

## **Testwale Current Affairs PDF**

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### **1. US announces 775 million dollars additional military assistance for Ukraine ( Aug. 20, 2022 )**

**On August 19, the United States government announced additional military aid of up to \$775 million for Ukraine.**

#### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- This is the 19th Presidential Drawdown Authority (PDA) package that the US Department of Defence has provided to Ukraine since August 2021.
- The USA will provide Ukraine with ScanEagle surveillance drones, mine-resistant vehicles, anti-armor rounds and howitzers to help the Ukrainian military retaliate against Russian invaders.
- The US sent eight HIMARS to Ukraine - which significantly strengthened Ukraine's defence against Russian weapons depots.
- The US has promised to send four more HIMARS.
- In the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the US is helping Ukraine's military by providing them with weapons to strengthen it.
- The latest aid comes as Russia's attack on Ukraine turns six months old.

#### ***HIMARS — a key weapon against Russia :***

- The US-made High Mobility Artillery Rocket System is known as HIMARS.
- The M142 HIMARS system (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System) is a modernized, lighter and more agile wheel-mounted missile for US and allied forces.
- The use of HIMARS has been effective in deterring Russian military positions.
- It can hit targets up to 70 kilometres away.
- Ukrainian troops can deploy this wheeled, high-tech lightweight rocket launcher outside the range of most Russian artillery.

#### ***US' military aid to Ukraine :***

- This military assistance forms part of a long history of US support to Ukraine.
- On 24 February this year, Moscow launched an invasion of Ukraine.
- The United States has committed about \$9.8 billion in security assistance to Ukraine.
- Since 2014, the United States has given Ukraine more than \$11.8 billion in security aid.

## **2. 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Canada ( Aug. 20, 2022 )**

**An Indian parliamentary delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is participating in the 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPA) in Halifax, Canada.**

### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- The conference is being held in Halifax, Canada from **20-26 August**.
- The delegation included Anurag Sharma, MP (Lok Sabha) and CPA executive committee member, Sunita Duggal, MP (Lok Sabha) and member of CWP steering committee, Neeraj Shekhar, MP (Rajya Sabha), Santosh Kumar, MP (Lok Sabha), Anubhav Mohanty, MP (Lok Sabha), Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu, MP (Rajya Sabha) and Utpal Kumar Singh, General Secretary, Lok Sabha.
- The conference will also be attended by 23 Presiding Officers of India and 16 Secretaries of State Legislatures who are also members of the CPA.
- Eight workshops on various topics will be organized during the conference.
- The Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will participate as a panellist in the Workshop 'C' titled **“A People’s Parliament : Accessibility through Innovation”**.
- The Speaker will also interact with his counterparts from other Commonwealth countries to discuss matters of mutual interest and parliamentary cooperation.

### ***About Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) :***

- The conference is the largest gathering of Commonwealth Parliamentarians who come together to discuss and debate major global political issues and developments.
- Between 1948 and 1959, this conference was held biennially, since 1961 it has been held annually.
- Due to COVID-19 global pandemic, the Conference has not been held since 2019.
- The 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) was held in Uganda (2019).

### ***Members of the Commonwealth of Nations :***

- The head of the Commonwealth is the Queen of Great Britain Elizabeth II.
- He received this title as a result of elections following the resignation of his father.
- The title of head cannot be inherited, so the new head of the Commonwealth of Nations is elected by voting at each meeting.
- The Commonwealth comprises 54 countries of the world in all 6 continents.
- The members have a total population of 2.1 billion, which is about a third of the world's population.

- Of its total population, 1.17 billion live in India.
- After India, the next largest Commonwealth countries by population are Pakistan (176 million), Bangladesh (156 million), Nigeria (149 million).
- The land area of the Commonwealth of Nations accounts for about 21% of the total world land area.
- The largest Commonwealth nations by area are Canada, Australia and India.

