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1. President inaugurate National Conference of women legislators in Thiruvananthapuram (May 26, 2022)

President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the two days national conference of women legislators in Thiruvananthapuram on 26 May.

- Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan presided over the inaugural session at the Kerala Legislative Assembly complex.
- Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his Council of Ministers were also present in the event.
- This is the first national conference of its kind in the country.

• About the Conference

- It is being organised by the state assembly as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to commemorate 75 years of independence.
- The theme of the conference - 'Power of democracy'
- The conference seeks to bring together women legislators including women ministers, speaker and deputy speaker from both the houses of parliament, state legislatures and legislative councils and union territories.
- The sessions cover topics like 'Constitution and women's rights,' 'Role of women in India's freedom struggle,' 'Women's rights and legal gaps' and 'Under-representation of women in decision-making bodies.'

• About Kerala

- Kerala is located - on the southwestern Malabar Coast of India.
- Formed - 1 November 1956
- Language - Malayalam
- Area - over 38,863 km²
- bordered by - Karnataka to the north and northeast, Tamil Nadu to the east and south and the Lakshadweep Sea to the west
- Districts - 14
- Capital - Thiruvananthapuram
- Chief Minister - Pinarayi Vijayan
- Governor - Arif Mohammad Khan
- Highest literacy rate in India - Kerala

2. 75th session of the World Health Assembly organised in Geneva (May 24, 2022)

The 75th World Health Assembly is being organised in Geneva, Switzerland from 22 to 28 May 2022.

- This is the first individual health gathering since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On behalf of India, the Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya addressed this 75th session.
- He said that the figures released by WHO for India regarding covid deaths were quite disappointing and confusing.
- Some time ago, a detailed report was released by WHO regarding corona deaths.
- The report claimed that within two years, more than 47 lakh people died due to corona in India.
- That report was rejected by the Indian government and questions were raised on the WHO model.
- They called for strengthening the WHO to streamline the WHO approval process for vaccines and therapeutic devices and to create a more resilient global health security infrastructure.
- He reiterated India's commitment to building a more resilient global health security infrastructure.
- **The theme of the year 2022** : Health for peace, peace for health.
- **About 75th World Health Assembly**
- The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of the WHO.
- The Health Assembly is held annually in Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Functions of world health assembly**

1. To determine the policies of the Organisation,
2. appoint the Director-General,
3. supervise financial policies, and review
4. approve the proposed programme budget.

- **About WHO**

- Founded - 7 April, 1948
- World Health Day is celebrated Every year on 7 April.

- It is the United Nations agency
- It leads global efforts to extend universal health coverage.
- It operates in 6 regions with 194 member states and over 150 locations.
- Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland

3. Piyush Goyal to lead India at WEF's Davos meeting (May 23, 2022)

The Indian delegation will be led by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal at the World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting in Davos from May 22 to 26.

- During this meeting, many big issues affecting the whole world like the Ukraine crisis, climate change, and the Corona epidemic will be discussed.
- The meeting will be addressed by several world leaders including Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, European Union President Ursula von der Leyen and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.
- In this conference, more than 2500 leaders, officials and experts, including heads of 50 countries and states from around the world, will give their views on various issues.
- From India, a large team led by Union Minister Piyush Goyal is going there, including Union Health Minister Mansukh Lal Mandaviya and Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, besides two Chief Ministers Basavaraj Bommai and Jaganmohan Reddy.
- Aaditya Thackeray from Maharashtra, KT Rama Rao from Telangana etc. Many big leaders and CEOs will also participate in this meeting.
- The theme of the conference will be 'History at a turning point'.
- **Key points of discussion during the meeting -**
 - This conference will mainly focus on six issues
 - These include promoting global and regional cooperation, restoring stability to a new era of geopolitical conflict and tension, as well as advancing trade, prosperity and partnership, achieving economic recovery and shaping a new era of development.
 - In the conference, it will also be discussed how to strengthen health services in view of future diseases, moving from the health emergency to the corona epidemic.
 - During this time the focus will be on suggesting ways to accelerate the global economy, promoting the Fourth Industrial Revolution and finding ways to face the biggest challenge to humanity like climate change.
- **About World Economic Forum (WEF) -**
 - The World Economic Forum is a non-profit organisation based in Switzerland.
 - It aims to set a global, regional and industrial direction by bringing together leaders in the world's business, political, educational and other fields.
 - Establishment- 1971

- Headquarters- Cologny, Switzerland
- CEO- Klaus M. Schwab

4. North East Research Conclave 2022 inaugurated (May 23, 2022)

The North East Research Conclave (NERC) 2022 was inaugurated at IIT, Guwahati by the Union Minister of Education and Skill Development, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan.

