



# SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT

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## TARGET 2025

### INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS



MAY 2024 TO FEBRUARY 2025

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Out of 100 questions asked in UPSC Civil Services (Preliminary) Examinations, 2024,  
**19 questions reflected directly** and  
**19 questions reflected partially**  
from the Shankar IAS Parliament

Total number of questions directly reflected from IAS Parliament (including Target 2023 series)	19
Number of questions directly reflected from the Target Series 2023	14
Total number of questions partially reflected from IAS Parliament	19

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# TARGET 2025

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

 **MAY 2024 TO FEBRUARY 2025**

### 1. UNITED NATIONS & ITS ORGANS


- It is an international organization founded in 1945 after the World War II.
- Its charter was signed in San Francisco on June 26, 1945 and came into existence on October 24, 1945 after 51 countries have signed the charter.
- Its predecessor, the League of Nations, created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 was disbanded in 1946.
- Its mission is to maintain international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights.
- UN System is made up of the
  - Main Organs** established by the Charter of the UN,
  - Specialized agencies** provided for in Article 57 of the Charter &
  - Funds & Programmes** established by the General Assembly under its authority derived from Article 22 of the Charter.



## Main Organs

### 1.1 UN General Assembly

- It is the main deliberative organ and composed of **all member states**, each of which has one vote.
- Mandate** – To discuss, debate, and make recommendations on subjects pertaining to international peace and security, including development, disarmament, human rights, international law, and peaceful arbitration of disputes between nations.
- It considers reports from the other four organs of the UN, assesses the financial situations of member states, and **approves the UN budget**.
- Sessions** – **Regular session** (annually from Sep to Dec), **Special session** and **Emergency Special Session** (within 24 hours) at the request of UN Security Council or majority of members or one-member state if the majority of states concur.
- Appointments** – UNGA appoints Secretary General of UN based on the recommendations of UNSC.
- It elects non-Permanent members in Security Council and Members for Social and Economic Council.
- Along with Security Council, it elects Judges to International Court of Justice (ICJ).
- Membership** – There are 193 UN member states, each with a vote in the General Assembly.
- The assembly's President changes with each annual session and is elected by the body itself.
- Palestine and Vatican City** are the United Nations' two non-member observer states, which have the right to speak at assembly meetings but cannot vote on resolutions.
- Assembly Actions** – Decision on important questions such as those on peace and security, UN budget, admission, suspension and expulsion of members to various organs of UN requires **special majority**.
- It can make recommendations on any matters within the scope of the UN, except matters of peace and security that are under consideration by the Security Council.
- In 1948, it promulgated the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which contained 30 articles outlining global standards for human rights.
- In 1950, it initiated **"Uniting for Peace"** resolution which states that if UNSC fails to exercise its primary responsibility" for maintaining international peace and security, UNGA should take up the matter itself and urge collective action.
- In 2000, it set forth the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), followed by Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in 2015.
- UNGA has the **power to censure states** for violating UN Charter principles.
- UN budget** – United Nation is funded by its member states through **compulsory and voluntary contributions**.
- The size of each state's compulsory contribution depends mainly on its economic strength, though its state of development and debt situation are also considered.
- Member countries can make voluntary contribution to UNESCO, WHO, UN Programmes and Funds such as Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

UNGA 	
<b>Founded in</b>	1945
<b>Headquarters</b>	New York, United States
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is a member</b>

<b>UN General Assembly</b>	<b>193 countries</b>
Main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ	
1 country = 1 vote	
Annual sessions: September - December	

<b>GENERAL ASSEMBLY</b>
<b>Subsidiary Organs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disarmament Commission</li> <li>Human Rights Council</li> <li>International Law Commission</li> <li>Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)</li> <li>Main Committees</li> <li>Standing committees and ad hoc bodies</li> </ul>

Unlike resolutions of the UN Security Council (UNSC), resolutions of the UNGA are **not legally binding**.

### Adoption of Resolution

- Resolution in UNGA can be adopted in two ways i.e., reaching consensus among member states and by voting on the resolution.

#### Consensus

- All member states have agreed to adopt the text of a draft resolution **without taking a vote**.
- Consensus will not be reached, even if one member State requests a vote.
- It is important to note that consensus does not mean that all Member States agree on every word in the draft resolution and they still have reservation about certain parts.
- Thus, the viewpoint of every member country is taken into consideration. This process is inclusive in nature.

#### Voting

- It need to get a **simple majority** to agree on the text of a resolution.
- There is no need to care about the perspectives of the minority who disagree.
- Those countries that did not vote in favour of a resolution on a particular agenda item will be less likely to implement the actions on an agenda item that are recommended in a resolution, hence it is divisive.

### UN Secretary-General

- The UNSC approved 9<sup>th</sup> UN Secretary-General António Guterres for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term for 5 years starting from 2022.
- While there are **no term limits**, no Secretary-General has so far served more than 2 terms.
- Selection process** - The Secretary-General is appointed by the UNGA on the **recommendation of the UNSC**.

**Article 99 - The Secretary-General** may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security

### Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (UN ACABQ)


- It is a subsidiary organ of the UNGA comprising of 16 members.
- It ensures that fund contributions to the UN system are put to good effect and that mandates are properly funded.
- UN General Assembly appoints members of the Advisory Committee in their individual capacity on the basis of broad geographical representation, personal qualifications and experience.
  - Surendra Kumar Adhana from India was re-elected to key UN advisory committee for 2024-26 term.

#### UNGA Emergency Special Session

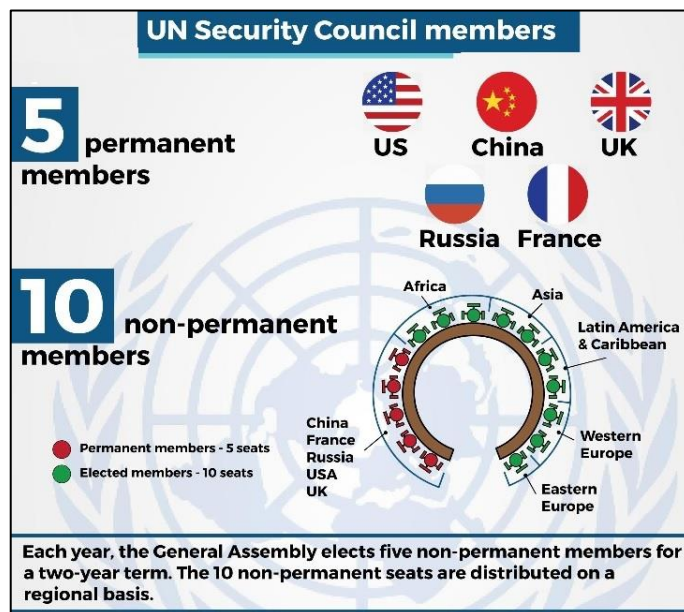
- An UNGA emergency special session happens when the **UNSC is deadlocked** i.e. when one of the five permanent Council members (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States) uses their veto power to quash a related draft resolution.
- UN Member States can request the Assembly President to convene such a session to make appropriate recommendations for collective measures, including calling for ceasefires, the use of armed force, etc.
- If adopted by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority, the **non-binding** General Assembly resolution provides guidance for nations.

## 1.2 United Nations Security Council

- Responsibility** – Maintenance of international peace and security.
- The Security Council has taken permanent residence at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City.
- The council has 15 members: **5 Permanent** – US, UK, Russia, France & China and 10 members elected by the General Assembly for **2-year term**.
- The Security Council is the only UN organ that has the power to make **binding decisions** on member states.

UNSC 	
Founded in	1945
Headquarters	New York, United States
India's membership	<b>India is not a permanent member</b>

- Equitable geographical distribution is also taken in to account for membership - African Group (3), Asia-Pacific Group (2), Latin American and Caribbean Group (2), Western European and Others Groups (WEOG) (2) and Eastern European Group (1).
- Arab states are given 1 seat alternately drawn from either Africa's quota or Asia's by informal agreement.
- The presidency of the Security Council rotates alphabetically among 15 members every month.
- **Voting system** – Each member of the Security Council shall have one vote.
- Permanent Member States at the Security Council has a special voting power known as the "right to veto".
- Decisions on procedural matters should have vote of at least 9 of the 15 members and decision on substantive matters require 9 votes and the absence of negative vote by any of the 5 permanent members.
- If any one of the five permanent members cast a negative vote in the 15-member Security Council, the resolution or decision would not be approved.
- If a permanent member does not fully agree with a proposed resolution but does not wish to cast a veto, it may choose to abstain.
- Veto powers of P5 countries was used most frequently by Russia, blocking more than 100 resolutions since the council's founding.



G4 Nations	Razali Reform Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 countries bids for permanent seats in UNSC.</li> <li>• They are <u><b>Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan.</b></u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan was proposed by the then UNGA president Ismail Razali in 1997 to enlarge the UNSC from its present 15 members to 24 members.</li> <li>• Under the plan, the UNSC would have 5 new permanent members without veto powers, and 4 more non-permanent members.</li> </ul>
Uniting for Consensus (Coffee Club)	L.69 group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are group of countries who are <u><b>opposing the expansion</b></u> of permanent seats in the UNSC under the leadership of Italy.</li> <li>• <b>Members</b> - Italy, Spain, Malta, San Marino, Pakistan, South Korea, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia &amp; Turkey.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is of pro-reform member states, including primarily developing countries from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific.</li> <li>• The Group is bound by the firm conviction that expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership of the UNSC is imperative.</li> <li>• The group currently has 42 countries <u><b>including India.</b></u></li> </ul>
Group of Friends	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 'Group of friends' was launched in 2022 during India's Presidency of the U.N. Security Council.</li> <li>• <b>Co-chairs</b> - India, Bangladesh, Egypt, France, Morocco and Nepal.</li> <li>• <b>Aim</b> - To promote accountability for crimes against peacekeepers, seek facilitation of capacity building and technical assistance to the host state authorities.</li> </ul>	

### Proposed Reforms in UNSC

- The demands for reform of the UNSC is based on 5 key issues:
  1. Categories of membership (permanent, non-permanent).



2. The question of the veto held by the five permanent members.
  3. Regional representation.
  4. The size of an enlarged Council and its working methods.
  5. The relationship between Security Council and General Assembly.
- Any reform of the Security Council would require the agreement of **at least 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of UN member states**.
  - The agreement of all the permanent members of the UNSC enjoying the veto right is also required.


SECURITY COUNCIL	
Subsidiary Organs	
• Counter-Terrorism Committee	
• International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals	
• Military Staff Committee	
• Peacekeeping operations and political missions	
• Sanctions committees (ad hoc)	
• Standing committees and ad hoc bodies	

## India & UNSC

- India has declared its candidature as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the **2028-29 term**.
- India has already held a non-permanent seat on the UNSC for **7 terms**, with the recent term being 2021-2022. In total, India has been in the UNSC for 14 years.

## 1.3 UN Economic & Social Council

- It is the UN's central platform for reflection, debate, and innovative thinking on sustainable development.
- It coordinates the activities of UN and intergovernmental level work of UN Specialised Agencies.
- It has 54 members, which are elected by the General Assembly for a **3-year term**.
- Seats in the council are allocated based on geographical representation.
- For the nations to be elected as members of ECOSOC, it needs **2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority** of UN General Assembly votes.
- Each member of the ECOSOC has one vote and generally voting in the council is by **simple majority**.
- The President is elected for a **one-year term**.

UN ECOSOC 	
<b>Founded in</b>	1945
<b>Headquarters</b>	New York, United States
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is a member</b>

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL	
<b>Functional Commissions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice</li> <li>• Narcotic Drugs</li> <li>• Population and Development</li> <li>• Science and Technology for Development</li> <li>• Social Development</li> <li>• Statistics</li> <li>• Status of Women</li> <li>• United Nations Forum on Forests</li> </ul>	<b>Other Bodies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee for Development Policy</li> <li>• Committee of Experts on Public Administration</li> <li>• Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations</li> <li>• Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues</li> <li>• <b>UNAIDS</b> Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• <b>UNGEI</b> United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names</li> <li>• <b>UNGGIM</b> Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management</li> </ul>

## 1.4 Secretariat

- It undertakes the day-to-day work of the UN, administering the programmes and policies of the organization.
- It is headed by the Secretary-General, assisted by a staff of international civil servants worldwide.
- UN Secretariat is located in New York City, USA.


UN Secretariat	
<b>Founded in</b>	1945
<b>Location</b>	New York, United States

## 1.5 International Court of Justice

- It is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. It is also called as the “**World Court**”.
- It is seated at the Peace Palace, *Hague, Netherlands*.
- It is the only principal organ of UN to be not located in New York.
- It settles legal disputes between states and gives advisory opinions to the UN and its specialized agencies.
- It hears cases related to war crimes, illegal state interference, ethnic cleansing, and other issues.
- It is composed of **15 judges elected to 9-year terms** of office by the UNGA and the Security Council.
- 5** judges are elected every 3 years to ensure continuity within the court and are eligible for re-election.
- Of the 15 judges, the composition is mandated to be as follows - 3 from Africa, 2 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 3 from Asia, 5 from Western Europe and other states and 2 from Eastern Europe.
- The President and Vice-President are elected by secret ballot to hold office for 3 years.
- The **P5 members** of the UNSC always have a judge on the Court.
  - The exception was China, which did not have a judge on the Court from 1967 to 1985 because it did not put forward a candidate.
- The Court settles **legal disputes between nations only** and not between individuals, organizations and private enterprises in accordance with international law.
- The Court can only hear a dispute when requested to do so by one or more States. It **cannot deal with a dispute of its own motion**.
- The judgment is **final, binding** on the parties and without an appeal.
- Though the rulings of the ICJ are binding, some countries ignored them, as ICJ has no direct means of enforcing its orders.
- There are 2 types of ICJ jurisdictions.
  - Contentious jurisdiction** - Resolving legal disputes between consenting states
  - Advisory jurisdiction** - The UNGA, the Security Council and other specialized bodies of the organization can request the ICJ for an opinion (non-binding) on a legal question.
- Decisions and Advisory Opinions are by majority, and, in the event of an equal division, the President's vote becomes decisive.

**International Court of Justice**  
 Settling disputes between states  
 Deals with territorial and border disputes, aggression, and provides advisory opinion to Security Council, General Assembly and other UN organs

15  
judges

ICJ 	
<b>Founded in</b>	1945
<b>Headquarters</b>	Hague, Netherlands
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is a member</b>

## 1.6 Trusteeship Council

- It was formed to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories that had been placed under the administration of Member States, and to prepare the territories for self-government and independence.
- By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government or independence, with the last nation being Palau.
- So, UN suspended its operation on 1994, and it continues to **exist only on paper**.
- By a resolution adopted in May 1994, the Council amended its rules of procedure to drop the obligation to meet annually and agreed to meet as occasion.

**Trusteeship Council**

Supervising the administration of  
Trust Territories

Suspended its operations on 1 October 1994

## SPECIALISED AGENCIES


- Specialized Agencies are **legally independent international organizations** with their own rules, membership, organs and financial resources, which were brought into relationship with the United Nations through negotiated agreements.
- Some existed before the First World War. Some were associated with the League of Nations. Others were created almost simultaneously with the UN. Others were created by the UN to meet emerging needs.
- There are totally **15 specialized agencies** under the United Nations (UN).
- These agencies carry out operations to promote multilateral cooperation from professional and technical viewpoints in an extremely broad range of areas, such as labour, education, science, culture, agriculture and public health.



### Specialized Agencies<sup>1,5</sup>

- FAO** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
**ICAO** International Civil Aviation Organization  
**IFAD** International Fund for Agricultural Development  
**ILO** International Labour Organization  
**IMF** International Monetary Fund  
**IMO** International Maritime Organization  
**ITU** International Telecommunication Union  
**UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
**UNIDO** United Nations Industrial Development Organization  
**UNWTO** World Tourism Organization  
**UPU** Universal Postal Union  
**WHO** World Health Organization  
**WIPO** World Intellectual Property Organization  
**WMO** World Meteorological Organization  
**WORLD BANK GROUP<sup>7</sup>**
- IBRD** International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
  - IDA** International Development Association
  - IFC** International Finance Corporation

### 1.7 World Bank Group

- The World Bank Group (WBG) is a family of 5 international organizations that make leveraged loans to developing countries. The organizations are
  - International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD),
  - International Development Association (IDA),
  - International Finance Corporation (IFC),
  - Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and
  - International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).
- They have their own country membership, governing boards, and articles of agreement but work as one.
- Each member countries in the organisation get voting power according to the shares held in the organisation's capital.

World Bank 	
<b>Founded in</b>	1944
<b>Headquarters</b>	Washington D.C., USA
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is a member of 4 of the 5 constituents of World Bank Group.</b>
<b>ICSID</b>	<b>India is not a member of ICSID</b>

 - Specialized Agencies of the UN		 - Not Specialized Agencies
<b>International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)</b>	IBRD and IDA provide loans at preferential rates to member countries, as well as grants to the poorest countries.	Established in 1944 to finance the reconstruction of European nations devastated by World War II.
<b>International Development Association (IDA)</b>		Established in 1960, to reduce poverty by providing zero to low-interest loans (called "credits") and grants for programs.
<b>International Finance Corporation (IFC)</b>	IFC, MIGA & ICSID focus on strengthening the private sector in developing countries by providing financing, technical assistance, political risk insurance, and settlement of disputes to private	Established in 1956, provides various forms of financing without sovereign guarantees, primarily to the private sector.
<b>Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)</b>		Established in 1988, provides insurance against certain types of risk, including political risk, primarily to the private sector.

<b>International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)</b>	enterprises, including financial institutions.	Established in 1966, works with governments to reduce investment risk.
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- **Governing Bodies** - The two main governing bodies are Board of Governors and Board of Directors.
- BOG is appointed by World Bank members and meets annually in joint meeting with Board of Governors of IMF.
- There is a separate BOD for IBRD, IDA, IFC and MIGA.
- India is a member of 4 of the 5 constituents of the World Bank Group **except ICSID**.
- India is one of the founder members of IBRD, IDA and IFC.

## World Bank

- **IBRD and IDA** are collectively known as World Bank that provides loans to countries for capital programs.
- They were created at the 1944 **Bretton Woods Conference**, along with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- It is like a cooperative, made up of 189 member countries or shareholders, represented by a Board of Governors (BOG), who are the ultimate policymakers at the World Bank.
- The aim of World Bank is to
  1. End extreme poverty by reducing share of global population that lives in extreme poverty to 3% by 2030,
  2. Promote shared prosperity by increasing the incomes of the poorest 40% of people in every country
  3. Provide sustainable development.
- **Other works**
  - **International Health Partnership (IHP+)** – World Bank with the World Health Organization, administers the IHP+ to improve the health of citizens in developing countries.
  - **Clean Air Initiative (CAI)** - It is a World Bank initiative to advance innovative ways to improve air quality in cities through partnerships in selected regions of the world by sharing knowledge and experiences.
  - **Reports** – Ease of Doing Business, Global Economic Prospects, Global Financial Development Report, International Debt Statistics, World Development Report, World Development Indicators, Logistic Performance Index, Poverty and Shared Prosperity.

## International Bank for Reconstruction & Development

- IBRD is a global development cooperative owned by 189-member countries and it is the largest development bank in the world.
- It is headquartered in Washington, D.C.
- It was established in 1944 to finance the reconstruction of European nations devastated by World War II.
- It supports the World Bank Group's mission by providing loans, guarantees, risk management products, and advisory services to middle-income and creditworthy low-income countries.
- IBRD finances investments across all sectors and provides technical support and expertise at each stage of a project.
- IBRD places special emphasis on supporting **lower-middle-income countries** as they move up the economic chain, graduating from IDA to become clients of IBRD.
- It will also help coordinating responses to regional and global challenges.
- The Bank's member governments are shareholders which contribute paid-in capital and have the right to vote on its matters.
- In addition to these contributions, the IBRD acquires most of its capital by borrowing on international capital markets through bond issues.
- To become a member of the Bank, under the IBRD Articles of Agreement, a country **must first join the International Monetary Fund (IMF)**.
- **Only members of IBRD** are allowed to join other institutions within the Bank such as IDA, IFC, and MIGA.

## International Finance Corporation (IFC)



- IFC is the private sector arm of The World Bank founded in 1956.
- IFC provides financing for private enterprise investments in developing countries.
- It also provides advisory services to encourage the development of private enterprise in nations.
- The IFC funds banks and other financial institutions that in turn lend to other projects (financial intermediaries).
- **Recent Developments** – In 2020, IFC launched the Green Equity Approach (GEA) to increase their clients climate lending and reduce their exposure to coal- related projects.
- Originally it required clients to reduce their exposure by half by 2025, and to zero by 2030.
- IFC updated its GEA policy recently and will no longer allow financial intermediary clients to support new coal-powered electricity projects.

## India & the World Bank

- **Animal Health System Support for One Health' (AHSSOH)** – Launched in 2023 to create an ecosystem for better animal health management system using the One Health approach covering five states in India.
- **Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme-III** - It is a programme supported by the World Bank in India that aims to improve the quality of engineering education.
- It was started by Ministry of Education in 2017 - concluded on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.
- **National Hydrology Project** - It is a Central Sector Scheme with 100% grant to implementing agencies on pan India basis that was started in 2016 and supported by the World Bank.
- Its objective is to improve the extent, quality and accessibility of water resources information and to strengthen the capacity of targeted water resources management institutions in India.
- **Meghalaya Community-led Landscape Management Project** - This World Bank supported project was launched in 2018 to empower communities in Meghalaya to strengthen rural communities and traditional institutions to take charge of their natural resources.
- **Indus Waters Treaty** - It was signed in 1960 by India and Pakistan with the intervention of the World Bank which requires the commissioners to meet at least once a year, alternately in India and Pakistan to discuss cooperation on the Indus River System.

## FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES

### 1.8 U.N. Counter-Terrorism Trust Fund

*India recently contributed 5, 00,000 dollars to U.N. Counter-Terrorism Trust Fund*

- **Origin-** It was established in 2009 and transferred to UN Office of Counter- Terrorism (UNOCT) in 2017.
- **UNOCT-** It was launched in 2017, considered as the first major institutional reform in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.
- **India-** It has contributed around 5,00,000 dollars to U.N. Counter Terrorism Trust Fund, it underscores India's strong commitment to support multilateral efforts to combat terrorism globally.
- **Support programs-** The funds are intended to support the UN's global programs particularly those focused on Countering Finance of Terrorism and Countering Terrorist Travel Programme (CTTP).
- **Countering Terrorist Travel Programme-** It was launched in 2019 assists UN member countries to enhance their responsibilities to detect and counter terrorists and serious by collecting and using
  - Advanced Passenger Information
  - Passenger Name Record data
- **Countering Finance of Terrorism-** It was launched in 2020 that focus on broad range of topics such as protecting non-profit organization sector, sharing financial intelligence, promoting public-private partnerships etc., identified by Financial Action Task Force.
- **Purpose-** CTTP and CFT are aimed at building capacities of the member states of eastern and southern Africa to combat the critical issues of financing of terrorism and prevent the movement and travel of terrorists.

