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1. India-Armenia sign MoU on High Impact Community Development Projects (July 5, 2022)

India and Armenia signed a Memorandum of Understanding on high impact community development projects with financial and technical assistance from India in Armenia on 4 July.

- The MoU was signed at the 8th India-Armenia Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical, Cultural and Educational Cooperation (IGC) held in Yerevan.
- The Indian delegation was led by Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs.
- The Armenian delegation was led by the Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan.
- The two sides discussed and reviewed the current status of cooperation in various fields such as trade, investment, health, tourism, infrastructure, culture, connectivity, information technology, agriculture, fintech and education.
- Later Mahatma Gandhi Auditorium was inaugurated at Yerevan State Medical University (VSMU).
- More than 700 students from the Indian community are pursuing medical education at Yerevan State Medical University in Armenia.
- **India-Armenia Intergovernmental Commission (IGC)**
- The 7th IGC was held in April 2016 and the 6th IGC and FOC were held in New Delhi on 25 September 2013.
- **About Armenia**
- It is a landlocked country located in the Armenian Highlands of Western Asia.
- Head Of Government - Prime Minister- Nikol Pashinyan
- Capital - Yerevan
- President - Vahagn Kachaturyan
- Currency - Dram

2. Yair Lapid Officially Becomes New Prime Minister Of Israel (July 4, 2022)

Yer Lapid, the leader of the Yesh Atid party, has been officially elected as the 14th Prime Minister of Israel.

- Lapid's term could be shortened as he is made the head of the caretaker government ahead of the November 1 election.
- Lapid replaces outgoing Prime Minister Naftali Bennett.

- Lapid is an Israeli politician and a former journalist.
- He has also previously served as the alternate Prime Minister of Israel and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2021 to 2022.
- Before joining politics in 2012, Lapid was a writer, TV presenter and news anchor.

- **About Israel**

- Israel is a country located in Southwest Asia. It is located at the eastern end of the Southeast Mediterranean Sea.
- The modern nation of Israel was established in 1948.
- Parliament is elected on the basis of universal suffrage by proportional representation method every four years.
- Israel is considered the most advanced country in Southwest Asia and the Middle East in economic and industrial development.
- Capital- Jerusalem
- President- Isaac Herzog
- Currency- Israeli new shekel

3. QS Best Student Cities Ranking 2023 (July 4, 2022)

QS Best Students City Ranking 2023 was published recently. London is ranked the best city in this ranking.

- The QS ranking has been released for 140 cities across the world.
- London was ranked the best for students looking to study abroad in terms of university standards, affordability and student facilities.
- **Indian city**
- The highest ranked student city of India is Mumbai.
- Globally it is ranked 103rd.
- Bengaluru is at 114th position after Mumbai.
- Chennai and Delhi have made their own entries in the list and are ranked 125th and 129th respectively.
- According to the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) 2018-19, the number of international students enrolled in Indian universities was just 47,427.
- India has set a target of attracting 200,000 international students by 2023, which is four times the current total.

- **world cities rank**

- Seoul and Munich are in second and third place after London.
- Zurich and Melbourne are ranked fourth and fifth.
- Buenos Aires took the top spot in Latin America. It has been ranked 23rd.
- The best student city in the Arab region is Dubai. It is ranked 51st globally.

4. Asia Pacific Sustainability Index 2021 (July 4, 2022)

Recently the Asia Pacific Sustainability Index 2021 was launched by Knight Frank, a global property advisor.

- The index ranks 36 cities on the basis of urbanisation pressure, carbon emissions, climate risk and government initiatives.
- Four Indian cities, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Delhi and Mumbai have been ranked in the top 20 sustainable cities in this index.

• Indian cities rank

- Bangalore ranks first among Indian cities. Whereas it is ranked 14th in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Bengaluru is the only Indian city to have achieved the 'Gold' standard category.
- Bengaluru is followed by Delhi, which is ranked 17th in the Asia Pacific region.
- Hyderabad is ranked 3rd in India and 18th in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Mumbai ranks 4th among Indian cities and 20th in the Asia-Pacific region.

