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1. 43rd ASEAN Summit to begin in Jakarta on September 5 (Sept. 4, 2023)

The 43rd ASEAN Summit is scheduled to be held in Jakarta from September 5 to 7.

An Overview of the News

- This summit is taking place in the context of increased tension in the South China Sea. Some ASEAN member countries have expressed protest over China's recent release of a new map claiming disputed areas.
- **Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong** will lead a delegation to the summit.
- During the summit, ASEAN leaders will also discuss the crisis in Myanmar among other pressing regional issues.
- Singapore's Prime Minister's Office issued a statement emphasizing that ASEAN leaders will focus on strategies to maintain the bloc's relevance and central role in the emerging regional landscape.
- The leaders will also discuss strengthening ASEAN integration and enhancing cooperation in key areas such as the digital and green economy.

About ASEAN

- ASEAN was officially **established on August 8, 1967**, through the signing of the ASEAN Declaration by the **foreign ministers of five countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.**
- Brunei Darussalam joined ASEAN on 7 January 1984.
- Vietnam became a member on 28 July 1995.
- Lao PDR and Myanmar joined on 23 July 1997.
- Cambodia became a member on 30 April 1999.
- ASEAN currently consists of ten member states.

2. India and ASEAN Conference on Traditional Medicines in New Delhi (July 21, 2023)

Association-of-Southeast-Asian-Nations-(ASEAN)

The Ministry of **AYUSH in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs** and the **Indian Mission in ASEAN** organized a conference of India and the **Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)** on **Traditional Medicines** in **New Delhi** on 20 July 2023.

An Overview of the news:

- Re-held a decade later, the conference pledged to strengthen sustainable and resilient health care systems to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and universal health coverage.

A total of 75 delegates included:

- A total of 75 delegates from India and ASEAN including two ASEAN countries participated in the conference through virtual mode.
- The Conference on Traditional Medicine between India and ASEAN countries provides a platform to deliberate on various dimensions of traditional systems of medicine to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and strategize on ways and means to take forward traditional systems of medicine.

Emphasis on Act East Policy:

- India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the 'Act East Policy' at the 12th ASEAN India Summit in Myanmar in November 2014, giving a new impetus to the strategic partnership. The Act-East policy emphasizes connectivity, commerce and culture.
- ASEAN Secretary-General **Dr. Cao Kim Horn** highlighted three key points that reflect the synergy between ASEAN and India, covering various aspects, including cooperation on public health through traditional and complementary medicines.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

- It was established to accelerate economic development, social progress and cultural development for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian countries.
- **Origin:** Established in 1967 with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration).
- **ASEAN Day:** 8 August.
- **Founding countries:** Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- **Motto:** 'One Vision, One Identity, One Community'.
- **Secretariat:** Jakarta, Indonesia.
- **Member States:** 10 (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia).
- India and ASEAN celebrated the 30th anniversary of their dialogue relations.

3. India to host ASEAN countries conference on traditional medicines (July 13, 2023)

India-to-host-ASEAN-countries-conference-on-traditional-medicines

The Ministry of AYUSH in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Mission to ASEAN and ASEAN Secretariat, is organizing a Conference on Traditional Medicines for ASEAN Countries on 20th July, 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The aim of the conference is **to strengthen cooperation and knowledge sharing between India and ASEAN countries in the field of traditional medicines.**

- **The "Act East Policy"** launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a new impetus to the strategic partnership between India and ASEAN.

Growth and Achievements of Ministry of AYUSH:

- The Ministry of AYUSH has seen significant growth since it became an independent ministry in 2014.
- Collaboration with international organizations and national institutions has allowed high-quality research on AYUSH systems in various health conditions, including non-communicable diseases such as diabetes mellitus, cancer, mental health, and infectious diseases such as COVID-19.
- The ASEAN conference will serve as a platform for sharing research results and experiences in the field of traditional medicine.

Conference Goals:

- To facilitate exchange of best practices and recent developments in the regulatory framework for the promotion of traditional medicine in ASEAN member countries.
- Strengthening international cooperation in AYUSH through collaboration and establishment of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ASEAN countries and other countries.

Participant Details:

- A total of 75 participants will participate in the conference, including international delegates from eight ASEAN countries and two international delegates participating virtually.
- Delegates will brainstorm and share ideas on traditional medicine during the one-day conference held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

About Ministry of AYUSH

- It is a **government ministry in India.**
- It is responsible for **the development, promotion and regulation of traditional systems of medicine.**
- AYUSH is the abbreviation of **Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Society** and aims **to promote education and research of the above.**
- The ministry provides educational and training programs.

Establishment - **2014**

Responsible Ministers - **Sarbananda Sonowal, Cabinet Minister and Mahendra Munjapara, Minister of State**

Ministry Executive - **Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary**

Ministry of Motherhood - **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India**

4. 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana' as a 'God Bharai' ceremony in Rajasthan (June 13, 2023)

'Pradhan-Mantri-Matru-Vandana-Yojana'-

According to **Jaskaur Meena**, MP from Dausa, Rajasthan, people in Dausa, Rajasthan celebrate '**Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana**' as a '**God Bharai**' (**Baby Shower**) ceremony.

