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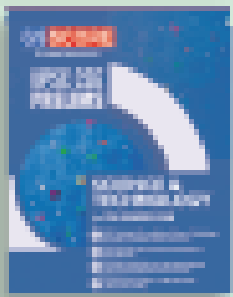
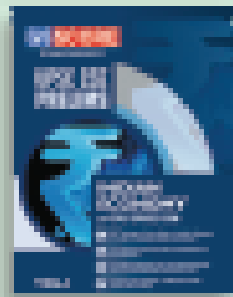
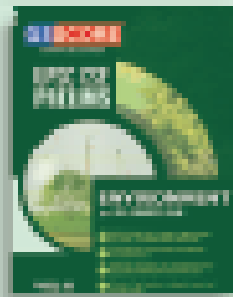
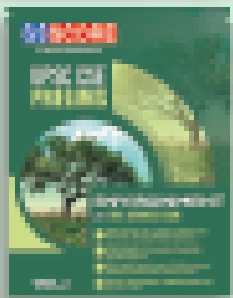
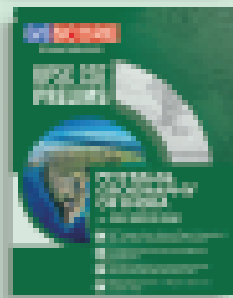
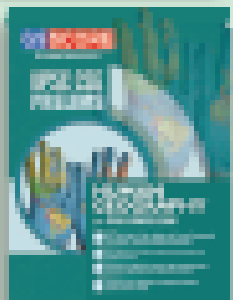
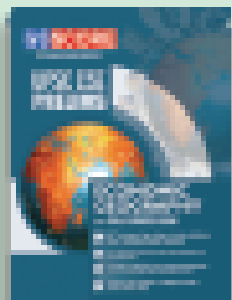
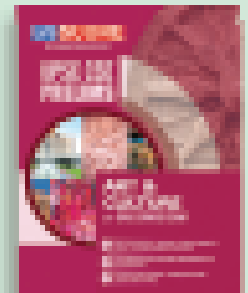
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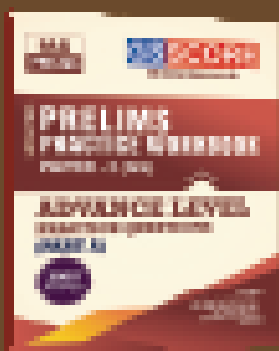
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CONTENTS

■ Asean Summit 2022	1
■ QUAD Summit.....	3
■ 14th BRICS Summit	4
■ Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit, 2022	5
■ Raisina Dialogue-2022	5
■ G 20 Summit 2022.....	6
■ G7 Summit 2022.....	8
■ Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit, 2022.....	10
■ India – Germany migration and mobility partnership agreement	11
■ Eastern Economic Forum.....	12
■ World Dairy Summit 2022	13
■ First virtual I2U2 summit.....	14
■ UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 15)	15

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INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS & SUMMITS

Asean Summit 2022

- As the part of **40th East Asia summit** and **41st Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** held in Cambodia started on November 12, India has highlighted its stance on Global issues and its agenda for the upcoming G20 summit.

Highlights of the Summit:

- Location:** Cambodian capital (**Phnom Penh**).
- The three-day summit also included the **East Asia Summit**.
- Major Participants other than ASEAN countries included **S. President Joe Biden, Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and others**.
- India's **external affairs Minister Mr. S Jaishankar** took part in the summit.
- Major issues:** The following issues were discussed:
 - Crisis in Myanmar
 - Russia-Ukraine War and disrupted global supply chains
 - Global Consensus and coordination
 - For World's common interest to cooperate to solve differences peacefully
 - The comments come as regional tensions remain high between the United States and China over Taiwan and Beijing's growing regional aspirations

About

The ASEAN	The East Asia Summit (EAS)
The Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN is a regional inter-governmental organization consisting of 10 Southeast Asian countries -Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.	The East Asia Summit (EAS) is the Indo-Pacific's premier forum for strategic dialogue .

