

# Current Affairs



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June 2019



# International Affairs

## ADB approves US \$350 million loan for road project in Chhattisgarh



Multi-lateral funding agency Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved US \$350 million loan for road project in Chhattisgarh. The project aims at rehabilitating and upgrading state highways and major district roads in Chhattisgarh, which will improve connectivity and access to basic services and livelihood opportunities.

### About Project

It aims to provide safer and higher capacity road connectivity between state capital, district centres, and other rural hubs. It also seeks to provide efficient linkages between existing key corridors.

It will support state government's strategy by rehabilitating or upgrading two state highways and 23 major district roads totalling about 850 kilometres.

The total cost of this project is US \$521.69 million of which State Government will finance US \$171.69 million.

**Significance of Project:** It will boost access of the poor to socio-economic opportunities and to basic services such as healthcare and education. It will also improve the overall quality of life in influence areas along the roads.



## Background

Chhattisgarh is overwhelmingly rural (about 96% of the area) and is rich in natural resources and a major producer of minerals such as coal and iron ore. However, according to 2011 census, poverty levels were at about 38% of the population.

There is need for safe and efficient road network to significantly improve state's economy and development, and for poverty reduction in the state. Currently, Chhattisgarh relies heavily on roads for movement of people and goods, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. About 70% of the state highways have only single or intermediate lanes, while most major and other district roads are single lanes.

## Asian Development Bank (ADB)

It is multilateral lending agency based in Manila, Philippines. It was established on 19 December 1966.

It is collectively owned by its members. It has total 67 members – 48 from Asia-Pacific region (including India) and 19 from outside.

It envisions prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty in the region.

It assists its members, and partners, by providing loans, technical assistance, grants and equity investments to promote social and economic development

It provides finance to both sovereign countries as well as to private entities. It provides soft loans to poorer countries and hard loans to middle-income countries.

Most of its lending is concentrated in five operational areas viz. education, environment, climate Change & disaster management, finance sector development, regional cooperation & integration and private sector lending.

## US ends preferential trade status for India under GSP



United States has officially announced termination of preferential trade treatment to India as a beneficiary developing nation under GSP (Generalised System of Preferences) trade programme from June 5, 2019. It was announced after US claimed that India has not assured that will provide equitable and reasonable access to its markets to US goods.

### Background

US has announced this withdrawal of special duty benefits under Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) to Indian in March 2019 and to come into force from the first week of May 2019 after 60 days of notification sent to US Congress followed by enactment of Presidential Proclamation.

However, US had decided to postpone implementation of its decision until May 23, 2019 till new Government is elected in India.

### About Generalised System of Preferences (GSP)

It is preferential tariff system extended by developed countries to developing countries. It also known as preference receiving countries or beneficiary countries. It was introduced in 1976.

It is preferential arrangement in sense that it allows concessional low or zero tariff imports from developing countries.

Developed countries including US, EU, UK, Japan etc gives GSPs to imports from developing countries.

It is designed to promote economic development by allowing duty-free entry for thousands of products from designated beneficiary countries both developing and developed countries.

**Objective of US-GSP:** (i) Give development support to poor countries by promoting exports from them into developed countries. (ii) Promote sustainable development in beneficiary countries by helping these countries to increase and diversify their trade with US.

**Criteria for US:** Providing US with equitable and reasonable market access, respecting arbitral awards in favour of US citizens or corporations, providing adequate and effective intellectual property protection, combating child labour and respecting internationally recognised worker rights, among others.

**Benefits:** Under it, wide range of industrial and agricultural products originating from certain developing countries are given preferential access to US markets.

**In India's case:** GSP enables duty-free entry of 3,500 goods in US markets, which benefits exporters of agriculture, textiles, engineering, gems and jewellery and chemical products.

Total US imports under GSP in 2017 was \$21.2 billion, of which India was largest beneficiary with \$5.6 billion, followed by Thailand (\$4.2 billion) and Brazil (\$2.5 billion).

### Impact on India

Bilateral trade between India and US stood at \$74.5 billion in 2017-18. US has trade surplus of \$27.3 billion. Terminating GSP status will put to end duty-free import of around 1900 goods from India into US. It will be strongest punitive action taken by President Donald Trump against as part of agenda of reducing US deficit with large economies.

