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1. India announces donation of 12,500 doses of pentavalent vaccines to Cuba (Jan. 19, 2023)

Minister of State for External Affairs **Meenakshi Lekhi**, during her official visit to **Cuba** from January 12 to 14, announced that India has decided to donate **12,500 doses of pentavalent vaccines** to Cuba.

An overview of the news

- During her visit, Meenakshi Lekhi held a meeting with Cuban President **Miguel Diaz-Canel** and discussed bilateral importance and political and economic cooperation.
- Both sides discussed issues of common interest and expressed desire to enhance cooperation in development assistance programmes, trade and investment, energy, disaster management, culture, health and pharma, AYUSH and biotechnology.

Pentavalent vaccine

- Pentavalent vaccine provides protection to a child from 5 life-threatening diseases – **Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Hepatitis B and Haemophilus influenzae.**
- It is injected in three doses.

About Cuba

- Prime Minister: **Manuel Marrero Cruz**
- President: **Miguel Díaz-Canel**
- Capital: **Havana**
- Currency: Cuban peso

2. India announces 100 million Maldivian Rufiyaa for community development projects in Maldives (Jan. 19, 2023)

External Affairs Minister **Dr S Jaishankar** arrived in **Maldives** on 18 January as part of his three-day visit to **Maldives and Sri Lanka.**

An overview of the news

- To strengthen bilateral ties, India and Maldives signed an **MoU on development projects** and held talks with top leadership in the country.
- The agreement included grant assistance of **100 million rufiyaa (Maldives' currency)** for the **High Impact Community Development Project (HICDP).**
- Under this funding, several socio-economic development projects are planned to be implemented in Maldives.

- It also includes the development of a sports complex at **Gahadhoo** and academic collaboration between the Maldives National University and the Cochin University of Science and Technology.
- India has handed over two sea ambulances to help the **Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF)**.

About Maldives

- It is also called **Maldives Islands**, an independent island country in the north-central Indian Ocean.
- It extends more than **510 miles (820 km)** from north to south and **80 miles (130 km)** from east to west.
- Basis of economy - **fisheries, tourism**
- Industries - handicraft or cottage including the making of coir (coconut-husk fibre) and coir products, fish canning, and boatbuilding.
- Capital - **Male**
- President - **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih**
- Official Language - **Dhivehi (Maldivian)**
- Official Religion - **Islam**
- Currency - **Rufiyaa**

3. Jacinda Ardern announced her resignation as Prime Minister of New Zealand (Jan. 19, 2023)

On 18 January 2023, the Prime Minister of New Zealand '**Jacinda Ardern**' has announced her resignation from her post at the annual meeting of her party.

An Overview of the news

- Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern will hold the post of Prime Minister till **7 February 2023** and will resign after that.
- The 2023 general election in New Zealand is going to be held on 14 October.
- Prime Minister Ardern's shock decision comes after five and a half years in office as she led New Zealand through the coronavirus pandemic.
- Prime Minister Ardern is one of the **world's youngest female heads of state** at the age of 37 when she came to power in 2017.

Jacinda Ardern

- Ms Ardern began her political career in the office of former New Zealand Prime Minister **Helen Clark**.

- Arden has also served as a **policy advisor in Tony Blair's government in the UK.**
- She was elected to the Parliament of **New Zealand in 2008** and became Deputy Leader of Labor in March 2017.
- Jacinda Arden announced her resignation as Prime Minister of New Zealand

New Zealand

- Capital: **Wellington**
- Currency: **New Zealand Dollar**
- Prime Minister: **Jacinda Arden**
- President: **Debbie Hockley**

4. NASA awards 425 million to Boeing Company for agency's sustainable flight demonstrator project (Jan. 19, 2023)

The **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** has awarded **\$425 million** to The **Boeing Company** for a sustainable flight demonstrator project.