It aims to facilitate and promote cooperation in trade, security, education, and cultural integration and exchange.	It is the only leader-led forum at which all key Indo-Pacific partners meet to discuss political, security, and economic challenges facing the region and have an important role to play in advancing closer regional cooperation.
ASEAN is considered one of the most influential groupings in the region, and India and several other countries, including the US, China, Japan, and Australia, are its dialogue partners.	The EAS has 18 members - the ten ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) along with Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States .
It is collectively the third-largest economy in Asia after China and Japan and the seventh-largest in the world.	ASEAN leads the forum, and the chair position rotates between ASEAN Member States.

What was India's stance at the Summit?

- **Marking its Relations with ASEAN Countries:** This year marks the **30th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations** and is being celebrated as the '**ASEAN-India Friendship Year**'.

India's Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has addressed the East Asia Summit.

- **India G20 presidency and Agenda:** India is also going to uptake the next G20 presidency in 2022-23. This has made it important for India to take steps for global support toward its agendas to fulfill.
 - ▶ The ASEAN summit was one of the stances towards it as per India.
 - ▶ The US has also mentioned its support for India's presidency.
- **Peaceful settlements between Russia and Ukraine:** Being not given any clear statement for India's support to the party in the war between both countries, India has mentioned that it is ready to go with any negotiation that remains in peace and non-weaponized.
- **Against Terrorism:** India with its INTERPOL meeting recently again cleared its No-tolerance policy for Terrorism. It is one of the important points of discussion with developed countries in G20.

Points remained Unaddressed in the Summit:

There exist a few points that remained undiscussed at the summit which are important for India as follows:

- Maritime security and Conflict between China's intervention in overpowering the sea routes and Economic activities in the Indian Ocean.
- Terrorism and increasing Communal hate.
- Russia and US note on Nuclear Technologies uses in war.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or **ASEAN**, was established on **8 August 1967** in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (**Bangkok Declaration**) by the Founding Fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

- Brunei Darussalam then joined on 7 January 1984, Viet Nam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999.
- Today, it is a **ten** Member States of ASEAN.
- **Members** - Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam

QUAD Summit

Context

- QUAD (Quadrilateral Cooperation) summit held in Tokyo, Japan.

What is Quad?

- The Quad, or Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, comprises the United States, India, Japan and Australia.
- It is an informal group of the four nations that hold semi-regular meetings, joint military drills, and discussions about regional, economic and development assistance.
- The framework was established in 2007, but it took on a new level of importance in 2019 with a discussion among foreign ministers amid China's increasing influence.

Why Quad assumes significance for four nations?

- **United States:** For the United States under Joe Biden, Quad assumes greater significance as it looks to strengthen its commitment in Asia and counter China after the tumultuous Trump era.
- **Japan, India and Australia:** For Japan, India and Australia, China has emerged as a security threat in several positions, making the Quad meeting a key opportunity to strengthen strategic ties.

Chinese Maritime Aggression in the Region

- **String of Pearls:** to encircle India and limit its maritime expansion
- **Belt and Road Initiative:** viewed as model of Neo Imperialism
- **Debt Trap Diplomacy** (Hambantota Port, Pakistan's CPEC)
- **Weaponization of Supply Chain** : deployment of naval vessels at Chinese-controlled ports

Key highlights of the Summit

- Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness.
- Sharing of space based civil Earth observation data; QUAD Satellite Data Portal
- Condemnation of terror groups and terrorist activities.
- QUAD Debt Management Resource Portal
- Capacity building under QUAD Cyber security Partnership; first ever QUAD Cyber Security Day
- Fellowship in STEM varsities in US for 25 students from each QUAD country.

