit the North Island.

### **An overview of the news**

- Cyclone Gabrielle causes widespread **flooding, landslides and huge ocean swells** across the North Island.
- This is an **unprecedented weather event** that is having widespread impacts across much of the **North Island**.
- Gabriel appeared over some small islands about 100 km north-east of Auckland, but is now moving south-west.

### **National State of Emergency in New Zealand**

- A national state of emergency has been declared in New Zealand on **two previous occasions** - the **first in 2011** after a magnitude 6.3 earthquake in Christchurch and the **second** in the early days of the **COVID-19 pandemic**.