

# Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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## **1. Exercise Cold Response of NATO ( March 25, 2022 )**

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is undertaking a large-scale military exercise in Norway code named Cold Response 2022. The military exercise is organised by **Norway** every two years.
- About 30,000 troops from 27 countries from Europe and North America are participating in the exercise which are being held in March and April 2022.
- The exercise assumed significance after the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022.
- The NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has announced that he will visit Norway on 25 March 2022 to witness the exercise just after the NATO, EU, G-7 summit meeting in Brussels on 24 March 2022.

## **Important for Exam**

### **NATO**

It is a military alliance which was set up after the signing of the Washington Treaty on 4 April 1949 in Washington , United States of America.

- It was set up to combat threats from the communist countries led by the Soviet Union in Europe. After the breakup of the Soviet Union ,Russia is considered as the successor state of the Soviet Union and Russia is seen as a threat by NATO.
- Initially there were 12 member countries but at present there are 30 member countries.
- **Headquarters of the NATO : Brussels , Belgium**
- **Member** : Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States.

## **2. G-7,EU,NATO holds emergency meeting on Russia Ukraine Conflict ( March 25, 2022 )**

In an unprecedented move the Western countries leader held an extraordinary summit meeting in Brussels, Belgium on 24 March 2022 to put pressure on the Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war in Ukraine.

- The Group of 7 or G-7 ,European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO ) was held back to back on 24 March 2022.
- The three back to back summit meeting which was attended by the President of Joe Biden is an attempt by the western countries to show solidarity to Ukraine and to present a united stand against Russia.

## **Highlights of the meeting**

- NATO leaders agreed to help Ukraine protect itself against any chemical, biological or nuclear attacks by Russia.
- NATO, which has already increased its troop deployment to 40,000 along the eastern border of Russia from the Baltic to the Black Sea, has agreed to set up new combat units in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Slovakia.
- The alliance also warned China not to support Russia's war effort or to take any actions that will help Russia circumvent the western sanctions on Russia.
- NATO turned down Ukrainian requests to defend Ukraine's skies by imposing a no-fly zone and said again, it will not send troops to Ukraine for fear of being dragged into a full-on military confrontation with nuclear-armed Russia.

## **EU Meeting**

- At the European Union summit meeting, the United States promised to supply the EU with 15 billion cubic metres more of liquefied natural gas this year than had been planned before so as to curb the European bloc's reliance on Russian gas.
- Russia supplies 40% of the EU's gas needs and more than a quarter of its oil imports. Those most dependent on this supply - in particular Germany - are reluctant to take a step that would have a major economic impact.

President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy also addressed the leaders via videoconference.

Russia does not want Ukraine to become a member of either the European Union or NATO. It fears if Ukraine joins these western blocs then the security of Russia will be compromised.

## **Important for Exam**

### **European Union**

- It is a political and Economic group of 27 European countries .
- The European Economic Community was launched in 1957 and it became the European Union in 1993 with the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty.
- Member countries of EU : Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

### **Headquarters of the European Union : Brussels**

### **G-7 or Group of Seven countries**

The G7 (Group of Seven) is an organisation of the world's seven largest advanced economies, which dominate global trade and the international financial system.

- They are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

- Russia joined in 1998, creating the G8, but was excluded in 2014 for its annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine .
- It has no permanent secretariat .
- The 2021 summit meeting was held in England
- The 2022 summit meeting will be held in Germany .

### **3. Danish Siddiqui families files case against Taliban in International Criminal Court ( March 23, 2022 )**

The family of the slain Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui has filed a case against the Taliban in the International Criminal Court (ICC) pleading for an investigation into the circumstances leading to his death in Afghanistan on 16 July 2021.

The family is seeking legal action against high level Taliban leaders and commanders accusing them of torturing and killing Siddiqui because he was an Indian.

Danish Siddiqui was a Pulitzer prize winning journalist working for Reuters news agency in Afghanistan. He was killed when Taliban attacked the Afghan special forces with which Danish was travelling in Kandahar province's Spin Boldak district, a town near Afghanistan Pakistan Border.

