

Current Affairs search results for tag: international-relations

1. India & Bangladesh launch '50 Start-ups Exchange Programme' (May 16, 2023)

'50-Start-ups-Exchange-Programme

India and Bangladesh have recently jointly launched the '**50 Start-up Exchange Programme**' to promote **collaboration and exchange between the start-up ecosystems of the two countries.**

An overview of the news

- The objective of the program is **to strengthen bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh** by promoting cooperation in start-up and innovation sectors.
- It provides a platform for **entrepreneurs, investors and stakeholders** from both the countries to connect and collaborate.
- The '50 Start-up Exchange Program' facilitates knowledge sharing and learning opportunities between **Indian and Bangladeshi start-ups.**
- It encourages exchange of ideas, best practices and expertise to foster innovation and growth.
- The program provides mentorship and guidance to participating start-ups, connecting them with experienced entrepreneurs, industry experts and investors.

People's Republic of Bangladesh

- Capital: **Dhaka**
- Prime Minister: **Sheikh Hasina Wazed**
- President: **Mohammad Shahabuddin**
- Currency: **Taka**

2. S Jaishankar meets Sweden's Defence, Foreign Ministers during his Stockholm trip (May 15, 2023)

S-Jaishankar-meets-Sweden's-Defence

During his visit to **Stockholm, Sweden**, External Affairs Minister **Dr. S. Jaishankar** held a meeting with the Defense Minister and Foreign Minister of Sweden.

Purpose of meetings

- Discuss bilateral relations
- Strengthen diplomatic ties
- To explore opportunities for cooperation between India and Sweden in defense and foreign affairs.

Highlights of the meeting

Bilateral Relations

- Discussion on enhancing overall bilateral relations between India and Sweden including areas such as trade, investment, defense cooperation and cultural exchanges.

Defence Cooperation

- Defense cooperation, joint military exercises, defense equipment procurement and sharing of defense technologies discussed in the meeting with the Defense Minister of Sweden.

Security Cooperation

- The discussions included issues of regional and global security concern, counter-terrorism efforts and information sharing to address common security challenges.

Foreign Affairs and Diplomacy

- Discussion on regional and global issues of mutual interest, multilateral cooperation and coordination on matters such as climate change, sustainable development goals and human rights.

Economic and trade relations

- Ways were explored to enhance economic and trade ties between India and Sweden including investment opportunities, technology partnership and trade facilitation.

Cultural and people-to-people exchanges

- The meetings emphasized the importance of cultural exchanges, academic cooperation and people-to-people interactions to deepen mutual understanding and strengthen ties between the two countries.

About Sweden

- It is located on the **Scandinavian Peninsula** in northern Europe.
- The ancient name of the country was **Svitiod**.
- Prime Minister - **Ulf Kristersson**
- Capital - **Stockholm**
- Currency - **Swedish krona**
- King - **Carl XVI Gustaf**

3. PM Modi meets Doug McMillan, CEO of Walmart (May 15, 2023)

PM-Modi-meets-Doug-McMillan

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** held a meeting with **Doug McMillan, CEO of American multinational retail corporation Walmart.**

An overview of the news

- The purpose of the meeting between PM Modi and Doug McMillan was **to discuss and explore potential areas of collaboration, investment and partnership between the Government of India and Walmart.**
- The meeting reflects the importance of the economic relationship between India and Walmart. The discussions covered topics such as trade, investment opportunities and promoting a conducive business environment in India.
- The meeting discussed opportunities to leverage **digital technologies and innovation in the retail sector.**
- The discussion centered around **sustainable business practices, environmental initiatives and social responsibility.**

Significance of the meeting

- The meeting between PM Modi and Walmart CEO Doug McMillan highlights the importance of promoting economic partnership and exploring investment opportunities between India and Walmart.
- It highlights the potential for cooperation in various sectors, **employment generation, economic growth and contribution to sustainable development in India.**

About Walmart

- It is an **American multinational retail corporation** that operates a chain of **hypermarkets, discount department stores, and grocery stores.**
- It was **founded in 1962 by Sam Walton.**
- It has grown to become one of the **world's largest retail chains.**
- It operates thousands of stores **globally, serving millions of customers.**
- It offers a wide range of **products, including groceries, apparel, electronics, household goods,** and more.

4. Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurates Sittwe Port in Myanmar (May 10, 2023)

Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurates Sittwe Port in Myanmar

Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways and AYUSH **Sarbananda Sonowal** and Deputy Prime Minister of Myanmar **Admiral Tin Aung San** jointly inaugurated **Sittwe Port in Myanmar on 9 May**.