According to Government, this withdrawal will not have any major impact on overall Indian exports to US as concessions availed under this scheme were minimal. Total GSP benefits availed by India under GSP programme were to tune of \$190 million on trade \$5.6 billion. So, benefits both in absolute sense, and as percentage of trade involved, are very minimal and moderate



## Quad meeting held in Bangkok



The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) meeting was recently held in Bangkok, Thailand for consultations on their collective efforts to advance a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. It was attended by senior officials from US, Australia, India, and Japan.

### Outcomes of Meeting

They affirmed their strong support for ASEAN centrality and ASEAN-led regional architecture, as well as their support for other regional institutions, including Indian Ocean Rim Association and Pacific Islands Forum.

They also reaffirmed their shared commitment to preserving and promoting the rules-based order in the region. They underscored their intent to continue close coordination and collaboration in support of sustainable, private-sector led development, maritime security, and good governance.

They discussed initiatives undertaken by each country to encourage transparent, principles-based investment in quality infrastructure in accordance with international standards and leverage the potential of the private sector.

They agreed to continue to explore opportunities to enhance cooperation including in support of regional disaster response, cybersecurity, maritime security, counterterrorism, and non-proliferation. They also underscored their intent to continue regular consultations on Indo-Pacific engagement and initiatives together and with other interested countries and institutions.

### Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)

It is an informal strategic grouping consisting of four pro-democratic countries – United States, India, Japan, and Australia. The grouping is seen by many as counter to China's increasing economic and military might. It was originally initiated in 2007 but later disbanded after withdrawal of Australia. However, it was n revived again in 2017 in response to increased Chinese economic and military power.

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## Yousef Aldobeay appointed as OIC's special envoy for Jammu & Kashmir



Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has appointed Saudi Arabia's Yousef Aldobeay as its special envoy for Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). This decision was taken at the 14th Islamic Summit of the OIC held in holy city of Makkah, Saudi Arabia..

### Purpose of appointment

OIC held that it fully supports people of J&K's achievement of their legitimate rights. It also called upon India to hold referendum in J&K under United Nations' patronage.

### No support of all OIC countries

The decision to appoint special envoy for Kashmir issue was primarily decision of few countries of OIC contact group on Kashmir and not all OIC members were party to the decision and maintained neutral stance on the issue. Some of the key OIC member states across continents have not been in favour of a strong position on Kashmir.

### Why this decision was taken?

It is believed that complicated political situation in West Asia, particularly tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran coupled with dependence of some key nations in the region on Pakistan Army against Houthis and Iran, may have prompted OIC to appoint a special envoy for Kashmir.

The developments came within three months of the OIC foreign ministers' meet in UAE where India for first time was invited as guest of honour for the plenary session. On that occasion,



Pakistan had tried to use every session to defame India but had failed to get Kashmir issue mentioned in the final joint declaration as the hosts and Saudi Arabia ensured that the guest (India) was not embarrassed.

However, it is believed that role of Pakistan Army in support of Gulf states amid tensions with Iran may have played role in the decision to appoint special envoy in response to Pakistan Government's request for such a post.

### India's position

Union Ministry of External Affairs' (MEA) spokesperson held that OIC has no locus standi in matters relating to state of J&K, which is an integral part of India.

It is reiterated that OIC should refrain from making such unwarranted references. India categorically rejects yet another unacceptable reference to matters internal to India in Final Communique adopted at conclusion of the 14th Islamic Summit of OIC member states held at Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

### About Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

It is international organization that aims to provide collective voice to Muslim world and safeguard and protect interests of Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony.

It was established in 1969. It has administrative centre (headquarters/ Secretariat) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It is second largest inter-governmental organization after United Nations.

It consists of 56 member states spread over four continents with collective population of over 1.3 billion as of 2009 with 47 countries being Muslim Majority countries. It has five observer states.

It has permanent delegations to UN and European Union. Its official languages are Arabic, English, and French.

**Issues with India:** Over the past few decades, India had, at best, prickly relationship with OIC, largely because Pakistan frequently used this grouping to target India on Kashmir issue. OIC on behest of Pakistan regarded parts of Kashmir as "occupied by India".

