

Current Affairs search results for tag: international-relations

1. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to visit Maldives (April 30, 2023)

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** is set to embark on a **three-day official visit to Maldives** on 30th April.

An overview of the news

- During the visit, Rajnath Singh will hold **bilateral talks** with Maldivian Defense Minister **Ms. Maria Ahmed Didi** and Foreign Minister **Abdulla Shahid**.
- All aspects of defense relations between the two countries will be reviewed during the consultations.
- Rajnath Singh will also meet Maldivian President **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih**.
- In line with India's commitment to capacity building of friendly countries and partners in the region, Rajnath Singh will gift a **Fast Patrol Vessel ship and a landing craft to the Maldivian National Defense Forces**.
- India and Maldives are working together to effectively address common challenges including **maritime security, terrorism, radicalism, piracy, smuggling, organized crime and natural disasters**.
- India's vision of **SAGAR** (Security and Growth for All in the Region) along with its '**Neighbourhood First**' policy as well as Maldives' '**India First**' policy seek to work together to jointly develop the capabilities within the Indian Ocean Region.

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**

2. 4th India-Mozambique Joint Defence Working Group meeting (April 26, 2023)

The **fourth meeting of the India-Mozambique Joint Defense Working Group** was held in **New Delhi** on 25 April.

An overview of the news

- The meeting was co-chaired by **Amitabh Prasad**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defense and **Casimiro Augusto Muio**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Defense of Mozambique.
- Both sides discussed a wide range of issues including **military training, exercises, medicine and capacity building with a view to deepening defense ties.**
- The Indian side highlighted the country's **growing capabilities in the field of defense production** and discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral military ties.
- The Mozambican side held separate talks with representatives of the defense industry.
- The Indian side assured Mozambique of India's continued support and commitment to a strong bilateral defense relationship.

About Mozambique

- Mozambique is a **central African nation.**
- India has sent food and defence equipment to under **Mission Sagar.**
- It was delivered at Port Maputo of Mozambique.
- Capital: **Maputo**
- President: **Philippe Nyusi**
- Prime Minister: **Carlos Agostinho do Rosário**
- Currency: **Mozambican metical (MZN)**
- Joint Maritime Exercise among the Indian, Mozambique and Tanzanian navies - **India-Mozambique-Tanzania Trilateral Exercise (IMT TRILAT).**

3. India, Guyana sign Air Services Agreement (April 24, 2023)

India and Guyana signed an Air Services Agreement (ASA) on 22nd April to **facilitate easier travel between the two nations.**

An overview of the news

- The agreement was signed between Public Works Minister **Bishop Juan Edghill** and India's High Commissioner to Guyana **KJ Srinivas** in the presence of External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar**, who is on a 3-day visit to Guyana.

- The agreement's signing is consistent with the government's objective to **establish ties between Guyana and the rest of the world.**
- It will also complement the more than 50 air service agreements Guyana has negotiated with other **ICAO governments for the advancement of interstate air travel.**
- The **agreement encourages the development of international air services between the two countries** and the global airline market.

What is an Air Services Agreement?

- Air Services Agreement (ASA) provides the **legal framework for air operations between two countries.**
- It is based on the sovereignty of the nations, the nationality of the carriers and the commercial opportunity for each side's designated airlines.
- **Prior to this there was no Air Services Agreement** between the Government of India and the Government of Guyana.
- **About Guyana**
 - Prime Minister: **Mark Phillips**
 - President: **Mohamed Irfaan Ali**
 - Capital: **Georgetown**
 - Currency : **Guyanese dollar (G\$)**

4. 8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue (April 20, 2023)

8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue

The **8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue** was held in **Bangkok on 20th April.**

An overview of the news

- The meeting was co-chaired by **Nivedita Shukla**, Special Secretary in the Ministry of Defense and **General Nuchit Sribunsong**, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Defense of Thailand.
- They reviewed defence cooperation between the two countries and explored **new initiatives to further strengthen bilateral ties.**
- The two sides also exchanged views on regional and global issues of common interest.
- India and Thailand share a **strategic partnership and defense** is a major pillar of this cooperation.

India-Thailand relations

- India and Thailand share a maritime boundary in the **Andaman Sea.**

- Thailand was one of the first countries to establish **diplomatic relations with India in 1947.**
- Since 2001, **India-Thailand economic and commercial relations** have grown significantly.
- India and Thailand have been cooperating in various multilateral fora such as **ASEAN and BIMSTEC**, a sub-regional grouping consisting of Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan.
- India is a member of the **Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)** initiated by Thailand in 2002 and the **Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC)** grouping of six countries.
- The **India-AESAN Agreement on Trade in Goods** was implemented in January 2010.
- Since 2015, India has been participating in the largest Asia Pacific military exercise **X-Cobra Gold.**
- Exercise **MAITREE (Army)** and exercise **SIAM BHARAT (Air Force)** are Bilateral exercises between both countries.

