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1. 4th India-CARICOM Ministerial meeting (April 22, 2023)

4th India-CARICOM Ministerial meeting

External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** co-chaired the **4th India-CARICOM ministerial meeting in Guyana's capital of Georgetown** on 22nd April.

An overview of the news

- S Jaishankar co-chaired the meeting with his **Jamaican counterpart Kaminaj Smith**.
- Both leaders discussed a range of issues, including **trade, climate change and counterterrorism**.
- During the bilateral meetings, the minister spoke on various issues including **cooperation, trade, climate change, digital transformation, health domain, agriculture and expansion of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.
- The Minister also met the **Bahamas Parliamentary Secretary Jamahl Strachan**, an Indian alumnus and discussed the International Solar Alliance (ISA), **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) as well as UNSC reforms**.
- Jaishankar began his nine-day trip to **Guyana, Panama, Colombia and the Dominican Republic** on 21st April by meeting his counterpart from **Surinam Albert Ramdin**.

What is CARICOM (Caribbean Community and Commons Market)?

- CARICOM is an **intergovernmental organisation** that is a **political and economic union of 15 member states** throughout the **Americas and the Atlantic Ocean**.
- Its main purposes are to **promote economic integration and cooperation** among its members, to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably shared, and to coordinate foreign policy.
- It was **established in 1973** by the Treaty of Chaguaramas.

About Guyana

Prime Minister: **Mark Phillips**

President: **Mohamed Irfaan Ali**

Capital: **Georgetown**

Currency : **Guyanese dollar (G\$)**

2. G20 meeting of chief agricultural scientists begins in Varanasi (April 17, 2023)

G20 meeting of chief agricultural scientists begins in Varanasi

The **G20 Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists (MACS)** began on 17 April in **Varanasi**.

An overview of the news

- The three-day meet is being organized by the **Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE)** and the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- The theme of the meeting is “**Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems for Healthy People and the Planet.**”
- Around **80 foreign delegates from G20 member states** are participating in the event.
- Director General of Indian Council of Agricultural Research **Dr. Himanshu Pathak** told that this is the 100th event related to G20.
- The discussions covered various issues of agricultural research and development including food security and nutrition, climate smart agriculture, digital agriculture, public private partnership etc.

Invited guest countries

- Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain, UAE, Vietnam and international bodies like United Nations, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Health Organization will participate in the meeting.
- International Solar Alliance, CDR and Asian Development Bank will also be participating as special invitees in the three-day meeting.

Millets and other Ancient Grains International Research Initiative (MAHARISHI)

- This initiative is also proposed for discussion as a **G20 initiative during India's chairmanship**.
- MAHARISHI aims to advance research collaboration and create awareness about millets and other ancient grains during the International Years of 2023 and beyond.

About the G20

- It is an **international forum** of the **world's leading economies established in 1999**.
- Its primary objective is to promote **international financial stability and sustainable economic growth**.
- The G20 serves as a forum to discuss and coordinate policies related to a wide range of economic and financial issues such as **trade, investment, employment, energy and climate change**.

3. India, Netherlands hold first Ministerial-level meeting of Joint Working Group (April 4, 2023)

1st Ministerial-level meeting of the Joint Working Group between India and the Netherlands
The **1st Ministerial-level meeting of the Joint Working Group** between **India and the Netherlands** was held on 3 April in New Delhi.

An overview of the news

- The meeting was held in the presence of Union Jal Shakti Minister **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** and Minister for Infrastructure and Water Management, Government of the Netherlands, **Mark Harbours**.
- The '**Strategic Water Partnership**' was launched during a virtual meeting between the Prime Ministers of India and the Netherlands in April 2021.
- The partnership provides the necessary impetus to expand bilateral water cooperation.
- The Netherlands is associated with various states and municipalities, including **Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Punjab, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Maharashtra**, in various water resources projects.
- River-city alliance between the two countries for river-sensitive cities and technologically driven nature-based solutions for river rejuvenation.

India-Netherlands Relations

- **India and the Netherlands** enjoy long-standing warm and friendly relations based on shared values of democracy, rule of law, human rights and historical bonds of friendship.
- Both countries share **common ideals of democracy, pluralism and rule of law**.
- Bilateral relations have been marked by strong economic and commercial ties.
- The Netherlands signed the **Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)** and became the **64th signatory member** country.
- There are over **200 Indian companies** operating in the Netherlands.
- The total bilateral trade stood at **US\$ 6.28 billion in the financial year 2018-2019**.
- The Netherlands was India's fourth largest trading partner in the European Union after Britain, Germany and Belgium.

