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1. 2nd Trade and Investment Working Group meeting begins in Bengaluru (May 23, 2023)

2nd Trade and Investment Working Group meeting begins in Bengaluru

On 23 May, the **second Trade and Investment Working Group meeting** under the G20 India Presidency began in **Bengaluru**.

An Overview of the News

- It is a three-day meeting and is attended by **75 delegates from G20 countries**, invited countries and regional/international organisations.
- The objective of the Bengaluru meeting is to address issues related to international trade and investment and seek agreeable solutions.
- Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry **Som Prakash** inaugurated the seminar.
- The meeting discussed reforming the multilateral trading system and finding agreeable solutions for international trade and investment.
- An exhibition of Indian Startups is also a part of the event.
- The first Trade and Investment Working Group meeting was held in Mumbai.

About the G20

- It is an **international forum of the world's leading economies established in 1999**.
- Its **primary objective** is to promote international financial stability and sustainable economic growth.
- The G20 serves as a forum to discuss and coordinate policies related to a wide range of economic and financial issues such as trade, investment, employment, energy and climate change.

Karnataka:

- It is a state in southwest India and is bordered by **Maharashtra to the north, Goa to the northwest, Andhra Pradesh to the east, Tamil Nadu to the southeast, and Kerala to the southwest**.
- **Bengaluru, the capital of Karnataka**, is known as the "**Silicon Valley of India**" and is a major centre of technology and innovation.
- Hampi, located in northern Karnataka, was once the capital of the **Vijayanagara Empire** and is now a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.
- Kannada is the official language of Karnataka, although English and Hindi are also widely spoken.

Chief minister - **Siddaramaiah**

Governor - **Thawar Chand Gehlot**

Official Animal - **Indian Elephant**

Official Bird - **Indian Roller**

Official Dance - **Yakshagana**

Official Song - **Jaya Bharat Jananiya Tanujate**

2. Second G-20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meeting begins in Mumbai (May 23, 2023)

The **second meeting of the G-20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group (DRRWG)** began on 23 May in **Mumbai**.

An Overview of the News

- **The objective** of the meeting is to reduce the impact of disasters on vulnerable communities.
- **The meeting aims** to identify opportunities and examine creative financing mechanisms for disaster risk reduction.
- Government officials, industry experts, private sector representatives and stakeholders from more than twenty countries participated in the three-day meeting.
- The meeting is based on the theme of "**Financing for DRR**" from the first DRRWG meeting held in Gandhinagar.
- The Coastal Road Project in Mumbai was discussed during the DRRWG meeting.

About Maharashtra

It is a state located in the **western part of India** and covers a significant part of the Deccan Plateau.

Chief Minister - **Eknath Shinde**

Governor - **Ramesh Bais**

Official Animal - **Indian giant squirrel**

Official Bird - **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon**

Official Dance - **Lavani**

3. India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development virtually launched (May 23, 2023)

India-US-Working

The **Ministry of Education, Government** of India and US Department of State on 22 May

launched the **India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development** in virtual mode.

An overview of the news

- Its aim is **to enhance cooperation and collaboration between the two countries** in the field of education and skill development.
- Both sides acknowledged the importance of **skilling and vocational education** in an industry-centric era.
- Recognizing the need to align skill training programs with industry requirements, both sides agreed to promote partnerships between educational institutions, industry stakeholders and relevant government agencies.
- The collaboration aims to bridge the skill gap, increase employability and promote entrepreneurship in both the countries.
- The delegations from both sides expressed their commitment **to strengthen cooperation in education and skill development between India and the United States.**
- The establishment of an India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development was **announced during the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue** held between India and the US in **Washington DC** in April 2022.

Topic of discussion

- Skilling and vocational education
- Certification and recognition
- Matchmaking between U.S. and Indian higher educational institutions
- Engaging with the Private Sector

4. WHO warns of possible rise in dengue cases in Afghanistan (May 23, 2023)

dengue-cases-in-Afghanistan

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has **issued an alert** on the recent cases of **dengue fever in Afghanistan.**

An overview of the news

- The organization said that their medical staff has enough equipment to control the disease.
- The organization said that the **number of dengue patients may increase during the rainy season.** Twelve groups of **65 women health professionals** are participating in the three-day program to protect against dengue patients.
- The WHO also urged the people of Afghanistan to avoid mosquito bites and adopt necessary safety measures to prevent dengue.