An Overview of the News:

- In this ceremony all the pregnant women of the area come together and they are provided with 'nutritional kits' for the health of their babies.
- According to MP Jaskaur Meena, about 3.5 lakh women have benefited from this scheme during 2022-23 only in Rajasthan.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has appreciated the new initiative of celebrating 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana' as a 'baby shower' ceremony in Dausa, Rajasthan.
- This unique initiative of Dausa will give new energy to 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana'. This initiative will ensure the health security of not only the mothers but also the babies.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY):

- PMMVY was launched on January 1, 2017 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- This scheme, run by the Union Ministry of Child Development, was done for the welfare of pregnant and lactating women across the country.
- Under this, cash benefits are provided to pregnant women directly into their bank accounts to meet increased nutritional requirements and partially compensate for wage loss.
- All pregnant women and lactating mothers who are in regular employment under the Central Government or State Governments or Public Undertakings or who are in receipt of similar benefits under any law.
- Under this, **five thousand rupees** are given to all the eligible beneficiaries in three installments and the remaining amount of one thousand rupees is given after institutional delivery as per the conditions of maternity benefit under **Janani Suraksha Yojana**.
- Thus on an average a woman is given **Rs.6000**.

Rajasthan:

- Capital: **Jaipur**
- Governor: **Kalraj Mishra**
- Chief Minister: **Ashok Gehlot**
- Number of seats in the Legislative Assembly: **200**
- Number of seats in Lok Sabha: **25**
- Number of seats in Rajya Sabha: **10**

5. India, Vietnam hold 3rd Maritime Security Dialogue (June 1, 2023)

India and Vietnamese officials held the **third Maritime Security Dialogue** in New Delhi on 31st May.

An overview of the news

- Both sides discussed ways to better maintain the marine environment which is helpful for the **inclusive development** of both the countries.
- Senior officials from ministries and services dealing with **maritime affairs participated in the dialogue.**
- The two sides also reviewed initiatives for maritime cooperation and ways to strengthen international and regional mechanisms for comprehensive maritime security.
- The **second India-Vietnam Maritime Security Dialogue** was to be held in virtual format in **April 2021** after the **first round was held in Hanoi in March 2019.**

India, Vietnam Relation

- Vietnam has become an important partner in **India's Act East policy** and the **Indo-Pacific vision** as both countries have disputes with China.
- Vietnam is involved in a dispute with China on the **South China Sea Island**. China claims nearly all of the disputed South China Sea islands, though **Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam** all claim parts of it. Beijing has built artificial islands and military installations in the South China Sea.
- India favours free and open navigation right in the South China Sea which is threatened by China.
- India has oil exploration projects in the **Vietnamese waters** in the South China Sea. India and Vietnam are boosting their maritime security cooperation in the last few years to protect common interests.
- **In 2016**, during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Vietnam, the bilateral relations were further elevated to a "**comprehensive strategic partnership**".
- India and Vietnam signed an important **Joint Vision Statement on defence partnership** during the visit of the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to Vietnam on 8 June 2022.
- During the defence minister's visit India provided a **\$500 million defence loan to Vietnam.**

About Vietnam

- It lies in **South East Asia** and it is a member of **Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN)**
- Prime Minister: **Pham Minh Chinh**

- Capital: **Hanoi**
- President: **Vo Van Thuong**
- Currency: **Dong**

6. Maiden ASEAN-India Maritime exercise begins in Singapore (May 2, 2023)

Maiden ASEAN-India Maritime exercise begins in Singapore

The first ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise (AIME-2023) began on 2 May in Singapore.

An overview of the news

- The maiden exercise is being conducted **off the coast of Singapore**.
- It aims **to enhance interoperability and exchange of best practices** among the participating navies.
- **INS Satpura and INS Delhi**, accompanied by RADM Gurcharan Singh, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, have reached Singapore to participate in the exercise.
- AIME 2023 will provide an opportunity for **Indian Navy and ASEAN navies** to work together closely and conduct seamless operations in the maritime domain.
- Indian Navy ships will also participate in the **International Maritime Security Conference (IMSC)** and the **International Maritime Defense Exhibition (IMDEX-23)**.
- The Philippine Navy has deployed its **missile frigate BRP Antonio Luna (FF-151)** with a 140-man crew of Naval Task Group 80.5 onboard in the exercise.

Phase of the exercise

- **Harbour Phase** - to be conducted at Changi Naval Base.
- **Sea Phase** - to be conducted in the South China Sea.