About Thailand

- Prime minister - **Prayuth Chan-ocha**
- Capital - **Bangkok**
- Head of State - **King Vajiralongkorn**
- Official Language - **Thai**
- Official Name - **Ratcha Anachak Thai (Kingdom of Thailand)**

5. India-Russia Business Dialogue 2023 (April 18, 2023)

India-Russia Business Dialogue 2023

External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** and Russian Deputy Prime Minister **Denis Manturov** on 17th April attended the inaugural session of "**India-Russia Business Dialogue**" 2023 in New Delhi.

An overview of the news

- They met representatives of Russian and Indian businesses.
- The participants in the business forum discussed issues of further enhancing Russian-Indian practical cooperation, including the **Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC).**
- The External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that **India and Russia have crossed the bilateral trade target of 30 billion dollars before the target year of 2025.**

- S Jaishankar talked about the importance of connectivity initiatives.
- The **International North-South Transport Corridor** as well as the Eastern Maritime Corridor, which is the Chennai-Vladivostok Corridor, are being given due consideration.
- He said that the issue of payment needs to be worked out clearly.
- He also referred to the expansion of the network under the scheme of settlement of international trade in Indian Rupees through the Special Rupee Vostro Account System.
- India and Russia are paying special attention to the issues of mutual access of products to the markets of both the countries.
- Russia and the **Eurasian Economic Commission** are trying to speed up negotiations on a free trade agreement with India.

International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)

- It is a multi-modal transport established by **Iran, Russia and India on 12 September 2000 in St Petersburg.**
- It is a **7,200 kilometre long multi-mode network** of shipping, rail and road transport for freight.
- **India, Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia and Europe** are involved in the corridor.
- Its main purpose is to **promote transportation cooperation among the Member States.**
- It connects the Indian Ocean to the Caspian Sea via the **Persian Gulf to Russia** and northern Europe.

Significance of INSTC

- It aims to reduce the **cost of movement of goods between India and Russia by about 30 percent** and reduce transit time by more than half.
- It will provide an **alternative connectivity initiative to countries** in the Eurasian region.
- It has the potential to transform countries' **economies into specialized manufacturing, logistics and transit hubs.**
- It opens a sustainable alternative route for India to trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia.

About Russia

- Prime Minister: **Mikhail Mishustin**
- Capital: **Moscow**

- Currency: **Russian ruble**
- President: **Vladimir Putin**
- Official Language: **Russian**

6. India opens its 16th Visa application center in Bangladesh's Kushtia (April 17, 2023)

India opens its 16th Visa application center in Bangladesh's Kushtia

The **High Commission of India** opened its **16th Visa application center in Kushtia town of Southwestern Bangladesh** on 16th April.

An overview of the news

- The new **Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC)** was inaugurated by **High Commissioner Pranya Verma**.
- **Mahbubul Alam Hanif**, MP from Kushtia-3 was also present on this occasion.
- This will provide greater ease and convenience to residents of **Kushtia and its surrounding areas** seeking visa services to visit India.
- Continuous efforts are being made to improve visa facilities for the people of Bangladesh.
- The new center will further strengthen people-to-people contact.
- It will serve as a new platform to promote tourism, trade and people-to-people exchanges between India and Bangladesh.
- The High Commission of India operates its largest Visa Operations Center in the world in Bangladesh.
- **Bangladesh accounts for the largest number of foreign tourists in India**, including those availing medical, tourism, business and student visa facilities.
- **In the year 2019-20, more than 16 lakh visas were issued in Dhaka.**

People's Republic of Bangladesh

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

7. Piyush Goyal addresses India - France Business Summit (April 15, 2023)

Piyush Goyal addresses India - France Business Summit

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry **Piyush Goyal** addressed the **India-France Business Summit and CEO Roundtable in Paris, France** on 11 April.

An overview of the news

- The Embassy of India, Paris, France, in association with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Mouvement des entreprises de France (MEDEF) and the Indo French Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IFCCI), organised the India - France Business Summit.

Sessions were held on the following topics-

- Building a Green Future
- Critical and Emerging Technologies: The New Strategic Frontier
- Defence Cooperation: Securing a Shared Future Through Atmanirbhar Bharat
- France and India: Springboard to Europe and Indo-Pacific
- CEOs Roundtable

Trade between India and France

- Bilateral trade with France has reached **US\$ 10.75 billion** in the last decade and has shown steady growth. Both sides have taken forward the discussions on the **India-EU Trade and Investment Agreement**.
- Agreements worth **about \$16 billion** have been signed at the trade summit.
- Nearly **1,000 French companies** are present in India while over a hundred Indian businesses have established a presence in France.