Taliban has denied that it tortured and killed Danish Siddiqui.

The International Criminal Court has been engaged in an ongoing investigation on international crimes, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, in Afghanistan, over which it has jurisdiction after Afghanistan's government acceded to the Rome treaty 1998.

### **India is not a member of the International Criminal Court.**

#### **International Criminal Court(ICC)**

It was set up in July 2002 under the Rome treaty of 1998.

- It is the only permanent court to prosecute persons for crimes **against humanity, genocide, war crimes and crimes of aggression.**
- At present 123 countries are its members. The United States, China, and Israel are not its members.
- The court's jurisdiction extends to offences that occurred after July 1, 2002, that were committed either in a state that has ratified the agreement or by a national of such a state or the case which was referred to it by the United Nations Security Council.
- The Headquarters of ICC: **The Hague, Netherlands**
- ICC is different from the International Court of Justice (ICJ). ICJ is a United Nations court which hears disputes involving the member states of the United Nations.

### **4. 2nd India Australia Virtual Summit Meeting held ( March 22, 2022 )**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and **Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Scott Morrison** held the 2nd India-Australia virtual summit on 21 March 2022. The first virtual summit meeting was held in June 2020.

- Prime Minister Modi thanked Mr. Scott Morrison for the special gesture in returning 29 ancient artefacts to India. These artefacts comprise sculptures, paintings and photographs, across centuries, some dating back to the 9th-10th century, from different parts of India.
- The artefacts include 12th century Chola bronzes, 11th-12th century Jain sculptures from Rajasthan, 12th-13th century sandstone Goddess Mahishasura Mardini from Gujarat, 18th-19th century paintings and early gelatin silver photographs.

## **Australia**

- It is the smallest continent by area on Earth after Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Antarctica, Europe and Australia.
- It is the 6th largest country in the world after Russia, Canada, China, United States, and Brazil.
- Australia has been called “the Oldest Continent,” “the Last of Lands,” and “the Last Frontier.”
- Its unique flora and fauna include the only egg-laying mammals on Earth, the Platypus and Echidna. It is also famous for its Kangaroos, Koala bears.
- It is the second driest continent after Antarctica.
- Its highest peak, Mount Kosciuszko, rises to only 7,310 feet (2,228 meters).

Its Capital : **Canberra**

Currency : **Australian Dollar**

Prime Minister : **Scott Morrison**

**The United Kingdom Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of the State of Australia.**

## **5. Major Plane Crash in China, all 132 passenger feared dead ( March 22, 2022 )**

132 people on board a Eastern China Airlines are feared dead in a plane crash on 21 March 2022. It is the worst air disaster in China since 2010.

The Boeing 737-800 plane took off from Kunming, capital of the southwestern province of Yunnan, to the port city of Guangzhou before it crashed in the mountains of southern Guangxi.

- The regulator of the civil aviation sector in India, Director General Civil Aviation(DGCA) has put Boeing 737s in the country under “enhanced surveillance” after an aircraft of the same model crashed in China.
- This means that DGCA will deploy its teams to monitor flight procedures, airworthiness and operations of these planes in India. Three airlines, Vistara, SpiceJet and Air India

Express, have Boeing 737s on their fleet. There are a total 64 of these planes in the country.

- Boeing is an American company which manufactures planes for civilian and military purposes.

## **6. World's Longest suspension bridge inaugurated in Turkey ( March 21, 2022 )**

The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan inaugurated the world's largest suspension bridge on 18 March 2022 across **Dardanelles Strait** in northwestern Turkey - which cuts travel time between Asia and Europe to six minutes.