Other discussed issues

- **India-Japan bilateral talks:**
 - ▶ Both the nations reviewed the progress of Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail project.
 - ▶ Both have welcomed the signing of exchange of notes of the 3rd tranche of loan for project.
 - ▶ Japan has agreed for quarantine free entry for Indians with Covishield and Covaxine certificates, recognizing the Indian vaccination program.
- **India-America Bilateral talks:**
 - ▶ Two sides have announced a major partnership to boost cooperation in critical and emerging technologies between their leading security agencies.
 - ▶ White has invited India to join Combined Military Forces- Bahrain as an associate member.
- **India-Australia talks:**
 - ▶ Comprehensive strategic Partnership, including **trade and investments, defense manufacturing, renewable energy and green hydrogen, education and agricultural research etc.**

Importance of Indo Pacific Region (IPR)

- It is the geographical connotation of the area which covers the Eastern Coast of Africa through Indian Ocean and Western Coast of United States of America.
- **Countries of Indo-Pacific region:** Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor Leste, United States, Vietnam.

Significance:

- **Minerals:** IPR houses deep sea minerals on deep sea floor consisting of polymetallic nodules (PMN), crusts, and accumulations of metallic sulfides from deep vents. mining the PMN—which contain quantities of manganese, iron, copper, nickel, titanium, and cobalt
- **Hydrocarbons:** Deposits of petroleum and natural gas under the seafloor are the most valuable and sought-after fuels.
- **Fisheries:** The main fisheries in IPR are Bombay duck, catfish, tuna and tuna-like species, ponyfishes, croakers, mullets, sardines, anchovies, mackerel, sharks, prawns, shrimps and lobsters.

India's initiatives in Indo-Pacific

- **SAGAR:** To promote its strategic interests in the Indian Ocean, India launched the SAGAR vision in 2015.
- **Indian Pacific Ocean Initiative:** On 4 November 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the IPOI at the East Asia Summit in Bangkok.
- The main objective of the IPOI is to ensure the safety, security, and stability of the maritime domain, and to do that, seven pillars have been laid out.
- IPOI is being built on the pillars of India's 'Act East' policy (focusing on the Eastern Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific) and 'Act West' (focusing on the Western Indian Ocean).
- **India's theatre command:** The Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC), India's first and only tri-service theater command of the Indian Armed Forces is located in IPR which aids immensely in protecting India's strategic interest in the region.

14th BRICS Summit

- 14 Summit of BRICS took place and BRICS countries, including **Russia, China and India**, jointly reiterated their support for UN-facilitated humanitarian assistance and peace talks to resolve the Ukraine war, even as leaders committed to respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states.

Key-highlights of the Summit

- The meeting was in the spotlight as it was the **first major multilateral get-together** attended by Putin since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24.
- No significant decisions were announced during the meeting.
- This was the third consecutive year that the **BRICS summit** was held in the virtual mode.
- At the end of the virtual summit, the leaders of **India, Russia, China, Brazil and South Africa** released a **joint statement**.
- **The joint statement mentioned that the leaders expressed their national positions on the Ukraine war at the summit.**

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit, 2022

- The summit 2022 was held recently in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.
- Samarkand declaration was signed by the member states.
- India takes over Presidency of the SCO for 2023.

Key Highlights

- The Samarkand declaration advocated "commitment to peaceful settlement of differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation".
- They stress that the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity of States, equality, mutual benefit, non- interference in internal affairs, and non-use or threat of use of force are the basis for sustainable development of international relations.
- The member countries are planning to develop common principles and approaches to form a unified list of terrorists, separatist and extremist organizations whose activities are prohibited on the territories of the SCO member states.
- Russia is also looking at more customers for its gas as Western countries look to cut their dependence on it.
- Russia suggested that the organisation should think about holding its own big athletic event.

Raisina Dialogue-2022

Context:

- The prestigious Raisina Dialogue - 2022, **was jointly organized by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation.**

About Raisina Dialogue:

- The Raisina Dialogue is an annual conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics addressing issues facing the global community.
- It takes its name from the Raisina Hill, the seat of the Indian government.
- It is organized by the Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with the Observer Research Foundation (ORF).
- Since its inception, the Raisina Dialogue has emerged as a leading global conference on international affairs featuring the participation of heads of state, ministers, journalists, academics and researchers.
- Theme of previous Dialogues:
 - ▶ 2016: "Asia: Regional and Global Connectivity"
 - ▶ 2017: "The New Normal: Multilateralism with Multipolarity"
 - ▶ 2018: "Managing Disruptive Transitions: Ideas, Institutions and Idioms"
 - ▶ 2019: "New Geometrics, Fluid Partnerships, Uncertain Outcomes"
 - ▶ 2020: "Navigating the Alpha Century"
 - ▶ 2021: "Viral World: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control"