- The conclave will strengthen linkages between industry, academia and policy makers and further strengthen the research, start-up and entrepreneurship ecosystem in the resource-rich North Eastern Region states and the country.
- **Key points related to the Conclave -**
- NERC 2022 will prove to be a global benchmark in meeting the R&D priorities of India and the world.
- On the occasion, an MoU “Assam Advanced Health Innovation Institute (AAHI)” was also signed between the Government of Assam and IIT, Guwahati.
- North East Research Conclave 2022 is being organised to showcase the best research and development activities of academic and research institutes from all the states of North East India.
- The North-East Research Conclave is a platform for entrepreneurs and research institutions to showcase their innovations.
- The North East Research Conclave will help the younger generation to fulfil their dreams in the near future.

5. 8th BRICS Environment Ministers Meeting (May 21, 2022)

The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav participated in the 8th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting on 20 May.

- The meeting was held virtually under the chairmanship of the People's Republic of China.
- Ministers and representatives of Brazil, Russia and South Africa also participated in the meeting.
- **The theme of the meeting - 'Foster High-Quality BRICS Partnership, Usher in a New Era for Global Development'.**
- The Joint Statement of the 8th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting was also accepted in the meeting after extensive deliberations among the BRICS countries.
- **About BRICS**
- The full form of BRICS is Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

- Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill coined the term BRIC (without South Africa) in 2001.
- He claimed that by 2050, the four BRIC economies would dominate the global economy by 2050.
- South Africa was included in the list in 2010.
- The presidency of the Forum is rotated annually among the members.
- BRICS accounts for about 40% of the world's population.
- It accounts for 30% of the world's GDP (Gross Domestic Product).

6. PM Modi to attend to third edition of Quad leaders' summit in Tokyo (May 20, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the Quad Leaders Summit in Tokyo on May 24 at the invitation of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

- US President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will attend the summit.
- The summit in Tokyo is the fourth meeting of the Quad Leaders since the first virtual meeting in March last year.
- During the visit, Modi will participate in business programs with Japanese business leaders.
- He will also address and interact with the Indian community in Japan.
- He will also hold a bilateral meeting with US President Joe Biden.
- The two leaders will review the India-US Strategic Partnership and act on discussions held during the bilateral meeting of the Prime Minister of India with the US President last September.
- Modi is also likely to hold bilateral talks with his Australian counterpart.
- **Purpose of the meeting**
 - To review progress of Quad Initiatives and Working Groups, identify new areas of cooperation and provide strategic guidance and vision for future collaborations.
 - The meeting will provide an opportunity to both the leaders to take forward the mutual dialogue after the 14th India Japan Annual Summit held in New Delhi in March this year.
- **About Quad**
 - This is known as the 'Quadrilateral Security Dialogue' (QSD).
 - It is an informal strategic forum comprising four nations - United States of America (USA), India, Australia and Japan.

- It aims to work for a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.
- The first meeting of the Quad was held in 2007 on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- The Quad Summit provides an opportunity for leaders to exchange views on the development of the Indo-Pacific region and current global issues of mutual interest.
- Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was the first to consider the formation of the Quad in 2007.

7. India hosts SCO-RATS meeting (May 17, 2022)

Counter-terrorism experts from India, Pakistan and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) discussed ways to enhance cooperation in tackling various regional security challenges in a meeting hosted in New Delhi on May 16.