India, France bilateral relations

- France is the first country with which India started a **strategic dialogue after its 1998 nuclear tests**.
- Both sides recognized the importance of discussing the **India-EU Trade and Investment Agreement**.
- **In 2005**, an agreement was signed to build **six Scorpene submarines** in India with the help of France.
- There has been an agreement between the Government of **France and India for 36 Rafale aircraft**.

About France

- President: **Emmanuel Macron**
- Prime minister: **Élisabeth Borne**
- Capital: **Paris**
- Currency : **euro**

8. Piyush Goyal's two-day visit to Italy (April 14, 2023)

Piyush Goyal's two-day visit to Italy

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry **Piyush Goyal** was visiting **Rome** on 12 April 2023 on a two-day visit to **Italy**.

An Overview of the News:

- Shri Goyal met **Antonio Tajani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs**, Government of Italy to review all aspects of bilateral trade and economic relations.
- Both the Ministers exchanged views on leveraging the India-Italy trade and economic partnership for development in various sectors.
- After the state visit of Italian **Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni** to India on 2 March 2023, efforts were made to elevate the bilateral relationship to the level of a strategic partnership.

Suggestion for formation of Joint Working Group:

- Tajani suggested setting up of a joint working group in strategic areas such as space, technology, defence, agriculture etc. to keep abreast of important developments in these areas.

Bilateral trade with Italy:

- Bilateral trade between India and Italy to be around **US\$ 16 billion** in 2022.
- Shri Goyal briefed about the progress made in India-EU FTA negotiations. Both the Ministers underlined the importance of a free, balanced and fair **Free Trade Agreement** and hoped that it would be concluded soon.

Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation (JCEC) in Rome:

- The two leaders also agreed to hold the next session of the Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation (JCEC) in Rome in the last week of September 2023.

Italy:

- Capital: **Rome**
- Currency: **Euro**
- President: **Sergio Mattarella**
- Prime Minister: **Giorgia Meloni**

9. Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar launches "Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project" in Kampala (April 13, 2023)

Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar launches "Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project" in Kampala

External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** launched **Varanasi's 'Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project'** on 10 April 2023 during his visit to **Kampala, Uganda**.

An Overview of the News:

- The **Tulsi Ghat Renovation Project** is an initiative aimed at enhancing the aesthetic appeal of **Varanasi**, the oldest inhabited city in the world.
- Uganda was supported to chair the Non-Aligned Movement from Africa for the period from 2022 to 2025. The position of chair of NAM rotates every three years during the summits.

Mozambique Visit:

- The External Affairs Minister will visit **Mozambique** from 13 to 15 April. This will be the first visit by an External Affairs Minister of India to Mozambique.
- The fifth meeting of the India-Mozambique Joint Commission will be chaired by the Foreign Ministers of both the countries.
- During the visit, various types of assistance will be announced from the Indian side to both these countries. There will also be talk on defense cooperation with these two countries.
- In March 2023, India conducted military exercises with nine countries in Africa, as well as a separate meeting with the military chiefs of African countries.
- In March 2023, **Cyclone Freddy** caused havoc in **Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar**.

Uganda:

- Capital: **Kampala**
- President: **Yoweri Museveni**
- Prime Minister: **Robinhood Nabanza**
- Currency: **Uganda Shilling**

Mozambique:

- Capital: **Maputo**
- President: **Philippe Nyusi**
- Prime Minister: **Carlos Agostinho do Rosário**
- Currency: **Mozambican metical (MZN)**

10. 4-day visit of Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Emin Zhaparova to India (April 10, 2023)

4-day visit of Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Emin Zhaparova to India

Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister **Emin Zhaparova** arrived in India on 9 April 2023 on a four-day visit, the first official visit to the Eastern European country since the Russian aggression began in February 2022.

An overview of the news

- According to the information given by the Ministry, the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine **Emin Zhaparova** will be on an official visit to India from 9 to 12 April.
- Jhaparova held talks with **Sanjay Verma**, Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). In which the two sides are expected to discuss bilateral relations, exchange views on the current situation in Ukraine and global issues of mutual interest.
- In India, Jhaparova will also meet Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture **Meenakshi Lekhi** and Deputy National Security Advisor **Vikram Misri**.
- In the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, India has urged both sides to find a peaceful solution to the disputes.

Ukraine:

- Capital: **Kyiv**
- President: **Volodymyr Zelensky**
- Currency: **Ukrainian hryvnia**