The Raisina Dialogue 2022 and its theme

- The 2022 edition will have over 100 sessions with around 210 speakers from 90 countries and multilateral organisations.
- While the main event takes place **in New Delhi**, side events will be held in **Berlin** and **Washington**.
- A young fellows programme will also be organised on the sidelines of the event.
- The **theme** for the 2022 Edition is "**Terra Nova: Impassioned, Impatient, and imperilled**".
- Over the course of three days, the dialogue will feature panel discussions across multiple formats on **six thematic pillars**. These are:
 - ▶ Rethinking democracy: Trade, Tech and Ideology
 - ▶ End of Multilateralism: A Networked Global Order?
 - ▶ Water Caucuses: Turbulent Tides in the Indo-Pacific
 - ▶ Communities Inc: First Responders to Health, Development, and Planet
 - ▶ Achieving Green Transitions: Common Imperative, Diverging Realities
 - ▶ Samson vs Goliath: The Persistent and Relentless Tech Wars

Raisina Dialogue:

- The **Raisina Dialogue** is a multilateral conference that is held on an **annual basis in New Delhi, India**.
- The first such conference took place in 2016.
- It is designed on the lines of Singapore's Shangri-La Dialogue.
- The name "*Raisina Dialogue*" comes from Raisina Hill (President's palace).
- **Strategic:** It is India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geo-economics.
- **Collaboration:** The conference is hosted by Observer Research Foundation, an independent think tank with the Ministry of External Affairs of India.

G 20 Summit 2022

About

The 2022 G20 Leaders' Summit concluded with member states issuing a **joint declaration** on cooperation for global development.

- India will now officially assume the G20 Presidency on December 1, 2022.

Key points of the Joint Declaration

- On Russia-Ukraine Conflict:** The G20 summit had come to a common ground and addressed the impact that western sanctions against Russia have had on the global economy.
 - Clarified that G20 is not the forum to '**resolve security issues**' but these issues can have significant consequences for the **global economy**.
- On Food Security:** The leaders expressed concern about the challenges to global food security which has been intensified by the ongoing conflicts and tensions, and committed to taking '**urgent actions**' to help developing economies.
- The text of the outcome document also acknowledged the Russian donations of fertilizers facilitated by the **World Food Programme** and the **Black Sea Grain Corridor**.
- Against Terrorism and Money laundering:** The G20 declaration also called upon the international community to step up efforts to counter money laundering, terrorism financing, and proliferation financing and urged the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** and FATF Style Regional Bodies to 'lead global action to respond to these threats.
- Against War:** The leaders at G20 have clearly mentioned that they all are against war, as it causes great human suffering and affects Global rule-based order.

G20 or Group of Twenty:

- The **G20 is an informal group** of 19 countries and the European Union, with representatives of the **International Monetary Fund and the World Bank**.
- G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation representing around 85% of the global GDP, over 75% of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.
- It includes 19 countries, including, **Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Germany, India, Indonesia, Canada, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the USA, China, France, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and the European Union (EU)**.

India's Perspective at G20:

- India is currently a part of the **G20 Troika** (current, previous, and incoming G20 Presidencies) which includes **Indonesia, Italy, and India**.
- During India's presidency tenure, Brazil and Indonesia would make up the troika.**
- For the first time, the troika would be having three developing nations and emerging economies, providing a strong narrative of the concerns of these economies.



G20 Presidency as an opportunity for India:

- The growing conflicts and spiraling climate crises have kept global and regional food security as one of the priority agendas of the G20 for many years now.
- Against this backdrop, India's presidency of the G20 offers a historical opportunity for India to share its successful journey in moving from a food-deficit nation to a food-surplus nation.
- India can play a key role to address the growing challenges of food security for creating resilient and equitable food systems.