An overview of the news

- **Admiral Tin Aung San** also received the **first Indian cargo ship** which was flagged off from **Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata**.
- The development of Sittwe port will **reduce the cost and time of movement of goods between Kolkata and Agartala and Aizawl** by 50 per cent.
- It will promote trade links and people-to-people ties between India and Myanmar and the wider region and help boost the economic development of the northeastern states.

About Sittwe port

- The project was envisaged to provide **alternative connectivity of Mizoram with Haldia, Kolkata** or any Indian port through **Kaladan River in Myanmar**.
- Sittwe Port has been developed as a part of the **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP)** funded under grant-in-aid assistance from the Indian government.
- Once the waterway and road components of the KMTTP are fully operational, the east coast of India will be **connected to the north-eastern states through the Sittwe port**.
- The commissioning of Sittwe port will increase **bilateral and regional trade** as well as boost the local economy of **Myanmar's Rakhine state**.
- The greater connectivity provided by the Port will **lead to employment opportunities and enhanced growth prospects in the region**.

About Myanmar

- It is a country located in **Southeast Asia** and is bordered by **India, Bangladesh, China, Laos and Thailand**.
- The capital city of Myanmar is **Naypyidaw**, which was officially designated as the **capital in 2005**.
- President - **Myint Swe (Acting)**
- Prime Minister - **Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing**
- Currency - **Myanmar kyat**

5. 6th India- Canada Ministerial Dialogue on Trade and Investment (May 9, 2023)

Sixth India- Canada Ministerial Dialogue on Trade and Investment (MDTI) held on 9th May in **Ottawa**.

An overview of the news

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, **Piyush Goyal** along with **Mary Ng**, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Government of Canada co-chaired the discussions.
- The Ministers also reviewed the **India-Canada CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement) negotiations**.
- In the last MDTI meeting in March 2022, the two ministers launched **CEPA negotiations** with the possibility of having an **interim agreement or EPTA (Early Progress Trade Agreement)**. Since then seven rounds of talks have taken place.
- Goyal participated in various events to promote trade and investment in Toronto from 9 to 10 May 2023.
- Piyush Goyal inaugurated the **India Pavilion at SIAL Canada-2023**, the largest food innovation trade show in North America with participation of over 1000 national and international exhibitors from 50 countries.

Topics of Dialogue

- Strengthening bilateral trade relations between India and Canada
- Investment Promotion and Cooperation
- Green transition - discussions on critical minerals and promotion of new areas of cooperation such as B2B engagement.

About Canada

- Canada, the **second largest country in the world in area (after Russia)**.
- Prime Minister - **Justin Trudeau**
- Capital - **Ottawa**
- Currency - **Canadian dollar**
- King of Canada (British Monarch) - **Charles III**
- Official Languages - **English; French**

6. Border Haat between India and Bangladesh inaugurated at Bholaganj in Sylhet (May 7, 2023)

Border Haat between India and Bangladesh inaugurated at Bholaganj in Sylhet

On 6 May a new **border-haat** was inaugurated between **India and Bangladesh at Bholaganj under Companyganj Upazila of Sylhet**.

An overview of the news

- Bangladesh's Minister for Migrant Welfare and Overseas Employment **Imran Ahmed** and India's Assistant High Commissioner **Neeraj Kumar Jaiswal** jointly inaugurated the border-haat.
- The opening of the border haat at Bholaganj on the **border between Sylhet in Bangladesh and the East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya** was greeted with great enthusiasm by people on both sides of the border.
- This is the **fourth border haat in Sylhet division**, out of which **three are currently functioning**. There are plans to open three more border haats in Sylhet division.
- The Border Haat will open from **10 am to 4 pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays**.
- The Bholaganj Border Haat will have 26 stalls from India and 24 stalls from Bangladesh, where traditional items from both the countries will be sold duty free.
- The **first border haats were inaugurated in 2011 at Kalaichar in West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya and Kurigram in Bangladesh**.

7. 21st meeting of Bangladesh-India Joint Steering Committee on Cooperation in Power Sector (May 5, 2023)

21st meeting of Bangladesh-India Joint Steering Committee on Cooperation in Power Sector

The **21st meeting of the Bangladesh-India Joint Steering Committee (BIJSC)** on the power sector was held on 4th May at **Khulna, Bangladesh**.

