

## **Testwale Current Affairs PDF**

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### **1. Ceasefire between Palestine, Israel takes effect in Gaza ( Aug. 9, 2022 )**

A ceasefire between Israel and Palestinian militants went into effect on 8 August and was agreed to end nearly three days of violence that left dozens of Palestinians dead.

#### **Important facts**

- In early 2022, tensions escalated between Palestinians and Israeli police at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
- Israeli jets hit targets of Islamic Jihad leaders in Gaza.
- In response, the Iranian-backed Palestinian Jihad terrorist group fired dozens of rockets at Israel.
- According to an Israeli military statement, militants fired about 580 rockets towards Israel in Gaza.

#### **UNSC meeting**

- The United Nations Security Council has scheduled an emergency meeting to end the violence.
- China scheduled the session in response to a request from the United Arab Emirates.
- China will preside over the UNSC for August 2022, representing Arab countries in the council.

#### **What is the dispute between Israel and Palestine?**

- Under the United Nations Original Partition Plan of 1947, Jerusalem was proposed as an international city.
- In the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Israelis captured half of the city of Jerusalem.
- The eastern part of this city where Haram al-Sharif is located was captured by Jordan.
- In 1967, the Six-Day War was followed by an armed conflict between Israel and a coalition of Arab states that mainly included Jordan, Syria and Egypt.
- Israel annexed Jordan-controlled East Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War.
- Israel sees the entire city as its "unified, eternal capital".
- Whereas Palestine does not want to accept any settlement for a future Palestinian state until East Jerusalem is recognized as its capital.

### **2. India begins cooperation with Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces ( Aug. 9, 2022 )**

India began cooperation with Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)

## **Background**

- In April 2022, during the India-US 2+2 talks, India announced that it would join the CMF as an associate partner to strengthen cooperation in regional security in the western Indian Ocean.
- In July 2022, India formally commenced cooperation with the Joint Maritime Force (CMF), a multilateral partnership based in Bahrain.

## **What are Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)?**

- The CMF is a multinational naval partnership to promote security, stability and prosperity in the approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters, which include some of the world's most important shipping lanes.
- The Group of 34 Nations is commanded by a Vice Admiral of the US Navy, who also serves as Commander US Naval Forces Centcom and US Fifth Fleet.
- All three commands are co-located in US Naval Support Activity Bahrain. Pakistan is a full member of the CMF.
- India is the 35th member of this group.
- **It consists of four task forces -**

1. CTF 150 (maritime security and counter-terrorism)
2. CTF 151 (counter-piracy)
3. CTF 152 (Arabian Gulf security and cooperation)
4. CTF 153 (Maritime security in the Red Sea & Gulf of Aden)

## **Significance of CMF**

- Curb illegal fishing
- Counter-piracy
- Counter-terrorism
- Protection of trade routes

## **About Bahrain**

- Prime Minister - Salman ibn Hamad Al Khalifah
- Capital - Manama
- Official Language - Arabic
- Official Religion - Islam

• Currency - Bahraini Dinars

### **3. Gustavo Petro sworn in as Colombia's first leftist President ( Aug. 8, 2022 )**

Gustavo Petro was sworn in as the first leftist president of Colombia on 7 August.

#### **Important facts**

- He has promised to fight inequality in the country and bring about a significant change in the history of a country ravaged by a prolonged war between the government and guerrilla groups.
- Petro (62) has promised to address Colombia's social and economic inequalities by increasing spending money on poverty alleviation programs and investing in rural areas.
- Gustavo Petro, a former member of Colombia's M-19 guerrilla group, won the presidential election in June by defeating conservative parties by a huge margin.
- The victory of former rebel Petro was an extraordinary event for the country Colombia, as voters in the country did not support leftist leaders.
- Left leaders are often accused of being soft on crimes or sympathising with the guerrillas.
- He has described US-led anti narcotics policies, such as the forced elimination of illegal coca crops, as a major failure.

#### **About Colombia**

- Capital - Bogota
- Name - Republic of Colombia
- Official Language - Spanish
- Currency - Colombian peso

### **4. ASEAN bars Myanmar from ASEAN meetings ( Aug. 6, 2022 )**

The ASEAN Regional Group has said that Myanmar will not be allowed to participate in any ASEAN meetings until it shows progress on the peace plan.

#### **Important facts**

- ASEAN has said that Myanmar should act in a way that shows progress has been made in the peace plan.
- The regional group expressed concern over the long-running political crisis in Myanmar and the executions of four opposition activists.