- The 1915 Canakkale Bridge was built by Turkish and South Korean firms with an investment of 2.5 billion euros (\$2.8 billion), connecting Turkey's European and Asian shores.
- The 2,023 metre length of its midspan (distance between the two towers) is an allusion to the Turkish Republic's 100th anniversary in 2023.
- Its towers are 318 metres (347.8 yards) high and the total length of the bridge is 4.6 km (2.9 miles) including the approach viaducts.
- Now the second longest suspension bridge in the world is Japan's Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, which has a 1,992-m-long main span.
- Ambassador Bridge on the river Detroit, which connects Canada and the United States of America is the International suspension bridge in the world.

### **Important for Exam**

#### **Dardanelles Strait**

It links the Aegean sea with the sea of Marmara .

The Strait is a narrow body of water which connects two large bodies of water .

Dardanelles strait is one of the narrowest international straits and it separates Asian Turkey from European Turkey.

**Turkey lies partly in Asia and partly in Europe .**

**It's currency : Turkish Lira**

**Capital : Ankara**

**President : Tayyip Erdogan**

## **7. Russia uses Hypersonic Missile In Ukraine ( March 21, 2022 )**

Russia said on 19 March 2022 that it had used hypersonic Kinzhal (Kh-47M2) missiles to destroy a large weapons depot in Ukraine's western Ivano-Frankivsk region.

It was the first time Russia had deployed the hypersonic Kinzhal system since it sent its troops into Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

The Kinzhal missile can be fired from Mig-31 fighter aircraft. The missile can carry both conventional warheads or nuclear weapons.

### **Hypersonic Missile**

- Hypersonic missiles are those missiles which can fly five times the speed of sound in the upper atmosphere or about 6,200 km per hour.
- The main feature of the missile is its manoeuvrability which makes its detection by radar very difficult.
- At present China has tested the missile and North Korea has also claimed to have tested it. The United States of America do not have these types of missiles.

Defence and Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is also working on developing this technology in India. In 2020 it successfully conducted the maiden test of the High-Speed Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) using an indigenously developed propulsion system.

### **8. 14th India-Japan Annual Summit held in New Delhi ( March 21, 2022 )**

The 14th India-Japan annual summit meeting was held in New Delhi on 19 March 2022. The Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Kishida Fumio visited India on 19 and 20th for a two day bilateral meeting with the Indian prime Minister Narendra Modi. Both the leader issued a joint statement titled “**Joint Statement Partnership for a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous Post-COVID World**”.

- This was the first visit of Mr. Kishida Fumio as a Japanese Prime Minister to India . He visited India as a foreign minister earlier.
- The Summit between the Indian and Japanese PMs is taking place three and a half years after the last Summit in Japan in 2018.
- This year also marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of India-Japan diplomatic relations (28 April 1952).

### **Highlights of the Visit**

- Japan will invest \$42 billion (Rs 3.2lakh crore )in India in the next five years.
- Six agreements on cooperation between the countries were signed. These agreements are on cybersecurity, economic partnerships, waste-water management, urban development, a clean energy partnership and an agreement on promoting bamboo-based products from the northeast region.
- The Japanese Prime Minister Invited the Indian Prime Minister for the QUAD summit 2022 meeting to be held in Japan.
- There was no agreement on Russian invasion of Ukraine. While the Japanese government has consistently criticised the Russian Invasion of Ukraine and imposed sanctions on Russia, India has refrained from criticising Russian and has also abstained on any UN resolution criticising Russia.

**Importance of Japan for India**

- Japan is the fifth largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India after Singapore, USA, Mauritius, Netherlands (April 2014 to August 2021).
- It has invested \$36.2 billion in India since 2000.
- Japan is the largest provider of assistance to India amongst all countries.
- There are 1,455 Japanese companies in India. Eleven Japan Industrial Townships (JIT) have been established, with Neemrana in Rajasthan and Sri City in Andhra Pradesh having the maximum number of companies.
- Japan is helping in setting up a High Speed Rail corridor between Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

**Fact File Japan**

- Japan is also called as Nihon or Nippon
- It is an archipelago in the western pacific ocean in East Asia.
- It is composed of four main islands Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. Honshu is the largest island of Japan.
- It is separated from the Asian mainland by the Sea of Japan.
- Its highest mountain is Mount Fuji.
- It is the third largest economy in the world after the United States and China.
- It is the only country in the world where atom bomb was dropped. In 1945 the U.S. dropped atomic bomb on Hiroshima on 6 August (bomb name Little Boy) and Nagasaki on 9 August (Bomb name Fat Man).