What is Dengue?

- Commonly known as **break bone fever**, it is a flu-like illness caused by the **dengue virus**.
- It occurs when an Aedes mosquito carrying the virus bites a healthy person.
- The disease is mainly found in tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world.

Causes of Dengue

- It is caused due to four viruses, namely - **DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3, and DENV-4**.
- The virus enters the mosquito when it bites an already infected person.
- The disease is transmitted when it bites a healthy person, and the virus is spread through the person's bloodstream.

Symptoms of Dengue

- Headache, Muscle, bone and joint pain, Nausea, Vomiting, swollen glands, Rash.

Treatment

- There is no specific treatment for dengue.
- Early detection of severe dengue-associated illness and access to appropriate medical care reduce deaths from severe dengue.
- Diagnosis of dengue infection is done with a blood test.

5. 30 percent financial support from the Center to promote green shipping (May 23, 2023)

green-shipping

Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, **Sarbananda Sonowal** has announced **30 per cent financial assistance to promote green shipping**.

An overview of the news

- Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal made **five important announcements** focusing on green shipping and digitization of ports at the end of the second **Chintan Shivir of the ministry held in Munnar, Kerala**.
- Green Hydrogen hubs will be developed at the **Deendayal Port at Kandla and Chidambaranar Port at Tuticorin**.
- Two tugs each will be procured for **Jawaharlal Nehru, VO Chidambaranar, Paradip and Deendayal ports** under the Green Tug Transition Programme.
- A **single window portal** will be prepared to facilitate booking of river and sea cruises.

Jawaharlal Nehru and Tuticorin ports will be made smart ports by next year.

What is Green Shipping?

- Green shipping is when people or goods are **transported via ships** using the **minimum resources and energy possible to protect** the environment from **pollutants generated by the ships**.
- Green shipping promotes clean practices by implementing **emission control, efficient port management and equipment management**.

6. AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023 Naval Exercise (May 23, 2023)

AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023 Naval Exercise

Indian Navy ships **INS TARKASH and INS SUBHADRA** arrived at **Port Al-Jubail in Saudi Arabia** on 21st May.

An overview of the news

- The visit of these ships marks the beginning of the **harbor phase of the second edition of the naval exercise** between the two countries, known as '**Al-Mohad Al-Hindi 2023**'.
- This year the naval exercise also includes the **participation of a Maritime Patrol Aircraft**.
- During the exercise, naval forces from both countries will engage in **joint maneuvers, training activities, and exchange of expertise**.
- The exercise will focus on enhancing maritime security capabilities and promoting interoperability between the two navies.
- The **inaugural edition** of the exercise was **successfully conducted in 2021**.

About Al-Mohed Al-Hindi Exercise

- The decision on this bilateral exercise between India and Saudi Arabia was taken at the **Riyadh summit held in 2019**.
- Its aim is to carry out **tactical maneuvers, search and rescue operations, and an electronic warfare drill** to enhance interoperability.
- It aims to strengthen the **defense ties between India and Saudi Arabia**.

Importance of the Exercise

- AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023 signifies the **growing strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia** in the defense sector.
- The exercise will provide an opportunity for both navies to learn from each other's experiences and improve their **operational capabilities**.

- The naval exercise also serves as a platform for fostering diplomatic relations and strengthening regional security cooperation.
- The successful conduct of **AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2023** may pave the way for future collaborations in defense technology, intelligence sharing, and joint defense projects.
- The exercise contributes to maintaining **stability and security in the region** by promoting cooperation and mutual understanding between the Indian and Saudi Arabian navies.

7. Third meeting of G-20, Tourism Working Group begins in Srinagar (May 22, 2023)

Third-meeting-of-G-20

The **third meeting of the G-20, Tourism Working Group** began on 22 May in **Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir**.

An Overview of the News

- The meeting focused on five key priority areas: **Green Tourism, Digitization, Skilling, MSME and Destination Management**.
- The priorities aim to grow the tourism sector and achieve the **Sustainable Development Goals by 2030**.
- The objective of the meeting is to **strengthen economic growth, preserve cultural heritage and promote sustainable development**.
- This is the third meeting of the Tourism Working Group after the previous meetings in **Gujarat and West Bengal**.