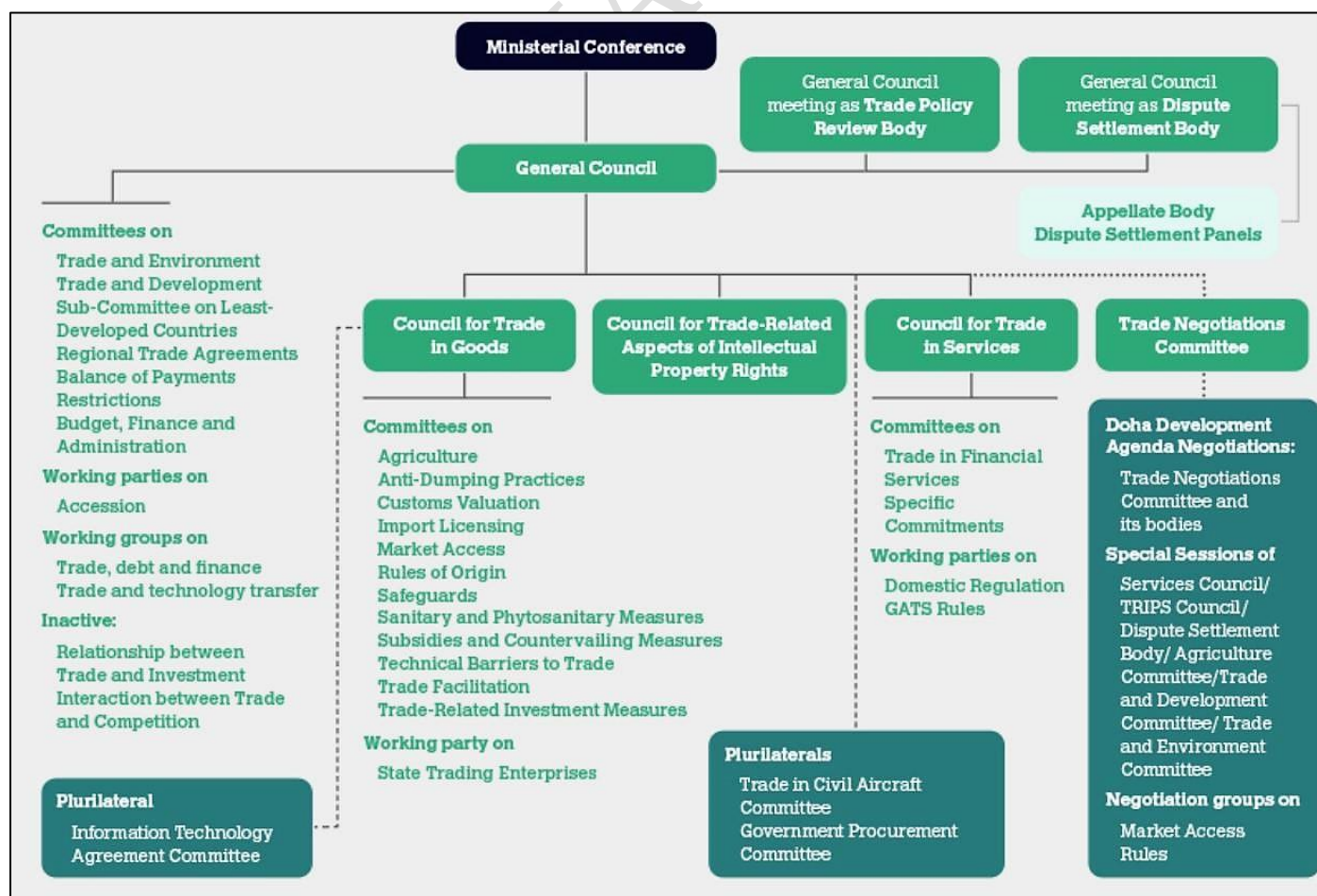
## RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

It describes the organizations whose cooperation agreement with the UN has many points in common with that of Specialized Agencies, but does not refer to Article 57 and 63 of the UN Charter, relevant to Specialized Agencies.

### 1.9 World Trade Organization (WTO)


- It operates a global system of trade rules, acts as a forum for negotiating trade agreements, it settles trade disputes between its member countries and it supports the needs of developing countries.
- WTO officially commenced under the **Marrakesh Agreement**, replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).
- It was created by Uruguay round of negotiations and established in 1995.
- The trade agreements are signed by representatives of member governments and ratified by their parliaments.
- WTO has 164 members and 25 observer governments.
- The members **need not** have to **be fully independent states**.
- Even customs territory with full autonomy in the conduct of their external commercial relations can join with the consent of other members. e.g.: Hong Kong.
- 5 principles which WTO follows are non-discrimination, reciprocity, binding and enforceable commitments, transparency, safety values.
- General Council** is the top day-to-day decision-making body. It has representatives from all member governments and also meets, under different rules, as the Dispute Settlement Body.
- Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making body, where members are represented by its trade ministers, which meets every 2 years.
- All decisions are taken through consensus and **any member can exercise a veto**.

WTO	
Founded in	1995
Headquarters	Geneva, Switzerland
India's membership	India is a member



- **MC5 Doha** - It is attempting to complete negotiations on the Doha Development Round.
- It has no specific agreement dealing with the environment. But a number of WTO agreements include provisions dealing with environmental concerns.
- The Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade and the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures address environment related issues.
- The 12<sup>th</sup> biennial ministerial conference held in Geneva in June 2022.

**5th Ministerial Conference, Doha 2001**



**WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION**

- These prominent issues raised were –
  - a. **Agriculture** - Undoing the trade-distorting subsidies provided in the developed countries for farming, while gaining exemption for necessary subsidies for developing countries.
  - b. **Medicines** - Relaxing IPR norms for life saving drugs in developing countries
  - c. **SDT** - Special & Differential Treatment for goods from the weaker countries
- While, negotiations on most of these issues haven't concluded, the developed countries have been keen to move on to newer issues like 'e-commerce'.
- On the contrary, the developing countries want the Doha issues to settled first.

### WTO's 'Developing Country' Status

- WTO agreements contain special provisions through '**special and differential treatment**' (**S&DT**) provisions, which give developing countries special rights and allow other members to treat them more favourably.
- S&DT provisions can grant developing countries longer timeframes to implement the agreements and even commitments to raise trading opportunities for such countries.
- The WTO has not defined 'developed' and 'developing' countries and so, the member countries are free to announce whether they are 'developed' or 'developing'.
- At the Bali Ministerial Conference (2013) a mechanism was established to review and analyse the implementation of special and differential treatment provisions.

### MFN Status

- MFN status is an economic position in which a country enjoys the best trade terms given by its trading partner. i.e. It receives the lowest tariffs, the fewest trade barriers, and the highest import quotas (or none at all).
- The World Trade Organization's 164 members have the **Principle of non-discrimination** and offers most favoured nation (MFN) treatment.
- Under this principle, the WTO members commit to treating other members equally so they can all benefit from each other's lowest tariffs, highest import quotas and fewest trade barriers for goods and services.
- The only exceptions are developing countries, regional trade areas, and customs unions.
- For countries outside the WTO, such as **Iran, North Korea, Syria, Belarus**, etc, the WTO members can impose whatever trade measures they wish without flouting global trading rules. Russia lost its "most favoured nation" (MFN) status over its invasion of Ukraine.

#### MFN STATUS

Developing countries receive preferential treatment without having to return it, so their economies can grow.

### India & WTO

- In 2019, Australia, Brazil, and Guatemala complained against India for sugar subsidies at the WTO.
- India filed an appeal with the Appellate Body of the WTO disputing a verdict by the WTO's dispute settlement panel on sugar subsidies in 2022.
- According to WTO rules, **subsidies cannot exceed 10%** of the total value of sugar production.
- The WTO ruled that India's sugar policy was favouring domestic producers through subsidies at the cost of foreign producers.
- The panel recommended India to withdraw its alleged prohibited subsidies within 120 days from the adoption of this report.
- India provides subsidies under Production Assistance, Buffer Stock and Marketing and Transportation Schemes



- India has stated that the WTO's dispute panel ruling has made certain erroneous findings and is completely unacceptable.

### Dispute Settlement Body in WTO



- Dispute Settlement Body establishes "panels" of experts to consider a case.
- DSB accepts or rejects the panels' findings.
- The panel's report can only be rejected by consensus in DSB; hence its conclusions are difficult to overturn.
- DSB monitors the implementation of the rulings and recommendations, and has the power to authorize retaliation when a country does not comply with a ruling.
- Appeals to the panel ruling are dealt by the permanent 7-member Appellate Body broadly representing the members.
- DSB has to accept or reject the appeals and again the rejection is only possible by consensus.

## CEB MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

### 1.10 United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

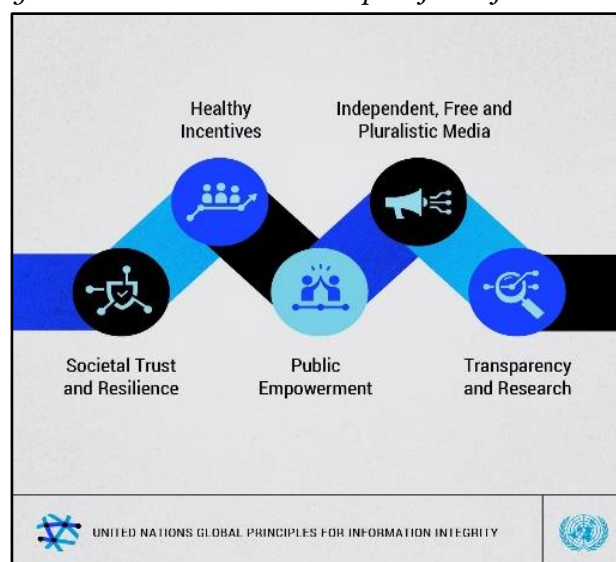
- It is the highest-level coordination forum of the United Nations system.
- It is the main instrument for supporting and reinforcing the coordinating role of the UN intergovernmental bodies on social, economic and related matters.
- UNSCBE is chaired by the UN Secretary-General. The membership includes
  - The United Nations
  - All 15 specialized agencies
  - Related Organizations (3) - WTO, OPCW, IAEA, IOM
  - 12 funds and programmes created by the General Assembly.
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is the newest member to join the CEB.

## OTHER UN INITIATIVES

### 1.11 UN Global Principles for Information Integrity

The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres recently unveiled the Global Principles for Information Integrity.

- It is a comprehensive framework aimed at addressing the escalating threats posed by misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech in the digital realm.
- It is developed through extensive consultations with Member States, the private sector, youth leaders, media, academia, and civil society.
- The principles aim to create healthier and safer information environments that uphold human rights and promote peaceful societies and a sustainable future.
- 5 Principles**
  - Societal trust and resilience,
  - Healthy incentives,
  - Public empowerment,





- Independent, free and pluralistic media,
- Transparency and research.

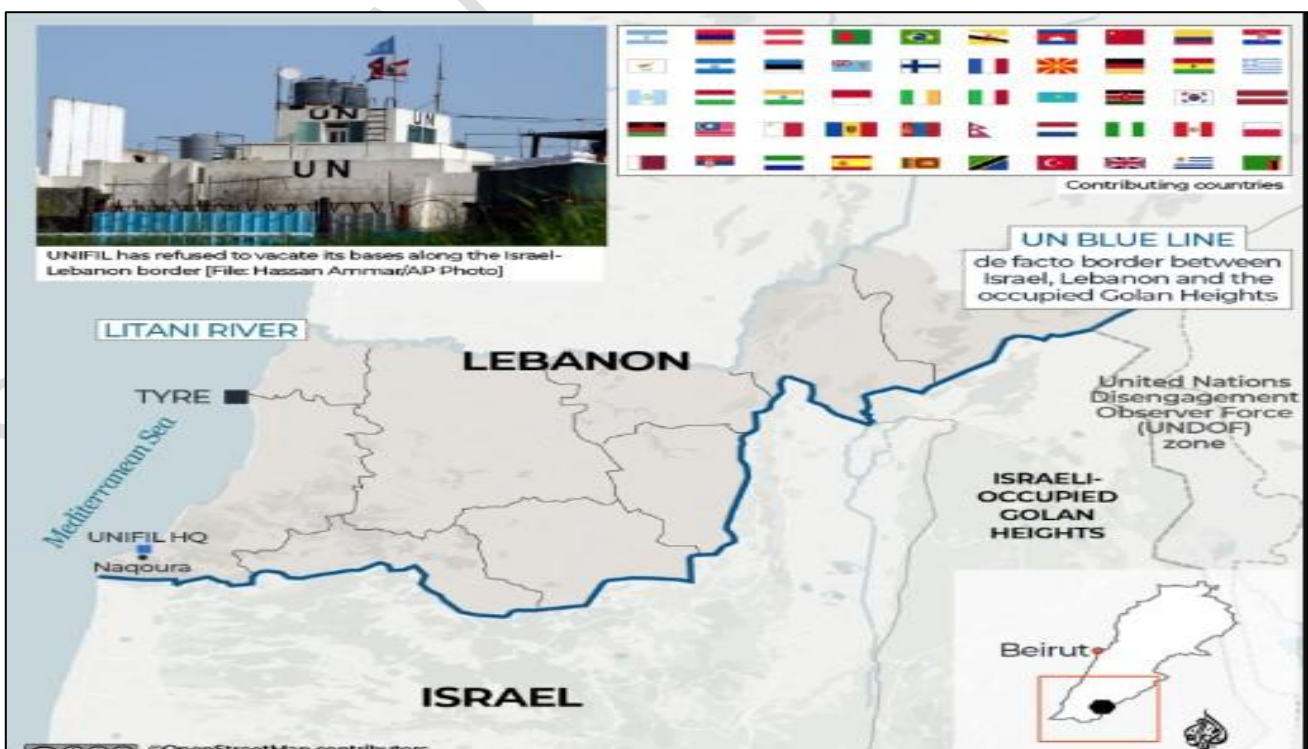
- **Key recommendations**

- **Combating disinformation and hate speech** - All stakeholders, including governments, tech companies, advertisers, and media, should avoid using, supporting, or amplifying disinformation and hate speech for any purpose.
- **Promoting media freedom** - Governments should ensure timely access to information, maintain a free, viable, independent, and plural media landscape.
- It should provide strong protections for journalists, researchers, and civil society.
- **Enhancing Tech Company responsibilities** - Technology companies should incorporate safety and privacy by design in all products, apply policies consistently across countries and languages.
- Additionally, they should prioritise crisis response and support information integrity during elections.
- **Ethical AI development** - AI developers must take immediate measures to ensure AI applications are designed, and used ethically and safely, upholding human rights.
- **Reforming business models** - Tech companies should explore business models that do not rely on programmatic advertising and prioritise human rights, privacy, and safety.
- Users should have greater control over their online experiences and personal data.
- **Transparency in advertising** - Advertisers should demand transparency in digital advertising processes.
- **Data transparency and accountability** - Tech companies and AI developers should ensure meaningful transparency, allow researchers and academics access to data while respecting user privacy.
- **Protecting children** - Special measures should be taken to protect and empower children, with governments providing resources for parents, guardians, and educators.

### 1.12 United Nations Interim Peacekeeping Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

Recently two members of a UN peacekeeping mission, operating along Lebanon's border with Israel were injured.

- It is an international body assigned to prevent violations along the border between **Lebanon and Israel**.
- **Established by** - UN Security Council (UNSC) in March 1978, days after Israel invaded Lebanon.
- It is supposed to report breaches to the UN Security Council.



- It consists of more than 10,000 civilian and military personnel from 50 countries including India.

- The group is charged by the UN with keeping out of the area any weapons or fighters.
- Although they are armed, the peacekeepers are generally restricted to using force only when their safety or the safety of civilians is in immediate danger.
- **Location** – It is located in the South of Lebanon. UNIFIL's presence stretches from the **Litani River to the Blue Line**.
  - Blue Line is a 120km "border" drawn up by the UN between Lebanon and Israel.
- Its headquarters is Naqoura in the southwest.
- **Fund** - UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) receives its funding through a dedicated account which is approved annually by the United Nations General Assembly.

### 1.13 Minerals Security Finance Network (MSFN)

*India is now formally a part of the Minerals Security Finance Network*

- It is a **US-led initiative**, a new initiative that stems from the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP), a framework established by the US in 2022.
  - India was inducted to the MSP in June 2023.
- **Aim** - To strengthen cooperation among Indo-Pacific region and Europe **to secure supply chains for critical minerals**.
- **Coordination and Collaboration** - The network encourages cooperation among members to align policies, share best practices, and streamline efforts to secure critical mineral supply chains.
- **Investment Facilitation** - The MSFN aims to mobilize private sector investment in mineral projects that are deemed critical for energy transition technologies and national security.
- **Technical Assistance** - It provides technical support to help member countries develop their mineral resources responsibly and sustainably, focusing on environmental and social governance (ESG) standards.
- **Market Development** - The network works to identify and promote market opportunities for critical minerals and improve infrastructure for mining and processing.
- **Geological and Economic Assessments** - It includes initiatives for shared research and assessment of mineral resources to better understand the availability and potential of critical minerals globally.
- **Policy Advocacy** - It advocates for policies that can enhance mineral security, such as trade policies and regulatory frameworks that support sustainable mineral extraction and processing.
- **Members** - As of now, it has 15 member countries
  - United States, Australia, Canada, **India**, Japan, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, South Korea.
- **Significance for India**— It helps India to diversify and secure its supply of critical minerals from nations like Argentina, Chile, Australia, and select African countries.

### 1.14 Banda Aceh Statement

*Recently, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) unveiled a roadmap at an international conference in Banda Aceh, Indonesia for global tsunami preparedness.*

- **Banda Aceh Statement** – It is a global commitment to improving **tsunami warning and mitigation systems**.
- It calls on states and civil society to accelerate investments to meet the 2030 goal.
- It recognised new **Tsunami Ready communities**, including 26 in India and 12 in Indonesia and included real-time drills in 2 villages near Banda Aceh to test community preparedness.
- These exercises reinforced the importance of UNESCO's 3-step warning process
  - **Detection** - Using advanced monitoring systems like deep-ocean tsunami buoys to identify sea-level disturbances.
  - **Warning** - Forecasting wave propagation and potential impacts, followed by immediate alerts.

- **Dissemination** - Reaching vulnerable populations swiftly through diverse communication channels like sirens, radio and smartphones.
- **Target** – To *achieve 100 per tsunami-ready coastal communities* globally by 2030.
- **Role of UNESCO** – **UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP)** is an international community-based effort to bolster risk prevention and mitigation across global coastal zones.
- It has expanded its *Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System* to cover high-risk areas worldwide.
- Its global network includes
  - Tens of thousands of seismometers
  - Over 1,200 active sea-level stations
  - Submarine cable observatories
  - 74 deep-ocean tsunami buoys.
- **Beneficiaries** – *More than 30 countries* have already benefited from UNESCO's TRRP to train their populations.

*Currently, 700 million people live in tsunami-prone coastal areas, a figure projected to reach 1 billion by 2050. Locally damaging tsunamis occur in the Pacific every 1-2 years and UNESCO estimates a near 100% chance of a tsunami in the Mediterranean within the next 30 years.*

### 1.15 United Nations Military Gender advocate of the year award

*Indian peacekeeper Radhika Sen conferred U.N. military gender advocate of the year award for 2023.*

- **Created in** – 2016.
- **Aim** – To recognize the dedication of an individual military peacekeepers.
- **Beneficiary** – They are selected among candidates nominated by Force Commanders and Heads of Mission from all peace operations.
- **India's Contribution** – India is the *2<sup>nd</sup> largest contributor* of uniformed personnel to UN Peacekeeping.
- It is currently the *11<sup>th</sup> largest* contributor of women military peacekeepers to the UN with 124 now deployed.
- **2023 Award for Radhika Sen** – The Indian peacekeeper, deployed in UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo or MONUSCO, awarded for her work supporting conflict-affected communities.

### 1.16 Dag Hammarskjöld Medal

*Indian peacekeeper to be honoured posthumously with prestigious United Nation (UN) medal for sacrifice in line of duty.*

- It is a *posthumous* award given *annually* on the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers.
- **Honoured by** – UN, at its Headquarters in New York.
- **Established in** – 1997, by **UNSC resolution 1121**.
- **Beneficiary** – Members of *military, police, and civilian peacekeepers*, who *lost their lives* serving under the UN flag.
- The Under-Secretary-General for Field Support also accepts a medal on behalf of deceased civilian staff each year.
- **2024 award** – It pays tribute to the more than 76,000 UN peacekeepers who embody humanity's highest ideal: peace.
- **From India** – **Naik Dhananjay Kumar Singh**, who served with the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).
- Previously, 3 Indian peacekeepers were honoured in 2023.
- **United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation** – It was started in 1948, when UN deployed military observers to the Middle East to supervise the Israel-Arab Armistice Agreements execution.

*The International Day of UN Peacekeepers, marked on **May 29**, was established by the UNGA in 2002.*

*In 1998, the 1st Medal was presented to the family of Dag Hammarskjöld.*

## 2. INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

### ECONOMIC

#### 2.1 International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO)

The International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) is now engaged in strengthening the reporting structure of Sustainability and Environmental, Social, and Governance.

- IOSCO is the international body that **brings together the world's securities regulators** and is recognized as the global standard setter for financial markets regulation.
- IOSCO was created in **1983**.

#### Other UN Medals

- Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal** – It was launched in 2014 by UNSC, to award those military, police, civilian UN personnel and associated personnel who demonstrate *exceptional courage*, in the face of extreme danger, while fulfilling the mandate of their missions or their functions, in the service of humanity and the UN.
- UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award** – It was started in 2016, to recognise the dedication and effort of an *individual peacekeeper in promoting the principles within the UNSC Resolution 1325*.

**UNSC Resolution 1325** urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all UN's peace and security efforts.

- It has a permanent secretariat in **Madrid, Spain**.
- Members** - IOSCO is a standard-setting body with **more than 200 members**, representing **95%** of the world's securities regulators.
- These members include national securities commissions, such as the
  - Securities and Exchange Commission in the United States and

- The Financial Services Authority in the United Kingdom, as well as
- Other governmental regulators and international standard-setting bodies.

- Securities and Exchange Board of India** is a member to this commission.

- Membership categories** - Membership is divided into 3 categories.

- The organization develops, implements, and promotes adherence to internationally recognized standards for securities regulation.

- IOSCO also works with the G20 and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) on global regulatory reform and to address financial vulnerabilities that could affect global financial stability.

- Objectives**

- Enhance investor protection

Ordinary members	Associate members	Affiliate members
The primary futures markets and securities regulators in a given jurisdiction.	Consisting of additional futures and securities regulators in those jurisdictions that have multiple regulatory bodies.	Self-regulatory organizations, stock exchanges, and stock market industry associations.
Each ordinary member has one vote.	Associate members do not have a vote.	These members do not have a vote
	They aren't eligible for the Executive Committee, but are members of the Presidents' Committee.	They are not eligible for either the Executive Committee or the President's Committee, but may be members of the Self-Regulatory Organizations (SRO) Consultative Committee.