About Netherlands

- The Netherlands, also known as **Holland**, is a country located in northwestern Europe.
- Monarch: **King Willem-Alexander**
- Prime Minister: **Mark Rutte**

- Capital: **Amsterdam**
- Currency: **euro**

4. The first meeting of the G-20 Energy Transition Working Group under the chairmanship of India will be held in Bengaluru from 5 to 7 February. An overview of the news Representatives of G-20 countries and guest countries will be part of the working gr (Feb. 4, 2023)

The **first meeting of the G-20 Energy Transition Working Group** under the chairmanship of India will be held in **Bengaluru** from 5 to 7 February.

An overview of the news

- Representatives of **G-20 countries and guest countries** will be part of the working group.
- In addition, representatives of major international organizations such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the United National Development Program, the International Energy Agency, the Clean Energy Ministerial, and the International Solar Alliance will participate in the meeting.
- The delegates will visit the **Infosys Green Building Campus in Bengaluru** and the **Mega Solar Park in Pavagada** as evidence of efforts to mitigate climate change.

Topics of discussion

- Technology gaps in energy transition,
- Low-cost financing for energy transition,
- Energy security and diversified supply chain,
- Industrial carbon transition
- Fuel for the future
- A roadmap for doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency by 2030,
- An action plan for enhancing and promoting bio-energy cooperation,
- Recommendations on global best practices for supporting affordable, and inclusive energy transitions

Planned Energy Transition Ministerial Meeting (ETMM)

- To set the agenda and identify action areas, the ETWG will hold three working group meetings in **Gandhinagar** (April), **Mumbai** (May), and **Goa** (July).

5. India welcomes Congo into International Solar Alliance (Feb. 3, 2023)

India welcomes Congo into International Solar Alliance

India has welcomed **Congo** into the International Solar Alliance.

An overview of the news

- According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the **International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement** was signed by **Raymond Serge Bell**, Ambassador of the Republic of Congo in the presence of Joint Secretary (Economic Diplomacy).

International Solar Alliance

- It is a treaty-based **intergovernmental organization** whose primary function is to promote solar development by reducing the cost of financing and technology.
- It is the nodal agency to implement '**One Sun, One World, One Grid**'.
- It aims to transfer the solar energy generated in a specific region to meet the electricity demand of another region.
- It was launched by the Prime Minister of India and the President of France on **30 November 2015** at the Conference of the **Parties (COP-21)** to the UNFCCC in **France (Paris)** along with 121 solar resource rich nations.
- Its key objectives include achieving a global potential of over **1000 GW** of solar power generation capacity and mobilising about \$1000 billion to invest in solar energy by 2030.
- Member-**113 countries** have signed this Framework Agreement. 86 out of 106 countries have signed and ratified this Framework Agreement.
- Headquarters - **Gurugram, India**

Democratic Republic of Congo

- It is located in **Central Africa**. It is the second largest country in Africa after **Algeria**.
- Capital : **Kinshasa**. It is on the bank of **River Congo**.
- Congo is the only river in the world to cross the **equator twice**.
- Currency : **Congo franc**

6. India, Cyprus signs three agreement during S. Jaishankar visits to Nicosia (Dec. 29, 2022)

Nicosia on 29 December 2022. This is the first visit of S. Jaishankar to Cyprus.

External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** who is on a three day visit (29-31 December 2022) to Cyprus signed a number of agreements with his Cypriot counterpart **Ioannis Kasoulides** in the capital **Nicosia** on 29 December 2022. This is the first visit of S. Jaishankar to Cyprus.

Three agreement signed

Both the ministers signed agreements to;

- Increase defence and military cooperation between the two countries ,
- Letter of Intent on immigration and mobility to check illegal migrations , as well as the agreement on
- Cyprus joining the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

S. Jaishankar also released the **commemorative stamp** on the **75 years of Indian Independence** and **60 years of establishing diplomatic ties with Cyprus**.

The minister said India and Cyprus were collectively working on pressing issues such as food and energy security, maritime security, as well as on sustainable environment.

During his three-day visit to Cyprus, Jaishankar will call **Annita Demetriou**, President of the Cyprus Parliament's House of Representatives.

