

## **Testwale Current Affairs PDF**

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### **1. Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al-Sabah Becomes New Kuwait PM ( July 26, 2022 )**

Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al Ahmed Al Sabah was appointed as the new Prime Minister of Kuwait on 25 July.

#### **Important facts**

- He replaced Sheikh Sabah Al Khalid, who stepped down in April 2022.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has conveyed his congratulations and best wishes on his appointment as the Prime Minister of Kuwait.
- In April 2022, Kuwait's government resigned just months after its formation, creating new uncertainty as it grappled with a worsening political crisis and stalled important economic and social reforms.
- Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al Hamad Al Sabah, former Prime Minister of Kuwait, submitted the resignation of the cabinet to the Crown Prince ahead of a no-confidence motion in parliament.

#### **India-Kuwait Relations**

- India and Kuwait have traditionally enjoyed friendly relations that have stood the test of time.
- India has consistently been one of Kuwait's top trading partners. Kuwait has been a reliable supplier of crude oil to India.
- India is the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer.
- Major items exported by India to Kuwait include food items, textiles, electrical and engineering equipment, ceramics, automobiles, chemicals, jewellery, metal products etc.
- Kuwait is one of the top sources of remittances for India.
- The Indian community in Kuwait has been growing at 5-6% per annum.
- Indians are the largest expatriate community in Kuwait while Egypt ranks second.

### **2. WHO declares monkeypox a global emergency ( July 25, 2022 )**

The World Health Organisation has declared the global monkeypox outbreak a 'Public Health Emergency of International Concern' (PHEIC), one step below the 'pandemic'.

#### **Important facts**

- According to WHO, PHEIC constitutes an exceptional event, which constitutes a public health risk to other countries through international spread, and which potentially requires a coordinated international response.

- On January 30, 2020, WHO had categorised COVID-19 as a PHEIC, when about 7,500 cases of novel coronavirus were reported.
- On 11 March that year, the WHO declared it a 'pandemic'.
- At present, more than 16 thousand cases of monkeypox have been registered in 75 countries and five deaths have been confirmed.
- The WHO estimates that the risk of monkeypox is moderate in the world and in all regions, but the risk is highest in Europe.
- According to the WHO, 99 percent of monkeypox cases found outside Africa are related to men, in which 98 percent of the patients are men who are gay.

### **Criteria on the basis of which WHO declares PHEIC**

- It is declared in the event of certain "serious public health events" that could endanger international public health.
- The responsibility of declaring an event as an emergency rests with the Director-General of the WHO and requires the convening of a committee of members.
- Declaring a PHEIC may result in restrictions on travel and trade.

### **What Is Monkeypox?**

- It is a viral zoonotic disease that is transmitted from animals to humans.
- Monkeypox virus is an orthopoxvirus similar to smallpox.
- It has been identified as a smallpox-like disease in monkeys, hence it is called monkeypox.
- It was first observed in 1958, in monkeys in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and in humans in 1970.
- The disease outbreak in Nigeria in 2017 was the largest ever.
- The monkeypox virus mutates at a high rate but is treatable once symptoms appear.

### **Symptom of disease**

- Fever, intense headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy, swollen lymph nodes and a skin rash or lesions.
- Infected people develop a rash resembling smallpox.
- In the early stages of the disease, monkeypox and smallpox can be differentiated because the monkeypox lymph gland enlarges.

### **Transmission of disease**

- It spreads through close face to face, skin to skin and direct contact.

- The disease can be spread through contact with bodily fluids, sores on the skin or internal mucous surfaces, such as the mouth or throat, respiratory droplets and contaminated objects.
- Treatment and Vaccine
- There is no specific treatment or vaccine available for monkeypox infection.
- The anti-smallpox vaccine has been shown to be 85% effective in preventing monkeypox.
- A newer vaccine MVA-BN, developed for Smallpox was approved in 2019 for use in preventing Monkeypox but is not yet widely available.

### **3. Wasifa Nazreen becomes first Bangladeshi to scale world's second highest peak K2 ( July 25, 2022 )**

Wasifa Nazreen has become the first Bangladeshi to scale Pakistan's K2, which is the second highest mountain in the world.

#### **Important facts**

- She climbed the 8611 metres or 28,251 feet high K2 mountain peak and returned to the base camp on 22 July.
- A summit is technically complete when the climber returns from the summit to the base camp.
- After completing this historic task, 39-year-old mountaineer Wasifa paid tribute to all known and unknown martyrs of Bangladesh from language movement to liberation struggle.
- On 26 May 2012, she became the second woman from Bangladesh to scale Mount Everest.
- She has previously conquered Aconcagua in South America and Kilimanjaro in Africa.