- Ensure markets are fair and efficient
- Promote financial stability by reducing systemic risk
- **Committees** - It has 4 regional committees and a technical committee, which does much of the organization's regulatory work.

## JUDICIAL

### 2.2 International Criminal Court

- **Establishment** – In 1998 under the “Rome Statute”.
- **Headquarters** – Hague in Netherlands.
- **Aim** - To end impunity through international criminal justice.
- **Jurisdiction** – It is limited to offences occurring after it came into effect on July 1, 2002 and act as a court of last resort.
- **Functions** – It investigates and tries individuals charged with the gravest crimes of concern to the international community.
- It is intended to complement, not to replace, national criminal systems.
- It prosecutes cases only when States do not are unwilling or unable to do so genuinely.
- It does not have its own police force or enforcement body and relies on cooperation with countries worldwide for making arrests, transferring arrested persons to the ICC detention centre in The Hague, freezing suspects' assets, and enforcing sentences.
- While it is not a United Nations organization, it has a cooperation agreement with UN.
- There are 123 members. Malaysia is the latest member to join.
- The co-operation of the non-party states with the ICC is of **voluntary nature**.
- But when a case is referred to the ICC by the UN Security Council all UN member states are obliged to co-operate, since its decisions are binding for all of them.
- **Official languages** - English, French, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish.

ICC	
	
<b>Founded in</b>	2002
<b>Headquarters</b>	The Hague, Netherlands
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is not a member</b>

Organs of ICC	Crimes within the jurisdiction of ICC
Presidency Judicial division The office of the prosecutor The Registry	Genocide War crimes Crimes against humanity Crime of aggression

*India, USA, China, Russia and Ukraine are not the member of ICC whereas Britain, Japan, Afghanistan, and Germany are members of ICC.*

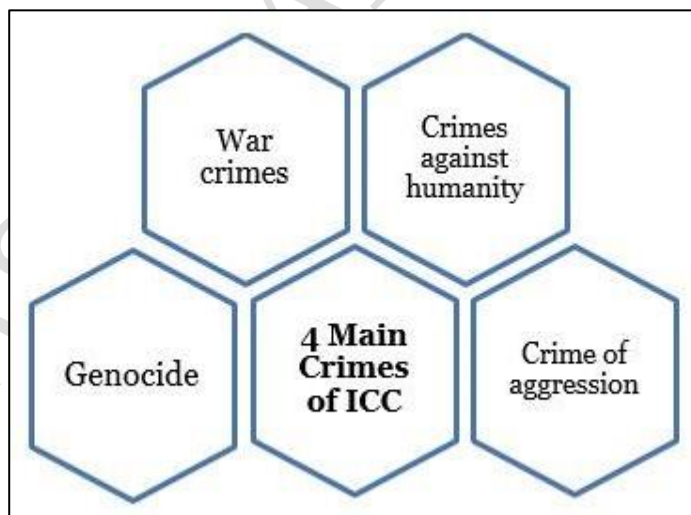
Features	ICC	ICJ
<b>Subject Matter</b>	Trial criminal offenses i.e. genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, crimes of aggression	Settle the legal dispute i.e. sovereignty, boundary disputes, maritime disputes, trade, natural resource
<b>Members</b>	Individuals either ratified member of ICC or accept the jurisdiction of ICC	Only states either member of United Nation or ICJ or both.
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	Criminal prosecution of individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contentious Jurisdiction</li> <li>• Advisory opinion</li> </ul>
<b>Authorized Statute</b>	Follow Rome Statute	Follow ICJ Statute

<b>Composition</b>	Composed of 18 judges elected to 9-year terms and not re-elected for further terms	Composed of 15 judges elected to 9-year terms and may be re-elected for up to two further terms
<b>Appeal</b>	Appeal is instituted by appeal chamber	No appeal provision for ICJ
<b>Independence</b>	Independent organization	United Nation Judiciary organ

### Rome Statute

- The Rome Statute laid the foundation for the establishment of International Criminal Court in 2002.
- It is a multilateral treaty which serves as ICC's foundational and governing document.
- States become party to Rome Statute by signing it and subsequently become member of ICC by ratifying it.
- USA, Israel, UAE and several other countries are also signatories to the 'Rome Statute' but haven't ratified yet.
- **India is not a party to the Rome Statute.**
- The court tries individuals and not countries.
- The ICC does not replace national criminal justice systems rather, it complements them.
- It can investigate and, where warranted, prosecute and **try individuals** only if the State concerned does not, cannot or is unwilling to do so genuinely.
- **Founding treaty** – The Rome Statute.
- **Established in** – 2002.
- **International Tribunal** – The Hague, Netherlands.
- The Rome Statute provides that the Court may sit elsewhere whenever the judges consider it desirable.
- It can prosecute crimes committed by nationals of member states or on the territory of member states by other actors.
- **Member states** – It has 125 member states.
- Palestine became the 123<sup>rd</sup> member (2015), Malaysia became 124<sup>th</sup> State party (2019) and Ukraine became the 125<sup>th</sup> member.
- **India**, United States, China and Russia, Myanmar, Israel are **not members of ICC.**
- **Funded by** – Contributions from the States Parties and by voluntary contributions from governments, international organisations, individuals, corporations and other entities.
- The ICC is a **permanent autonomous court**, whereas other similar courts, established under United Nations are to deal with specific situations, and only have a limited mandate and jurisdiction.
- In 2004, the ICC and the United Nations signed an agreement governing their institutional relationship.
- No one is exempt from prosecution because of **his or her current functions** or because of the position he or she held at the time the crimes concerned were committed.
- **Under the age of 18** – The Court has **no jurisdiction** with respect to any person who was **under the age of 18** when the crimes concerned were committed.

- The ICJ rules on disputes between states, but cannot prosecute individuals.
- The ICC investigates and prosecutes individual war criminals who are not before the courts of individual states.



## MARITIME

### 2.3 Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)

*India Assumes Chairmanship of Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation at the 13<sup>th</sup> Governing Council Meeting in Male, Maldives.*

- **Event Hosted by** - Ministry of Fisheries & Ocean Resources of the Maldives government, in collaboration with the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO).

#### Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)

- It is a unique regional fisheries body, set up in 2003.
- The decision to establish the Inter-Governmental Organisation (IGO) was taken at the 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee, held in Phuket, Thailand from 13 -16 October 1999.
- **Aim** - To assist the member countries in increasing the livelihood opportunities and improving the quality of life of the small-scale/ artisanal fisher folk in the Bay of Bengal region.
- **Members** - Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka.
- **Cooperating parties** - Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand.
- **Observers**- FAO and all the relevant regional fisheries and environmental bodies and International Non-Governmental Organisations active in the Bay of Bengal region.
- **Objectives**
  - To increase awareness and knowledge of the needs, benefits and practices of marine fisheries management.
  - Enhance skills through training and education.
  - Transfer appropriate technologies and techniques for development of the small-scale fisheries.
  - Establish regional information networking.
  - Promote women's participation in marine fisheries value chain.
- **Area of competence** - Exclusive Economic Zones under the jurisdiction of the Member States (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka) and contiguous areas beyond national jurisdiction.
- **Structure - Governing Council** - Serves as the apex body of the intergovernmental organization (IGO) and meets once a year.
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** - Considers the technical aspects of the activities proposed to be undertaken and implemented. It meets once a year.
- **Ad-hoc committees** -These are constituted for specific purposes from time to time.
- **Secretariat**- It is the implementing organ of the IGO and implements the decisions taken by the Governing Council.
- **Evolution** - The Organization evolved from the erstwhile Bay of Bengal Programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) founded in 1979.
- It has worked closely with the whole-range of the stakeholders including the R&D Institutions to develop pathways to capacity enhancement for a sustainable future of the region.
- It has set international benchmarks in execution of programs and activities in the field of small-scale fisheries that has translated into measurable benefits for the member countries.

### 2.4 UNESCO State of Ocean Report 2024

*UNESCO's State of Ocean report released recently on World Oceans Day highlights key knowledge gaps in research & data on spiking oceanic warming.*

- **Initiated by** - The report is initiated by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO).

*United States, Saudi Arabia and Russia are the top 3 major oil producing countries in the world. While Saudi Arabia is an OPEC member, Russia has OPEC+ membership.*

- It supports for UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development Outcomes.

### Recent findings of the report

- Critical issues in **ocean climate regulation**, emphasizing the need for better understanding and data to address ocean crises and validate new carbon dioxide removal technologies.
- **Greenhouse gas emissions**- The increased greenhouse gas emissions from human activities have increased the uptake of the Earth's energy imbalance (EEI) by oceans.
- **Energy and Heat Imbalance**- Oceans absorb about **90% of the Earth's energy imbalance**, leading to increased heat content in the upper 2,000 meters.
- This inhibits ocean mixing, causing *deoxygenation, which harms marine ecosystems and coastal communities relying on oceans*.
- **Coastal Blue Carbon Habitats**- There's growing interest in *restoring coastal blue carbon habitats like mangroves, seagrasses, and tidal marshes to enhance carbon sequestration*.
- **Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal (mCDR)**- A rising interest in marine *Carbon Dioxide Removal (mCDR) technologies* since 2020, supported by scientific research, start-up initiatives, and substantial funding from the U.S. and EU.
- **Ocean Warming trend**- From 1960 to 2023, the upper 2,000 meters of oceans warmed at a rate of  $32 \pm 0.03 \text{ W/m}^2$ , accelerating to  $0.66 \pm 0.10 \text{ W/m}^2$  in the past two decades.
- This trend is expected to persist, leading to irreversible changes over centennial to millennial timescales.
- **Ocean Acidification**- Coastal waters can turn acidic due to natural processes, such as *freshwater influx, biological activity, temperature change and climate patterns like El Nino/Southern Oscillation (ENSO)*.
- Human activities like nutrient input from agricultural and industrial activities also influence the chemistry of coastal areas.
- **Sea Level Rise** - From 1993 to 2023, the global mean sea level rose at a rate of  $4 \pm 0.3 \text{ mm/year}$ .
- **Data and Research**- The report highlights a pressing need for comprehensive and regular data to monitor ocean warming and its impacts, essential for maintaining healthy and resilient oceans.

*EEI is the balance between incoming energy from the Sun and outgoing energy from the Earth.*

## 2.5 South Asian Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Maritime Transport (SACE-SMarT)

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways recently participated in the 132<sup>nd</sup> session of the Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in London.

- It is a regional hub aims to transform the maritime sector in India and South Asia into a technologically advanced, environmentally sustainable, and digitally proficient industry.
- It is dedicated to identifying and tackling seafarers' issues and the human element in maritime operations.
- The center will focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, fostering technical cooperation, capacity-building, and digital transition.
- Recently, India reiterated its proposal for the South Asian Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Maritime Transport (SACE-SMarT).
- Other proposed members include the Philippines, Thailand, Liberia, Panama, Greece, the US, and France.

## 2.6 Island Development Agency (IDA) and its Initiatives

Recently, the union home minister chaired the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Island Development Agency (IDA) in New Delhi.

- **IDA** – It is the nodal agency created for **holistic development of Islands**.
- **Established in** – 2017, by Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Vision** – To develop India's maritime economy while preserving the natural eco-system of remote islands.
- **Activities** – Concept Development Plans and Detailed Master Plans are prepared for identified islands with principles of



- Sustainability, People's participation, Eco-System preservation and Determination of carrying capacity.

- **7th Meeting of IDA**

- It reviewed the progress of ongoing development initiatives in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.
- It underscored the importance of advancing solar and wind energy initiatives in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.
- It emphasized the need for a holistic approach to infrastructure projects in both island groups.
- It called on all concerned central ministries to collaborate on initiatives related to tourism, trade, and other key sectors.
- **Solar energy initiatives** – Under the 'PM Surya Ghar' scheme, 100% solar energy panels should be installed in all the houses in Andaman-Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.
- It aims to achieve 100% renewable energy through solar panels and wind mills in both islands.

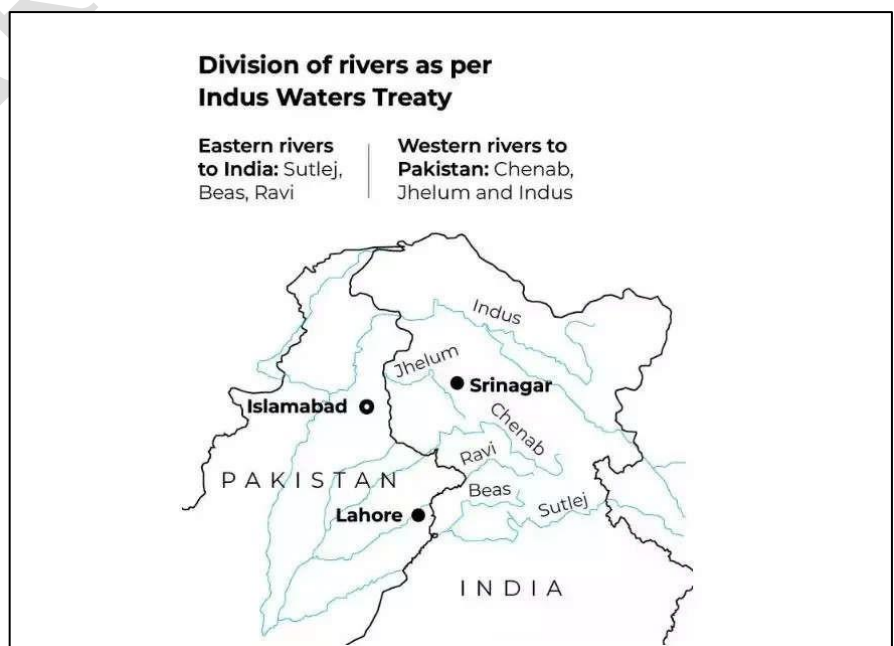
## 2.7 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)

*The Neutral Expert (NE) appointed under terms of the IWT decided that he was competent to decide on differences between India and Pakistan on the design of hydroelectric projects built on the Indus Treaty-rivers.*

- The Indus Water Treaty was signed by **India and Pakistan** on September 19, 1960 to determine the distribution of the waters of the Indus and its tributaries.
- The negotiations were arranged by the **World Bank**.
- Under the IWT,
  - India enjoys “unrestricted use” of the **3 “Eastern Rivers”** - Beas, Ravi, Sutlej and
  - Pakistan controls the **3 “Western Rivers”** - Indus, Chenab, and Jhelum.
- India gets roughly 30% and Pakistan gets 70% of the water carried by the Indus River System.
- According to Article III (1) of the Treaty, “India is under obligation to let flow” waters of the Western Rivers to Pakistan.
- Both India and Pakistan have the right to non-consumptive use and rights of drainage issues and river conservation aspects.
- Article IX of the IWT provides for a graded 3-level dispute settlement mechanism, in which disputes are first decided at the level of the Indus Commissioners of India and Pakistan.
- Then it will be escalated to the World Bank-appointed Neutral Expert, and only then to the PCA in The Hague.

### The recent ongoing dispute

- Two hydroelectric projects currently under construction in Jammu & Kashmir in India, namely
  1. The Kishenganga HEP on Kishenganga, a tributary of the Jhelum,
  2. The Ratle HEP on the Chenab.
- Although they are “run-of-the-river” projects, which generate electricity without obstructing the natural flow of the river, Pakistan has repeatedly alleged that these violate the IWT.



- Pakistan asked the World Bank to facilitate the establishment of a Court of Arbitration to consider its concerns about the designs of the two hydroelectric power projects.
- India asked for the appointment of a Neutral Expert to consider similar concerns over the two projects.
- According to Article IX of the IWT it is now escalated to World Bank-appointed Neutral Expert.

## 2.8 International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA)

*India is elected to the vice presidency of the International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA) in Singapore.*

- **Established in – 1957**, as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and a non-profit making international technical association.
- **NGO to IGO** – It officially changed its status from an NGO to an Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) based on a convention ratified by 34 states on 2024.
- It is previously known as **International Association of Lighthouse Authorities (IALA)**.
- **Motto** – Successful Voyages, Sustainable Planet.
- **Aim** – To foster the safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels, through:
  - Improvement and harmonization of aids to navigation worldwide
  - Other appropriate means, for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the environment.
- **Membership** – 200 members, 80 of which are national authorities and 60 are commercial firms.
  - **India** – Member **since 1957**.
- **Collaborated member states** - It encourages its members to work together in a common effort to harmonize aids to navigation worldwide.
- It ensures that the movements of vessels are safe, expeditious and cost effective.
- It also encourages co-operation between nations to give developing countries the opportunity to make use of new aids to navigation techniques.
- **Support SDGs** – It recommends its members and other marine aids to navigation authorities responsible for the provision of Marine Aids to Navigation endeavour to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

*India will host the IALA Council meeting, December 2025 and IALA Conference & General Assembly, September 2027 in Mumbai.*

## 2.9 Carlsberg Ridge & Afanasy-Nikitin Seamount

*Indian delegates have been visiting the International Seabed Authority (ISA), Jamaica to strengthen efforts to explore 2 deep sea regions in the Indian Ocean for mining.*

- **Carlsberg Ridge** – It is located away from India's western shores, a region between Africa and India in the Indian Ocean.
- Running along Seychelles and spanning 3, 00,000 sq kms.
- **Features** – It is the northern part of the Central Indian Ridge, a tectonic plate boundary between the African and Indian plates.
- It formed nearly 30 million years ago and seismically active with major earthquakes.
- **Mineral resources** – Rich in polymetallic nodules, and is thought to contain trace elements of copper, lead, and zinc.

### Application of Deep Sea Mined Minerals

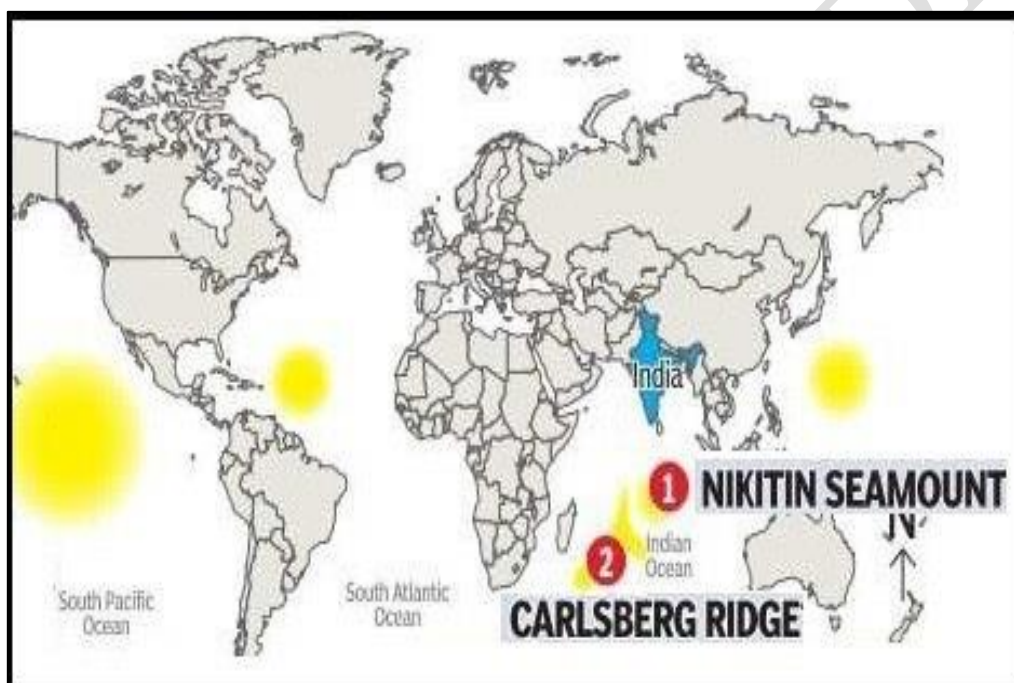
- **Cobalt** – To make Batteries and to make solar and wind power infrastructure.
- **Nickel** – In electric vehicles as it is resistant to corrosion & oxidation.
- **Manganese** – Used for lithium ion and alkaline batteries.
- **Copper** – Used in electricity.

### Afanasy-Nikitin Seamount (ANS)

- **Located in** – The Central Indian Basin, that is southeast to Sri Lanka, right below the equator, to the west of Singapore.
- It is about 3,000 km from India's coast.
- **Features** – It rises up above the sea bed but below the surface, and forming a seamount, was formed about 80 million years ago.
- It is 400 km long and 150 km wide.
- **Mineral resources** – It is a cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts that is rich in cobalt, copper, manganese, and nickel.
- **Contention** – Sri Lanka claim the Seamount as its own territory as countries in the Bay of Bengal region can utilise a different set of criteria that allows a claim of up to 500 nautical miles.

**Polymetallic Nodules** occur in lumps in the seabed of tectonically active regions. They occur as sulphides that are rich in gold and silver, as well as manganese, zinc and cobalt.

Exploration and mining in international maritime waters (beyond 200 nautical miles from coastal boundary) requires permission from the international body '**International Seabed Authority**', an autonomous organisation established under the United Nations.



## WEAPONS

### 2.10 U.S. – India Civil Nuclear Agreement

Union Minister recently chaired bilateral meeting on US-India Civil Nuclear Commerce

- It is a **legally binding** agreement between the United States and India that establishes a framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation in 2005.
- **123 Agreements** - It is also known as 123 Agreement. 123 Agreements are a prerequisite for nuclear deals between the US and other countries.
- The agreements are based on Section 123 of the United States Atomic Energy Act of 1954, which is titled "Cooperation with Other Nations".
- **Criteria**
  - To legally obligate our partners to observe specific standards in a multitude of areas including peaceful uses.

- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards (technical measures through which the IAEA seeks to verify that nuclear material is not diverted from peaceful uses)
- Physical security of nuclear materials and prohibitions on enriching, reprocessing, and transfer of specific material and equipment without our consent.
- **Civilian nuclear facilities** - India agrees to allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA), the United Nations' nuclear watchdog group, access to its civilian nuclear program.
- The IAEA Board of Governors approved India's safeguards agreement, paving the way for India's consideration at the Nuclear Suppliers Group in 2008.
- **Nuclear weapons** - The deal recognizes ***India as a nuclear weapons state***, which was a landmark occasion as the U.S. had imposed sanctions on India since 1974 after its first nuclear weapons testing.
- **Energy** - The deal is about partnering with India on its energy, and it could set the stage for India to emerge as a global power.
- **Outer space cooperation** - The deal also includes a plan for cooperation in outer space.
- As part of the overall initiative,
  - India will expand international safeguards,
  - Adhere to international nuclear and missile export guidelines,
  - Continue its voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing, and
  - Ensure that all civil nuclear trade will be used only for peaceful purposes.