Points remained Unaddressed:

- No Bilateral agreement has been signed in the event regarding the trade and crisis of fuel supplies.
- The issue of Infrastructure finances for food grain storage and Agriculture has been noted.
- Funds for research and development in the field of Biotechnology and GM crops are unnoticed.

Young Professionals Scheme

The United Kingdom announced a new partnership with India as a **Young Professionals Scheme** at the G20 summit in Bali.

The Young Professionals Scheme:

- Under the scheme, the U.K will offer about **3,000 degree-holding Indians** in the **18–30-year age** group places to work in the U.K. for up to two years.
- The scheme will commence in early 2023. Both India and UK will allow young professionals in their Countries to hold degree programs.
- India is the **first country** to benefit from such a scheme, highlighting the strength of the **UK-India Migration and Mobility Partnership** agreed upon last year.
- **Objective:** The Young Professionals Programme is a recruitment initiative aiming to improve geographical representation, and promote gender parity in the Organization at the international level.

G7 Summit 2022

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, invited by Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of Germany, participated in the G7 Summit meeting in Germany. The summit is being hosted by Germany in its capacity as the chair of G7.
- Germany has held the G7 presidency from 1 January and will continue till 31 December 2022.
- Its choice of the guest countries was a recognition of the importance of democracies sticking together, no matter whether they also talk to Russia and China in a parallel way.

Background

- The G7 summit is held in the shadow of the continuing Ukraine war, with no end in sight.
- There were determined agenda items on which India made its contribution.
- These included issues of environment, energy, climate, food security, health, gender equality, and democracy.

What is G7?

- The Group of Seven (G7) is an inter-governmental political grouping consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the US.

Key takeaways from the summit

- **Climate change:** G7 nations are moving closer on their climate strategies, but differences over key details will prevent more concerted action for now.
- **Building back better and greener:** G7 countries will channel more international development finance into infrastructure and climate change projects, but they refused to label the initiative as a direct rival to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- **Shifting approach towards China:** The G7 conference official communiqué directly mentioned competition with China for the first time—a notable shift from previous summits, although countries differ in their approach.
- **Global Covid-19 vaccine rollout:** G7 countries are ramping up their vaccine diplomacy efforts; however, the implementation of pledges will remain to be seen, and G7 states have lost the public relations battle to China and Russia.
- **Global tax agreement remains elusive:** Leaders endorsed the 15% global minimum corporate tax plan, but major obstacles to its implementation remain.
- One important takeaway is India's inclusion in the **Just Energy Transition Partnership**.
 - ▶ This was initiated with South Africa at COP26, as a long-term ambitious approach to support transition to a low carbon, climate resilient economy.
- US has announced to lead **the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment**.
 - ▶ This PGII intends to cover the infrastructure gap in developing countries and strengthen global economic and supply chains and thus contribute to the security among the friends of the US.
- **Other major outcomes** included the
 - ▶ Global Alliance on Food Security
 - ▶ Climate Club
 - ▶ a \$600 billion Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment

Why G7 assumes significance for India?

- **An influential grouping:** The G7 is not just seven rich countries, but a group of more than 30 Western nations. The European Union as a whole also participates in all meetings.
- **Big numbers:** G-7 members comprising Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK and the US currently represent close to 45% of the global GDP and more than 10% of the world's population.
- **Solution for global challenges:** In addition to addressing economic issues, the G-7 has become a forum for consultation where common grounds are being found for major global challenges.
 - ▶ The G-7 has taken some important decisions with regard to global food security, supply chain resilience, digital and net zero transitions.

Why India assumes significance for G7?

- **Strong figure:** India has very strong economic and strategic ties with major economies.