India was blocked country, though it is third largest country (after Indonesia and Pakistan) in terms of Muslim population (It has about 12% of world's Muslim population).

OIC was seen as pro Pakistan and its allies in Arab world have also had blocked attempts to give observer status to India.

## 2nd Global Disability Summit held in Argentina



The second edition of Global Disability Summit will be held in at Buenos Aires, Argentina from 6-8 June 2019. It is being organised by International Alliance Disability (IDA) and Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families (RIADIS).

### 2nd Global Disability Summit

**Objective:** Deliberate on issues across the world concerning empowerment and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and to work out mechanism for enabling them to live an independent and dignified life.

**Features:** It will be a follow-up to the first "Global Disability Summit" held in London in 2018. It seeks to strengthen commitment of world to ensure full inclusion of people with disabilities and guarantee their rights, freedoms and human dignity.

**India's representation:** Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot is leading Indian delegation to this summit.

### About International Disability Alliance (IDA)

It is umbrella organization focused on improving awareness and rights for individuals with disabilities around the globe. It was established in 1999.

It is alliance of eight global and six regional organisations of persons with disabilities (PWDs). It advocates for more inclusive global environment for PWDs and their organisations.

It represents estimated one billion people worldwide with disabilities, which is the world's largest and most frequently overlooked marginalised group.

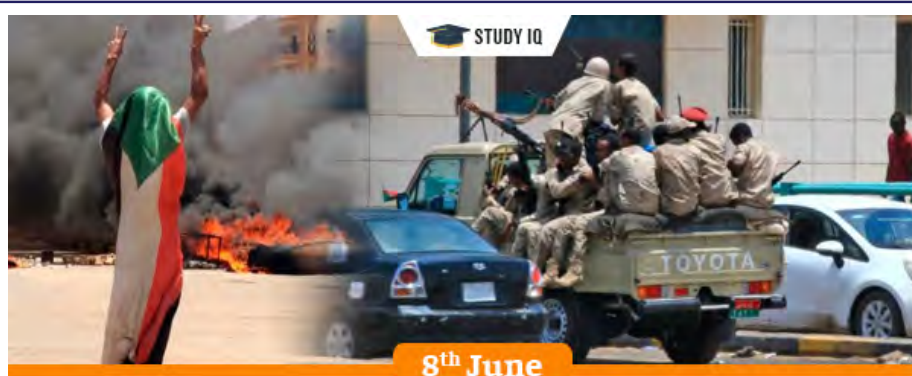
**Mandate:** It works closely with Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's), supranational organizations such as United Nations (UN), as well as state governments to create legislation, fund disability programs in developing and industrialized countries, and advocate for PWDs around the world. It uses UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) as its code of conduct. It also ensure that 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals is inclusive and in line with UNCRPD.

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## African Union suspends Sudan over military crackdown



### AFRICAN UNION SUSPENDS SUDAN OVER MILITARY CRACKDOWN

African Union (AU) has suspended participation of Sudan in all AU activities until effective establishment of Civilian-led Transitional Authority. It comes after Sudan's military launched a brutal crackdown on protesters that killed dozens of people in the capital, Khartoum. AU also has warned of further action if power is not transferred to civilian authority - a key demand of pro-democracy protesters. The military leadership had taken control over the country after ouster of President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019 in military coup following large-scale pro-democracy protests.

#### About African Union (AU)

It is pan-Africa continental union consisting of 55 countries. Its structure is loosely modelled on that of European Union. It is headquartered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

It was founded in May 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and launched in July 2002 in South Africa. It had replaced Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

**Main objectives:** (i) Promote unity and cooperation among African nations and strive to spread democracy and good governance in the continent. (ii) Accelerate process of integration in continent to enable it play its rightful role in global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political problems. (iii) Safeguard sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and (iv) Promote international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations.

**Structure:** AU Assembly is its most important decisions making body. It is a semi-annual meeting of heads of state and government of its member states. It also has official bodies such as Peace and Security Council and Pan-African Parliament.

## 2nd anniversary of India-UN Development Partnership Fund



United Nation's Secretary General Antonio Guterres has praised India-UN Development Partnership Fund on its second anniversary for championing greater prosperity for all while contributing to South-South cooperation. He held that through this initiative India is championing greater prosperity and opportunity for all. This initiative also has been held up by UN leaders as model for cooperation among developing countries.