## 2.11 United States Agency of International Development (USAID)

*The United States of America's Administration recently decided to put an end to United States Agency of International Development.*

- USAID is the ***lead international humanitarian and development arm*** of the US government.
- The agency was established via an executive order by President Kennedy after the US Congress in 1961 passed the Foreign Assistance Act.
- The act mandated the creation of a single agency to administer foreign aid.
- The agency provides assistance to other countries primarily by funding non-governmental organisations (NGOs), foreign governments, international organisations, or other US agencies.
- **Aim** - To alleviate poverty, provide education and healthcare, among other things.
- **Funding** - The agency managed more than \$43 billion in funds, and provided assistance to ***around 130 countries*** in FY2023.
- The top 10 recipients of USAID-managed funds in FY2023 (in descending order of funding).
  - Ukraine, Ethiopia, Jordan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Syria.
- **Employees** - USAID employed more than 10,000 people in FY2023, according to CRS, with approximately two-thirds of this workforce serving overseas.
- USAID maintains more than 60 missions around the world.
- **Significance for India** - The US has provided development and humanitarian assistance to India since 1951, when President Harry Truman signed the India Emergency Food Assistance Act.
- Economic aid from the US has also helped establish 8 agricultural universities, the first Indian Institute of Technology, and 14 regional engineering colleges.
- It also strengthened India's national programs on immunization, family planning, maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and polio.
- In 2004, the Indian government decided to reject any foreign aid that comes with conditions. This has, over time, led to a decline in the quantum of such assistance.



## SECURITY

### 2.12 Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

India's External Affairs Minister attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit 2024.

- **Background-** It is world's largest regional organization for international security and defense.
- It is a permanent intergovernmental international organization formed in 2001.
- **Origin-** It is basically an extension of the Shanghai Five Group (China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan), created in 1996.
- **Headquarters** – Beijing (China)
- **Founding nations-** Kazakhstan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
- The SCO now has 10 members, including India, Iran, and Pakistan, Belarus in addition to the founding members.
- **Observer states** – Afghanistan, and Mongolia (2 members).
- **Dialogue Partners** - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Turkey and more (14 members).
- **Significance** – The SCO consists of 40% of the world's population and 30% of global gross domestic product (GDP).
- The SCO has been an observer in the UN General Assembly since 2005.
- **Goals of the SCO**
  - To strengthen mutual trust, friendship, and good-neighbourliness between the Member States.
  - To encourage the effective cooperation between the Member States in such spheres as politics, trade, economy, science and technology, culture, education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, etc.
  - To jointly ensure and maintain peace, security and stability in the region and
  - To promote a new democratic, fair and rational international political and economic international order.

#### Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, 2024

- **Venue-** Astana, Kazakhstan.
- **Theme-** Strengthening Multilateral Dialogue—Striving Towards a Sustainable Peace and Prosperity.
- **Objective-** Addressing key regional issues and providing a platform to advocate for dialogue and diplomacy once again.
- **New SCO member- Belarus** recently upgraded to member state from Observer status in (SCO), becoming its 10<sup>th</sup> member state.

*Belarus, officially the Republic of Belarus, is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe.*

### 2.13 United States Secret Service

The US Secret Service faces intense scrutiny and investigations after the assassination attempt on the former U.S. President.

- **About-** The United States Secret Service (USSS) is a federal law enforcement agency with two primary missions i.e. protection and investigation.
- The agency plays a critical role in both national security and the integrity of the nation's financial systems.
- Its dual mission requires a unique blend of law enforcement and protection skills, making it one of the most versatile agencies in the U.S. government.
- **History-** The Secret Service was established in 1865 as a bureau in the Treasury Department to suppress widespread counterfeiting.
- **Nodal agency-** Department of Homeland Security.

- **Headquarters-** Washington, D.C.
- **Mandate-** The Secret Service is mandated to protect the vice president, the president-elect, their immediate families, former presidents, and their spouses (except when the spouse remarries) and children of former presidents until age 16, among others.
- **Functions-** It manages national special security events for significant events like presidential inaugurations and major international summits.
- It Investigates counterfeit currency and prevents counterfeiting of U.S. currency.
- It Investigates financial crimes including credit card fraud, cybercrime, and identity theft.
- It conducts threat assessments and investigations to prevent potential threats to protectives.
- **Training-** Secret Service agents undergo rigorous training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centre (FLETC) and the James J. Rowley Training Centre.

## 2.14 India-China LAC Agreement

India has announced a pact on patrolling along the LAC, which is expected to set in motion the process ultimately leading to normalization.

- India and China have made progress in resolving the military standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, with both nations reportedly agreeing to restore patrolling rights.
- **Regions** - Dapsang Plains and Demchok region, allowing their troops to resume patrolling up to their old patrolling points along the LAC.
- The frictions between the two sides these regions have long been regarded as "legacy issues" predating the Chinese incursions of 2020.
- The Dapsang Plains are located in the north of Ladakh and Demchok in the south.
- At present, 7 friction points exist in eastern Ladakh.
- These include PP 14 (Galwan), PP 15 (Hot Springs), PP 17A (Gogra), the north and south banks of Pangong Tso, the Dapsang Plains, and Charding Nullah in Demchok.
- The agreement allows Indian troops access to patrolling points (PP) 10 to 13 in the Dapsang Plains, while in Demchok, patrolling will extend to Charding Nullah.
- Mutual agreements have reportedly been reached for the eastern theatre as well, particularly in sensitive areas of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Friction points like Galwan Valley and Pangong Tso remain unchanged.
- Further discussions on other sectors in the eastern region will also take place between the two sides at a later stage.
- Moreover, both sides will exchange their patrol schedules with each other.
- In case of conflicting dates or times, adjustments will reportedly be made by mutual consent.



## OTHERS

## 2.15 World Heritage Committee

India is hosting the World Heritage Committee Meeting for the 1<sup>st</sup> time at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

- **Aim-** It is responsible for managing all matters on World Heritage and deciding on sites to be inscribed on the World Heritage list.
- It is a committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

- **Meet** – The committee meets **annually**.
- **Objective** – Credibility, Conservation, Capacity building, Communication and Communities.
- **Powers** – The Committee is responsible for implementing the World Heritage Convention, defines its use, and allocates financial assistance upon requests from States Parties.
- It has the final say on whether a property is inscribed on the World Heritage List.
- It examines reports on the conservation of inscribed properties and asks States Parties to act when properties are not being properly managed.
- It also decides on the inscription or deletion of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- **Representation** – It consists of representatives from 21 of the States Parties to the Convention elected by their General Assembly.
- **Bureau of the World Heritage Committee** – The Bureau consists of 7 States Parties elected annually by the Committee: a **chairperson, 5 Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur**.
- The Bureau of the Committee coordinates the work of the Committee and fixes the dates, hours and order of business of meetings.
- **Tenure**- Committee member's term of office is for **6 years**, but most States Parties choose voluntarily to be Members of the Committee for only 4 years, to allow other States Parties to be on the Committee.

## 2.16 International Energy Agency (IEA)

*Recently, the International Energy Agency (IEA) has called the policy makers and industry to collaborate on a vision for meeting the fast-growing demand for electricity from data centers.*

- IEA is an **international intergovernmental organization** based in Paris to ensure the **security of oil supplies**.
- It is the world's leading energy authority.
- **Founded in** – 1974, in response to the 1973 oil crisis.
- **Headquarters** – Paris, France.
- **Mission** – Works with governments and industry to shape a secure and sustainable energy future for all.
- **Working** – In recent years, the IEA has also focused on renewable energy and initiatives focused on environmental protection and stopping climate change.
- It operates within broader framework of Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD).
- **Membership** – Only **OECD member countries can join as the IEA member**.
- There are 31 member countries, 13 association countries and 4 countries currently seeking IEA membership are,
  - Chile, Colombia, Israel and Costa Rica.
- The flagship program is the International Energy Program, which its members agree to withhold large stocks of oil in order to respond to any future unforeseen disruption in the oil supply.
- Under this agreement, IEA member nations are required to store the equivalent of at least 90 days' worth of oil, measured according to their previous year's net oil imports.
- In the event of a sudden disruption to supply, the IEA can help coordinate among its member nations, which could increase supply by releasing some of their oil reserves.
- It providing authoritative analysis, data, policy recommendations, and real-world solutions to countries.
- It also providing input on energy and climate policy by its regular participation in global forum, which includes G7 and G20 summits and the ASEAN and APEC meetings.
- It guides countries to build net-zero emission energy systems, to comply internationally agreed climate goals.
- **Funded by** – Its member countries and voluntarily by non-member countries and stakeholders such as energy companies and private donations.

*Initially India **joined the IEA family** as an Associate country in 2017.*

*The IEA will launch a new **AI-based chatbot** for users to explore the 2024 edition of the Agency's flagship World Energy Outlook report.*

## • Important reports

- World Energy Outlook.
- Energy Technology Perspectives (ETP).
- Gas Market Report.
- Global Electric Vehicles (EV) Outlook.
- Advancing Clean Technology Manufacturing.

## 2.17 Global Energy Efficiency Alliance

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) launched the Global Energy Efficiency Alliance at COP29, hosted in Azerbaijan.

- **Aim** – To double global energy efficiency rates by 2030 and contribute to significant emission reductions.
- This initiative builds on the 'UAE Consensus' from COP28.
- It encourages strategic **public-private partnerships** and bolsters investments in energy efficiency initiatives.
- The UAE plans to lead the alliance by sharing its expertise in energy efficiency, fostering knowledge transfer, and building effective partnership models with the private sector.
- **Features** – It is designed to support the reduction of carbon emissions and the sustainable use of natural resources through knowledge sharing, capacity building, and standardization efforts.
- It will focus on compiling and disseminating best practices, with a particular emphasis on assisting African nations.
- This support will extend to developing financing options and technological solutions vital for the continent's progress in energy sustainability.

*UAE Consensus is a commitment that brings together countries, organizations, and corporations to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable resource management.*

### Energy Efficiency Global Alliance (EEGA)

- It is **an international coalition** of government, corporate, and NGO leaders that champions faster and deeper implementation of energy efficiency solutions to meet global energy and climate goals
- The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that energy efficiency could provide more than 40% of the emissions abatement required by 2040 to be in line with the Paris Agreement (IEA, 2018).
- It meets annually at the EE Global Forum to discuss global energy efficiency needs and opportunities, and to coordinate action.

## 2.18 Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty

Recently, the G20 Leaders' Summit launched an initiative Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

- It is a **voluntary coalition** leveraging UN bodies and other organizations for its operations, without having itself a legal personality. The Alliance is conceived as a country-driven initiative.
- **Aim** – To support and accelerate efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty (SDGs 1 and 2) while reducing inequalities (SDG 10) by 2030.
- **3 Pillars**
  - **National** – Coordination of specific public policies.
  - **Financial** – Large-scale resource mobilization.
  - **Knowledge** – Integration of data and technologies for evidence-based solutions.
- **Need** – In 2015, all 193 UN Member States adopted the '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'.

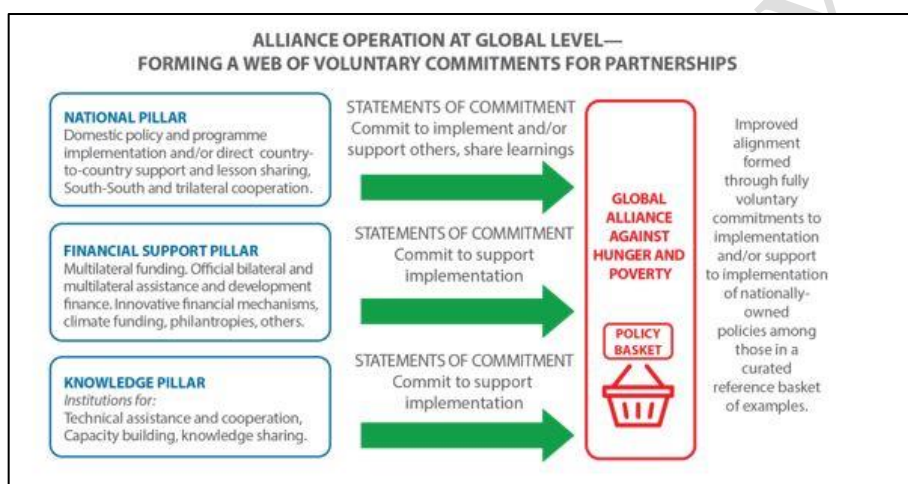
*622 million people will live below the extreme poverty line of \$ 2.15 per day by 2030.*



- **Aim** – To end poverty and hunger, and achieve food security and improved nutrition by 2030.
- **Policy Basket** – It draws from Brazil's experience and other best practices and approaches.
- **Types** – Policies and programs that are included by objective criteria:
  - Well-defined policy instruments, with a clear scope
  - Implemented/implementable by governments
  - Evidence-based
  - Primarily reaching out to people persons experiencing poverty and hunger
  - Contributing primarily to reach Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2.

- **Commitments**

- 500 million people through income support programs by 2030.
- Provide school meals to 150 million children in countries with high child hunger rates.
- Effective Mobilization of billions of dollars through multilateral banks for anti-poverty programs.



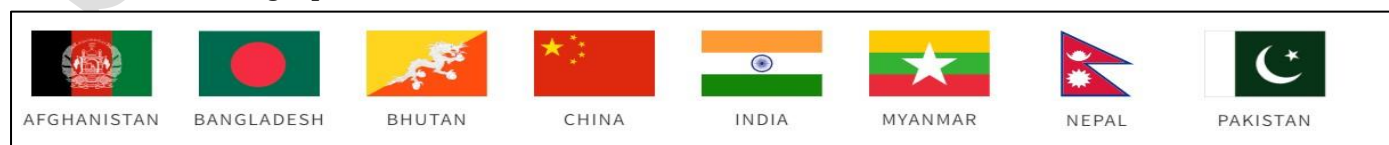
- Countries can join the Alliance by submitting a Statement of Commitment detailing how a state plans to support the initiative.
- **Joined Members – 81 countries (including India)**, 26 international organisations, 9 financial institutions, and 31 philanthropic foundations and non-governmental organisations.
- **Funding** - The \$2-3 million required annually for its operations will come from member countries and institutions such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNICEF and the World Bank.
- The Alliance may be headquartered in Brasilia, or some other Global South country. It will also likely have an office at the FAO headquarters in Rome.

*Statements of Commitment is mean to express a robust declaration of intent by the Alliance's members, acting as a catalyst of positive change. They are not legally binding.*

## 2.19 International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

ICIMOD recently launches air quality dashboard to track and forecast pollution across Indo-Gangetic plain.

- ICIMOD is an **intergovernmental organization** that works to improve the lives of people in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region and protect the resources and culture that define it.
- **Founded in** - 1983.
- **Location** - ICIMOD is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- **Associated countries** – 8 regional countries associated with ICIMOD because Hindu Kush Himalaya Mountain range spans those countries.



- **Working**
  - Promoting the development of a sustainable mountain ecosystem
  - Improving the living standards of people in the mountains
  - Conserving and managing the region's biodiversity

- Preparing for disasters and monitoring the environment
- **Funding** - ICIMOD's activities are supported by
  - The governments of Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland
  - Regional member countries
  - Over thirty project co-financing donors
- **India's role in ICIMOD** - India is a founding member country of ICIMOD. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is the nodal Ministry in India.
- **Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) mountain range** – The HKH region extends 3,500 km over all or part of 8 countries from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east.
- It is the source of **10 large Asian river systems**
- It provides water, ecosystem services, and the basis for livelihoods to a population of around 240 million people in the region.
- The basins of these rivers provide water to **1.9 billion people, a 4<sup>th</sup> of the world's population**.
- A considerable volume of water resources is stored as snow & glacier ice in HKH.
- Cryosphere components including permafrost and glacial lakes provide various ecosystem services for mountain and downstream communities.

#### River system origins from HKH

Amu Darya  
Indus  
Ganges  
Brahmaputra  
Irrawaddy  
Salween (Nu)  
Mekong (Lancang)  
Yangtse (Jinsha)  
Yellow River (Huanghe)  
Tarim (Dayan)

### 3. INTERNATIONAL GROUPS 2024

#### 3.1 G20

- It is an international forum that brings together the world's leading industrialized and emerging economies.
- **Launch-** Established in 1999 after the Asian financial crisis as a regular forum for Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors.
- **Objectives-**
  - Policy coordination between its members to achieve global economic stability, sustainable growth
  - To promote financial regulations that reduce risks and prevent future financial crises
  - To create a new international financial architecture
- **Member** – Earlier, it comprises of 19 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, US, Russia, Australia, Canada, Saudi Arabia, India, South Africa, Turkey, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, China and Indonesia) and European Union.
- The group does not have permanent secretariat.
- **Presidency** - The President is chosen by a rotation system amongst the member countries.


G20	
Founded in	1999
India's membership	India is a member
Chair	India (2023)

The African Union, the 55-member bloc of African nations, is now a permanent member of the G20. The group now comprises 19 countries and two regional organisations.

European Union\*    **African Union\***

\*Regional Organisations

- **Troika** – It comprises of past, present, and future presidents. Troika 2023 includes Indonesia, India, and Brazil.
- **Guest** – Every year, the host country chooses other guests.
- Spain always participates in the G20 summits.
- **Working structure-**
  - **Finance track-** Meets 4 times in a year.
  - **Sherpa track-** Established after the inception of G20 Leaders' Summit in 2008. It covers non-financial issues.
  - **Engagement groups-** An unofficial track comprising non-government participants from each member country.

India's G20 Presidency	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India held the Presidency of G20 from <b><u>Dec 2022 to 30 Nov 2023</u></b>.</li> <li>• <b>Theme</b> - One Earth One Family One Future.</li> <li>• It means Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the whole earth is a family).</li> <li>• The theme is drawn from the <b><i>Maha Upanishad</i></b>.</li> <li>• <b>Guest countries-</b> Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain and UAE</li> </ul>	 <b>भारत 2023 INDIA</b> <b>ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE</b>



#### Key outcomes of New Delhi Declaration

- India achieved a unanimous "**New Delhi Leaders' Summit Declaration**" on developmental and geopolitical matters.
- The declaration reflects India's motto of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas" –“Together with all, Development for all, Trust of all”, which resonates with the spirit of multilateralism and inclusiveness.


Outcomes	Description	Significance
<b><u>Russia-Ukraine War</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G20 nations agreed that states cannot grab territory by force and highlighted the suffering of the people of Ukraine, but avoided direct criticism of Russia for the war.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India along with Brazil, Indonesia and South Africa, played a key role in avoiding a fracturing of the G20 over the Ukraine conflict, reflecting the growing power of the Global South developing nations in the group.</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusion of African Union</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 55-member African Union was formally made permanent member of the G20, on par with the European Union, in order to make the grouping more representative.</li> <li>• Until now only South Africa was a member of G20.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The entry of the AU would provide greater voice to the Global South within the G20 where the G7 countries have long played a dominant role.</li> </ul>
<b>India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEE-EC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A multinational rail and shipping project linking India with the Middle East and Europe has been announced.</li> <li>• The corridor would include <u>India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan, Israel and European Union</u>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It will challenge China's economic ambitions in the region.</li> <li>• It aims to boost trade, deliver energy resources and improve digital connectivity.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The G20 leaders agreed to pursue <i>tripling renewable energy capacity globally by 2030</i> and accepted the need to phase-down unabated coal power.</li> <li>• It stressed the urgency of mobilizing “US\$5.8-5.9 trillion in the pre-2030 period for developing countries” and “US\$4 trillion per year for clean energy technologies by 2030.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It will help countries to attain net-zero emissions by 2050.</li> </ul>

<b>Green Development Pact</b>	<p>The declaration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Envisages a green development pact</li> <li>Endorses high-level principles on lifestyle</li> <li>Voluntary principles of hydrogen</li> <li><i>Chennai principles</i> for a sustainable resilient blue economy</li> <li><i>Deccan principles</i> on food security and nutrition among others</li> </ul>	<p>Objectives of this move involves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable development</li> <li>Resilient blue economy</li> <li>Food security and nutrition</li> <li>Climate financing</li> </ul>
<b>Global bio fuel alliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is an alliance driven by <i>India, the United States, and Brazil</i>, is a concerted effort to address pressing energy and economic challenges through sustainable biofuels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The inauguration of the <a href="#">Global Biofuel Alliance</a> at the G20 Summit signifies a pivotal moment in the pursuit of sustainable energy solutions.</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A <i>voluntary framework for Systems of Digital Public Infrastructure</i> for the development, deployment and governance of DPI has been unanimously accepted.</li> <li>The declaration also mentions the approval of India's plan to build and maintain <i>Global Digital Public Infrastructure Repository</i>.</li> <li>The declaration takes note of the proposal to create <i>One Future Alliance</i>, a voluntary initiative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The repository will be a virtual stack where non-G20 and G-20 countries can voluntarily share their open-source mechanisms.</li> <li>One Future Alliance will assist and fund the implementation of digital public infrastructure in low- and middle-income countries.</li> </ul>
<b>Reform of Multilateral Development Banks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The member countries endorsed the G20 Roadmap for Implementing the Recommendations of the G20 Independent Review of MDBs Capital Adequacy Frameworks and called for its implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Capital Adequacy Frameworks (CAF) recommendations are focused on enabling MDBs to use the existing resources effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>G20 Satellite Mission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>India has proposed to launch the <a href="#">G20 satellite mission</a> for environment and climate observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It aims to help the countries of Global South for environment and climate observation.</li> </ul>

### Cultural values reflected in G20 summit

Cultural Heritages	Significance
<p><b>Nataraja Sculpture</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The World's tallest 27-foot Nataraja sculpture has been installed at Bharat Mandapam, venue of the G20 Leaders' Summit.</li> <li><b>Metal</b> - The Bharat Mandapam Nataraja statue is an <i>ashtadhatu</i> (8-metal alloy).</li> <li>The eight metals include copper, zinc and lead with traces of tin, silver, gold and mercury, with iron.</li> <li><b>Crafting process</b> - <i>Lost-wax</i> casting method, indigenous to the Chola era.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Konark wheel</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A replica of Konark Wheel from the <i>Sun temple in Odisha</i> served as the backdrop of Indian Prime Minister's welcome handshake with G20 leaders.</li> <li>Konark Wheel was built during the 13<sup>th</sup> century under the reign of King Narasimhadeva-I of the <i>Eastern Ganga dynasty</i>.</li> <li>The wheel with 24 spokes representing the wheels of Lord Surya's sun chariot.</li> <li>The wheel has been adapted in the Indian National Flag.</li> <li>Its rotating motion symbolizes time, Kaalchakra, as well as progress and continuous change.</li> <li>Konark sun temple, an example of <i>Kalinga architecture</i>, is a <i>UNESCO World Heritage Site</i>.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Nalanda University</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Backdrop of Nalanda, a UNESCO World Heritage site, welcomed delegates for the President's dinner.</li> <li>• Nalanda was an acclaimed <b><u>Mahavihara</u></b>, a large Buddhist monastery in the kingdom of Magadha (modern-day Bihar).</li> <li>• It is an ancient centre of higher learning, founded by <b><u>Kumargupta I</u></b> of the Gupta dynasty in 5th century CE.</li> <li>• It was patronized by various rulers including King Harshavardhana of Kannauj (7th century CE) and the Pala rulers (8th – 12th century CE).</li> <li>• The library of Nalanda is known as Dharma Gunj (Mountain of Truth) or Dharmagañja (Treasury of Truth).</li> </ul>
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### Gifts given to the world leaders in the G20 Summit

The Gifts	Significance
<p><b>Sheeshamwood Sandook with Brass Patti</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a strong box made of solid old wood or metal, with a lid on top and embellishments all over.</li> <li>• The Sandook was handcrafted using Sheesham (Indian Rosewood), which is valued for its strength, durability, distinctive grain patterns and rich colour.</li> <li>• The brass <i>patti</i> (strip) was delicately etched and embedded on to the wood.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kashmiri Saffron</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Kashmiri</u></b> Saffron's intense aromatic profile, vibrant colour and unmatched potency sets it apart.</li> <li>• This is due to the crisp air, abundant sunlight and well-drained soil of Kashmir, which yields saffron with a higher concentration of essential oils.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pekoe Darjeeling &amp; Nilgiri Tea</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pekoe <b><u>Darjeeling</u></b> and <b><u>Nilgiri</u></b> Tea are two illustrious gems from India's tea tapestry, epitomizing the delicate art of tea cultivation and infusion.</li> <li>• Nilgiri Tea comes from the most spectacular mountain range in southern India, cultivated amidst the mountains' lush terrain at an elevation of 1000-3000 ft.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Araku Coffee</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Araku Coffee is the world's first terroir mapped coffee, grown on organic plantations in the Araku Valley of <b><u>Andhra Pradesh</u></b>.</li> <li>• Araku Coffee is known for its unique texture and a symphony of flavours.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sundarbans Honey</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sundarbans is home to wild colonies of honeybees and is less viscous than other honey.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kashmiri Pashmina</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Kashmiri, it refers to the raw unspun wool of the Changthangi goat (the world's most unique Cashmere goat) found only at a height of 14,000 feet above sea level.</li> <li>• In ancient courts, Pashmina was used as an indicator of rank and nobility.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Zighrana Ittar</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zighrana Ittar is a masterpiece of fragrance from Kannauj in <b><u>Uttar Pradesh</u></b>.</li> <li>• Ittar (perfume) is an essential oil derived from botanical sources.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Khadi Scarf</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synonymous with Mahatma Gandhi, khadi is an eco-friendly clothing material most beloved for its beautiful texture and versatility throughout the seasons.</li> <li>• It is also one of the most important symbols of India's freedom struggle.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Banarasi silk stole</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banarasi silk stoles are India's elegant treasures.</li> <li>• Handcrafted in <b><u>Varanasi</u></b>, luxurious silk threads are used to create intricate patterns, reflecting the city's cultural richness and its weaving heritage.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assam stole</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assam stoles are traditional pieces of clothing crafted using <b><u>Muga silk</u></b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kanchivaram stole</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stole using pure mulberry silk threads crafted in <b><u>Tamil Nadu</u></b>.</li> </ul>

### Ikkat stole

- Stole by artisans of **Odisha** using **mulberry silk** with the exquisite Ikkat technique.
- 'Tkat' is a meticulous dyeing process on silk or cotton.