#### **About K2 mountain**

- K2 or Mount Godwin Austen with an elevation of 8,611 metres is the second highest mountain in the world after Mount Everest above sea level.
- It is located on the Sino-Pakistan border between Baltistan and Dafdar Township of Xinjiang, China, in the Gilgit-Baltistan region of northern Pakistan.
- It is the highest point of the Karakoram mountain range and the highest point in both Pakistan and Xinjiang.

#### **Major Mountain peaks in Indian subcontinent**

- **Kangchenjunga**

Length - 8586 metres

The third highest summit in the World

It is also known as the 'five treasures of snow

it lies in Himalayan Mountain Range

- **Nanda Devi**

Length - 7816 metres

Ranked the 23rd highest peak in the world

It is a part of Himalayan mountain ranges (Garhwal)

Nanda Devi National Park situated around the peak has the best high altitude flora and fauna.

- **Kamet Mountain**

Length - 7756 metres

Location - near the Tibetan Plateau

It is located in the Garhwal region

- **SaltoroKangri**

Length - 7742 metres

Location - near the Siachen Region

It is ranked the 31st highest independent peak in the world

It lies in Saltoro range (which is a part of Karakoram Mountain range)

#### **4. China launches 2nd space station module ( July 25, 2022 )**

China launched the second of three modules needed to complete its new space station on July 24 as part of the latest step in the ambitious space program.

##### **Important facts**

- According to the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA), the giant Long March-5B Y3 carrier rocket, Wentian, was successfully launched from the Wenchang spacecraft launch site off the coast of the southern island province of Hainan.
- The new module will serve as a backup to the core module, Tianhe, and as a powerful scientific experiment platform in the space station currently being built by China.
- In the coming weeks, the Wentian will be transformed by a robotic device from a forward docking port to a lateral port, where it will remain and be ready for long-term operation.
- The construction of China's Tiangong space station is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

- This will complete the construction of Tiangong, the space station taking shape in China's space.
- With the establishment of this space station, China will be the third country in the world to have its own space station.

**Tianhe module**

- It was launched in April 2021, and the Mengtian module is set to be launched in October this year.
- About 18 meters (60 ft) long and weighing 22 tons (48,500 lb), the new module has three sleeping areas and space for scientific experiments.
- It will combine with Tiangong's already dispatched modules to shape the space station.

**Tiangong Space Station**

- This is a Chinese space station being built in low Earth orbit between 340 and 450 kilometres above the earth.
- It is part of China's manned space program and is the country's first long-term space station.

**5. Henley Passport Index 2022 ( July 23, 2022 )**

India has been ranked 87 out of the world's 199 most powerful passports in 2022 in the Henley Passport Index 2022 published by immigration consultancy Henley & Partners.

**Important facts**

- The ranking was based on the number of destinations that passport holders can reach without prior visas.

**Countries' performance in the index**

- Japan ranks first among 199 countries. It is followed by Singapore and South Korea.
- Japan's passport allows entry to 193 countries without a prior visa. Singapore and South Korea, on the other hand, allow seamless entry into 192 countries.
- in Asian countries; India, Mauritius and Tajikistan are ranked 87th with hassle-free entry to 67 countries without prior visas.
- China and Bolivia are ranked 69th with their passports allowing access to 80 destinations.
- Bangladesh is ranked 104th.
- With access to 32 destinations, Pakistan has the fourth worst passport in the world.

- Afghan passport holders have access to only 27 countries. Iraqi passport, on the other hand, provides hassle-free entry to 29 countries. These two countries have been placed at the bottom.
- The top 10 countries on the list of the most powerful passports in the world include Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Germany, Spain, Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, Austria and Denmark (in order).

## **6. Russia, Ukraine sign historic grain deal with Turkey ( July 23, 2022 )**

For the first time since the war, Russia and Ukraine signed a historic deal with the United Nations and Turkey on July 22 to restart grain shipments, which could ease the global food crisis.

### **What is the deal about?**

- The agreement has been reached through the mediation of the United Nations and Turkey.
- The aim is to reopen the Black Sea delivery routes that are important for grain exports.
- The deal, agreed through UN and Turkish mediation, establishes secure corridors along which Ukrainian ships can move in and out of three designated Black Sea ports in and around Odessa.
- Both sides also promised not to attack ships en route or outside.

### **What is the grain export deal?**

- The deal provides for the safe passage of ships.
- Ships must undergo inspection to ensure that they are not carrying weapons.
- Ukraine has said that no Russian ships will guard the ships and that there will be no Russian representatives at Ukrainian ports.

### **Significance of the deal**

- It will provide relief to developing countries on the verge of bankruptcy and the most vulnerable on the brink of famine.
- The five-month Russia-Ukraine war has already displaced millions and claimed thousands of lives.
- Huge quantities of wheat and other grain have been blocked by Russian warships and landmines in Ukraine's ports.
- Ukraine is one of the world's biggest exporters of wheat, corn and sunflower oil, but a naval blockade of Russia's ports has halted shipments.
- Ukraine is expected to export 22 million tonnes of grain and other agricultural products that are stuck in Black Sea ports because of the war.