### About India-UN Development Partnership Fund

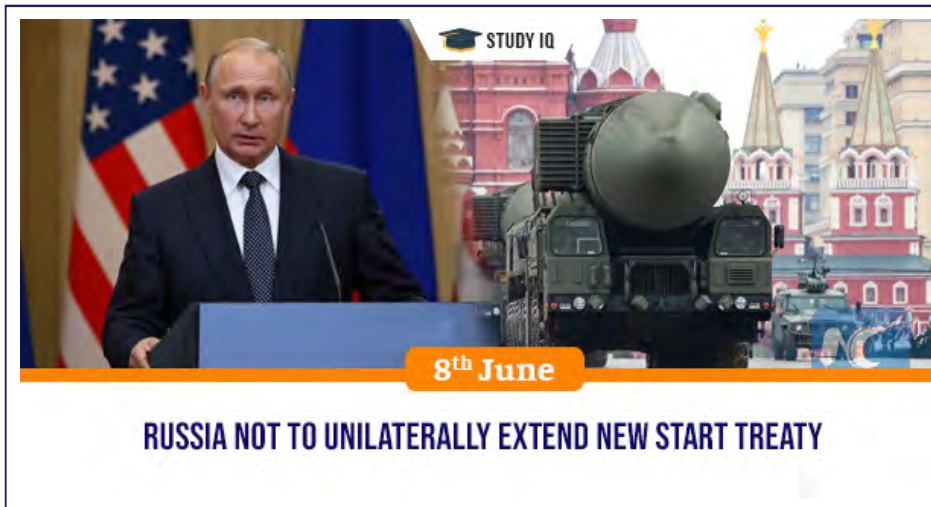
It is dedicated facility within United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). It was established in 2017.

It is supported and led by Government of India and managed by United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). It implemented in collaboration with the United Nations system.

**Mandate:** It supports Southern-owned and led, demand-driven, and transformational sustainable development projects across the developing world, with focus on least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states.

**India's contributions:** It has committed total of US \$150 million for this fund over the next decade to support projects that are in alignment with 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It has already disbursed \$22 million during past two years to finance 36 projects in 37 partnering countries.

## Russia not to unilaterally extend New START treaty



Russian President Vladimir Putin has announced Russia was prepared to drop New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) with the US. He said that Russia will not unilaterally extend New START with US as President Donald Trump administration has showed no genuine interest in conducting talks on extending the treaty.

**Note:** If New START falls, it will be second nuclear weapons treaty between US and Russia to collapse under leadership of US President Donald Trump. In February 2019, US had unilaterally withdrawn from the [1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty \(INF\)](#), accusing Russia of violating the agreement. Russia then followed the same suit.

### **New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START)**

It is nuclear arms reduction treaty between signed between United States and Russia. Its formal name is Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms.

It was signed by US President Barack Obama and Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev in Prague in 2010. It had entered into force in February 2011 after ratification. It is expected to last at least until 2021.

It had replaced 1991 START I treaty, which expired December 2009, and superseded 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), which terminated when New START entered into force

**Objective:** It was aimed at capping the number of nuclear warheads of US and Russia well below Cold War limits. Under terms of this treaty, number



of strategic nuclear missile launchers were to be reduced by half and new inspection and verification regime was to be established, replacing SORT mechanism.

**Significance:** It was first verifiable US-Russia nuclear arms control treaty to take effect since START I in 1994. It continued bipartisan process of verifiably reducing US and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals begun by former Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

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## India-Maldives sign six agreements



India and Maldives have signed six agreements in the fields of hydrography, health, passenger and cargo services by sea, Customs capacity-building, training of Maldivian civil servants and white shipping information. These agreements were signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the Maldives. Both countries also agreed to intensify economic and cultural relations.

### About Visit

It was first state official foreign visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi after assuming office for second term. During the visit, India reaffirmed its neighbourhood first policy while Maldives strongly conveyed its India first policy. He also inaugurated Coastal Surveillance Radar System and Composite Training Facility of Maldives National Defence Force in Maafilafushi by remote link.

**Note:** During this visit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded prestigious Order of Distinguished Role of Nishan Izzuddeen.