- **2024 Presidency**- India has formally handed over the G20 presidency to **Brazil**.
- The next G20 summit is in **Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2024**, with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva taking over the presidency.

## 3.2 SAARC

- South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of nations in South Asia.
- **Members** - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- **Secretariat** - Kathmandu, Nepal.
- It launched the **South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA)** in 2006.
- States with observer status include Australia, China, European Union, Iran, Japan, Mauritius, Myanmar, South Korea and United States.
- **SAARC Development Fund** - It was created by SAARC member states in 2010 to promote welfare of the people of SAARC region, improve their quality of life, and accelerate economic growth, social progress and poverty alleviation in the region.
- It has an authorized capital of \$1.5 billion and a total capital base of \$500 million.

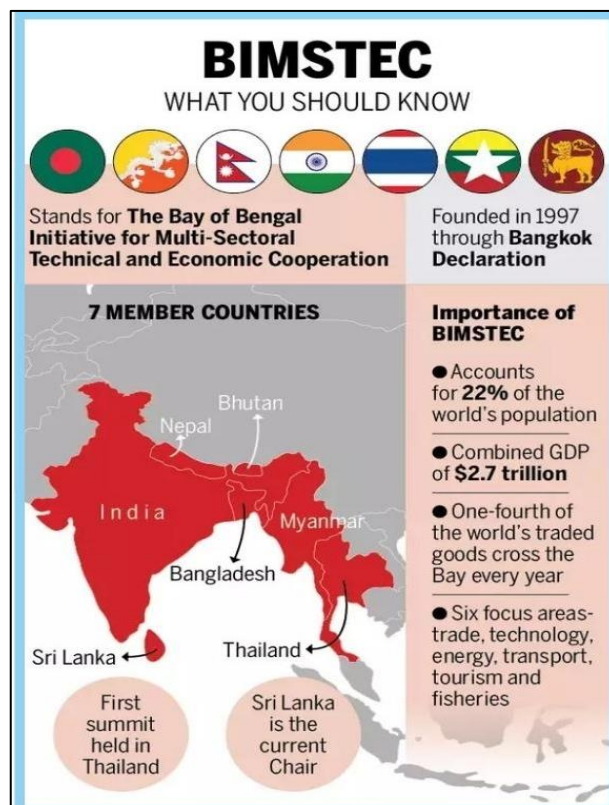
SAARC	
Founded in	1985
Secretariat	Kathmandu, Nepal
India's membership	India is a member



## 3.3 BIMSTEC

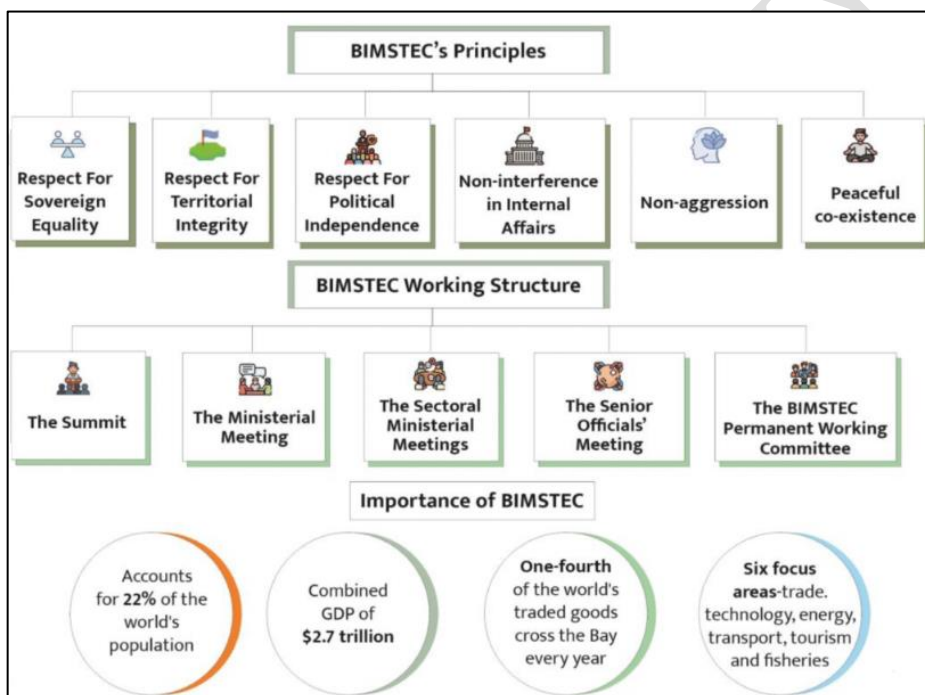
- **BIMSTEC** – Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.
- It is a regional organization group of littoral countries encircling the Bay of Bengal with own flag and emblem.
- **Established in** – 1997 with the signing of the **Bangkok Declaration**.
- 2022 marked the **25th anniversary of BISTEC** formation.
- **Secretariat at** – Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- **Aim** – To foster **economic and social development** among member countries.
- **Members** – 7 members (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand).
- It includes 5 members from **SAARC** and 2 from **ASEAN**.
- BIMSTEC was initially known as BIST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand- Economic cooperation) before the joining of Myanmar (1997), Bhutan (2004) and Nepal (2004).
- **BIMSTEC Charter** – It was signed and adopted during the fifth BIMSTEC Summit in Sri Lanka in 2022.

### Various BIMSTEC Centres



- **BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC)** – It is to be housed in the premises of the Central Power Research Institute in **Bengaluru, India**.
- It will also function as the Secretariat of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Coordination Committee.
- **BIMSTEC Centre on Weather and Climate** - It is located in the National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) in **Uttar Pradesh, India**.
- **BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory** – In 2006, it was proposed for the establishment of BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission (BCIC) and the BIMTEC Cultural Industries Observatory (BCIO) in **Bhutan**.
- **BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility** – The Memorandum of Association (MoA) on the establishment was signed in 2022 during the 5<sup>th</sup> BIMSTEC Summit but its entry into force is awaited.
- 6<sup>th</sup> BIMSTEC summit under the chairmanship of Thailand will be held in 2024 with promising features like
  - Adoption of the BIMSTEC Rules of Procedure
  - Adoption of the BIMSTEC Maritime Cooperation Agreement (BMCA)
  - Launching of BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030

BIMSTEC	
Founded in	1997
Secretariat	Dhaka, Bangladesh
India's membership	India is a member



### 3.4 BIMSTEC Charter

*BIMSTEC Charter comes into force after Nepal's ratification.*

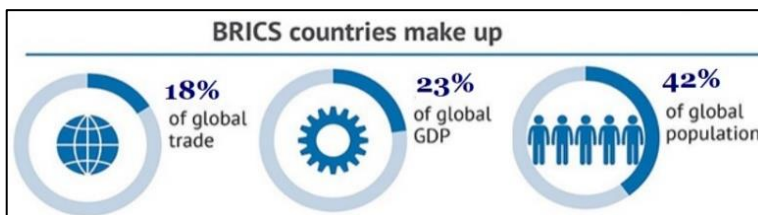
- It is a testament to the shared commitment of the BIMSTEC Members to promote regional cooperation in various sectors.
- **Signed in** – **2022, at the 5<sup>th</sup> BIMSTEC summit** held virtually in Colombo, Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka was the chair).
- **Came into force in** – **2024**, after Nepal's ratification, as it required every member country to ratify to come into force.
- **Significance** – Gives the organisation a legal personality and establishes an institutional framework.
- All decisions will be taken by consensus among current members.
- Conducting the leaders' summit every 2 years and indicates the procedure for the rotational chairmanship of the organisation.
- Establishes a mechanism for admitting new members & observers.
- Enables structured diplomatic dialogue with other groupings and countries.
- **Significance for India** – It is in line with India's willingness to shift its focus from SAARC to BIMSTEC as the latter is in greater harmony with India's 'Act East' policy.
- It reaffirms India's commitment to a prosperous, peaceful and sustainable neighbourhood.

*BIMSTEC Charter came into force in the backdrop of stalled status of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which last time met in Kathmandu during November 2014.*



### 3.5 BRICS

- Originally conceived as BRIC by Jim O'Neill, the grouping consisted of Brazil, Russia, India, and China.
- Launch-** It was launched by a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Russia, India and China in 2006.
- BRIC turned into BRICS in 2010, with the entry of South Africa.
- Members-** Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.



- Now it has admitted more members (**Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Ethiopia**).
- Chair-** Chaired by member countries in rotational basis.
- First summit-** Held in Yekaterinburg in 2009.
  - In **Fortaleza declaration**, **New Development Bank** was created in 2015 worth 100 bn dollars.

BRICS	
Founded in	2009
Headquarters	Shanghai, China
India's membership	India is a member

#### BRICS Summit 2023

- It is the first in-person summit since 2019, which meets at an important geopolitical and geo-economic moment.
- It is first in-person meeting since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.
- South Africa** is the chair for 2023.
- Agenda-** 'BRICS in Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism'.
- Participation in dialogues-** BRICS-Africa Outreach, BRICS Plus Dialogue
- New Members** – In the ongoing summit at Johannesburg, South Africa, BRICS has invited **Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Egypt, and Ethiopia** to be its new members.
  - Argentina formally rejects BRICS membership recently.
- Their membership will begin in January, 2024.
- With the additions, it will represent **almost half the world's population**, and will include three of the world's biggest oil producers, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Iran.

### 3.6 BBIN

- In 1996, **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal**, formed the **South Asian Growth Quadrangle** to boost energy and power, trade and investment, transport, and tourism.
- They requested ADB's assistance.
- The addition of Maldives and Sri Lanka to this group lead to the creation of the SASEC Program, leaving the four-party idle.
- In 2014, when **SAARC Motor Vehicle Agreement** failed due to rejection by Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal Initiative was formulated to push the agenda.
- The landmark BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement was signed by Transport Ministers of the BBIN in 2015.
- It will allow seamless movement of passenger and cargo vehicles among the four countries.

BBIN	
Founded in	2015
India's membership	India is a member





- Bangladesh, India and Nepal have agreed on the operating procedures for passenger vehicle movement in the sub-region under the MVA.
- Bhutan did not ratify it, demanding a cap on vehicles entering its territory for some time.
- Three signatory countries have anyway agreed to start implementation of the MVA among them.

### 3.7 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

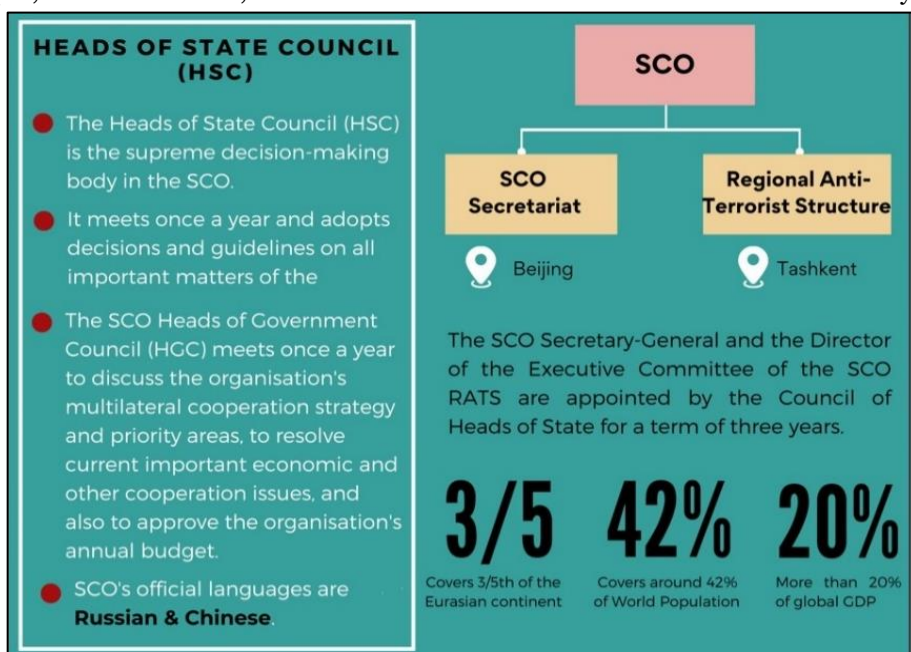
- It is a Eurasian political, economic, and military organisation which was founded by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
- **Current member states (9)** - China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan and **Iran (latest addition)**.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization	
<b>Founded in</b>	2001
<b>Headquarters</b>	Beijing, China
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is a member</b>

- **Observer States (4)** - Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia.
- **Dialogue Partners (6)** - Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, Sri Lanka.
- The official working languages of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation are Chinese and Russian.
- The SCO Secretariat, based in **Beijing**, is the main permanent executive body of the SCO
- The Council of Heads of State is the top decision-making body in the SCO.
- The **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)**, headquartered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, is a permanent organ of the SCO which serves to promote cooperation of member states against terrorism, separatism and extremism.



- All SCO members, except for China, India & Pakistan, are also members of the Eurasian Economic Community.
- The original purpose of the SCO was to serve as a counterbalance to NATO and in particular to avoid conflicts that would allow the United States to intervene in areas bordering both Russia and China.
- **SCO Summit** - The SCO Summit 2022 held at Samarkand, Uzbekistan.
- The Samarkand declaration adopted by the Summit pointed out the series of challenges and headwinds to be faced by humanity in the 21st century.
- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres suggested the **Acceleration Agenda** at the



SCO summit address to end the dependence on fossil fuels while providing universal, affordable and sustainable energy for all.

- **23<sup>rd</sup> SCO Summit** - The 23<sup>rd</sup> SCO meeting of the council of heads of the member states was held virtually.
- This is the first time **India** holds the presidency of the SCO summit.
- **Theme - SECURE**- Security, Economic development, Connectivity, Unity, Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and Environmental protection.
- India has created **5 new pillars** and focus areas of cooperation in SCO –
  - Startups and Innovation
  - Traditional Medicine
  - Digital Inclusion
  - Youth Empowerment
  - Shared Buddhist Heritage
- 24<sup>th</sup> SCO chair is **Kazakhstan** and the summit is to take place in Astana.

### 3.8 BASIC

- The BASIC group was formed as the result of an agreement signed by the 4 countries (**Brazil, South Africa, India, & China**) in 2009.
- The signatories committed to act together at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, commonly known as the Copenhagen Summit.
- BASIC is one of several groups of nations working together to fight climate change and carry out negotiations within the UNFCCC.



### 3.9 I2U2

- Called as the “**West Asian Quad**” & comprises of **India, Israel, the U.S., and the UAE**.
- This idea was articulated by U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan.
- **Aim** - To discuss common areas of mutual interest, to strengthen the economic partnership in trade and investment in our respective regions and beyond.
- To encourage joint investments in water, energy, transportation, space, health, and food security.
- With the help of private sector capital and expertise, the countries will look to
  1. Modernise infrastructure,
  2. Explore low carbon development avenues for industries,
  3. Improve public health, and
  4. Promote the development of critical emerging and green technologies.
- Both the I2U2 and the Abraham Accords will focus on increasing Israel's integration into the region.



#### Abraham Accord

- **Signed in** – 2020
- **Agreement between** - UAE, Bahrain, Israel
- **Mediated by** – The US
- **Objective**- To normalise ties with Israel.
- Following the signing of Abraham Accords, 5 Arab states (**Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Morocco, and Sudan**) have established diplomatic ties with Israel.

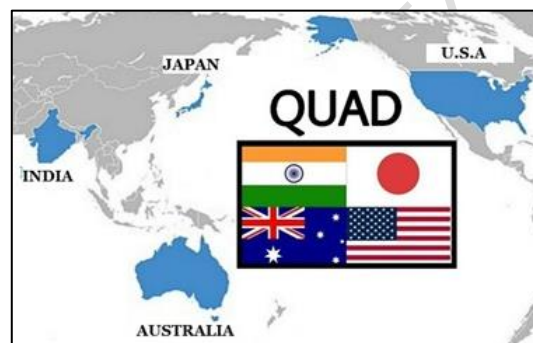
### 3.10 Quad

- The Quadrilateral Group consisting of **India, Australia, Japan and the U.S.** was formed in 2017.
- It aims to strengthen the defence and security cooperation amongst the four countries.

- The idea was originally conceived in 2007 by the former Japan's Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe.
- It has a shared objective to ensure and support a **"free, open and prosperous" Indo-Pacific region.**
- The Quad leaders held their first formal summit in 2021.
- In the second meeting that was held in Tokyo in 2022, the US-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (**iCET**) was unveiled.

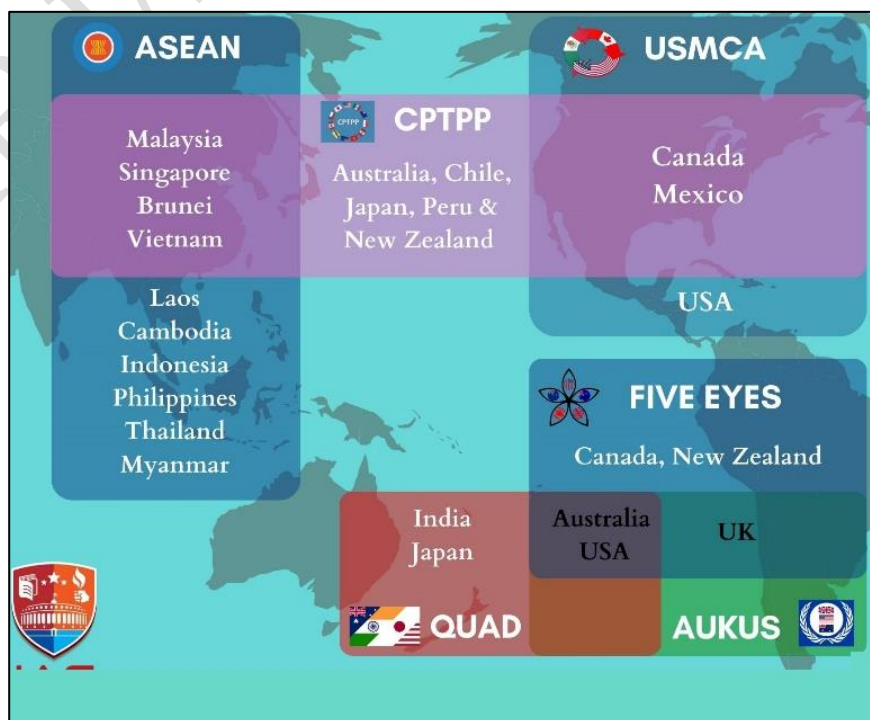
### Outcomes of QUAD 2023 Summit

- The Leaders of the QUAD countries participated in person in the Summit held at **Tokyo, Japan.**
- **Clean Energy Supply Chains Initiative** to facilitate research and development and support the Indo-Pacific's energy transition.
- The **Quad Principles of Clean Energy Supply Chains** were approved to guide engagement with the region on clean energy supply chain development.
- **'Quad Infrastructure Fellowships Programme'** to support policy makers and practitioners in the region to design, build and manage sustainable and viable infrastructure in their countries.
- **'Partnership for Cable Connectivity and Resilience'** to leverage QUAD's collective expertise in undersea cables to secure and diversify these critical networks.
- QUAD support for a small-scale ORAN deployment in **Palau**, the first in the Pacific region. They also released the ORAN Security Report to support industry investment in open, interoperable and secure telecom platforms.
- **QUAD Investors' Network (QUIN)** has been launched as a private sector led platform to facilitate investments in strategic technologies.
- The **Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness**, announced at 2022 Summit had notable progress.



### 3.11 AUKUS

- In September **2021**, leaders of **Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States** announced the creation of an enhanced trilateral security partnership called "AUKUS."
- It is intended to strengthen the ability of each government to support security and defence interests, building on longstanding and ongoing bilateral ties.
- It will promote deeper information sharing and technology sharing; and foster deeper integration of security.
- It will also promote defence-related science, technology, industrial bases and supply chains.
- **India is not a part** of this grouping.