The capital of Japan : **Tokyo**

Currency of Japan : **Yen**

**9. Finland is the Happiest country in the world ( March 19, 2022 )**

For the fifth year in a row, Finland is the world's happiest country, according to the World Happiness Report 2022, of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

**Denmark was ranked 2nd followed by Iceland, Switzerland and the Netherlands.**

**India was ranked 136 in 2022 as compared to 139 in 2021.**

Afghanistan was ranked the most unhappy country in the world and was ranked at the bottom 146th .

The World Happiness Report is released by the United Nation Sustainable Development Solutions Network. It ranks the countries on the basis of:

- healthy life expectancy;
- GDP per capita;
- social support in times of trouble,;
- low corruption and high social trust;
- generosity in a community where people look after each other and
- freedom to make key life decisions.

**The first World Happiness report was released in 2012.**

**UN Sustainable Sustainable Development Solutions Network**

It is a non-profit organisation set up by the United Nation in 2012.

Its Headquarters : New York, United States of America.

**Factfile Finland**

**Finland is located in Northern Europe .**

**Capital** : Helsinki

**Currency** : Euro

**Prime Minister** : Sanna Marin

**Nokia company is from Finland**

**10. India to provide fresh \$1 billion line of credit to Sri Lanka ( March 19, 2022 )**

The Government of India has agreed to provide another **USD 1 billion** line of credit to Sri Lanka. An agreement was signed between the **State Bank of India and Sri Lankan government** on 17 March during the visit of the Sri Lankan finance minister's **Basil Rajapakse to India.**

- The loan has been given to Sri Lanka to buy **food, medicine and other essential items.**
- This is the second visit of the Sri Lanka Finance minister's Basil Rajapakse who is the brother of the Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapakse and the Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse, since December 2021.
- Sri Lanka's economy is facing a huge economic crisis and ever increasing foreign debt. It has to repay USD 7 billion of foreign loans this year and it is facing an unprecedented food and fuel shortage. It is dependent on imported food and fuel and it has almost no foreign exchange reserves to buy food or fuel. Almost 10% of its external debt is to China.



- The main source of foreign exchange earner for the Sri Lankan economy is tourism. Due to covid situation there has been no flow of international tourists to Sri Lanka in the past two years.

### **Helping Hand of India**

The government of India has provided loans to Sri Lanka to deal with its economic crisis, under its neighbourhood first policy. During Basil Rajapakse's visit to India on December 21, India agreed to help Sri Lanka under its neighbourhood policy. The decision included a four pillar initiative to help Sri Lanka.

### **The four pillar initiative comprises-**

- India will provide loans to Sri Lanka to enable it to purchase food, medicines and fuel from India.
- A **currency swap agreement** to deal with **Sri Lanka's balance of payment issues**,
- An “early” modernisation project of the **Trincomalee oil farms** that India has been pursuing for several years, and
- Sri Lankan commitment to facilitate Indian investments in various sectors

Excluding this loan amount of USD 1 billion, India has provided USD 1.4 billion support to Sri Lanka in 2022. It has provided USD 500 million for import of fuels, deferred repayment of USD 500 billion debt repayment and extended a \$400-million RBI currency swap facility.

### **Fact File Sri Lanka**

- Officially it is called the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka .
- It is a country in the Indian Ocean and is separated from India by the Palk Strait.
- It was called Serendib by the Arabs and the Europeans called it Ceylon .
- It officially became Sri Lanka in 1972.
- It became independent in 1948 from Britain.

**Capital** : Sri Jayewardenepura

**President** : Mahinda Rajapakse

**Currency** : Sri Lankan Rupee