- **Beneficial investment point:** As the Indian economy is likely to be one of the fastest growing economies in the post-pandemic phase, partnership with India is attractive for the West.
- **Attractive investments:** For its sustainable modernisation and energy transition, India is keen to attract investment, technology, and green finance from G7 nations.
- **To overcome challenges from Russia and China:** The G7 relations with Russia are bad, and tensions with China have grown. The main focus of **NATO's Madrid summit** which is taking place immediately after the G7 meeting is the direct security threat from Moscow, and challenges posed by China.
- In these circumstances, strengthening partnership with New Delhi is useful for the G7.
- **To meet global targets:** Moreover, major global targets related to green transition and Sustainable Development Goals cannot be met without robust and equitable Indian economic growth.
- **Potential:** India has the potential to scale up new emerging technologies, bringing costs down, and making it affordable to other developing countries.
- **India is an active participant in plurilateral groupings like the Quad, I2U2, and BRICS,**
- **Other strengths** of the Indian economy:
 - ▶ Ambitious climate target and performance
 - ▶ Contribution to global food security

Conclusion

In this scenario, G7 summit and invitation to India is a welcome development. G-7 summit is an opportunity to expand the global dimension of India's growing partnerships with the US and the West.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit, 2022

Context:

- The summit of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was held in Thailand. It is among the most impactful and yet lesser-known meetings in the region.

Key Highlights:

- APEC consolidated ideas which emerged at several of the summits. Unlike other summits, the APEC is actually a leader's meeting from the 21 economies of the region. The economies include Taiwan and Hong Kong, and thus are not called a summit of States.
- Economic Leaders of APEC, met in-person for the first time in four years in Bangkok on 18-19 November 2022.
- They continue the implementation of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, including through the Aotearoa Plan of Action.
- APEC theme "Open. Connect. Balance.",
- Members advance work through three priorities: to be open to all opportunities, connected in all dimensions, and balanced in all aspects, to advance long-term robust, innovative and inclusive economic growth as well as sustainability objectives in the Asia-Pacific region.
- APEC 2023, will be hosted by the United States of America and Peru and the Republic of Korea as hosts of APEC 2024 and 2025, respectively.

India and APEC:

- India has not been a member of APEC, and from time to time has shown interest in it.
- An effort was made in 2013 by Indonesia as APEC Chair, to admit India. As in other fora, the Chinese withheld support.
- Since APEC works on a consensus model, the moment passed without India's admission.
- Since then, India's enthusiasm to join APEC has withered though its profile in the region through the Indo-Pacific policies has enhanced.

What is APEC?

- The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum established in 1989.
- APEC is a 21 members forum with members - Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; People's Republic of China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; The Philippines; The Russian Federation; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; United States of America; Vietnam.
- It aims to create greater prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and by accelerating regional economic integration.
- It brings together 21 Pacific Rim countries which accounts for about 60% of global GDP.
- APEC was hosted in 2020 by Malaysia and Thailand will host in 2022.

Global Offshore Wind Alliance (GOWA)

- Nine new countries (Belgium, Colombia, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the US) have joined the Global Offshore Wind Alliance (GOWA) at the UN-COP27 climate summit.
- GOWA was initiated in September 2022 by the
 - ▶ International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)
 - ▶ Denmark
 - ▶ Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC)
- It aims to drive installed **global offshore wind capacity** up by 670 percent — from 57 GW in 2021 to 380 GW in 2030.
- Offshore wind energy is **clean and renewable energy** obtained by taking advantage of the force of the wind that is produced on the high seas, where it reaches a higher and more constant speed than on land due to the absence of barriers.

India – Germany migration and mobility partnership agreement

About

India and Germany inked an agreement on a **Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership** to help the citizens of both nations to study, do research and work in each other's country.

Discussed bilateral issues

- Bilateral issues: Germany's assistance to India on renewable energy and energy transitions
- International issues: Ukraine conflict, the situation in Afghanistan and cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan, Indo-Pacific strategy, and China

Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement

- The India-Germany MMPA (Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement) is part of overall efforts to create a network of agreements with prospective labor market destination countries.
- The pact will make it easier for people to study, do research, and work in each other's country.

The **German Skilled Immigration Act 2020** has expanded the opportunities for workers from countries outside. Through a new law to be adopted in early 2023, the German Government proposes to significantly facilitate the immigration of qualified workers from abroad.

