



PLUTUS ACADEMY

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1.Sixth Session of India-Norway Joint commission held

The Sixth Session of India-Norway Joint Commission was held. India was represented by the External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

Key Highlights

The ministers welcomed the establishment of COVAX during the meet. Both the countries agreed to engage in regular consultations on the issues of the United Nations Security Council. The countries also hoped for an early conclusion of India and European Free Trade Association trade negotiations. The four members of EFTA are Iceland, Switzerland, Norway and Liechtenstein.

India-Norway

In 2019, India and Norway signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Blue Economy. Norway supports India's membership in Nuclear Suppliers Group. Also, Norway supports India Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). India and Norway signed the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement in 1986 and revised in 2011.

What is the Blue Economy?

It is the sustainable use of the ocean and its resources for improved livelihoods, economic growth and ocean ecosystem health. It encompasses fisheries, renewable energy, maritime transport, climate change, tourism and waste management. It is important as 80% of international trade are transported by sea.

Also, Blue Economy emphasizes social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

Need for Blue Economy

At least 3% to 5% of world GDP is derived from oceans. The oceans protect biodiversity and absorb about 30% of global carbon dioxide emissions. The Blue Economy supports diversification, food security, protein food, and seep sea minerals.

Blue Economy for India

The marine sector serves as the backbone of blue economy. The maritime services will help India become a 10 trillion USD economy by 2022. Around 80% of global oil trade happens through Indian Ocean.

Initiatives of India to boost Blue Economy

- India launched the Sagarmala Project to develop inland waterways and coastal shipping. It focuses on development of coastal communities.
- O-SMART: It is an umbrella scheme that was launched to regulate use of marine resources
- The Integrated Coastal Zone Management focus on marine and coastal resource conservation improving the livelihood opportunities of coastal communities.

Indian Missions to Norway

Three Arctic Missions from India have visited Norway in 2007, 2008 and 2009.

2.Gujarat Disturbed Area Act (Amendment) bill, 2020: Key Facts

The president Ramnath kovind assented to the Gujarat Distributed Area act (Amendment) Bill 2019. The amendment will prohibit transfer of assets that is the immovable property in disturbed areas. Also, it will protect the tenants from vacating the property.

Gujarat prohibition of transfer of immovable property and provision for protection of tenants from eviction from premises in disturbed areas act 1991 is commonly referred to as Disturbed Areas act.

Key features of the amendment

The main objective of the act is to check on elements that cause demographic imbalance and to stop polarisation. The act will prohibit sale of property from one religious community to another religious community in the disturbed areas. An area can be declared disturbed area by the district collector based on a history of communal riots in the area. The transfer of assets cannot be done without the approval of the district collector.

Penalty

An offender under the provisions of the act has to pay a fine of one lakh rupees or 10% of value of the property. He can be imprisoned for 3 to 5 years for acquiring properties to illegal means in disturbed areas.

Background

The act is being amended as several complaints were received by the government officials on skirting the provisions of the act and taking advantages of its loopholes. Earlier the collector only had to see the seller sending the property personally. It has come to notice that several Anti-Social elements are buying and selling properties in these regions by threatening people. Thus the act is being amended to pluck the legal loopholes.

Disturbed areas in Gujarat

Currently the disturbed area act is applicable to certain regions of Gujarat such as Vadodara, Ahmedabad, Surat, Himmatnagar, Godhra, Bharuch and kapadvanj.

The act was first introduced in Ahmedabad in 1986 due to large scale and continuous riots in the City.

3.NITI Aayog's India Energy Modelling Forum: Key Facts, Governing Structure

Niti Aayog recently announced the governing structure of India energy modelling forum. The forum and its governing structure are being established under US India strategic energy partnership.

In July 2020 the United States agency for international development (USAID) and Niti Aayog launched India energy modelling forum. Niti Aayog is now announcing its governing structure. The USAID is primarily responsible to administer foreign aid and development assistance.

Key highlights

The forum aims to engage think tanks, knowledge partners, Indian researches and International Government agencies for long-term energy planning.