### 3.12 Five Eyes Alliance

- The Five Eyes is an intelligence alliance consisting of the **US, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.**



- The origins of the Five Eyes can be traced back to the informal meetings between the US and UK code-breakers during the World War II.
- After the World War II, Britain-USA continue to be and the UKUSA agreement was signed in 1946.
- It was later expanded to include Canada in 1948, and Australia and New Zealand in 1956, thereby creating the Five Eyes alliance, partly due to past shared Commonwealth heritage.
- **Working** – The Five Eyes members use communications methods, including signals intelligence (SIGINT), to monitor the citizens of other member countries.
- In 2016, the Five Eyes Intelligence Oversight and Review Council came into being.
- **Recent issue** – The intelligence shared among Five Eyes partners had prompted Canadian Prime Minister's allegations against India.

***SIGINT** is intelligence derived from electronic signals and systems used by foreign targets, such as communications systems, radars, and weapons systems that provides a vital window for our nation into foreign adversaries' capabilities, actions, and intentions.*


### 3.13 Collective Security Treaty Organization

- When the Cold War drew to a close in 1991, the Warsaw Pact, an alliance of 8 socialist states dissolved.
- Less than a year later, Russia and five of its allies in the Commonwealth of Independent States, which was a loose club of post-Soviet countries, signed a new Collective Security Treaty, which came into force in 1994.
- In 2002, as Central Asia loomed larger in geopolitics, it declared itself the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, a full-blown intergovernmental military alliance.
- Also known as the **"Tashkent Pact" or "Tashkent Treaty"**.
- It has 6 members - Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. Uzbekistan had quit the alliance in 2012.
- HQ – **Moscow**.
- It aims to
  1. To strengthen peace, international and regional security including cybersecurity and stability
  2. To protect on a collective basis of the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the members
- The Article 4 of CSTO is very similar to **NATO's Article 5**.

CSTO	
Founded in	1992
Headquarters	Moscow, Russia
India's membership	<b>India is a not a member</b>

### 3.14 North Atlantic Treaty Organization

- It was founded in **1949** as a mutual-defence and political alliance.
- It is an intergovernmental political and military alliance setup by the US, Canada, and several western European nations to ensure collective security against Soviet Union.
- HQ - **Brussels, Belgium**.
- The key member States included the United States, Canada, and American allies in Europe.
- NATO was the US's first peacetime military alliance outside the western hemisphere.
- Core tasks - collective defence, crisis-management and cooperative security.
- Members of NATO are committed to **mutual defence** in response to an attack by any external party.
- **Collective defence** lies at the very heart of NATO, "a unique and enduring principle that binds its members together, committing them to protect each other and setting a spirit of solidarity within the Alliance".
- This is laid out in **Article 5** of the North Atlantic Treaty, the founding treaty of NATO.

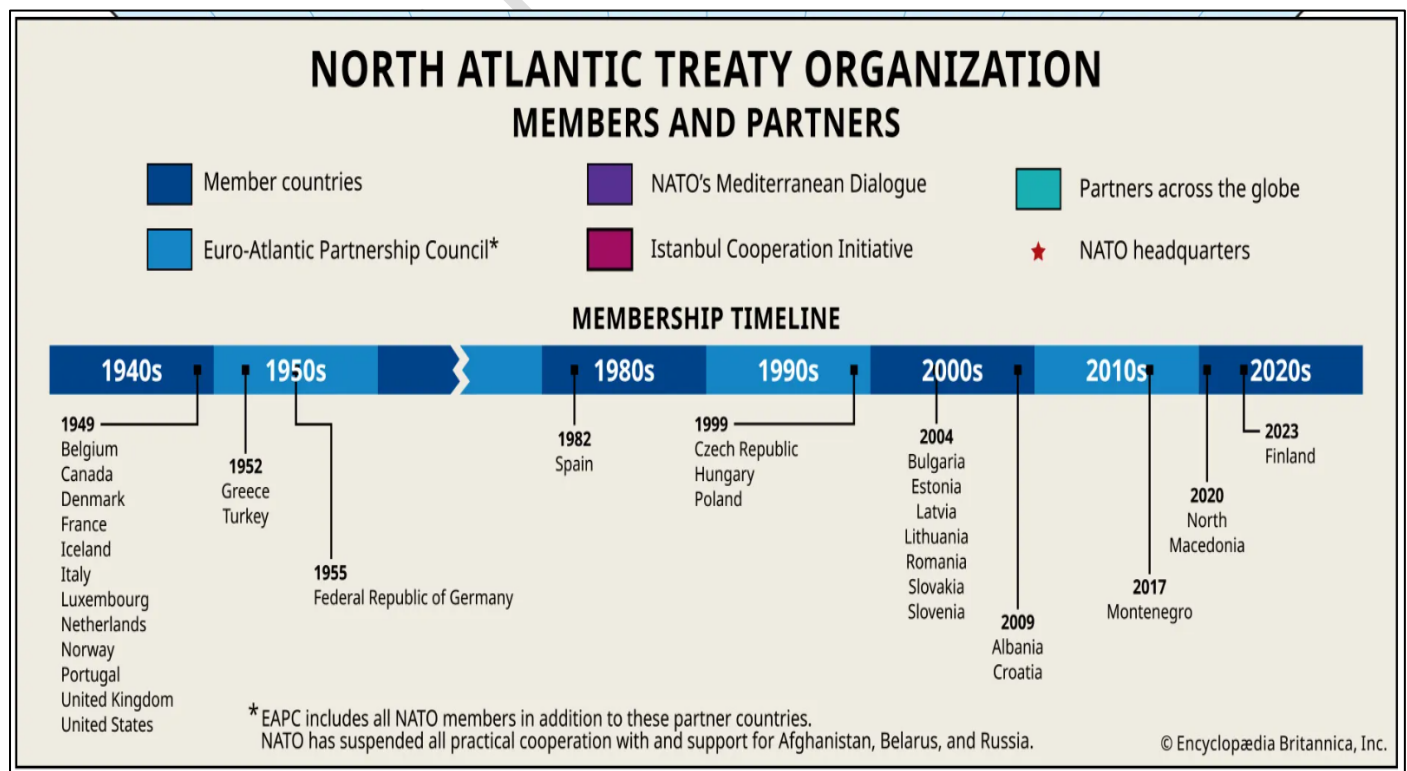
NATO 	
Founded in	1949
Headquarters	Brussels, Belgium
India's membership	<b>India is a not a member</b>



- **Members - 32 countries** are members of NATO.
  - **Sweden** became NATO's newest member in 2023.
- All Alliance decisions are taken by consensus, with each ally having an equal say.
- In 2019, Members of NATO are gathered in London to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the defence alliance.

### Process to secure NATO Membership

- **Article 10** of the treaty provides for entry of a new member to accede to the treaty by unanimous agreement of the existing members.
- Once the member countries of the NATO have established consensus about a country's potential membership, it is called upon to initiate accession talks with the alliance.
- **MAP** - Following this, they may be invited to join the Membership Action Plan (MAP). Reaching this stage does not secure membership.
- It is a preparatory mechanism providing advice, assistance and practical support tailored to the specific needs of applicant countries.
- It may continue even after the applicant country has become a member.
- **MAP obligations** - The 5 chapters of the MAP identify issues that might be taken up, also suggesting mechanism through which the preparations for "possible eventual membership" can be taken forward.
- They constitute issues relevant to politics and economics, defence/military, resources, security and legality.
- **Confirming intent** - This process begins with NATO experts and representatives of the invited countries at the NATO's headquarters in Brussels.
- The idea is to obtain formal confirmation of the invitee's willingness and ability to meet the political, legal and military obligations and commitments of the NATO membership.
- The second step of the process requires the applicant country to issue a formal letter of intent to NATO. This acts as a confirmation to the obligations and commitments of the organisation.
- **Necessary amendments** are, then, made to make the invitees party to the Washington Treaty followed by ratification of the applicant countries' constitutional protocols to facilitate the membership.
- **Acceding to the Treaty** - After all NATO members notify their acceptance to the US government about the applicant, the Secretary General would call the potential new members to accede to the Treaty.
  - [The US government is the depository of the Washington Treaty.]
- Following the invitee depositing their instruments of accession with the U.S. State Dept., the applicant becomes a member of the NATO.



### NATO Plus

- It is a security arrangement that brings together the grouping of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and 5 countries - **Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan and Israel.**
- It was formalized in 2019.
- **Aim** - To boost defence and intelligence ties.

### 3.15 The Bucharest Nine Countries

- The "Bucharest Nine" or "Bucharest Format" or "B9" was founded in 2015, and takes its name from Bucharest, the capital of Romania.
- It is a group of **9 NATO countries in Eastern Europe** that became part of the NATO after the end of the Cold War.
- It is also regarded as the "Voice of the Eastern Flank" in the NATO alliance.
- The group was created at the High-Level Meeting of the States from Central and Eastern Europe in Bucharest on the initiative of,
  1. Klaus Iohannis, who became the President of Romania in 2014,
  2. Andrzej Duda, who became President of Poland in 2015.
- B9 offers a platform for deepening the dialogue among the participant allied states, in order to articulate their specific contribution to the ongoing processes across the NATO.
- **Composition** of B9 include, Romania, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
- All nine countries were once closely associated with the now dissolved Soviet Union, but later chose the path of democracy.
- Romania, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria are former signatories of the now dissolved Warsaw Pact military alliance led by the Soviet Union.
- (The other Warsaw Pact countries were the erstwhile Czechoslovakia and East Germany, and Albania.)
- Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were part of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

#### DID YOU KNOW?

All members of the B9 are part of the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

### 3.16 G7 Grouping

- It is an intergovernmental economic group consisting of **7 largest IMF advanced economies** such as Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the US.
- **EU is also represented** within the G7 as an invitee.
- Formerly called **G8 with Russia** in it, but due to Crimean crisis, Russia was ejected from the group.
- The organization was founded to facilitate shared macroeconomic initiatives by its members in response to the collapse of the exchange rate 1971.
- G7 summit is being held annually to discuss economic policies, while the G7 finance ministers have met at least semi-annually.
- For the first time in the last 44 years, **Gender Equality Advisory Council** was set up to convince private sector companies to set up such council and eradicate the problem of gender inequality from the root.
- **Nature** - Together the member countries represent 40% of global GDP and 10% of the world's population.
- Unlike other bodies such as NATO, the G7 has no legal existence, permanent secretariat or official members.
- It has **no binding impact** on policy, and all decisions and commitments made at G7 meetings need to be ratified independently by governing bodies of member states.

G7	
<b>Founded in</b>	1975
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is not a member</b>

#### Outcomes of the recent G7 summit

- The recent G-7 summit was held in in **Hiroshima, Japan.**

- **Hiroshima Vision Statement on Nuclear Disarmament** - Commitment to achieving a world without nuclear weapons with undiminished security for all through taking a realistic, pragmatic, and responsible approach.
- The G7 Summit initiated the **Hiroshima AI process (HAP)** to determine a way forward to regulate artificial intelligence (AI).

### Global Partnership on AI (GPAI)

- It is an international initiative to support responsible and human-centric development and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- **Aim** - To bridge the gap between theory and practice on AI by supporting cutting-edge research and applied activities on AI-related priorities.
- It built around a shared commitment to the OECD Recommendation on Artificial Intelligence.
- GPAI is a group of 25 member countries.
- **India** joined the group as a founding member in 2020.
- It brings together engaged minds and expertise from science, industry, civil society, governments, international organisations and academia to foster international cooperation.

- **Support for Ukraine** - G7 leaders reaffirmed their commitment to supporting Ukraine by providing additional military and financial assistance in its war against Russia.
- Announced new sanctions against Russia, including a ban on the import of Russian gold.
- **De-risking not decoupling from China** - Countering China's economic coercion. Pledged to work together to promote fair and open trade.
- **Addressing the global food crisis** - New initiative to provide \$5 billion in food assistance to countries that are most affected by the crisis.
- **Investing in clean energy and infrastructure** - Invest USD 600 billion in clean energy and infrastructure over the next five years to make clean energy more affordable and accessible.
- Compensating for the developed world's contribution to global warming and greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Protecting human rights and democracy** - Reaffirmed their commitment to protecting human rights and democracy around the world.
- To provide humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people.
- Condemned the human rights abuses in China, Russia, and other countries.

### 3.17 Group of Seven (G7)

The recent Group of Seven (G7) energy ministers meeting in Turin, Italy in 2024 agreed on ending coal-powered fire plants.

#### Group of Seven (G7)

- It is an informal group of leading industrialized nations.
- **Established in** – 1975, in response to the oil crisis.
- **7 Members** – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK and USA.
- **Summit** – The presidency of G-7 summits revolves among the 7 members, Italy holds the presidency in 2024 (Japan in 2023).
- The European Union, which has observer status, is excluded from the rotating chairmanship.
- **Participants** – As is customary in recent years, leaders from some non-G-7 countries and international organizations will also participate in some sessions as India did in 2023 summit.
- **Discussion** – On a wide range of issues, including economic policy, security, climate change, energy and gender.

Russia joined G7 to form the G8 in 1998 but was expelled after Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea.

- **G7's Coal target** – To end the use of coal in power generation "during the first half of (the) 2030s.

- **Need** – There is a need to bring the carbon emissions down 50% by 2030 and to zero by 2050 to avert 1.5C warming of the planet.
- **Challenges** – However, it included an alternative goal of phasing out coal-fired power plants "in a timeline consistent with keeping a limit of a 1.5°C temperature rise within reach, in line with countries' net-zero pathways.
- It may allow the countries to extend the phase-out timeline past the 2030s as well.

	USA	UK	Germany	Italy	France	Canada	Japan
Date for Phaseout of Coal	2035	2024	2030	2025	2027	2030	No date

*Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommends that global coal use "has to fall by 67-82% by 2030 for a 50 per cent chance of meeting the 1.5°C target".*

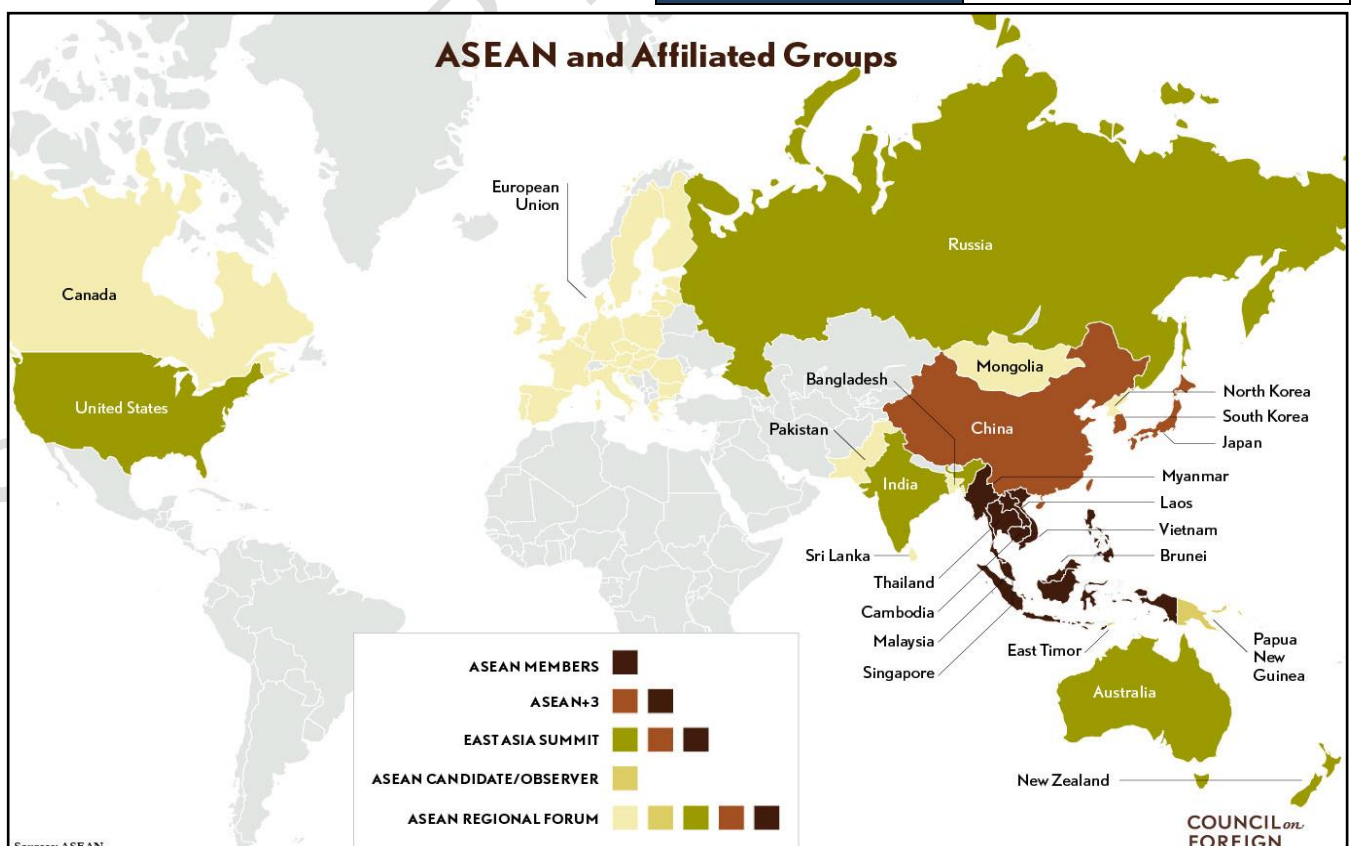
### 3.18 G11 Grouping

- G11 will be the expansion of the G7 grouping which will include G7 countries, **India, Australia, South Korea, and Russia.**
- G7 consists of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- It is being widely perceived as an "anti-Chinese" platform.
- It was established in 2006.

### 3.19 Association of Southeast Asian Nations

- It is a regional organisation comprising **10 Southeast Asian states** which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic integration amongst its members.
- **Members** - Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos, Philippines, Singapore, Brunei, Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam.

ASEAN	
<b>Founded in</b>	1967
<b>Headquarters</b>	Jakarta, Indonesia
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is a dialogue partner</b>





- **Aim-** To accelerate economic growth, social progress, socio-cultural evolution alongside regional stability.
- **ASEAN plus Three** - To improve existing ties with the People's Republic of China, Japan, and South Korea.
- ASEAN became **ASEAN Plus Six** with additional countries: Australia, New Zealand and India
- In 2006, ASEAN was given observer status at the United Nations General Assembly.
- In response, the organisation awarded the status of "dialogue partner" to the UN.
- **Delhi Dialogue** - Delhi Dialogue is a premier annual **track 1.5 event** between India and ASEAN since 2009.
- Track 1.5 diplomacy involves both officials and non-officials such as business leaders, business organisations and all possible non diplomats of two states.
- ASEAN and India hold annual summits since 2002 to elevate political, security, economic and socio-cultural ties.



### 3.20 European Union

- It is a political and economic union of **27 member states** that are located primarily in Europe.
  - The United Kingdom withdrew from the European Union on 31 January 2020.
- The **Maastricht Treaty** established the European Union in 1993 and introduced European citizenship.
- The latest major amendment to the constitutional basis of the EU, the **Treaty of Lisbon**, came into force in 2009. **The Lisbon Treaty** contains a clause under Article 50, providing for a member to leave the EU.
- The EU has developed an internal single market through a standardised system of laws that apply in all member states.
- EU policies aim to ensure the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital within the internal market, enact legislation in justice and home affairs, and maintain common policies on trade, agriculture, fisheries, and regional development.
- Within the **Schengen Area**, passport controls have been abolished.
- A monetary union has been established within union but lacks common Fiscal union.
- Of 27 member states, **only 20** EU member states use the euro currency.
- The EU as a whole is the largest economy in the world.
- EU has a common foreign and security policy, thus developing a coordinated external relations and defence.
- The membership of EU entails a partial delegation of sovereignty to the institutions in return for representation within those institutions, a practice often referred to as "pooling of sovereignty".
- To become a member, a country must meet **the Copenhagen criteria**, of the European Council which requires a stable democracy that respects human rights and the rule of law; a functioning market economy; and the acceptance of the obligations of membership, including EU law.
- **Future enlargement of EU** – 6 countries have applied for membership in EU. They were categorised in to candidate countries and potential candidates.



- **Candidate Countries** - These countries are in the process of 'transposing' (or integrating) EU legislation into national law. They are Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey
- **Potential Candidates** - Potential candidate countries do not yet fulfil the requirements for EU membership. They are Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.
- Kosovo's independence from Serbia in 2008 is not recognised by all EU member countries.
- The four countries that are not EU members have partly committed to EU's economy and regulations - Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.
- **The European Council** gives political direction to the EU.
- **Council of European Union** acts together with European Parliament as a legislature.
- **European Commission** is the Executive arm.
- **Court of Justice of European Union** ensures uniform application and interpretation of European Law.
- **European Central Bank** together with national central bank determines monetary policy.
- **India and EU** – 2022 marks India's 60 years of diplomatic relations with the European Union (EU).
- The first India-EU Summit, in June 2000, marked a watershed in the evolution of the relationship.
- At the fifth India-EU Summit in 2004, the relationship was upgraded to a '**Strategic Partnership**'.

### European Commission

- It is an institution, responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the EU treaties and managing the day-to-day business of the EU.
- HQ - **Brussels**.
- It consists of a President and commissioners from the 27 member nations, known as 'the college,' who together take decisions on political and strategic matters.
- A new college of Commissioners is appointed every 5 years.

### European Council

- The European Council (informally EUCO) is a collective body that defines the European Union's overall political direction and priorities.
- Established as an informal summit in 1975, the European Council was formalized as an institution in 2009 upon the entry into force of the **Treaty of Lisbon**.
- It comprises the heads of state or government of the EU member states, along with the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission.
- The President of the European Council is elected by the European Council by a qualified majority for a once-renewable term of two and a half years.
- The European Council has no legislative power, but it is a strategic body that provides the union with general political directions and priorities, and acts as a collective presidency.
- The European Commission remains the sole initiator of legislation, but the European Council is able to provide an impetus to guide legislative policy.
- The meetings of the European Council, still commonly referred to as EU summits, are chaired by its president and take place at least twice every six months.

### European Court of Justice (ECJ)

- The ECJ is the supreme court of the European Union (EU) in matters of the EU law.
- It is a part of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU).
- The **Luxembourg-based** court was found in 1952 after the Treaty of Paris.
- It ensures that EU law is interpreted and applied the same in every EU country, and that the countries and EU institutions abide by the EU law.
- It settles the legal disputes between national governments and EU institutions.
- In terms of hierarchy, the national courts of member countries are below the ECJ in matters of EU law.

### Article 17 of the EU Copyright Directive

- Article 17 of the EU Copyright Directive is the final version of what was previously called "Article 13."
- It attempts to reshape copyright law for the internet age.