- The meeting is being held under the regional counter-terrorism framework of the SCO.
- A major focus of the discussion was on the situation in Afghanistan where all countries are threatened by terrorist groups operating in the Taliban-ruled country.
- Pakistan has sent a three-member team for the meeting.
- The Afghan issue has figured prominently in almost all the major meetings of the SCO.
- **Council of Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO (RATS SCO)**
- India assumed the presidency of the SCO (RATS SCO) on 28 October last year for a period of one year.
- India has shown keen interest in deepening its security-related cooperation with the SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorism Framework (RATS).
- This specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.
- The SCO is an influential economic and security bloc and has emerged as one of the largest inter-regional international organisations.
- **The member states of the SCO**
- Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
- Afghanistan is among the observer states of the SCO.

8. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurates India-UAE Economic Partnership Summit (May 14, 2022)

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and UAE Economy Minister Abdullah bin Touq Al Marie inaugurated the India-UAE Economic Partnership Summit in Mumbai on 13 May.

- The two leaders also launched the India-UAE Start-up Bridge to boost the economy.

- The summit was organised by Confederation of Indian Industry.
- India and UAE have immense potential to work together and the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) will open a lot of doors to markets across the world.
- **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**
- The Comprehensive Trade Agreement between India and the United Arab Emirates will help generate employment opportunities and boost the growth of the domestic economy.
- The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is expected to increase bilateral trade in goods to over US\$100 billion and trade in services to over US\$15 billion within five years.
- The agreement paves the way for several sectors, especially labour intensive sectors such as textiles, gems and jewellery, pharmaceuticals and agriculture.
- The agreement will open doors not only for Indian and UAE businesses but also for other countries as the UAE is a transit point for large parts of Africa, CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries and the Gulf region.
- CIS countries include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, and Tajikistan.
- Indian pharma products will get immediate access to the UAE market.
- Bilateral trade will reach at least US\$ 100 billion in the near future.

9. US President Joe Biden to host ASEAN summit (May 13, 2022)

US President Joe Biden will host leaders and top officials of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Washington DC.

- Washington has focused on the Russo-Ukraine war as well as battling Chinese influence in the Indo Pacific.
- The ASEAN "special summit" was postponed from late March just days before Biden's first visit to Asia as president.
- ASEAN member state Myanmar, whose government was toppled on 1 February last year, will not participate in the summit.
- The US wanted an 'apolitical' representative from Myanmar to attend the meeting.
- ASEAN's 'five-point Consensus' to end the turmoil in Myanmar has not progressed since its release in April last year.
- **About ASEAN**
- Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN is an international organisation formed in Bangkok, Thailand in 1967.

- It promotes economic development, peace, security, social progress and cultural development in the Southeast Asian region.
- ASEAN Secretariat – Indonesia, Jakarta.
- General Secretary of ASEAN - Lim Jock Hoi, Brunei
- Official Languages - Burmese, Filipino, Indonesian, Khmer, Lao, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese
- Working Language - English
- ASEAN Summit is the supreme policy making body of ASEAN.
- ASEAN is third largest market in the world
- It is the sixth largest economy in the world, third in Asia.
- ASEAN has Free-trade agreements (FTAs) with China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

- **ASEAN Member Countries**

- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Thailand
- Brunei
- Vietnam
- Laos
- Myanmar
- Cambodia

10. PM Modi addresses 'Utkarsh Samaroh' in Bharuch (May 12, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the 'Utkarsh Samaroh' organised in Bharuch, Gujarat.

- This program has been organised to commemorate the 100 percent saturation of four major schemes of the state government in the district.
- These schemes will help in providing timely financial assistance to those in need.

- **About Utkarsh Initiative**

- The Bharuch district administration has launched the 'Utkarsh Initiative' campaign to
- ensure full coverage of schemes providing assistance to widows, elderly and destitute citizens.
 - This initiative includes four schemes Ganga Swaroopa Aarthik Sahay Yojana, Indira Gandhi Vrudh Sahay Yojana, Niradhar Vrudh Aarthik Sahay Yojana and Rashtriy Kutumb Sahay Yojana.
 - During the campaign from January to March this year, taluka-wise WhatsApp helpline numbers were announced to collect information about those who were not getting the benefits of the scheme.
 - Utkarsh camps were organised in all the villages and wards of the municipal areas of the district to collect the necessary documents for approval on the spot.
 - Utkarsh Sahayaks were also given incentives to make the campaign more convenient.