### **3. China's army to take part in Vostok-2022 exercise in Russia ( Aug. 19, 2022 )**

**The People's Liberation Army of China will participate in the strategic command and staff exercise Vostok-2022 in Russia from 1 - 5 September.**

#### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- India, Belarus, Tajikistan, Mongolia and other countries will also participate in the exercise.
- The exercise will be held under the command of the chief of Russia's General Staff, Valery Gerasimov, at 13 training grounds of the Eastern Military District.
- During the exercise, the participating forces will practice measures to maintain military security in the eastern sector.
- The exercise will contribute to "friendly cooperation between the armed forces of all countries".
- It will advance the level of strategic dialogue by all parties and strengthen the ability to respond to various security threats.
- Last year, India participated in Exercise ZAPAD 2021 in Russia, in which 17 countries including China and Pakistan participated.

#### ***India's Exercises with China & Russia :***

- **China** - Exercise Hand-in-Hand
- **Russia** - Exercise Indra, Exercise TSENTR

### **4. China's funding for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor down 56% ( Aug. 19, 2022 )**

**China's funding to Pakistan for the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) declined by about 56% in the first half of 2022.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- Other countries such as Russia, Egypt and Sri Lanka saw a 100% drop of BRI engagement compared to 2021.
- The project is running from Gwadar port in Pakistan to Kashgar city in Xinjiang, China.
- The project is not running as per the initial promise due to lack of transparency, debt problem, poor management and corruption.
- The project is facing local opposition and frequent attacks on the project and its personnel in Pakistan and other security challenges.
- Apart from this, the deteriorating economic condition of Pakistan is also affecting the project.
- According to reports, China has recently asked for its military presence in Pakistan to safeguard and look after the project.
- China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project, on the other hand, is also facing global criticism for its inadequate transparency of loans.

***China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) :***

- It is a project connecting China's northwestern Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and Gwadar Port in Pakistan's western province of Balochistan.
- The length of this project is 3,000 km.
- It is a bilateral project between Pakistan and China.
- It aims to promote connectivity across Pakistan through a network of energy, industrial and other infrastructure development projects, highways, railways and pipelines.
- It is a part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

**5. HAL to open office in Kuala Lumpur for business operations in Southeast Asia ( Aug. 18, 2022 )**

**Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) signed a MoU to set up an office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- This office will help HAL to tap new business opportunities for Fighter Lead-in Trainer (FLIT) and other requirements of Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) such as Su-30 MKM and Hawk upgrade.
- This will strengthen India's commitment in supporting the Malaysian Defence Forces and industry for a sustainable aerospace and defence landscape in Malaysia.

- HAL had submitted a proposal in October 2021 for the supply of 18 FLIT LCAs against a global tender issued by RMAF to the Ministry of Defence, Malaysia.
- Being one of the largest producers of Russian-origin Su-30 aircraft, HAL stated that it has the capability to provide necessary support to the RMAF for the Su-30 MKM fleet, which is facing low serviceability due to the Russia-Ukraine crisis.
- Other HAL platforms such as HTT-40, Do-228, Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), and Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) are likely to be inducted by the RMAF in the future.
- HAL's office in Kuala Lumpur will market promotion of HAL's range of products and services not only in Malaysia but throughout Southeast Asia.

## **6. Thai Public Broadcasting Service signs MoU with Prasar Bharati ( Aug. 18, 2022 )**

**The Thai Public Broadcasting Service (Thai PBS) on 18 August signed a Memorandum of Understanding with India's public broadcaster Prasar Bharati for comprehensive cooperation between Thailand and India to strengthen their bilateral ties.**

### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- Thai PBS and Prasar Bharati share the same values as public broadcasters.
- The MoU will contribute to better understanding between the peoples of the two countries and is the first step in cooperation in exchange of news and programmes.
- Indian Ambassador to Thailand Suchitra Durai represented Prasar Bharati in signing the MoU.
- Both countries also signed MoU on Health and Medical Research Cooperation between Indian Council of Medical Research and Department of Medical Sciences, Thailand.

### ***India -Thailand relations :***

- **The year 2022 is the 75th year of diplomatic relations between the two countries.**
- Both countries share a maritime boundary in the Andaman Sea.
- Thailand was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with India in 1947.
- In 2021, Thailand became India's fourth largest trading partner in ASEAN.
- In 2021-22, Thailand was India's 22nd top trading partner, with a total trade of US\$6.6 billion.
- The MoU on Defence Cooperation between India and Thailand was signed on 25 January 2012.