2022 Summit of the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT)

- India and Sweden hosted the **LeadIT Summit** on the sidelines of COP27.
- The **Lead IT (Leadership for Industry Transition) initiative** focuses on the low carbon transition of the hard-to-abate industrial sector.
- LeadIT gathers countries and companies that are committed to action to achieve the Paris Agreement.
- It was launched by the governments of Sweden and India at the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019.
- It is supported by the **World Economic Forum**.
- LeadIT members subscribe to the notion that energy-intensive industries can and must progress on low-carbon pathways, aiming to achieve net-zero carbon emissions.

Eastern Economic Forum

Prime Minister of India (PM) addressed the plenary session of the 6th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) via video-conferencing held on 3 September 2021 in Vladivostok.

Key Points:

- The PM highlighted the importance of India-Russia relations and potential areas of cooperation in line with the 'Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership'.
- Applauded Russia's vision for the development of the Russian Far East region and reiterated India's commitment (as part of its "Act East Policy") of being a reliable partner of Russia in this regard.
- Highlighted the significance of health and pharma sectors as important areas of cooperation that have emerged during the pandemic.
- Referred to other potential areas of economic cooperation including diamond, coking coal, steel, timber etc.

About Eastern Economic Forum:

- It was established by decree of the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in **2015** to support the economic development of **Russia's Far East** and to expand **international cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region**.
- In accordance with the Decree, the Eastern Economic Forum takes place each year in Vladivostok.
- Every year, the Eastern Economic Forum serves as a platform for the discussion of key issues in the world economy, regional integration, and the development of new industrial and technological sectors, as well as of the global challenges facing Russia and other nations.

About the Far East:

- The Far East is the easternmost part of Russia. The macro-region borders two oceans, the Pacific and the Arctic, and five countries (China, Japan, Mongolia, the United States and the DPRK).
- The Far Eastern Federal District covers more than a third of the country's territory.
- Resources: The Far East is rich in natural resources like diamonds, stannary, borax materials, 50 gold, tungsten, and fish and seafood. About 1/3 of all coal reserves and hydro-engineering resources of the country are here. Forests of the region comprise about 30% of the total forest area of Russia.
- Significant rivers include the Volga, Dnieper and Dvina (west), the Lena, Ob, and Yenisey (central) and the Amur in the far-east.



World Dairy Summit 2022

Prime Minister officially inaugurated the International Dairy Federation World Dairy Summit (IDF WDS) 2022, being held at the India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida.

About

- Theme of the IDF WDS is 'Dairy for Nutrition and Livelihood'.
- Last time India hosted the **International Dairy Congress in 1974**.
- The dairy summit is a congregation of global and Indian dairy industry leaders, experts, farmers, and policy planners.

International Dairy Federation

- IDF is the leading source of scientific and technical expertise for all stakeholders of the dairy chain.
- Since 1903, IDF's network of dairy experts has provided a mechanism for the dairy sector to reach global consensus on how to help feed the world with safe and sustainable dairy products.

- A recognised international authority in the development of science-based standards for the dairy sector, IDF has an important role to play in ensuring the right policies, standards, practices and regulations are in place to ensure the world's dairy products are safe and sustainable.
- With over 1,200 highly qualified dairy experts in 43 member countries around the world, IDF represents 75% of global milk production and provides a permanent source of authoritative scientific and technical information relevant to the dairy sector.

First virtual I2U2 summit

The first-ever I2U2 Virtual Summit was held comprising India, Israel, the UAE, and the US.

- The grouping focused on the food security crisis and clean energy during their meeting.
- They also discussed innovative ways to ensure longer-term, more diversified food production and food delivery systems that can better manage global food shocks.
- I2U2 will bring together countries, governments and the private sector to tackle challenges.
- The leaders welcomed India's interest in joining the United States, the UAE, and Israel in the Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate initiative (AIM for Climate).
- For India
 - ▶ The grouping unveiled initiatives focused on food security and clean energy, including:
 - ▶ UAE will invest \$2-billion programme to develop a series of integrated food parks across India.
 - ▶ Food parks will incorporate state-of-the-art climate-smart technologies to reduce food waste and spoilage, conserve fresh water, and employ renewable energy sources.
 - ▶ The Indian government will provide appropriate land and facilitate farmers' integration into the food parks.
- I2U2 will invest in a hybrid renewable energy project in Gujarat.
 - ▶ It will consist of 300 megawatts (MW) of wind and solar capacity, complemented by a battery energy storage system.
 - ▶ The project is expected to be another step in India's quest for "500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030".