An overview of the news

- Bangladesh's Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Secretary **Habibur Rahman** and his Indian counterpart **Alok Kumar** led their respective sides at the meeting.
- The meeting reviewed the progress of ongoing activities related to **mutual cooperation in the power sector** between Bangladesh and India.
- The meeting also examined the **possibility of power generation projects** in India through **BIFPCL** including power export from Bangladesh to India and setting up of solar power projects.
- The delegation also discussed the signing of an agreement to **import 500 MW of hydro power from Nepal by GMR to Bangladesh** through India.
- The progress in the management of the first unit and the implementation of the second unit of the **1320 MW Maitri Super Thermal Power Project** construction project was also reviewed.

People's Republic of Bangladesh

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8. India and Israel sign MoU for cooperation on industrial research and development (May 5, 2023)

India and Israel sign MoU for cooperation on industrial research and development

India and Israel signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to enhance **industrial research and development cooperation** in high-tech areas such as **AI, quantum, semiconductors, healthcare, aerospace, sustainable energy and agriculture.**

An Overview of the News

- The partnership aims to facilitate **collaborative initiatives for industrial research and development** in a diverse range of high-tech domains, including **artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductor technology, synthetic biology, healthcare, aerospace, sustainable energy and agriculture.**
- The MoU will focus on specific projects and will be monitored by a **Joint Steering Committee** to ensure effective implementation.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

- It is a type of agreement between two or more parties that expresses a shared intention to take a **common line of action.**
- Memoranda of Understanding can be used in situations where the **parties do not intend a legal commitment or cannot form a legally enforceable agreement.**
- MOUs are often used by many companies and government agencies to **define relationships between departments, agencies, or closely related companies.**

About Israel

Israel is a **Middle Eastern country** on the **Mediterranean Sea.**

It is considered the **Holy Land of the Bible by Jews,** Christians and Muslims.

Tel Aviv is the financial centre of the country and is known for its **beaches and Bauhaus architecture.**

Capital and largest city - **Jerusalem**

Official language - **Hebrew**

Recognized Language - **Arabic**

Government - **Unitary parliamentary republic**

President - **Isaac Herzog**

Prime Minister - **Benjamin Netanyahu**

Chief Justice - **Esther Hayut**

9. India to build Harbour for Maldivian Coast Guard (May 4, 2023)

India to build Harbour for Maldivian Coast Guard

India and Maldives launched construction of '**Ekatha Harbour**' for the Coast Guard of the **Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF)**.

An overview of the news

- The foundation stone for the Coast Guard '**Ekatha Harbour**' was laid by Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** and his Maldivian counterpart, **Mariya Didi**, at **Sifavaru in Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) atoll**, where India is assisting in construction of a **naval dockyard**.
- This is the **biggest grant-in-aid project of India in Maldives**.

UTF project

- The UTF project, announced during External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar's visit in February 2021**, has been at the centre of a political controversy in the Maldives.
- Allegations that the project was meant for Indian military presence in the Indian Ocean nation were part of an "India Out" campaign, which was supported by the country's opposition leader, **Abdulla Yameen**.
- Last April, Maldivian President Ibrahim Solih **banned anti-India protests** as a threat to national security.
- Anti-India campaigners allege that Indian troops were stationed in a fast patrol vessel India recently gifted to Maldives Coast Guard.

Recent gifts of India to Maldives

- India gifted a **Dornier aircraft** to Maldives in 2020 and a patrol ship in 2019.
- In 2022, India had also given **Coastal Radar System to Male**.
- Last year, Modi had announced that India would provide **24 vehicles** and a naval boat and build police facilities on the country's **61 islands**.

10. India to hand-over fast Patrol Vessel ship & landing Craft to Maldives (May 2, 2023)

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** will hand over a **fast patrol vessel and a landing craft to the Maldives** as India's "**gift**" during his visit to the island nation from May 1 to 3.

An overview of the news

- It will be an "**important landmark**" in building "**strong bonds**" of friendship between the two countries.
- Maldives is one of India's major maritime neighbors **in the Indian Ocean region and overall bilateral relations** between the two countries, including in the areas of **defense and security**, have been on the rise over the years.
- Singh will also review the implementation of various **India-aided projects in the Maldives** and interact with the Indian expatriate.
- India and Maldives are working together to effectively address common challenges including **maritime security, terrorism, radicalism, piracy, smuggling**, organized crime and natural disasters.

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**