• World cities rank

- Singapore tops this index.
- It is followed by Sydney, Wellington, Perth and Melbourne.

• Green bond in india

- According to the report, there has been an increase of 523% year-on-year in issuance of green bonds in India.
- It was USD 1.1 billion in 2020 and has increased to USD 6.8 billion in 2021.
- Currently, India has become the sixth largest country in the Asia-Pacific region in terms of the total amount of green bonds issued in 2021.

• Green Bonds in the Asia-Pacific Region

- The sector issued USD 126 billion in green bonds in 2021, according to estimates from the Climate Bonds Initiative.
- China issued the largest amount of bonds worth USD 68 billion.

5. India's Participation in Seychelles Independence Day Celebrations (July 4, 2022)

The Indian Navy contingent joined Seychelles Defence Force personnel and Seychelles citizens for the Independence Day celebrations.

- INS Kolkata, an indigenously built stealth guided missile destroyer of the Indian Navy, was deployed at Port Victoria, Seychelles on the occasion of Seychelles Independence Day on 29 Jun 22.
- A marching contingent of Indian Navy personnel accompanied by a musical band participated in the military parade held at the Unity Stadium in Roche Caiman on 3 July.
- The deployment marked the continued participation of the Indian military contingent in the Seychelles National Day since 1976.
- **INS Kolkata**
 - It is a stealth guided missile destroyer.
 - BrahMos missile and Barak 8 missiles were test fired from INS Kolkata in 2015.
 - It was constructed at Mazagon Dock Limited and was handed over to the navy on 10 July 2014 after completing its sea trials.
 - It was officially commissioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a ceremony held on 16 August 2014.
- **Seychelles**
 - It is an island republic in the Western Indian ocean . It is a part of Eastern Africa .
 - Capital : Victoria
 - President : Wavel Ramkalawan
 - Currency : Seychelles rupee

6. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. is sworn in as the Philippines 17th president (July 2, 2022)

Ferdinand Marcos Jr. sworn in as the 17th President of the Philippines.

- Ferdinand Marcos Jr took the oath at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Manila.
- Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will serve as president until 2028.
- Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has replaced Rodrigo Duterte, who served as the President of the Philippines from 2016 to 2022.
- Sara Duterte Carpia has been elected Vice President.

- Marcos Jr. won the presidential election in May with 60 percent of the vote over rival Maria Leonor Robredo.
- The President is the head of the executive branch of the Philippine government. The President is directly elected by the people.
- The term of the President in the Philippine Constitution is six years.

• **About Philippines**

- The Philippines is a country located in Southeast Asia.
- It got complete independence on 4 July 1946 after the Second World War.
- It is the country with the fifth longest coastline in the world.
- The Philippines is the second largest producer of geothermal energy in the world, after the United States.
- Capital - Manila
- Currency - peso

7. Habitat World Cities Report 2022 (July 2, 2022)

Recently the United Nations published its report titled "Habitat World Cities Report 2022".

- The urban population in India is projected to reach 675 million in 2035. This will be the second highest figure after China.
- After the COVID-19 pandemic, the global urban population is on the rise again. This will increase to 2.2 billion by 2050.
- India's urban population is expected to reach 675,456,000 in 2035 as compared to 483,099,000 in 2020.
- The percentage of population in India's urban areas will be 43.2 percent by 2035.

• **Global scenario**

- The urban population in China is projected to reach 1.05 billion in 2035.
- The urban population in Asia will increase to 2.99 billion in 2035.
- In the past two decades, India and China experienced rapid urbanisation and economic growth. As a result, the number of people living in poverty has decreased.
- Large economies like China and India account for the bulk of the world's population. The growth trajectory in these countries has affected global inequality.

• **About United Nations Human Settlement Program (UN-Habitat) -**

- It was established in 1978.