- It is based around the relationship between copyright holders and online platforms, compelling the latter to enforce tighter regulation over protected content.
- Article 17 provides that online content-sharing service providers need to obtain an authorisation from rightholders for the content uploaded on their website.
- If no authorisation is granted, they need to take steps to avoid unauthorised uploads.
- By this proposed article memes, remixes and other types of user-generated content would all be put at risk as these could technically be seen as breaches of copyright.

### EU's Carbon Border Tax

- The 'Carbon Border Adjusted Mechanism' (CBAM) would cover energy-intensive sectors such as cement, steel, aluminium, oil refinery, paper, glass, chemicals as well as the power sector.
- A recent draft regulation pertaining to the CBAM proposed that goods entering the EU would be taxed at the borders.
- Such a tax would promote "low-carbon, resource-efficient manufacturing."

### Temporary Protection Directive of 2001

- TPD describes "Temporary protection" as an exceptional measure to provide immediate and temporary protection to displaced persons from non-EU countries and those unable to return to their country of origin.
- The directive applies when "there is a risk that the standard asylum system is struggling to cope with demand stemming from a mass influx risking a negative impact on the processing of claims".
- **Recent** - Responding to the Ukraine crisis, EU Member States made the unprecedented decision to activate the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD).
- The war in Ukraine is the first time that the EU has invoked the TPD. It is being seen as another sign of European unity against Russia.

## 3.21 African Union

- The African Union (AU) is a continental body consisting of the **55 member states** that make up the countries of the African Continent.
- It was officially launched in 2002 in Durban, South Africa.
- It is successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, 1963-1999).
- HQ - **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**
- It reinforced the main objectives of the OAU which were to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonisation and apartheid
- Members have signed the **African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA)** for goods and services at the 12th AU Summit. It is the world's largest FTA by the number of countries participating.
- **Agenda 2063** calls for greater collaboration for African led initiatives for the achievement of the aspirations of African people.

### India- Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)

- It is the official platform for the African-Indian relations.
- **Aim** - To strengthen India's cooperation with Africa in the Global South.
- The summit happens **once in every three years**.
- So far, 3 summits have taken place- 2008, 2011, 2015.
- The IAFS has a 3-tier platform of the African Union, the 8 regional economic communities of Africa and important bilateral participants.
- First and third summit was held in India while the second summit was held in Addis Ababa, Egypt.
- The first two summits were held under the **Banjul formula** with the participation of 15 African countries and the AU Commission.
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> Summit, a massive event for all 54 African countries was held.

## 3.22 Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

*ECOWAS the West African bloc could intervene in Niger's coup.*

- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional group of 15 founded in 1975.
- It was established through the **Lagos Treaty**.
- **Mission** – To promote economic integration in all fields of economic activity, social and cultural matters.

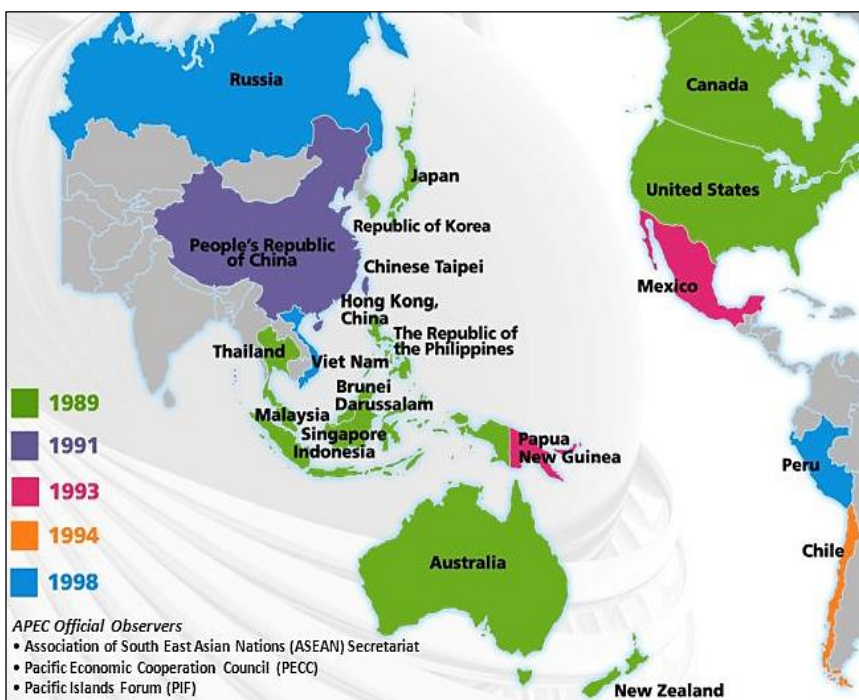
- The Institutions of the ECOWAS are as follows:
  - The Commission
  - The Community Parliament
  - The Community Court of Justice
  - ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development
- The ECOWAS Commission and the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (The Fund) are its two main institutions.
- Single currency** – Its larger aims are to have a single common currency and create a single, large trading bloc in western Africa.
- The grouping has also intervened militarily in the region in the past.
- Members** – Benin, Cape Verde, Cote d' Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.
- Suspended Members** – Guinea, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali
- In 2024, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali announced their withdrawal from the bloc.
- Alliance of Sahel States** - It is a mutual defense pact created between Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso in 2023.
- The Liptako-Gourma region is where the Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger borders meet.

### 3.23 East Asia Summit

- It is a regional premier forum for strategic dialogue.
- It has **18 members** - the 10 ASEAN countries along with Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, the US and Russia.
- Annual leaders' Summit is usually held alongside ASEAN meetings.
- The chair position of EAS rotates between ASEAN Member States annually.
- Apart from the Leaders' Summit, meetings of EAS Foreign Ministers and Economic Ministers are also held annually.
- The 19th EAS will take place in 2024 in **Lao PDR** – the 2024 ASEAN and EAS Chair.

### 3.24 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation

- It is a regional forum for **21 Pacific Rim member economies** established in **1989**.
- Aim** - To promote balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and growth by accelerating regional economic integration. HQ - **Singapore**
- Members** - Australia, Brunei, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, United States, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Chile, Peru, Russian and Vietnam.
- 3 official observers** - ASEAN, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council.





- India is not in the grouping and has applied for membership. It was invited to be an observer for the first time in 2011.
- The criterion for membership is that the member is a separate economy, rather than a state and the result of it is the inclusion of Taiwan.
- The U.S. hosted APEC 2023 Summit with the theme “Creating a Resilient & Sustainable Future for All”.

APEC	
Founded in	1989
Headquarters	Queenstown, Singapore
India's membership	<b>India is not a member</b>

### 3.25 Organization of Islamic Cooperation

- It is an international organization founded in 1969, consisting of 57 member states.
- Its administrative centre is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- The organisation works to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony.
- India is not a member** but was invited to the meeting as a guest of honour in 2019 for the first time.
- Recent Developments** - The 49<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers was held in Nouakchott, Mauritania,

OIC	
Founded in	1969
Headquarters	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
India's membership	<b>India is not a member</b>

### 3.26 Gulf Cooperation Council

- It is a regional political and economic alliance of 6 Gulf States i.e., Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.
- Its aim is to achieve ever closer union between the energy rich Gulf countries.
- Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE and Egypt have imposed an air, land and sea blockade on Qatar since 2017.
- Recent Development** – The four blockading countries signed the Al-Ula declaration during the 41<sup>st</sup> GCC summit based on greater cooperation within the Council.

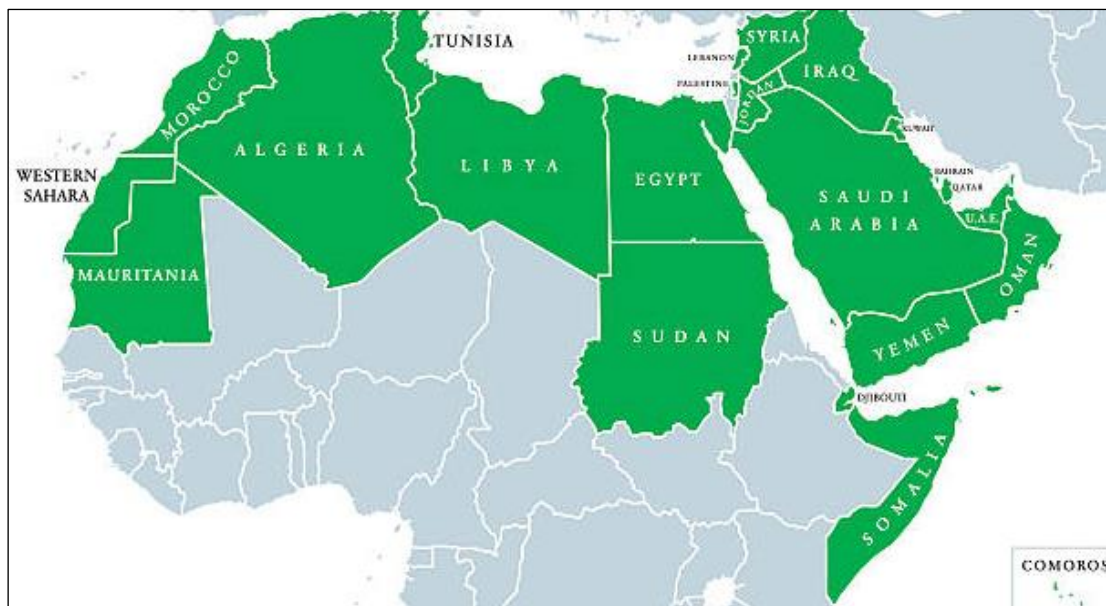
GCC	
Founded in	1981
Headquarters	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
India's membership	<b>India is not a member</b>



### 3.27 Arab League

- The Arab League, formally known as the League of Arab States, was established in 1945 with initially 6 nations: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.
- Currently, it has 22 member states, who have pledged to cooperate on economic and military affairs, among other issues.
- Recent developments** - Syria is back in the influential Arab League, more than a decade after being thrown out.
- Syria** – Syria was ousted from the Arab League in 2011 following President Bashar al-Assad's brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protests, which led to the ongoing civil war in the country.

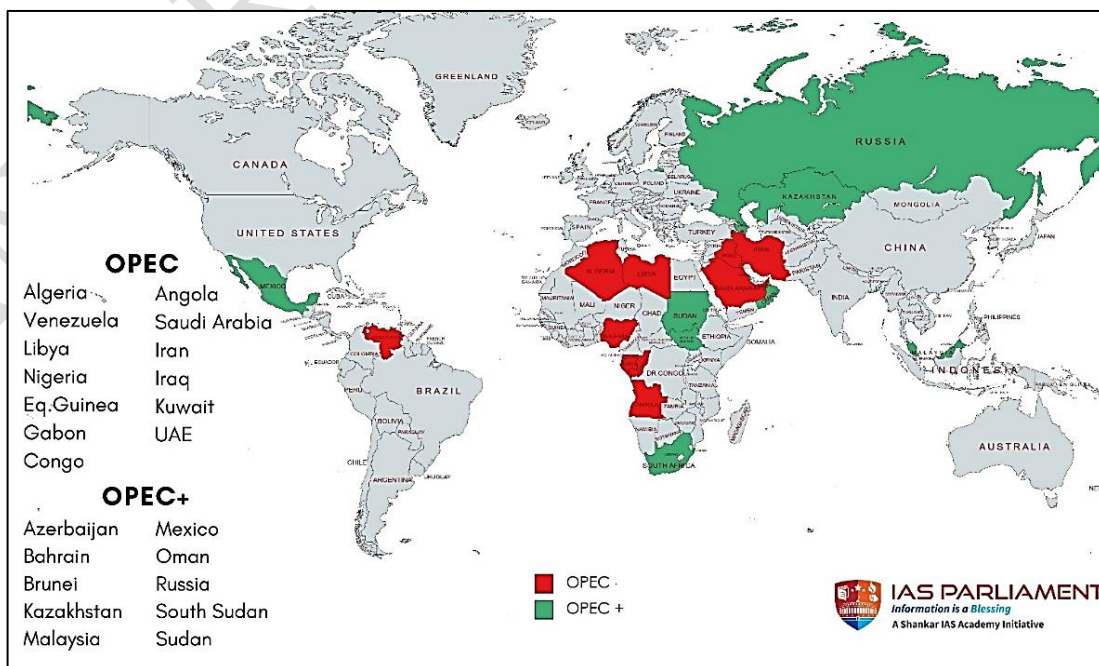
- The conflict has since killed around half a million people and displaced about 23 million.



### 3.28 Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

- It is an intergovernmental organization of **13 nations** to coordinate and unify their petroleum policies and ensure the stabilization of oil markets, in order to have regular supply of petroleum to consumers, a steady income to producers, and a fair return on capital for those investing in the petroleum industry.
- HQ – **Vienna**
- Members** -Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Libya, UAE, Algeria, Nigeria, Gabon, Angola, Equatorial Guinea and Congo.
- Qatar terminated its membership from 2019. **Russia is not a member of OPEC.**
- OPEC countries possess more than 80% of the world's proven crude oil reserves.
- Since 2007, OPEC has published the **"World Oil Outlook"** annually, in which it presents a comprehensive analysis of the global oil industry including medium- and long-term projections for supply and demand.

- OPEC+** - It is a loosely affiliated entity consisting of the **13 OPEC members and 10 of the world's major non-OPEC oil-exporting nations.**




- It includes Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan in addition to OPEC members.
- Since 2016, they cooperate in fixing the global crude oil prices.

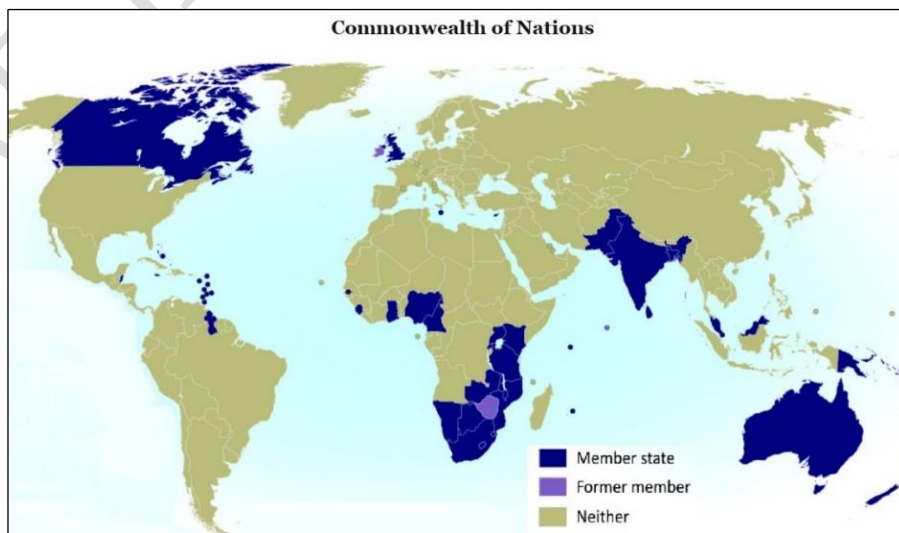
### 3.29 CARICOM Countries

- The Caribbean community, also known as CARICOM, was formed in 1973 by the **Treaty of Chaguaramas**.
- It is an **economic and political community** that works jointly to shape policies for the region and encourages economic growth and trade.
- It is a grouping of **15 member states and 5 associate members** (Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and Turks & Caicos Islands).
- Its membership is **open to any other State or Territory of the Caribbean Region**.
- First ever India- CARICOM leaders' summit was held in New York in 2019.
- India announced a \$14-million grant for community development projects and \$150 million Line of Credit for solar, renewable energy and climate-change related works in that summit.

### 3.30 Commonwealth of Nations

- It is an organisation of **56 member states** that are mostly former territories of the British Empire.
- It operates by intergovernmental consensus of the member states, organised through the Commonwealth Secretariat and non-governmental organisations, organised through the Commonwealth Foundation.
- King Charles III is the Head of the Commonwealth and the monarch of 16 members of the Commonwealth, known as Commonwealth realms.
- Member states have **no legal obligation** to one another.
- Instead, they are united by language, history, culture and their shared values of democracy, free speech, human rights, and the rule of law.
- Every 2 years, member countries meet to discuss issues affecting the Commonwealth and the wider world at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.
- All members have an **equal voice**, regardless of size or economic stature.
- Britain and several others, mostly in the Caribbean, grant the right to vote to Commonwealth citizens who reside in those countries.
- In non-Commonwealth countries in which their own country is not represented, Commonwealth citizens may seek consular assistance at the British embassy.
- The first member to be admitted without having any link to the British Empire was **Mozambique** followed by Rwanda in 2009.

Commonwealth of Nations 	
<b>Founded in</b>	1931
<b>Headquarters</b>	London, UK
<b>India's membership</b>	<b>India is a member</b>



#### CHRI

- The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) is an independent, non-partisan, international non-governmental organization, headquartered in **New Delhi**.
- CHRI's objectives are to promote awareness of and adherence to the Harare Commonwealth Declaration, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other internationally recognized human rights instruments, as well as domestic instruments supporting human rights in member states.

#### Harare Commonwealth Declaration

- It was a declaration of the Commonwealth of Nations, issued in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 1991.



- It sets out the Commonwealth's core principles and values, detailing the Commonwealth's membership criteria, and redefining and reinforcing its purpose.

### 3.31 Arctic Council

- It is the leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular on issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.
- The **Ottawa Declaration** lists the following countries as Members of the Arctic Council - Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States.
- In addition, 6 organizations representing Arctic indigenous peoples have status as **Permanent Participants**.
- The Observer status in the Arctic Council is open to Non-Arctic States. Observers primarily contribute through their engagement in the Council at the level of Working Groups.
- Observers** - China, France, Germany, **India**, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Netherlands, Poland, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland and UK.

Arctic Council	
Founded in	1996
Secretariat	Tromsø, Norway
India's membership	India is an observer

8 ARCTIC STATES
Canada
The Kingdom of Denmark
Finland
Iceland
Norway
The Russian Federation
Sweden
The United States





### 3.32 MERCOSUR

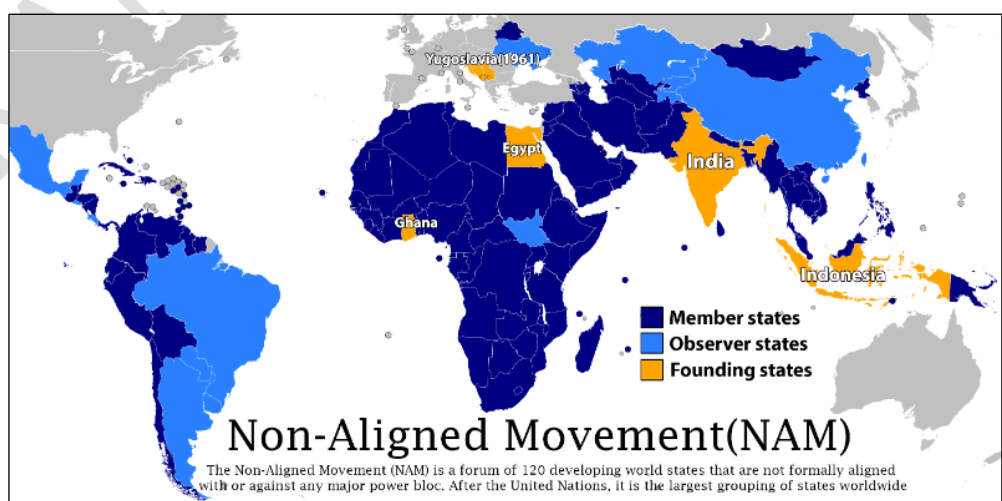
- It is a **full customs union and a trading bloc** with members Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.
- Venezuela was suspended from membership in 2016.
- Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana and Suriname are its associate members.
- Observer countries are New Zealand and Mexico.
- Its purpose is to promote free trade and the fluid movement of goods, people, and currency.
- India - MERCOSUR Preferential Trade Agreement** is operational since 2009.
- India and the Mercosur bloc have stepped up efforts to expand their preferential trade agreement to make greater inroads into the other's market.



### 3.33 NAM Summit

- NAM was established in 1961 with 29 members. **India is one of the founding members.**
- It has since grown to **120 members** to become one of the largest groupings of nation-states.
- It was envisioned as a platform for those who didn't want to be dictated by the then two superpowers - USSR and USA.
- The concept of not aligning a country's policy with others can be traced to the Congress of Vienna (1814-15) when the neutrality of Switzerland was recognised.
- The NAM was founded during the collapse of the colonial system and the independence struggles of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and other regions and at the height of the Cold War.
- While some meetings with a third-world perspective were held before 1955, historians consider that the **Bandung Asian-African Conference** is the most immediate antecedent to the creation of NAM.
- This Conference was held in Bandung in **1955** with the aim of identifying and assessing world issues at the time and pursuing out joint policies in international relations.
- The principles that would govern relations among large and small nations, known as the **"Ten Principles of Bandung"** were proclaimed at that Conference.
- The NAM was formed during the Cold War to create an independent path in world politics that would not result in member States becoming pawns in the struggles between the major powers.
- The First Summit of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was held in **Cairo, Egypt in 1961.**
- Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Ahmed Sukarno of Indonesia and Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia later became the founding fathers of the movement.

NAM	
Founded in	1961
Coordinating Bureau	New York, U.S
India's membership	Founding member



- It held its first ministerial in Belgrade (erstwhile Yugoslavia) in 1961 and complete independence of members in their foreign policy was ingrained.
- **NAM 2.0** – There were calls for reimagining the non-alignment concept in 2012 to suit the emerging current realities of an emerging and assertive China.
- The 19<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement was held in 2024 in **Kampala, Uganda**.
- **Uganda** assumes Chairmanship for 2024-2027.

### 3.34 Council of Europe

- It aims to uphold human rights, democracy, and rule of law in Europe and promote European culture.
- HQ - **Strasbourg, France**.
- It has **46 member states** and is distinct from the EU.
- No country has ever joined the EU without first belonging to the Council of Europe.
- Unlike the EU, the Council of Europe **cannot make binding laws**, but it does have the power to enforce select international agreements reached by European states on various topics.
- The best-known body of the Council of Europe is the **European Court of Human Rights**, which enforces the European Convention on Human Rights.
- The Commissioner for Human Rights is an independent institution within the Council of Europe, mandated to promote awareness of and respect for human rights in the member states.

#### European Court of Human Rights

- It is an international court set up in Strasbourg, France in 1959 that rules on individual or state applications alleging violations of the civil and political rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights.

### 3.35 Eurasia Economic Union

EAEU is a **political and economic union of 5 states** located in central and northern Eurasia i.e., Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia.

- It facilitates the free movement of goods, capital, services, and people among its member countries.
- India is holding negotiations to finalize free trade agreement with EAEU.

### 3.36 Eastern Economic Forum

- EEF was established by Russian Federation, in 2015 to support economic development of Russia's '**Far East**', and to expand international cooperation in Asia-Pacific region.
- It takes place each year in **Vladivostok**.
- It serves as a platform for the discussion of key issues in World economy, regional integration and the development of new industrial and technological sectors.
- The macro-region borders 2 oceans, the Pacific and the Arctic, and 5 countries, China, Japan, Mongolia, the United States and the N. Korea.