- Since 2015, India has participated in the largest Asia Pacific military exercise Ex-Cobra Gold as an 'Observer Plus' category.

## **7. India, Thailand jointly inaugurate Indian Embassy Residence Complex in Bangkok ( Aug. 18, 2022 )**

**External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar inaugurated the Indian Embassy Residence Complex in Bangkok along with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Thailand Don Pramudwinai on 17 August.**

### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- **Jaishankar is on a visit to Thailand to attend the 9th India-Thailand Joint Commission meeting.**
- He also paid a visit to the Temple of Emerald Buddha in Bangkok.
- 9th India-Thailand Joint Commission Meeting was held in Bangkok on 17 August.
- The meeting was co-chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs of Thailand and S Jaishankar, the External Affairs Minister of India.
- Both countries discussed advancing contacts in political, economic, security as well as defence, connectivity and health domains.
- **The two sides also discussed cooperation within ASEAN and BIMSTEC and shared their perspectives on the Indo-Pacific.**

### ***About Thailand :***

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

## **8. London home of Dadabhai Naoroji gets Blue Plaque honour ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

Dadabhai Naoroji's south London home, where he lived for eight years in the late 19th century, has received a commemorative 'blue plaque' award.

### **Important facts**

- Under the 'Blue Plaque' scheme, the English Heritage Charity honours historically significant buildings across London.
- Naoroji made seven trips to England and lived in London for more than three decades.
- Naoroji's plaque was unveiled on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Indian Independence.

### **Dadabhai Naoroji**

- Dadabhai Naoroji (4 September 1825 – 30 June 1917) was a Parsi intellectual, educationist, cotton merchant and early political and social leader of British India.
- He is also known as 'Grand Old Man of India' and 'Official Ambassador of India'.
- He proposed the principle of economic exit or drain of money.
- Dadabhai Naoroji founded the East India Association in London in 1866.
- Poverty and UnBritish Rule in India is a major book written by him.

### **9. Italy's Lake Garda shrinks to historically low level due to drought ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

Italy's worst drought in a long time threatens to shrink the country's largest Lake Garda, pushing its lowest ever recorded.

#### **Important facts**

- Northern Italy received very little rainfall for months, and snowfall was also reduced by 70% in 2022, drying up important rivers such as the Po, which flow through Italy's agricultural and industrial region.
- The dry condition of Italy's longest river, the Po, caused billions of euros in damage to farmers who usually depend on the river to irrigate their fields.
- To make up for the loss, the authorities have allowed more and more water from Lake Garda to flow into the local rivers.
- But at the end of July 2022, less money was spent protecting the lake and its associated economically important tourism.
- Due to the diversion of large amounts of lake water into rivers, the lake has the lowest water level ever recorded.

#### **About Garda Lake**

- It is best known as the playground lake.
- Location - Veneto, Trentino Alto Adige and Lombardy regions in north-west Italy
- Best - For fun and games for kids of all ages

**10. North Korea fires two cruise missiles from west coast town of Onchon ( Aug. 17, 2022 )**

**North Korea fired two cruise missiles from the west coast city of Onchon on the morning of August 17.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- The launch comes as South Korea and the United States begin a four-day preliminary joint exercise in preparation for the long-suspended live field training Ulchi Freedom Shield, which takes place from August 22 to September 1.
- South Korean President Yoon Sek-yol said that his country is ready to provide phased economic aid to North Korea if it ends the development of nuclear weapons and begins denuclearization.
- Unlike ballistic missiles, cruise missiles are powered by jet engines and remain close to the ground, making them difficult to detect.
- Most cruise missiles are not designed to carry nuclear warheads.

***Recent missile launches by North Korea :***

- North Korea has recently conducted a flurry of missile tests, making its 18th launch on August 17 this year.
- North Korea only has four tests in 2020, and eight in 2021.
- The last missile launch was on June 5 with eight short-range ballistic missiles – which were responded to by South Korea and the US firing eight more missiles into the waters off the eastern coast of the Korean peninsula.

***About North Korea :***

- Capital - Pyongyang
- Official Language - Korean
- President - Kim Jong-un