An overview of the news

- Boeing will work with NASA to validate technologies aimed at 'building, testing and flying a full-scale demonstrator aircraft and reducing emissions'.
- Over seven years, **NASA will invest \$425 million**, while Boeing and its partners will contribute the remainder of the agreement, estimated to **cost \$725 million.**
- The **Transonic Truss-Braced Wing Demonstrator Single-Aisle** is an aeroplane that aims to reduce fuel consumption and emissions by up to **30 percent.**
- The goal of the project is to produce and test a full-scale demonstrator that will help build future fuel-efficient commercial airliners.
- The United States has set a goal of achieving **net-zero greenhouse gas emissions** from the US aviation sector **by 2050.**

About NASA

- NASA was formed under the **National Aeronautics and Space Act** on **July 19, 1948**, in place of its predecessor, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA).
- NASA - **National Aeronautics and Space Administration**
- Headquarters- **Washington D.C.**
- Administrator - **Bill Nelson**

5. UN General Assembly adopts Indian Co-sponsored Resolution on 'Education For Democracy' (Jan. 19, 2023)

To provide education to all, a resolution titled "**Education for Democracy**" was adopted by the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** on 18 January.

An overview of the news

- The resolution co-sponsored by India reaffirms the **right to education** to strengthen democracy.
- Adopted unanimously, this resolution will recognize the importance of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- This is not the first time that an education resolution has been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.
- **Earlier in 2015**, a similar resolution was passed in the General Assembly, encouraging all UN entities **to use education to promote peace, human rights and democracy**.
- The purpose of the resolution was to encourage member states **to integrate Education for Democracy** into their education standards.

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

- It is the United Nation's chief policy-making and representative organ and was created in **1945**.
- It is one of the six principal organs of the **United Nations (UN)**.
- It serves as the main deliberative, policy making and representative organ of the United Nations.
- Its powers, structure, functions and procedures are set out in **Chapter IV of the United Nations Charter**.
- Its main functions are to prepare the budget of the United Nations, appoint non-permanent members to the Security Council, appoint the Secretary-General of the United Nations, receive reports from other parts of the United Nations system, and make recommendations through resolutions.

6. World's oldest person, Lucile Randon dies at the age of 118 (Jan. 18, 2023)

World's oldest person, Lucile Randon, died on 17 January at the age of **118**.

An overview of the news

- Ms Randon, who was known as **Sister André**, died in her sleep at her nursing home in Toulon, France.

- She was born on 11 February, 1904 in **Southern France**.
- Despite being blind and dependent on a wheelchair, Andre took care of other elderly people.
- In the year 2022, the world's oldest person **Ken Tanaka of Japan** died. He was **119 years old**.
- After Tanaka's death, 118-year-old Sister **Lucille Randon** became the oldest person in the world.
- **Guinness World Records** had officially recognised her status in April 2022.
- Randon became a Catholic when she was 19 years old. Eight years later she became a nun.

7. Bill tabled in US House to terminate Pakistan's status as Major Non-NATO ally (Jan. 18, 2023)

A **US lawmaker** has introduced a bill in the US House of Representatives that would **end Pakistan's designation as a major non-NATO ally** and require annual certification from the President with certain conditions for Islamabad to be granted such a designation.

An overview of the news

- The bill said that giving such a status to Pakistan would require annual certification from the President, subject to certain conditions.
- The bill was introduced by **Andy Biggs**, who represents Arizona's Fifth District.
- The bill has been referred to the **House Foreign Affairs Committee** for necessary action.
- It will need to be passed by the **House and Senate** before the US President can sign it into law.
- Pakistan has always been giving shelter to terrorism in its country. Therefore, the US MP has introduced this bill.
- The bill states that Pakistan will have to prove that it has shown speed in action against senior leaders of the **Haqqani network** in its country and is conducting military operations against them.
- The US President's Office will certify Pakistan regarding this.

Major Non-NATO ally

- Major non-NATO ally (MNNA) is a designation given by the **United States** to close allies that have strategic working relationships with the **US Armed Forces**.
- They are not members of the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**.