### List of Agreements/MoUs signed

MoU for Cooperation in field of hydrography between Indian Navy and Maldives National Defence Force

MoU on Cooperation in the field of Health .

MoU for establishment of passenger and cargo services by Sea between Union Ministry of Shipping, and Maldives' Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation.

Technical Agreement on sharing white shipping information between Indian Navy and Maldives National Defence Force.

MoU between India's National Centre for Good Governance (NCCG) and Maldives Civil Service Commission on Training and Capacity Building Programme for Maldivian Civil Servants

MoU for Cooperation in Customs Capacity Building between Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs of India (CBIC) and Maldives Customs Service

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## Maritime Information Sharing Workshop 2019 held in Gurugram



The Indian Navy is hosting Maritime Information Sharing Workshop 2019 (MISW 2019) under the aegis of the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) at Gurugram, Haryana. The two-day event was inaugurated by Vice Admiral MS Pawar, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff. It saw participation of more than 41 delegates from 29 countries of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and beyond.

### MISW 2019

**Objectives:** It was aimed at acquainting all participants about IFC-IOR and its information sharing mechanisms. It was also aimed at promoting and sharing best practices in this field for better yield response to myriad security and safety challenges faced by IOR.

**Issues Highlighted:** Several talks regarding contemporary maritime challenges in Indo-Pacific region were discussed. It also highlighted significance of maritime domain as well as the challenges faced by region such as piracy, maritime terrorism, humanitarian assistance & disaster relief, human & drug trafficking as well as legal perspective of combating these challenges.

### About Information Fusion Centre Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)

It was launched in December 2018 by then Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at Indian Navy's Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) Gurugram, Haryana.

It was established with vision of strengthening maritime security in the region and beyond, by building common coherent maritime situation picture and acting as a maritime information hub for the region. It serves as a single point centre linking all coastal radar chains to generate a seamless real-time picture of the nearly 7,500-km coastline. Through it, information on “white shipping”, or commercial shipping is exchanged with countries in the region to improve maritime domain awareness in the Indian Ocean.

It works towards capability building in IOR, coordinating in time incident response and disaster relief, and also sharing submarine safety information.

All countries that have signed white shipping information exchange agreements with India can post their liaison officers at IFC.

So far, it has established linkages with more than 16 countries and 13 international maritime security agencies.

Note: It serves as separate platform as of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), but its all members can be part of it.

Notes

## PM Modi to be Guest at Eastern Economic Forum



### PM MODI TO BE GUEST AT EASTERN ECONOMIC FORUM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accepted invitation of Russian President Putin to be main guest at Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) to be held at Vladivostok, Russia in September 2019. The invitation proposal was forwarded by Russian President Vladimir Putin after two leaders held in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan on sidelines of 2019 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit.

#### Eastern Economic Forum (EEF)

It is annual event held at Vladivostok, Russia to encourage foreign investment in the Russian Far East. It was established by Decree of Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2015.

It provides platform for discussion of key issues in the world economy, regional integration, and development of new industrial and technological sectors, as well as of global challenges facing Russia and other nations.

#### Key objectives of EEF

Strengthen ties between international investment community, Russian business and federal, regional, and local government bodies

Conduct comprehensive expert assessment of economic potential of Russian Far East and improve region's competitiveness and attractiveness to investors both nationally and internationally

Showcase new investment and business opportunities such as advanced special economic zones, Vladivostok Free Port, and state support for high-potential investment projects.



## Asia Media Summit 2019 held in Cambodia



The Asia Media Summit 2019 was held in Siem Reap province, Cambodia from 12 June to 14 June 2019. It was 16th edition of summit and last one (15th) was hosted by India. This year's summit was organized by Cambodia's Ministry of Information in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD). It deliberated on many issues pertaining to media & broadcasting industry.

### Asia Media Summit 2019

**Theme of Summit:** "Media Digitalization Focusing on Developing Markets". It called for regulation-making to fight against fake news and cyber-crimes.

**Participation:** More than 600 media representatives from 42 countries and regions participated in event.

**Purpose:** It held discussion on spread of disinformation and fake news and its impact on governments, media, private sector and society.

### Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)

It is regional inter-governmental organisation servicing countries of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) in field of electronic media development.