- ASEAN expressed its deep disappointment at the limited progress and highlighted the lack of commitment of the Nay Pyi Taw officials towards the implementation of the Five Point Consensus.
- ASEAN's five-point agreement was reached in Jakarta, Indonesia on April 24, 2021, calling for an immediate end to violence in Myanmar and constructive dialogue among all parties to seek a peaceful solution.
- On the Rohingya issue, ASEAN reiterated its support for facilitating the voluntary return of displaced persons in a safe and dignified manner in accordance with the bilateral agreement between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

### **About ASEAN**

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN is an international organisation formed in Bangkok, Thailand in 1967.
- It promotes economic development, peace, security, social progress and cultural development in the Southeast Asian region.
- ASEAN Secretariat – Indonesia, Jakarta.
- General Secretary of ASEAN - Lim Jock Hoi, Brunei
- Official Languages - Burmese, Filipino, Indonesian, Khmer, Lao, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese
- Working Language - English
- ASEAN Summit is the supreme policy making body of ASEAN.
- ASEAN is third largest market in the world
- It is the sixth largest economy in the world, third in Asia.
- ASEAN has Free-trade agreements (FTAs) with China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

### **ASEAN Member Countries**

- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Thailand
- Brunei
- Vietnam
- Laos
- Myanmar

• Cambodia

## **5. 9 Indian companies in Fortune 500 Global list 2022 ( Aug. 5, 2022 )**

Recently, Life Insurance Corporation listed on the stock exchange has joined the list of Fortune's Global 500 companies. With this, now nine Indian companies have made their place in the list.

### **Important facts**

- LIC, the country's largest life insurer with a revenue of USD 97.26 billion and profit of USD 553.8 million, is ranked 98th in the recently released Fortune 500 list.
- Reliance Industries jumped 51 places to 104 in the 2022 list.
- Reliance has been on the list for 19 years with a revenue of USD 93.98 billion and a net profit of USD 8.15 billion in the latest year.
- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) jumped 28 places to 142nd position, while Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) moved up 16 places to 190th.
- The list includes two Tata group companies - Tata Motors at 370th position and Tata Steel at 435th position.
- State Bank of India (SBI) climbed 17 places to 236th and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited climbed 19 places to 295th.
- The Fortune Global 500 list ranks companies based on total revenue for the respective fiscal years ended on or before March 31, 2022.

### **Global position**

- American retail company Walmart tops the list of Fortune Global 500.
- Amazon is in second position.
- Chinese energy giant's State Grid, China National Petroleum and Sinopec rounded out the top five.

### **Top 10 companies in 2022 Fortune Global 500 list**

1. Walmart, U.S
2. Amazon, U.S
3. State Grid, China
4. China National Petroleum, China
5. Sinopec, China
6. Saudi Aramco, Saudi Arabia

7. Apple, U.S
8. Volkswagen, Germany
9. China State Construction Engineering, China
10. CVS Health, U.S.

## **6. Water shortage officially in Netherlands due to drought ( Aug. 5, 2022 )**

The Netherlands government has officially declared a water shortage due to the ongoing drought in the country, national water levels at an all-time low.

### **Important facts**

- According to the Water Shortage Management Team of the country, continuous drought in the country has led to 'water shortage'.
- The scarcity of water is so bad that the waters of the Rhine River are supplying 50% less water than normal.
- The water shortage is already having a negative effect on shipping and agriculture in particular.
- Water used for irrigation of crops is banned in some parts of the country.
- Prolonged water scarcity can lead to salinization of the soil, affecting the agricultural industry.
- Despite the fact that the Netherlands is known for its abundance of water, it has declared a water shortage for the fifth time in the last 22 years.
- The water scarcity situation has now escalated to the third level threat in 2003. Threat of the third level means a specified national crisis.
- Drought means that the supply of fresh water must be comparatively less, but it can also affect the quality of drinking water.

## **7. Minerals Security Partnership ( Aug. 5, 2022 )**

India is to join an 11-member US-led partnership for critical mineral supply chains called the 'Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)'.

### **Important facts**

- A group of Western countries are collaborating to develop alternatives to China to ensure key industrial supplies.
- The Mineral Security Partnership is a new ambitious US-led partnership to secure the supply chain of rare minerals with the aim of reducing dependence on China.

- India is not a part of this arrangement but is working to gain entry through diplomatic efforts.
- Demand for rare minerals, which are essential for clean energy and other technologies, is projected to increase significantly in the coming decades.

### **What is the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP)?**

- It is an initiative by the United States to strengthen rare mineral supply chains.
- Partner countries - Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States and European Commission.
- Its purpose is to ensure that rare minerals are produced, processed and recycled in such a way that countries benefit from the full economic development of their geological management.
- This new group will focus on the supply chains of cobalt, nickel, lithium and the 17 "rare minerals" found on Earth.

### **Rare Earth Elements**

- The 17 rare earth elements (REE) include the 15 Lanthanides (atomic numbers 57 — which is Lanthanum — to 71 in the periodic table) plus Scandium (atomic number 21) and Yttrium (39).
- REEs are classified as light RE elements (LREE) and heavy RE elements (HREE).
- Some REs are available in India such as Lanthanum, Cerium, Neodymium, Praseodymium and Samarium, while others such as Dysprosium, Terbium, Europium that are classified as HREE are not available in India.
- Hence, there is a dependence on countries such as China for HREE.