- Major non-NATO allies are eligible for loans related to material, supplies or equipment for
- research, development, test or evaluation purposes.

18 major non-NATO allies

- Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, South Korea, Thailand and Tunisia.
- In September 2022, the US terminated the designation of **Afghanistan** as a major non-NATO ally.

8. Vietnam President Nguyen Xuan Phuc resigns amid allegations of corruption and scandals (Jan. 18, 2023)

Vietnam's President **Nguyen Xuan Phuc** has submitted his resignation on January 17 after the ruling Communist Party found him responsible for **corruption, scandals and wrongdoings**.

An overview of the news

- The anti-corruption campaign has led to the sacking of several ministers in Vietnam.
- Earlier, **two deputy prime ministers** who served under President Phuc had quit.
- The resignation of the President requires approval from the **National Assembly**.
- Former Prime Minister **Phuc** had assumed the office of **President from 2021**.
- Phuc, 69, served as Vietnam's prime minister **from 2016 until April 2021**, when he was elected president.
- Vietnam is a country with **single party rule** and any political changes are very carefully managed for political stability and continuity.
- However, it is not clear who will be the new President.

About Vietnam

- It lies in **South East Asia** and it is a member of **Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN)**
- Capital: **Hanoi**
- Currency: **Dong**

9. India-South Korea holds 5th Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (Jan. 18, 2023)

Saurabh Kumar, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), made an official visit to South Korea and co-chaired the **5th Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FPSD)** with his Korean counterpart **Cho Hyundong**.

An overview of the news

- During the two-day talks that ended on January 17, the two sides agreed to deepen cooperation in the areas of **trade and investment, security and defence, science and technology as well as cultural and people-to-people exchanges**.
- India and South Korea agreed to work to make **global supply chains** more resilient and robust.
- Both the countries agreed to take bilateral trade to **US\$ 50 billion by 2030** from an all-time high of **US\$ 28 billion** at present.
- Both sides also discussed opportunities for cooperation in new and emerging technologies.
- India has offered investment to Korean companies in manufacturing, infrastructure and other sectors.

About South Korea

- South Korea is a country located in **East Asia** that is known as the '**Land of Quiet Mornings**'.
- The Korean peninsula was divided into communist **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)** and **Republic of Korea (South Korea)** after the **Korean War in 1953**.
- The nation's capital, **Seoul**, is the world's second largest metropolitan area and a major global city.
- North Korea is the only country bordering this country.
- **Martial arts Taekwondo** originated in Korea.
- President- **Yoon Suk-yol**
- Currency- **South Korean won**

10. British home secretary Suella Braverman clears Sanjay Bhandari's extradition (Jan. 17, 2023)

Sanjay Bhandari's extradition

Two months after a **Westminster court in London** ordered the [extradition of fugitive arms dealer Sanjay Bhandari](#) to India, British Home Secretary **Suella Braverman** has given her approval on the matter.

An overview of the news

- It is noteworthy that on **November 7, District Judge Michael Snow** ordered Bhandari's extradition which was sent to Home Secretary Suella Braverman for approval.
- Bhandari, 60, has been under investigation **since 2019 for corruption in a Rs 2,985-crore deal in 2009** to buy **75 PC-7 trainer aircraft** from Swiss aircraft maker **Pilatus Aircraft**.
- He is also facing a probe for alleged **money laundering** in properties linked to Robert Vadra, son-in-law of former Congress president Sonia Gandhi in London.

What is Extradition?

- Extradition is the formal process of **surrendering a person from one state to another**.
- The purpose of this process is the prosecution or **punishment for offences** committed by a person within the jurisdiction of the requesting country.
- The extradition of a fugitive criminal to India is regulated under the **Indian Extradition Act, 1962**.
- The **Consular, Passport and Visa (CPV) Division**, Ministry of External Affairs is the central/nodal authority to administer the Extradition Act.
- Extradition process can be initiated in case of under-investigation, under-trial and convicted criminals.