About the G20

- It is an **international forum** of the world's leading economies **established in 1999**.
- Its primary objective is **to promote international financial stability and sustainable economic growth**.
- The G20 serves as a forum to discuss and coordinate policies related to a wide range of economic and financial issues such as **trade, investment, employment, energy and climate change**.

8. India to host 44th ISO COPOLCO Plenary (May 22, 2023)

India-to-host-44th-ISO-COPOLCO-Plenary

India will host the **44th edition of the annual ISO COPOLCO Plenary** from May 23-26, 2023, by the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution**.

An overview of the news

- The event to be held in **New Delhi** will be inaugurated by Commerce and Industry Minister **Piyush Goyal**.
- COPOLCO President **Sadie Denton**, ISO Secretary General **Sergio Mujica** and other high ISO officials will also attend the event.
- Organized by the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**, the grand event will include interactive sessions and workshops on relevant topics, apart from various activities aimed at enhancing consumer engagement in the standardization process.
- It will also feature a distinguished presence of leaders from government and business sectors, as well as an international delegation of eminent global stakeholders.

About ISO COPOLCO

- ISO COPOLCO, known as the **Committee on Consumer Policy**, is a vital committee under the **International Organization for Standardization (ISO)**.
- It is responsible for advocating consumer interests in the **standardization process and ensuring that standards are developed with consumers' needs** in mind.
- It provides a forum for the exchange of information and experience on consumer involvement in **ISO's international standardization** work.
- COPOLCO's membership consists of **128 ISO member countries**, represented by representatives of these countries' national standards bodies and consumer organizations.

Themes of the Plenary

- 'Challenges and Good Practices for Consumer Engagement', 'Empowering Consumers for a Sustainable Future' and 'Consumer Protection and Legal Framework'.

International Standards Organisation (ISO)

- It is an international body with **168 member countries**.
- It plays a crucial role in developing standards that impact a wide range of business and social sectors worldwide.

9. 5000 year old tree from Chile recognized as the oldest tree in the world (May 22, 2023)

5000-year-old-tree

A giant tree in **southern Chile**, known as the "**Great Grandfather**" and this tree, a **Patagonian cypress**, located in the **Alerce Costero National Park** is the **oldest tree in the world**.

news overview

- The trunk of the tree has a **diameter of four metres (13 ft) and it is 28 metres tall.**
- It is over 5,000 years old, surpassing the oldest tree currently known as the **Methuselah, which is 4,850 years old.**
- It is located in a forest in the **southern Los Ríos region**, 800 kilometres (500 mi) south of the **capital Santiago.**
- This tree belongs to the species **Fitzroya cupressoides**, which is also known as **Patagonian cypress.**
- **Fitzroya cupressoides is the largest tree species in South America.**

About Chile

- It is a long, narrow country located on the **western edge of South America.**
- **Santiago** is the **capital of Chile** and is located in a valley surrounded by the **Santiago Andes and Chilean Coast Range mountains.**
- The city's central square is called the **Plaza de Armas and has palm-lined streets.**
- The Plaza de Armas houses the **Neoclassical Cathedral and the National History Museum.**
- There is a huge park in Santiago called **Parque Metropolitano.**

President - **Gabriel Boric**

10. Amy Pope became the first woman Director-General of the United Nations Migration Agency (May 22, 2023)

first-woman-Director-General-of-the-United-Nations

Amy Pope of the United States has been selected as the **first female Director-General of the United Nations Migration Agency.**

An Overview of the News

- She will head the **Geneva-based International Organization for Migration (IOM).**
- Pope is currently serving as **deputy to Director General Antonio Vitorino.**
- Her five-year term as director general will begin on October 1, replacing Vitorino.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- It is an **agency of the United Nations** and provides **services and advice related to migration.**

- The agency provides assistance to governments and expatriates.
- It caters to the needs of diverse groups including **internally displaced persons, refugees and migrant workers.**

Formation - **6 December 1951**

Headquarters - **Geneva, Switzerland**

Membership (2023) - **175 member states and 8 observer states**