### 3.37 China's 17+1

- China's 16+1 initiative is a cooperation forum between **China and Central and Eastern European Countries (China-CEEC)** founded in 2012 in Warsaw.
- It is seen as an extension of China's Belt and Road initiative (BRI).
- With the addition of Greece in 2012, it was known as 17+1 cooperation.
  - *Lithuania quits in 2021 and Latvia and Estonia have left the China-CEEC forum in 2022.*
- **Objective** - To promote business and investment relations between China and the CEEC countries.
- Focus on infrastructure projects such as bridges, motorways, railway lines and modernisation of ports in the member states.

- **Members of the initiative** - 12 EU member states and 3 Balkan states.
- They are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

### 3.38 Organization of American States

- It brings together all **35 independent states of the Americas**.
- It constitutes the main political, juridical, and social governmental forum in the Hemisphere.
- In addition, it has granted permanent observer status to 69 states, as well as to the European Union (EU).
- **India is a permanent observer to it.**
- The Organization's four main pillars are democracy, human rights, security, and development.



## OTHER GROUPINGS

### 3.39 OPEC

*Brazil's government recently approved joining OPEC+, rising status as a key oil player.*

- **OPEC** - Stands for the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.
- It is a permanent, intergovernmental Organization refers to a group of 12 of the world's major oil-exporting nations.
- **Founded in - Baghdad in 1960.**
- **Founding members** - Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.
- **Headquarters** - Vienna, Austria.
- **OPEC Members** - Algeria, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela.
- It will meet on every year to discuss their joint oil production policy
- **Aim** - To control the global oil supply and price.
- **Objectives** - It is to co-ordinate and unify petroleum policies among Member Countries, in order to secure fair and stable prices for petroleum producers.
- To give an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consuming nations; and a fair return on capital to those investing in the industry.
- OPEC membership is open to any country, substantial exporter of oil and which shares the ideals of the organization.

***Seven Sisters'*** refers to a group of integrated international oil companies that dominated the global oil markets from the mid-1940s to the mid-1970s.

#### OPEC+

- The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies including Russia are known collectively as OPEC+.
- **Formed in** – 2016.
- **Significance of Brazil** - Brazil was officially invited to join in 2023.
- Brazil is currently the **world's 7<sup>th</sup>-largest oil producer**, pumping around 4.3 million barrels per day, or 4% of global output.
- In 2024, crude oil overtook soy as the country's top export, making up 13.3% of total foreign sales.
- **Members**



### 3.40 Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge

A new treaty was adopted at the Diplomatic Conference held under the aegis of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) at its headquarters in Geneva in 2024.

- **Need** – Under current laws inventions developed using genetic resources can be protected but genetic resources themselves cannot be patented.
- **Parent body** – World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
- **Course of action** - After adoption, the treaty was opened for signature and the treaty will enter force after 15 parties ratify it.
- However, signing the treaty at the end of a diplomatic conference does not commit a country to being bound by its provisions.
- **Provision** – Whenever there is a claimed invention on genetic resources, the applicants will have to disclose the country of origin or source of the genetic resources.
- Similarly, the applicant would also have to disclose the Indigenous Peoples or local community who provided the traditional knowledge, in case the patent is based on traditional knowledge.
- **Significance** – It is the 1<sup>st</sup> new WIPO Treaty in over a decade.
- It is the 1<sup>st</sup> one that deals with genetic resources & traditional knowledge held by Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities.
- It will not only safeguard and protect biodiversity but will increase transparency in the patent system and strengthen innovation.
- **Challenges** – It does not address the problem of the biopiracy of genetic resources & associated traditional knowledge using patents.

India holds 7-8% of global biodiversity and a rich repertoire of knowledge based on these genetic resources.

**The Nagoya Protocol** under the Convention on Biological Diversity does ensure that benefits earned through the use of traditional knowledge are shared with the communities that have protected the resource.

### 3.41 Pact for the Future

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Global leaders recently embraced the Pact for the Future.



- **Aim** – To foster a safer, more peaceful, sustainable, and inclusive world for future generations.
- **Focus areas**
  - Sustainable development
  - International peace and security
  - Science and technology
  - Youth and future generations and
  - Transforming global governance.
- Multilateral financial institutions and the United Nations have come up short seeking solutions to 21<sup>st</sup> century problems, the pact lays out.
- **Pledges for UN members** - Turbocharge the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on climate change, 2 landmark 2015 agreements that have slower progress and missed milestones.
- Listen to young people and include them in decision-making, at the national and global levels
- Build stronger partnerships with civil society, the private sector, local and regional authorities and more
- Redouble efforts to build and sustain peaceful, inclusive just societies & address the root causes of conflicts.
- Protect all civilians in armed conflict.
- Accelerate the implementation of our commitments on women, peace and security.
- In annex Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations was also adopted unanimously.

#### Global Digital Compact

- The Global Digital Compact marks the first truly worldwide agreement on the **international regulation of artificial intelligence (AI)**.
- It outlines commitments to ensure that digital technologies contribute to sustainable development and human rights, while addressing risks like digital divides, cybersecurity, and misuse of technology.
- The Compact aims to bridge the digital divide and ensure AI technologies are used responsibly, fostering global cooperation on both AI capabilities and security threats.
- Governments are also obligated to form an impartial worldwide Scientific Panel on AI and start an international conversation about AI governance inside the UN.

#### Declaration on Future Generations

- The Declaration on Future Generations focuses on securing the well-being of future generations, also highlighting the need to include their interests in decision-making processes.
- It also underlines the importance of protecting the environment, promoting intergenerational equity, and ensuring that long-term consequences of today's actions are considered.

## 4. TRADE AGREEMENTS

### 4.1 Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)

India and the US have signed two significant agreements as the Indian Defence Minister started his official visit to the US.

- **Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)** – It is a non-**binding pact** signed between India and the US to ensure **reciprocal priority support for goods and services** that promote national defence.
- India is the **18th country** to enter SOSA with the US.
- **Aim** - Strengthen the defence industrial ecosystem of both countries by enhancing supply chain resilience.

- **Features** - U.S. and India commit to support one another's priority delivery requests for procurement of critical national defense resources.
- US provides India with priority support for critical national defence resources through the **Defence Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS)** mechanism.
- Indian companies to prioritize support for US defence requirements under a **government-industry Code of Conduct**.
- India will draw up a list of domestic companies that will volunteer to undertake a government-industry Code of Conduct to provide military equipment to the US on priority.
- **Benefit** – SOSA is a significant step toward greater defence industry collaboration, with potential for future legally binding agreements like the **Reciprocal Defence Procurement Agreement (RDP)**.
- It will be a key factor in strengthening the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) between the two countries.
- SOSA will make it easier for Indian companies to get priority supplies from the US and revitalise the defence industry cooperation between the two countries.
- **Memorandum of Agreement on Liaison Officers**
  - Facilitates the assignment of Indian Liaison Officers to key US strategic commands.
  - Enhances information sharing and cooperation between the Indian and US armed forces.
- **Strategic Commands and Regional Security**
  - The deployment of Indian officers in US strategic commands is expected to enhance regional security and international cooperation.
  - The agreements contribute to the broader Indo-US collaboration on industrial, defence, and security issues.

*Other SOSA partners include Australia, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Spain, Sweden and the UK.*

## 4.2 Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

The CEO of NITI Aayog recently said that India should join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a China-backed Asian trade bloc it rejected years ago.

- It is a **free trade agreement** of the world's largest trade bloc.
- **Members** - It groups
  - **15 Asia-Pacific economies**, including Australia, Japan, New Zealand, China, South Korea and
  - The 10 member-states of the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**.
- **Began in** – The RCEP was signed in November 2020 and came into effect on January 1, 2022.
- **Objectives** - **Trade** - Reduce or eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade.
- **Investment** - Increase investment and encourage foreign investment.
- **Supply chains** - Facilitate trade and investment among member nations, and enhance regional supply chains.
- **Economic growth** - Promote economic growth and regional stability.
- **Covering areas** - RCEP will cover trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic and technical cooperation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement and other issues.

**Members of ASEAN** were Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

**RCEP: Nations signed up to world's largest free trade deal**



- **Trade volume** – It is the world's largest free trade agreement by members' GDP, with the 15 member countries accounting for about **30% of the world's population and 30% of global GDP**.
- **India** – India was the **founding member** of RCEP.
- In 2019, India decided to not join the bloc, on the grounds that the deal would hurt its farmers, businesses, workers and consumers.
- **Significance for India** - Joining the trade blocs of RCEP and CPTPP will help India boost its manufacturing base and exports by small and medium firms that constitute 40% of the country's exports.
- India's goods exports during April-September 2024 rose by 1.02% from a year earlier to \$213.22 billion.

*Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) is a free trade agreement between **11** countries.*

#### 4.3 European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

India recently establishes European Free Trade Association (EFTA) desk to boost trade with European nations.

India and the EFTA bloc signed a free trade agreement (FTA) recently to boost trade and investment ties.

- **EFTA** – Is a **regional trade organization** set up for the promotion of **free trade and economic integration** between its members, within Europe and globally.
- **Established by** – Signing a Convention in Stockholm on **4 January 1960**.
- **Founding Members** – Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.
- **Member States** – Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.
- **Headquarters** – Geneva.
- **Governing Body** – EFTA Council.
- It usually meets 8 times a year at Ambassadorial level (Heads of Permanent Delegations to EFTA) and once a year at Ministerial level.
- Each Member State is represented, and decisions are taken by consensus. The Member States take turns to chair the Council, **rotating yearly**.
- **Features** – The Council manages relations between the EFTA States themselves under the EFTA Convention.
- It adopts decisions to reflect legislative developments in the EEA (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) Agreement and in the Switzerland-EU bilateral agreements.
- EFTA's worldwide network of free trade and partnership agreements with third countries.
- **Significance** – EFTA has **one of the world's largest free trade networks**, with 31 agreements covering 42 partner countries outside the EU.
- More than 80% of EFTA's merchandise trade is currently covered by the trade bloc's preferential agreements.
- India-EFTA two-way trade was about \$24 billion in 2023-24 against \$18.65 billion in 2022-23.
- India received \$10.72 billion in foreign direct investment from Switzerland during April 2000 and September 2024.
- **India- EFTA Agreement** – The pact is also known as **Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)**.
- The deal is set to come into effect in the next four-six months after the 4 nations receive necessary Parliamentary approvals.
- It comes against the backdrop of an investment commitment made by EFTA nations under the trade agreement \$50 billion investment in India within 10 years of the agreement.
  - Taking into effect and an additional \$50 billion in the next 5 years.
- The investment is expected to facilitate the creation of 1 million direct jobs in India in 15 years.
- The dedicated platform will act as a centralized support mechanism for EFTA companies looking to expand in India.
- It aims to fast track processes to make it easier for companies to do business, ensure seamless flow of capital, and navigate areas of concerns.

*Switzerland is the largest trading partner and investor in India followed by Norway in the bloc.*

#### 4.4 UK-India Infrastructure Financing Bridge (UKIIFB)

Recently UKIIFB agreement was signed between NITI Aayog and City of London Corporation in London.

- **UKIIFB** - It is a collaborative initiative led jointly by **NITI Aayog and the City of London Corporation**.
- It was agreed during the UK Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) in 2023 and signed in 2024.
- **Agreement Period** – 2 years.
- **Aim** – To facilitate international investments into India's ambitious infrastructure projects.
- **Functions** – Accelerate the mobilisation of international private sector investment into Indian sustainable infrastructure.
- Make recommendations on addressing barriers to international private sector investment in Indian sustainable infrastructure.
- Work together towards developing knowledge and best practices on sustainable infrastructure projects and make it investable and attractive to international investors.
- **Steering Committee** – It consists of representatives of both the countries from UK and India.
- **Identified Projects** – 8 projects, including Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System, highways and a few related to green hydrogen and renewables, have been identified for support and funding under the UKIIFB.

*The FTA negotiations between India and UK is still undergoing and is not signed yet.*

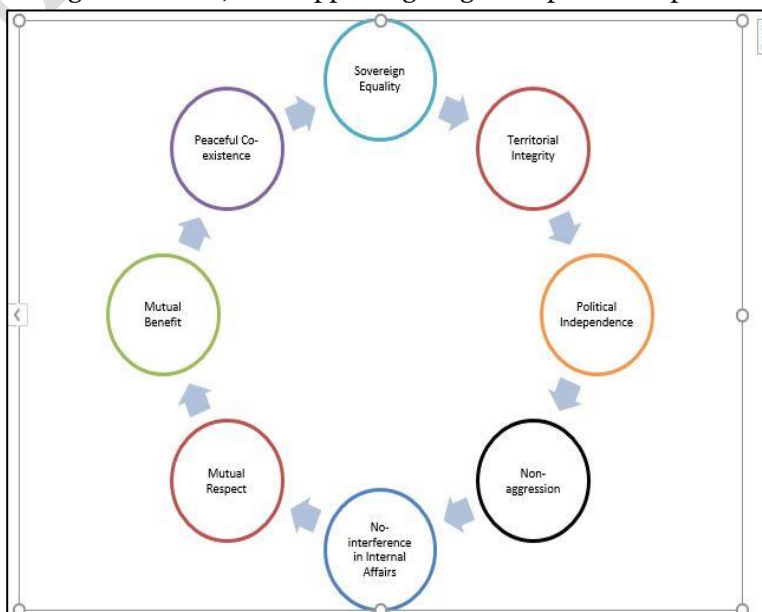
#### 4.5 U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC)

A USIBC delegation, led by its Executive Vice Chairman, met with the Union Minister in Delhi to discuss various collaboration opportunities.

- **Background** - It was formed in **1975** at the request of the U.S. and Indian governments.
- **About**- It represents top global companies operating across the United States and India, **creating connections between businesses and governments** in both countries.
- **Aim** - The Council aims to create an **inclusive trade environment** between India and the US by representing industry, connecting businesses with governments, and supporting long-term partnerships.
- **Membership** - It has around 200 member companies of which **70% are from the United States** and the remaining **30% are from India**.
- **Headquarters** - Washington D.C.
- It has offices in Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru.
- The USIBC is also **part of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce**.

##### Key Points of the meeting

- **Green initiatives** - Deployment of Greenfield renewable energy, battery storage, and emerging green technologies.
- **Advanced technologies** - Focus on quantum technology, artificial intelligence, critical metals, and semiconductors.
- **Anusandhan NRF** - Introduction of a research foundation in India similar to the US National Research Foundation.
- **Biotech growth** - In India, this industry has reached \$140 billion with over 4,000 companies.
- **Space collaboration** - NISAR mission with NASA and ISRO highlights India's space sector prowess.





## 5. TREATIES & CONVENTIONS

### 5.1 India-UAE Bilateral Investment Treaty 2024

Recently, India-UAE Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) came into effect.

- **Need** - The earlier Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) between them expired in September 2024.
- **Signed in** – February 2024 at Abu Dhabi
- **Entered into force** – With effect from August 2024.
- **Bilateral trade** – UAE is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest with a share of 3% in the total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) received in India
  - Cumulative investment of approximately \$19 Billion from April 2000- June 2024.
- India also makes 5% of its total Overseas Direct Investments in UAE to the tune of \$15.26 Billion from April 2000 - August 2024.
- **Importance of BIT 2024** – It gives continuity of investment protection to investors of both the countries.

#### Key features of India-UAE BIT 2024

- Closed asset-based definition of Investment with coverage of Portfolio Investment.
- Treatment of Investment with obligation for no denial of justice, no fundamental breach of due process, no targeted discrimination and no manifestly abusive or arbitrary treatment.
- Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) through arbitration with mandatory exhaustion of Local remedies for 3 years
- General and Security Exceptions
- Right to Regulate for State
- No investor claim in case investments is involved with corruption, fraud, round tripping etc.
- Provision on National Treatment
- Treaty for protection to investments from Expropriation
- Treaty for Transparency, Transfers and Compensation for losses.
- Carve out for measures such as those related to taxation, local government, government procurement, subsidies or grants and Compulsory license.

### 5.2 Design Law Treaty (DLT)

India has recently signed the Final Act of the Riyadh Design Law Treaty almost two decades of extensive negotiations.

- **Design Law Treaty (DLT)** – To harmonize procedures and simplify registration processes of industrial designs in different countries.
- **Adopted by** - World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
  - All 193 contracting parties of the WIPO have enforced the treaty.
- **Goal** - To ensure the streamlined design protection accessible to all stakeholders, with particular emphasis on
  - Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs),
  - Startups and
  - Independent designers.
- **Features** – It work towards implementing electronic industrial design systems and facilitating the electronic exchange of priority documents.

India has tripled the domestic filings increasing by 120% in the last 2 years and design applications grew by 25% last year.

• **Benefits** – Its benefiting design applicants, including

- Relaxed time limits,
- Reinstatement of lost rights,
- Option to correct or add priority claims,
- Simplified procedures for recording assignments and licenses,
- Option to file multiple designs in a single application.

• These changes provide greater flexibility for design applicants.

• It reduces administrative burdens, and promoting global creativity in design.

• It empower startups and SMEs by boosting their competitiveness and supporting market growth.

• **India's role** – It reaffirms its commitment to fostering inclusive growth and ensuring equitable access to intellectual property protection.

• It combined with initiatives like the Startup India program and the Startups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP) scheme.

• The policy integrates design protection with traditional knowledge and cultural expressions.

**World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**

- It is the United Nations specialized agency that serves the world's innovators and creators, to protect and promote their intellectual property (IP).
- **Established on** - 14 July 1967.
- **Headquarters** - Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Member states** – 193.
- All member states of the UN are not obliged, to become members of this specialized agency.

### 5.3 Munich Agreement

On this day 85 years ago in September 1, 1939, German troops marched into Poland, triggering the beginning of World War II.

• **Munich Agreement**- It is a settlement reached **by Great Britain, France, and Italy with Germany** that permitted German annexation of the Sudetenland, in western Czechoslovakia to ensure peace in Europe.

• **Signed** - September 29-30, 1938.

• **Sudetenland** – It is the region in the vicinity of the Sudeten Mountain ranges which had a predominately German population and was incorporated into Czechoslovakia in 1918–19.

• **Sudeten Annexation** – Czechoslovakia, though not officially party to the Agreement, was forced to agree to the deal under pressure from Great Britain and France.

• Following the Munich Agreement, German troops occupied these areas between October 1 and October 10, 1938.

• The annexation was part of Hitler's plan to create a "Greater Germany."

• **Violation of the agreement** - Six months after the agreement, Hitler violated it by invading the rest of Czechoslovakia on outbreak of World War II

• **WWII Outbreak** – On September 1, 1939 German troops marched into Poland, triggering the beginning.

• Great Britain and France, which had assured help to Poland, declared war on Germany and its allies on September 3.



### 5.4 Balfour Declaration

The 107<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Balfour Declaration sees Gaza burning and collusion by Zionist Arab regimes.

• Balfour Declaration was made on November 2, 1917, in a letter from British Foreign Secretary **Arthur Balfour** to Lionel Walter Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community.

- **Provisions**–Balfour Declaration promised British support in establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine.
- It stated that the British government would not take any action that would prejudice the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish communities already living in Palestine.
- The British government would not take any action that would prejudice the rights and political status of Jews in other countries.
- **History** – Palestine then was a part of the Ottoman Empire, and Britain had no legal right to promise it to anyone.
- After World War II the system transferred rule from the territories that were previously controlled by the powers defeated in the war Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria to the victors.
- The declared aim of the mandate system was to allow the winners of the war to administer the newly emerging states until they could become independent.
- Upon the start of the mandate, the British began to facilitate the immigration of European Jews to Palestine.
- Between 1922 and 1935, the Jewish population rose from 9% to nearly 27% of the total population.
- Though the Balfour Declaration stated that nothing shall be done against the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, equip Jews with the tools to establish self-rule, at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs.
- Also, the Declaration in spirit violated the promises made in the McMahon–Hussein correspondence (July 1915 to March 1916).
  - In which the British had promised the Arabs an independent state in return for support against the Ottoman Empire in World War I.
- **The importance of the declaration for British** – Control over Palestine was a strategic imperial interest to keep Egypt and the Suez Canal within Britain's sphere of influence.
- Britain had to side with the Zionists to rally support among Jews in the United States and Russia, hoping they could encourage their governments to stay in the war until victory.
- Intense Zionist lobbying and strong connections between the Zionist community in Britain and the British government, some of the officials in the government were Zionists themselves.
- Jews were being persecuted in Europe and the British government was sympathetic to their suffering.
- Palestinians and their supporters have long condemned the declaration as a land theft conspiracy.
- This declaration ignored the longstanding Palestinian presence and sovereignty, as Jews made up only 5% of Palestine's population at the time.

*Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, represents a strategic military initiative undertaken by Palestinian forces, aimed at targeting Israeli military bases, particularly in areas near the Gaza Strip.*

## 5.5 Kampala Declaration

*The African Union Summit on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program recently concluded in Kampala, with adopting the transformative Kampala Declaration for Africa's agro-food systems.*

- **Kampala Declaration** – It solely focusing on agricultural production to a broader "agri-food systems" approach.
- This holistic view considers the entire food value chain, from production to consumption, encompassing factors like nutrition, sustainability, and resilience.
- **Adopted by** – African leaders at the Extraordinary African Union Summit on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) held in Kampala, Uganda, on January 11, 2025.
- **Key Features of the Kampala Declaration:**
  - **Sustainable and Resilient Agri-food Systems** – The core objective is to create a food system that is not only productive but also environmentally sustainable and resilient to shocks.
  - **Addressing Malnutrition** – The declaration emphasizes combating all forms of malnutrition, including undernutrition (stunting, wasting), micronutrient deficiencies, and even rising obesity rates.

- **Climate-Smart Agriculture** – Promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices is crucial. This includes adopting climate-smart technologies, improving water management, and enhancing soil health.
- **Intra-African Trade** – Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural products is seen as key to improving food security and economic growth.
- **Empowering Smallholder Farmers** – The declaration recognizes the critical role of smallholder farmers and aims to empower them through access to technology, markets, and finance.
- **Significance** – The strategy will also see Africa reduce post-harvest loss by 50 %, triple intra-African trade in agro-food products and inputs by 2035.
- It will also raise the share of locally processed food to 35% of agro-food GDP by 2035.
- The adoption of the strategy is seen as a pivotal moment that will lay the groundwork for agro-food systems across the continent, and enable countries to act.

***Malabo Declaration** is the previous framework for African agricultural development, fell short of its goals, particularly in eradicating hunger and malnutrition.*

## 6. NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

### 6.1 International Commission on Large Dams

- ICOLD is a non-governmental International Organization that provides a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience in dam engineering.
- It sets standards and guidelines to ensure that dams are built and operated safely, efficiently, economically, and are environmentally sustainable and socially equitable.
- It is directed by the General Assembly consisting of representatives from all the Member Countries and of the Officers of the Commission.
- Any country can become a "Member Country" and constitute a National Committee with persons competent in the matters relating to dams.

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