- UN-Habitat is the United Nations agency for human settlements assigned by the United Nations General Assembly the task of promoting socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities towards the goal of providing affordable housing for all.
- Headquarters- Nairobi, Kenya
- Executive Director- Maimunah Mohammad Sharif

8. Russia quits Snake Island (July 1, 2022)

Ukrainian forces have taken control of Snake Island in the Black Sea, which was occupied by Russia at the beginning of the war.

- The quitting of the Russians from the island is a major setback, and possibly undermines their control over shipping routes that are vital to Moscow's strategic objectives.
- Last week Ukraine said it had inflicted "significant damage" on Russia in air strikes on the island.
- Ukraine had claimed the first successful use of Harpoon anti-ship missiles.

• About Snake Island

- It is also known as Zmiinyi Island, Snake or Serpent Island.
- It has a small piece of rock less than 700 metres from, that has been described as being "X-shaped".
- It is located 35 km from the coast in the Black Sea.
- The island is marked on the map as a small village and belongs to Ukraine.
- The island is close to the coast of Romania, with which Ukraine has had a dispute and which was settled in 2009 by the International Court of Justice.
- It drew a new maritime border between the two countries.
- Parts of the Black Sea around Snake Island are believed to have significant oil and gas reserves.
- On 24 February, Russia invaded Ukraine and attacked Snake Island with two modern warships.

• About Black Sea

- It is a marginal sea of the Atlantic Ocean.
- It is located between Eastern Europe and Western Asia.
- It is bound by Ukraine to the north and northwest, Russia and Georgia to the east, Turkey to the south, and Bulgaria and Romania to the west.
- The Black Sea drains into the Mediterranean Sea via the Turkish Straits and the Aegean Sea.

It has traditionally been Russia's warm water gateway to Europe.

9. 'Partners in the Blue Pacific' program launched by US and allies (June 30, 2022)

Recently the US and its allies - Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the United Kingdom have launched a new initiative called 'Partners in the Blue Pacific' for "effective and efficient cooperation" with the small island states of the Blue Pacific region.

- The purpose of the PBP is to promote cooperation in the areas of "climate crisis, connectivity and transport, maritime safety and security, health, prosperity and education".
- **Partners in Blue Pacific (PBP) Initiative:**
- The PBP is an "informal mechanism" of five countries to support the Pacific islands and promote diplomatic, economic ties in the region.
- It focuses on increasing "prosperity, resilience and security" in the Pacific region through closer cooperation.
- That is, through the PBP, these countries together and individually will provide more resources to the Pacific Island countries to counterbalance China's aggressive outreach.
- Former members will "promote Pacific regionalism" and forge strong ties with the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).
- **Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) -**
- The Pacific Islands Forum is the region's premier political and economic policy organisation.
- It was established in 1971.
- It consists of 18 members including Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. countries are included.

10. Establishment of an India Centre to promote India-centric activities in South Korea (June 30, 2022)

The India Centre has been established at Busan University of Foreign Studies, South Korea to promote activities related to India.

- This centre will act as a major organisation for India related programs in Busan.

- It will provide necessary resources for interested students in India and will emphasise on increasing academic and cultural cooperation with Busan University.
- An MoU was also signed on the occasion to promote cooperation in the field of education and cultural exchange between Busan University and the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre in Seoul.
- Busan University of Foreign Studies and Hanuk University of Foreign Studies in South Korea are the two higher educations where Hindi is taught as a full-time subject.
- The Department of Hindi Language was established in 1983 at Busan University of Foreign Studies (BUFS).

- **About South Korea**

- South Korea is a country located in East Asia that is known as the 'Land of Quiet Mornings'.
- The nation's capital, Seoul, is the world's second largest metropolitan area and a major global city.
- North Korea is the only country bordering this country.
- Martial arts Taekwondo originated in Korea.
- President- Yoon Suk-yol
- Currency- South Korean won