### **Importance of these minerals**

- The batteries used in electric vehicles require minerals such as cobalt, nickel and lithium.
- REE is an essential component for over 200 consumer products such as mobile phones, computer hard drives, electric and hybrid vehicles, semiconductors, etc.

## **8. New Zealand introduced Bill on Tobacco Endgame ( Aug. 4, 2022 )**

New Zealand's parliament recently introduced the Smoke-Free Environment and Regulated Products (Smoked Tobacco) Amendment Bill to fulfil its plan to be smoke-free by the year 2025.

### **About New Zealand Bill on Tobacco Endgame**

- The 'tobacco endgame' refers to a policy approach that focuses on ending tobacco-related disease with the aim of a 'tobacco-free future'.

- The bill calls for three strategies to significantly reduce or eliminate smoking.
- If implemented, the bill would be the first law in the world to prevent the next generation from buying cigarettes legally.

### **Proposed Strategies**

- To significantly reduce the amount of nicotine (known as "denicotinization" or "very low nicotine cigarettes - VLNC") in tobacco so as not to become addictive.
- 90% to 95% reduction in the number of shops selling tobacco.
- Selling tobacco to people born on or after January 1, 2009, is illegal (thus making the "smoke-free generation").

### **Current status of tobacco use**

#### **Global**

- One in four people around the world use tobacco
- Cigarette smoking is the most common form of tobacco use worldwide.
- Other tobacco products include waterpipe tobacco, various smokeless tobacco products, cigars, cigarillos, roll-your-own tobacco, pipe tobacco, bidis and kreteks.
- According to the World Health Organisation, the tobacco epidemic is one of the world's biggest public health threats to date, killing more than 8 million people every year.

#### **Status in india**

- According to the National Family Health Survey-5 (Year 2019-21), 38% of men and 9% of women above the age of 15 use tobacco products.
- Women (19%) and men (51%) belonging to Scheduled Tribes are more likely to use tobacco than those belonging to any other caste/tribe group.
- Among men as well as women, tobacco consumption is higher in rural areas (43 percent for men and 11 percent for women) than in urban areas.
- It is one of the leading causes of death and disease in India and causes about 1.35 million deaths every year.
- India is also the second largest consumer and producer of tobacco.

### **9. US Senate approves Finland and Sweden's accession to NATO ( Aug. 4, 2022 )**

The United States Senate on 3 August approved Finland and Sweden's accession to NATO.

#### **Important facts**



- The US Senate voted 95 to one in favour of both Western European countries joining NATO.
- This historic vote provides an important indication of the continued, bipartisan US commitment to NATO.
- The Nordic countries, which had long maintained neutrality, had united to join a 30-member coalition in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- Earlier the National Assembly of France voted in favor of Finland and Sweden's NATO membership.
- Several countries, including Germany, Canada and Italy, have already approved the ratification.

### **NATO membership process**

- First a country must formally apply for NATO membership.
- The joining country must meet the criteria set out in NATO's 1995 "Study on Expansion". These criteria include a functioning democratic political system based on a market economy, the ability to make a military contribution to NATO, etc.
- A country can join NATO only if all its 30 member countries support its membership.
- A country can become a member of NATO after ratification of accession protocols, which may take 8 to 12 months.
- At present, Turkey has not agreed to give NATO membership to Finland and Sweden.

### **About North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)**

- NATO is an intergovernmental military alliance consisting of 30 member states belonging to Europe and North America (28 European states, the US and Canada).
- NATO aims to guarantee the security of its members through political and military means.
- According to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, an armed attack against any NATO member in Europe or North America shall be deemed an attack against all NATO members.
- Article 5 has been invoked only once so far after the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the US.
- The last country to join NATO was North Macedonia in 2020.
- Headquarters- Brussels, Belgium

### **10. IAF to participate in multilateral exercise 'Pitch Black' in Australia ( Aug. 3, 2022 )**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will join 16 other countries, including the Quad partner countries, for the biennial Exercise Pitch Black to be conducted by the Australian Air Force later this month.

**Important facts**

- About 100 aircraft and 2,500 military personnel from 17 countries will reach the northern region later this month for the Pitch Black 2022 exercise.
- This year's Pitch Black participants include Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, India, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, UK and US.
- The 2020 edition of this exercise was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**About Exercise Pitch Black**

- It is a biennial warfare exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).
- It enhances interoperability and strengthens relationships among participants.
- This will provide the Indian Air Force with a unique opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience with these countries in a dynamic combat environment.
- Its last edition was held in 2018.
- Its aim is to practice Offensive Counter Air (OCA) and Defensive Counter Air (DCA) combat in a simulated war environment.

**Other exercise between India and Australia**

- AUSINDEX - It is a biennial bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN).
- The first edition of the exercise was held in 2015.