He will also address the business and investment community of Cyprus, apart from an interaction with the Indian Diaspora.

Republic of Cyprus

It is an island European country in the eastern Mediterranean Sea.

It gained its Independence from Britain in 1960. The country has a majority population which are of Greece descent while the minority population are of Turkish origin.

Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974 and created a Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983. Except Turkey no country recognises Turkish Cyprus.

India also recognises the Cyprus government.

Capital: **Nicosia**

Currency: **Euro**

President: **Nicos Anastasiades**

7. International Civil Aviation Day (Dec. 7, 2022)

International Civil Aviation Day

Every year 7 December is observed as International Civil Aviation Day. This day is observed to raise awareness about the importance of civil aviation and its contribution in the world. The day honours civil aviation workers, air traffic controllers and everyone who works towards keeping flights and flying safe for passengers.

Background to the Day

The first Civil Aviation day was observed on 7 December 1994 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Chicago convention.

The Chicago convention held on 7 December 1944 led to the establishment of the [International Civil Aviation Organization \(ICAO\)](#). The ICAO is a United Nations agency which was formally established on 4 April 1947.

Later in 1996, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution to observe 7 December as an International Civil Aviation Day. Since then, the day has been observed on a global scale.

Theme of the International Civil Aviation Day

In 2019 the ICAO decided that till 2023 the theme of the International Civil Aviation Day will be **“Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development”**.

8. India to host the 5th Assembly of the International Solar Alliance in New Delhi in October 2022 (Oct. 6, 2022)

India will host the 5th Assembly of the [International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)](#) in **New Delhi** from 17-20th October 2022. All the 109 members of the ISA will be attended by their Ministers, missions, delegates. The Assembly will be presided over by **R.K. Singh**, Union Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy.

The Assembly is the apex decision-making body of ISA. This body makes decisions concerning the implementation of the ISA's Framework Agreement and coordinated actions to be taken to achieve its objective.

The International Solar Alliance is an international organisation with 109 member and signatory countries. It works with governments to improve energy access and security worldwide and promote solar power as a sustainable way to transition to a carbon-neutral future.

Headquarters: **Gurugram**, Haryana

9. ICAO sign agreement with International Solar Alliance to promote solar use in Aviation sector (Sept. 27, 2022)

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with [International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)](#) to reduce the growth of carbon dioxide emissions in the international aviation sector. The agreement was signed in **Montreal, Canada** on 27 September 2022.

With the headquarter of ISA being in **Gurugram**, the agreement was received by the Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia as a host country of ISA.

Under the MoU the ICAO and ISA will scale up the deployment of solar energy solutions for aircraft, airports, and other aviation-related applications.

ICAO has become the latest International organisation to join ISA. In September 2022, **Bhutan** became the 86th country to ratify the ISA agreement .

The International Solar Alliance was launched by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the French President Emmanuel Macron in 2015 to implement the Paris agreement on climate change.

It promotes the use of sun energy so as to reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

It is a specialised agency of the United Nations which was set up on **4 April 1947**.

The ICAO is dedicated to developing safe and efficient international air transport for peaceful purposes and ensuring a reasonable opportunity for every state to operate international airlines.

Headquarters; **Montreal, Canada**

Members: **193 countries**

ICAO Secretary General: **Juan Carlos Salazar**

10. Bhutan ratifies International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement (Sept. 15, 2022)

Bhutan on 14 September ratified the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- Bhutan's Ambassador to India Major General Wetsop Namgyal handed over the ratification document to Secretary ER Dammu Ravi in the presence of DG International Solar Alliance.

International Solar Alliance :

- It is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization whose primary function is to promote solar development by reducing the cost of financing and technology.
- It is the nodal agency to implement '**One Sun, One World, One Grid**'.
- It aims to transfer the solar energy generated in a specific region to meet the electricity demand of another region.
- It was launched by the Prime Minister of India and the President of France on 30 November 2015 at the Conference of the Parties (COP-21) to the UNFCCC in France (Paris) along with 121 solar resource rich nations.
- Its key objectives include achieving a global potential of over 1000 GW of solar power generation capacity and mobilising about \$1000 billion to invest in solar energy by 2030.
- Member-**106 countries** have signed this Framework Agreement. 86 out of 106 countries have signed and ratified this Framework Agreement.

- Headquarters - **Gurugram, India**