**Established in:** 1977 under auspices of UNESCO.

**Secretariat:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

**Mandate:** To achieve vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in Asia-Pacific region through policy and resource development.

**Membership:** 26 full members (countries), represented by 34 organisations and 67 Affiliate Members (or organisations) and over 50 partners in Asia, Pacific, Africa, Arab States, Europe and North America.

## CICA Summit 2019 held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan



The 5th Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Summit was in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Theme of this edition of summit was "Shared Vision for a Secure and More Prosperous CICA Region". From India, Union External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar had attended the two days summit.

### 5th CICA Summit

Participating Leaders from CICA member countries deliberated on existing and emerging issues of common concern to members and underline implementation of confidence-building measures for developing Asia into a prosperous, secure and peaceful region. They adopted Declaration covering issues of cooperation within CICA.

### Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

It is a pan Asia multi-national (intergovernmental) forum for enhancing cooperation towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia.

It was established in 1999. Its secretariat (headquarter) is in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan.

**Membership:** Presently it has 27 member states. India has been member since its inception. Eight countries and five multi-national organizations, including United Nations are having observer status. For becoming member of CICA, a country/ state must have at least part of its territory in Asia.

**Structure:** The highest decision making organ of CICA is the meeting of the CICA heads of state and government. CICA summit is convened every four years.

Besides, meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs is required to be held every two years.

**Note:** Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had participated in the first CICA Summit held in 2002 in Almaty, Kazakhstan



## India hosting Intersessional meeting of Kimberley Process



India will be hosting Intersessional meeting of Kimberley Process (KP) from 17th to 21st June, 2019 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Along with it, meetings of different Working Groups and Committees of Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), two special forums regarding Diamond Terminology and Artisanal Mining – Small Steps to Larger Outcomes, will be also held.

### Kimberley Process

It is international certification scheme that regulates trade in rough diamonds with aim of preventing flow of conflict diamonds, while helping to protect legitimate trade in rough diamonds.

It is joint initiative involving Government, international diamond industry and civil society to stem flow of Conflict Diamonds.

**Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS):** It outlines rules that govern trade in rough diamonds. It came into effect from 1st January, 2003. As per its provisions, each shipment of rough diamonds being exported and imported by crossing international border can be transported in tamper proof container and accompanied by validated Kimberley Process Certificate.

The shipment can only be exported to co-participant country in KPCS. No uncertified shipments of rough diamonds are permitted to enter a participant country.

**Participants:** At present, KPCS has 55 members representing 82 countries including European Union with 28 members. India is the founding member of KPCS.



**Chairmanship of Kimberley Process:** It is chaired on rotating basis, by participating countries. Its Vice-Chair is generally elected by KP Plenary each year, who becomes the Chair in the next year. India is Chairman of KPCS for the year 2019 with Russia as Vice Chair. India had earlier chaired KPCS in the year 2008.

**Important Note:** Kimberley Process in formal sense is not **international organization** and has no permanent offices or permanent staff. It relies on contributions under principle of burden-sharing of participants and is supported by industry and civil society observers. KP also cannot be considered as an international agreement from legal perspective, as it is implemented through national legislations of its participants.

**Conflict Diamonds:** They are also known as 'blood' diamonds. They are basically rough diamonds used by rebel movements or their allies to finance conflict aimed at undermining legitimate governments. It is also described in United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions.

Notes

## WHO launches AWaRe tool to curb antimicrobial resistance



WHO has launched global campaign urging governments to adopt **AWaRe tool** to reduce the spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), adverse events and costs.

### AWaRe

It is online tool aimed at guiding policy-makers and health workers to use antibiotics safely and more effectively. It also seeks to limit drugs that are at risk of resistance. It has been developed by the WHO Essential Medicines List to contain rising resistance and make antibiotic use safer and more effective.

**It classifies antibiotics into three groups:**

**Access:** antibiotics used to treat the most common and serious infections.

**Watch:** antibiotics available at all times in the healthcare system.

**Reserve:** antibiotics to be used sparingly or preserved and used only as a last resort.

### New campaign

**Objective:** Increase the proportion of global consumption of antibiotics in Access group to at least 60% and to reduce use of the antibiotics most at risk of resistance from the Watch and Reserve groups. It will make easier for policy-makers, prescribers and health workers to select right antibiotic at right time, and to protect endangered antibiotics.