INS Delhi and INS Satpura

- **INS Delhi** is **India's first indigenously-built guided missile destroyer**.
- **INS Satpura**, is an **indigenously built guided missile stealth frigate** and are fitted with **state-of-the art weapons and sensors**.
- Both are part of the **Eastern Fleet based at Visakhapatnam** and are under the operational command of the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command.

7. 8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue (April 20, 2023)

8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue

The **8th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue** was held in **Bangkok on 20th April**.

An overview of the news

- The meeting was co-chaired by **Nivedita Shukla**, Special Secretary in the Ministry of Defense and **General Nuchit Sribunsong**, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Defense of Thailand.
- They reviewed defence cooperation between the two countries and explored **new initiatives to further strengthen bilateral ties**.
- The two sides also exchanged views on regional and global issues of common interest.
- India and Thailand share a **strategic partnership and defense** is a major pillar of this cooperation.

India-Thailand relations

- India and Thailand share a maritime boundary in the **Andaman Sea**.
- Thailand was one of the first countries to establish **diplomatic relations with India in 1947**.
- Since 2001, **India-Thailand economic and commercial relations** have grown significantly.
- India and Thailand have been cooperating in various multilateral fora such as **ASEAN and BIMSTEC**, a sub-regional grouping consisting of Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan.
- India is a member of the **Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)** initiated by Thailand in 2002 and the **Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC)** grouping of six countries.
- The **India-AESAN Agreement on Trade in Goods** was implemented in January 2010.
- Since 2015, India has been participating in the largest Asia Pacific military exercise **X-Cobra Gold**.
- Exercise **MAITREE (Army)** and exercise **SIAM BHARAT (Air Force)** are Bilateral exercises between both countries.

About Thailand

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

8. Pranav Haridasan appointed as new MD & CEO of Axis Securities (March 30, 2023)

Pranav Haridasan appointed as new MD & CEO of Axis Securities

Pranav Haridasan has been appointed as the **new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Axis Securities for the next three years.**

An Overview of the News

- **B Gopakumar**, currently **MD & CEO of Axis Securities**, has been transferred to **Axis Asset Management Company as MD & CEO.**
- **Pranav Haridasan** is currently serving as the **Managing Director and Co-Head of Equity at Axis Capital.**
- Pranav Haridasan has over **20 years of experience** in financial markets, having served as Citigroup Director Global Markets and Head of India/ASEAN Execution Services prior to joining Axis Capital.
- Axis Securities is a **subsidiary of Axis Bank** which operates retail broking services through Axis Direct.
- Axis Capital provides **investment banking and institutional equity services.**

About Axis Bank

- It is a **leading private sector bank in India.**
- It was **established in 1993** as UTI Bank, and later renamed as **Axis Bank in 2007.** The **headquarter** of this bank is located in **Mumbai, Maharashtra.**
- It provides **personal banking, corporate banking and international banking services** and this bank is focusing on digitization and innovation to improve its services.
- It has launched digital initiatives such as **Axis Mobile App and Axis Direct for online trading.**
- Axis Bank is involved in several **Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives** through the Axis Bank Foundation.
- **Amitabh Choudhary** is the MD and CEO of Axis Bank.

9. Vo Van Thuong elected as new President of Vietnam (March 3, 2023)

Vo Van Thuong, a member of the Politburo of the **Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV)**, was elected as the **country's new President** by the National Assembly of Vietnam.

Overview of the news

- Thuong's election came after the sudden resignation of the previous president, **Nguyen Xuan Phuc**.
- Thuong is the youngest member of the party's Politburo, the country's top decision-making body.

About Vo Van Thuong

- Thuong began his political career in **1993**.
- In 2003, Thuong became secretary of the Communist Youth Union of **Ho Chi Minh City**.
- Thuong was elected as a member of the **SPV Central Committee** for the third time in 2021 and became a member of the Politburo for the second time.

About Vietnam

- It lies in **South East Asia** and it is a member of **Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN)**
- Capital: **Hanoi**
- Currency: **Dong**
- President: **Vo Van Thuong**

10. For the first time, Indian submarine INS Sindhukesari docks Indonesia amid South China Sea conflict (Feb. 25, 2023)

Indian submarine **INS SindhuKesari** docks **Jakarta, Indonesia** for the first time amid the conflict between **China and Indonesia in the South China Sea**.

An overview of the news

- Indonesia is among the countries embroiled in a naval dispute with **Beijing in the South China Sea**.
- It is about strengthening the **maritime partnership between India and Indonesia** towards a secure Indo-Pacific.
- Indian warships frequently visit Indonesia and other ASEAN countries. This is the first time the submarine has been deployed for long distances.
- Under the rule of Xi Jinping, China is trying to **expand its territory by making incursions into its neighbouring countries**.
- On the land border, China is trying to enter **Indian as well as Bhutanese territories**.
- This maiden long-range deployment of a submarine also underlines the operational capability and reach of the **country's underwater warfare arm**.

- INS Sindhukesari is the **3,000-tonne diesel-electric submarine**.