About The I2U2 group

- I2U2 stands for India, Israel, the UAE, and the US, and was also referred to as the 'West Asian Quad'.
- The group was first conceptualised in October 2021, during a meeting of the foreign ministers of the four countries in Israel.
- At that time, the grouping was called the 'International Forum for Economic Cooperation'.

Objectives

- Its stated aim is to discuss "common areas of mutual interest, to strengthen the economic partnership in trade and investment in our respective regions and beyond".
- Six areas of cooperation have been identified by the countries mutually.

- The aim is to encourage joint investments in-
 - ▶ Water
 - ▶ Energy
 - ▶ Transportation
 - ▶ Space
 - ▶ Health
 - ▶ Food security
- With the help of “private sector capital and expertise”, the countries will look to modernise infrastructure, explore low carbon development avenues for industries, improve public health, and promote the development of critical emerging and green technologies.

UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 15)

- The fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the **UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 15)** was hosted in **Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire**.

About UN Convention to Combat Desertification COP 15

- The COP15 theme, ‘**Life. Legacy: From scarcity to prosperity**’, is a call to action to ensure land, the lifeline on this planet, continues to benefit present and future generations.
- COP15 will bring together leaders from governments, the private sector, civil society and other key stakeholders from around the world to drive progress in the future sustainable management of one of our most precious commodities: land. ?
- Land is the bedrock of a healthy, productive society, and COP15 will explore links between land and other key sustainability issues.
- COP 15 is a key moment in the fight against desertification, land degradation and drought.
- It will build on the findings of the second edition of the **Global Land Outlook** and offer a concrete response to the interconnected challenges of land degradation, climate change and biodiversity loss as we step into the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. ?

About UNCCD:

- Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the **sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management**.
- The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found.
- The UNCCD is particularly committed to a bottom-up approach, encouraging the participation of local people in combating desertification and land degradation.
- The new **UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework** is the most comprehensive global commitment to achieve **Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)** in order to restore the productivity of vast expanses of degraded land, improve the livelihoods of more than 1.3 billion people, and reduce the impacts of drought on vulnerable populations to build.
- The UNCCD secretariat facilitates cooperation between developed and developing countries, particularly around knowledge and technology transfer for sustainable land management.
- Its **197 Parties** aim, through partnerships, to implement the Convention and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The **UNCCD collaborates closely with the other two Rio Conventions; the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** with an integrated approach and the best possible use of natural resources.

Conference of Parties (COP):

- The COP was established by the Convention as the **supreme decision-making body**.
- It comprises ratifying governments and regional economic integration organizations, such as the European Union.
- The **14th session was held in India**. The latest and 15th session is being held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.
- It has been **meeting biennially since 2001**.

Conference of Parties (COP)	Country	Year
COP 1	Rome, Italy	1997
COP 2	Dakar, Senegal	1998
COP 3	Recife, Brazil	1999
COP 4	Bonn, Germany	2000
COP 5	Geneva, Switzerland	2001
COP 6	Havana, Cuba	2003
COP 7	Nairobi, Kenya	2005
COP 8	Madrid, Spain	2007
COP 9	Buenos Aires, Argentina	2009
COP 10	Changwon, South Korea	2011
COP 11	Windhoek, Namibia	2013
COP 12	Ankara, Turkey	2015
COP 13	Ordos, China	2017
COP 14	New Delhi, India	2019
COP 15	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.	2022

The Moscow format

- India joined the latest meeting of the 'Moscow format consultations on Afghanistan' held in the Russian capital.
- The Moscow format is one of the several dialogue platforms on Afghanistan.
- It began before the Taliban takeover of Kabul, consists of Russia, **China, Pakistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and India**.

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