### Antimicrobial resistance

It is already one of the biggest health risks and is estimated to kill 50 million by 2050 worldwide. It threatens to undo a century of medical progress. Its threat continues to escalate globally because more than 50% of antibiotics in many countries are used inappropriately such as for treatment of viruses when they only treat bacterial infections or use of wrong (broader spectrum) antibiotic.

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## ICG to co-hosts 12th ReCAAP ISC capacity building workshop



Indian Coast Guard (ICG) co-hosted 12th Capacity Building workshop with Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre (ISC) in New Delhi. This will be third time India hosting this workshop and earlier it was held in November 2011 and December 2017 in the National Capital.

### 12th Capacity Building workshop

It will witness active participation from total of 31 International delegates from 19 countries. It will also see participation of officials from National Stakeholders such as State Maritime Boards, major ports, State Marine Police, Directorate General of Shipping and Indian National Ship-Owners Association .

### Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP)

It is the first regional Government-to-Government (G2G) agreement to deal with piracy and armed robbery at sea in Asia. It was concluded in November 2004. India had played key role in the setting up and functioning of ReCAAPISC along with Japan and Singapore.

Presently 20 countries (14 Asian countries, 4 European countries, Australia, USA) are its members. Union Government has designated Indian Coast Guard (ICG) as the focal point within India for ReCAAP.

**Three pillars of co-operation under ReCAAP agreement:** Information sharing, capacity building and mutual legal assistance.

**Information Sharing Centre (ISC):** It was established at Singapore to collate and disseminate information among the contracting parties and the maritime community.

## India provides \$15 million grant to Niger for organising African Union summit



India has extended US \$15 million grant to Niger in support of organising the African Union summit scheduled in July 2019 in Niamey. The support was provided in response to a specific request made by the Niger government to India. Niger is hosting the AU Summit for the first time. It will be held from July 7-8, 2019 in Niamey, which is expected to launch the historic African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

### Significance

India's grant assistance to Niger for organizing AU Summit will further contribute towards enhancing bilateral ties between two countries. It is also reiteration of India's firm commitment to its developmental partnership with Africa.

### About African Union (AU)

It is pan-Africa continental union consisting of 55 countries. Its structure is loosely modelled on that of European Union. It is headquartered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

It was founded in May 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and launched in July 2002 in South Africa. It had replaced Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

**Main objectives:** (i) Promote unity and cooperation among African nations and strive to spread democracy and good governance in the continent. (ii) Accelerate process of integration in continent to enable it play its rightful

role in global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political problems. (iii) Safeguard sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and (iv) Promote international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations.

**Structure:** AU Assembly is its most important decisions making body. It is a semi-annual meeting of heads of state and government of its member states. It also has official bodies such as Peace and Security Council and Pan-African Parliament.

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## ICCPR: Sri Lanka abusing UN law to make arrests



Media activists have accused Sri Lankan law and enforcement agencies of using International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), an United Nations law on hate speech to crack down on media freedom and country's Muslim minority. Recently, journalist was arrested for his writing on anti-Muslim riots and Buddhist extremists under Sri Lanka's laws compliant to International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

### About International Covenant On Civil And Political Rights (ICCPR)

It is a multilateral treaty adopted by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) through resolution 2200A (XXI) in December 1966, and came in force in March 1976. It commits its parties to respect civil and political rights of individuals, including right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, electoral rights and rights to due process and a fair trial.

It is part of International Bill of Human Rights, along with International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It is monitored by the United Nations Human Rights Committee. It has 172 parties and six more signatories without ratification,

## Olympic House: New HQ building of IOC inaugurated



The International Olympic Committee (IOC) formally opened its new headquarters- Olympic House in Lausanne, Switzerland on the occasion of 125th anniversary of Olympic Games. It has been built on the site of the former headquarters.

### Olympic House

It has been built on site of former Olympic headquarters. It is environment friendly efficient building, made by recycling and reusing 95% of old materials from old headquarter building. Its power requirement is met by renewable energy supplied using solar panels on roof and pumps taking water from Lake Geneva. Its central staircase links together 5 Olympic rings. It is designed by architecture firm 3XN of Denmark. Its energy-efficient building design has won international awards for sustainability.