**7. Indian embassy to organise second edition of North-East India Festival in Bangkok ( July 22, 2022 )**

The second edition of the Festival of Northeast India is being organised by the Embassy of India in Bangkok Central World in association with Trend MMS of India from July 29 to July 31, 2022.

**Important facts**

- The first edition of this festival was held in February 2019.
- This has opened up business opportunities for the Indian business community of the North East.
- Trade has got a boost especially in the fields of tourism, agriculture and food processing.
- This year's Northeast India Festival will focus more on promoting trade, investment and tourism.
- In addition, there will be more opportunities for culture, education and people-to-people exchanges.
- The three-day festival will be inaugurated on July 29, 2022.
- Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs will be the Chief Guest for the festival.

**8. Dinesh Gunawardena sworn in as 15th Prime Minister of Sri Lanka ( July 22, 2022 )**

Dinesh Gunawardena was sworn in as the 15th prime minister of Sri Lanka by President Ranil Wickremesinghe on 22 July along with 17 other cabinet ministers.

**Important facts**

- Gunawardena is parliamentarian of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) party.
- Gunawardene was appointed Home Minister by the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in April.
- Gunawardena, 73, earlier served as the foreign minister and education minister for the nation.
- The Sri Lankan economic and political crisis, resulted in economic mismanagement and conflict in Ukraine, sparked months of mass protests and eventually forced then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country.
- Wickremesinghe was elected as the new president of Srilanka on 20 July and was sworn in as Sri Lankan president on 21 July.
- Wickremesinghe declared a state of emergency, demanding a bailout from the International Monetary Fund.

**About Sri Lanka**

- The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is a tropical island nation off the southeast coast of the Indian subcontinent. It is separated from the Indian subcontinent by the Gulf of Munnar and the Palk Strait.
- Capitals: Colombo (Executive and Judicial) and Sri Jayawardenepura (Legislative).
- Official Languages: Sinhala and Tamil
- Currency: Sri Lankan Rupee

**9. Russia resumes Nord Stream natural-gas supply to Europe ( July 22, 2022 )**

Russia has started sending natural gas to Europe via the Nord Stream pipeline system after a pause, bringing relief to Europe, whose economy is wobbly under pressure from short supplies.

**Important facts**

- Germany, which is heavily dependent on Russia's gas, had feared that Moscow would not reopen the pipeline after the scheduled work.
- Germany believes Russia is reducing supplies in retaliation for Western sanctions on the Ukraine war.

**Nord Stream Pipeline**

Nord Stream has two pipelines, each containing two lines.

**1. Nord Stream 1**

It was completed in 2011 and runs from Vyborg in Leningrad (Russia) to Lubmin near Greifswald, Germany.

**1. Nord Stream 2**

In 2015, Russian energy major Gazprom and five other European firms decided to form Nord Stream 2.

It runs from Ust-Luga in Russia to Greifswald in Germany through the Baltic Sea and was completed in September 2021.

It will carry 55 billion cubic metres of gas every year.

Nord Stream 1 and 2 together will supply an aggregate of 110 billion cubic metres of gas to Germany per year.

The pipeline falls in the territory of EU members Germany and Denmark.

In December 2019, work on the project was suspended due to the threat of US sanctions.



In January 2021, the US sanctioned a Russian ship carrying out pipe laying work for the project. An agreement was reached between the US and Germany on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

**Top 5 Natural Gas producing Countries**

1. United States - 914.6 billion Cubic Meters
2. Russia - 638.5 billion Cubic Meters
3. Iran - 250.8 billion Cubic Meters
4. China - 194 billion Cubic Meters
5. Qatar 171.3 billion Cubic Meters

**Top 5 Countries that Consume the Most Natural Gas**

1. United States
2. Russia
3. China
4. Iran
5. Canada

**Top 5 Countries with the Largest Natural Gas Reserves**

1. Russia
2. Iran
3. Qatar
4. Turkmenistan
5. United States

**10. US House approves CAATSA waiver for India ( July 21, 2022 )**

The US House of Representatives passed an amendment, which approves an exemption to India against CAATSA sanctions.

**Important facts**

- This amendment was passed by voice vote.
- This gives India an exemption to purchase S-400 missile defence systems from Russia under CAATSA sanctions.
- America's relaxation is in the direction of countering China.

- The amendment was passed during the floor consideration of the National Defence Authorization Act.

### **CAATSA Amendment**

- The CAATSA amendment was drafted and introduced by Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna.
- The amendment seeks the Joe Biden administration to grant India exemptions under CAATSA to help deter aggressive countries like China.

### **What is CAATSA?**

- CAATSA stands for Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.
- The law authorises the US administration to impose sanctions on countries that buy major defence equipment from Russia.
- The US government is free to take punitive action under CAATSA against countries involved in transactions with the Russian defence and intelligence sectors.