### About International Olympic Committee (IOC)

It is a non-governmental sports organisation headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland. It was created on 23 June 1894. It is headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland. The first Olympic Games of the modern era were held in Athens, Greece on 6 April 1896.

**Mandate of IOC:** It is supreme authority of Olympic Movement and is responsible for organising the modern Summer and Winter Olympic Games. It is governing body of National Olympic Committees (NOCs), which are the national constituents of the worldwide Olympic Movement.

**Membership:** It has 95 active members, 44 honorary members, 2 honour members (Senegal and United States), 206 individual National Olympic Committees which are officially recognised by IOC.



## Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region



Leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region. The declaration comes ahead G20 summit in Japan, which assembles 20 major economies and will also aim to tackle marine plastic pollution

### Background

According to 2015 report co-authored by environmental campaigner Ocean Conservancy, four ASEAN member countries Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand, along with China are world's top polluters, throwing most plastic waste into oceans.

### Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

It is regional intergovernmental organization comprising 10 countries in Southeast Asia viz. Vietnam, Laos, Brunei, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar and Indonesia.

It promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic, political, security, military, sociocultural and educational integration among its members and other countries in Asia.

It was established on August 8, 1967, after adaptation ASEAN declaration (also known as Bangkok Declaration). Its secretariat is located in Jakarta, Indonesia.



## Saudi Arabia becomes 39th member of FATF



24<sup>th</sup> June

SAUDI ARABIA BECOMES 39TH MEMBER OF FATF

Saudi Arabia became 39th member of Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF). It is first Arab country to be granted full membership of FAFT. Saudi Arabia was granted observer status of FAFT in 2015.

### About Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

It is inter-governmental standard-setting body for anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT).

It was established in 1989 during G7 Summit in Paris (France) to combat growing problem of money laundering. It is headquartered in OECD headquarters in Paris, France.

Initially, it was only dealing with developing policies to combat money laundering, its madate was expanded in 2001 to act against terrorism financing.

**Mandate:** Set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

**Members:** It comprises 39-member jurisdictions (including India, China, Russia) and 2 regional organisations (Gulf Cooperation Council and European Commission).

**Functions:** (i) Set global standards to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Assess and monitor compliance with the FATF standards. (ii) Conduct studies of money laundering and terrorist financing methods, trends and techniques. (iii) Respond to new and emerging threats, such as proliferation financing used for promoting proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

## goAML: UAE 1st Gulf country to launch new anti-money laundering platform



United Arab Emirates (UAE) become the first country in the Gulf to launch goAML, a new anti-money laundering platform. goAML has been customised to the requirements of the UAE's Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorist Financing framework.

### About goAML

It has been developed by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to curb organised crimes (UNODC) for use by the UAE Central Bank's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU).

It is also available to Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) of Member States to support their work in countering money laundering and terrorist financing. It facilitates receipt, analysis, and dissemination of illicit transactions and activity to law enforcement authorities in the UAE.

UAE's reporting entities including financial institutions such as banks, finance companies and exchange houses are required to register on this platform.

It will be also used by law enforcement agencies, and designated non-financial professions such as accountants and lawyers.



## Council of Europe restores Russia's voting rights



### COUNCIL OF EUROPE RESTORES RUSSIA'S VOTING RIGHTS

The Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe has voted in favour of restoring Russia's voting rights, five years after they were revoked over its illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. This move paves way for Russia to participate in election of a new secretary general for of this pan-European rights watchdog. The motion for restoring Russia's voting rights was approved with 118 votes in favour, 62 against, and 10 abstentions.

#### Background

Russia was stripped of its voting rights after Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014. Russia responded by boycotting assembly and exerted political pressure. Since 2017, Russia also had refused to pay its share of 33 million Euro to Council of Europe. It also had threatened to quit body altogether if it is not allowed to take part in election.

#### About Council of Europe

It is Europe's leading human rights organisation mandated to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe. It is distinct from the European Union (EU). It was founded in in 1949. It is headquartered in Strasbourg, France. Its best known body is the European Court of Human Rights, which enforces the European Convention on Human Rights. Its members include 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union.

**Note:** Unlike EU, Council of Europe cannot make binding laws, but it has powers to enforce select international agreements reached by European states on various topics.





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