Structure of India energy modelling forum

The forum will consist of a steering committee under inter-ministerial committee. The inter- ministerial committee is to be headed by a chief executive officer and will be convened by Niti Aayog. This committee will review modelling activities and provide directions towards new areas of research. It will also have senior officials from the ministries such as new and renewable energy, forest and climate change, natural gas and power. The committee will also hold members from the Department of Science and Technology.

On the other hand, the steering committee will shortlist policy issues. It will also perform different task forces. A convenience will be selected on a rotational basis and

it will act as an interface between the steering committee and inter-ministerial committee.

Currently the Prayas group of Maharashtra has been selected as the first convenor of the steering committee.

India US

The India US strategic energy partnership is based on four pillars such as renewable energy, oil and gas and power and Energy Efficiency and sustainable growth.

The Strategic Energy Partnership between the countries was established in April 2018. It organises interagency engagement. The partnership also supports the Asia Edge initiative. The initiative establishes India as a strong energy partner of the USA in the Indo Pacific region.

4.5th India-Mexico High level Group on Trade, investment and cooperation held

The fifth meeting of India Mexico bilateral high-level group on trade, investment and cooperation was held virtually. The countries reviewed their bilateral trade and commercial relations.

Key highlights

The countries discussed bilateral investment treaty, audio visual co-production, cooperation Framework on phytosanitary and sanitary products, market access for Agricultural Products and technical barriers to trade. The countries also discussed cooperation in intellectual property rights. They held talks about ways to promote tourism and people to people contact.

The countries also agreed to diversify their trade relationship in the the fields of medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, Agro products, Healthcare, fisheries, Aerospace and food processing industries.

Agreements signed

During the fifth meeting of bilateral high level group on trade investment in cooperation, the countries signed two Memorandum of understanding. An MoU was signed between Mexican Chamber of Electronics telecommunication and information Technologies, called CANIETI and Electronics and Computer software export Promotion Council of India, called ESC.

Also, Memorandum of understanding was signed between the Mexican Business Council of foreign trade investment and Technology, called COMCE and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and industry, called FICCI.

Mexico and sustainable development goals

In September 2020 Mexico became the first country to inaugurate a sustainable financing programme to achieve SDGs. The programme focused on a 7 years sovereign bond of 890 million USD. These bonds will help in achieving sustainable development goals.

India and Mexico

Both India and Mexico are the members of the G20 and United Nations. The trade between the countries amounts to 10 billion USD. There are more than 174 Indian companies operating in Mexico. However, the Indian community in Mexico is very less and it is around the 5500.

India mainly exports gems, jewellery, Textiles, software and leather to Mexico. India imports, fertilizers, machinery, petroleum and Chemicals from Mexico.

5.India to attend Seventh Justice Ministers Meet of SCO

The Union Minister of law and Justice Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad is to attend the seventh meeting of ministers of justice of Shanghai cooperation organisation.

Highlights

The ministers during the meet will share the knowledge on creating conducive environment to promote dispute resolution mechanism, forensic activities and other legal services. Also, the ministers will discuss on the action plan of the working groups of experts on legal services and forensic activities. Justice ministers from the member countries of the organisation such as China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Pakistan are to participate in the meet.

Importance of SCO for India

SCO is a part of India's policy of "multi alignments". RATS is regional Anti-terror structure of SCO. Accessing information and intelligent from RATS will help India learn about non-Pakistan centred Counter Terrorism.

India aims to reach Central Asia through SCO. Central Asia is an extended neighbourhood of India. India has enormous potential to enhance ties with these countries in terms of security, investment, economy, connectivity, energy and capacity development. As India does not share a common land border with these countries it is highly important for India to use the SCO platform to reach these countries. The TAPI gas pipeline is one such example of a mutually beneficial project between India and SCO countries.

Also, SCO will help India in the construction of the international North South Corridor. India has finalized a deal with Uzbekistan in 2019 for a long-term supply of Uranium.

What is the multi alignment policy of India?

India was initially following a non-alignment policy. It has now shifted towards multi alignment. Under Non-alignment India will not take sides when there is a conflict between countries. Rather it will preach them to adopt peace. Under multi alignment policy India will align with both the parties or all the parties.

6.India and Taiwan Think Tanks join hands for Indo-Pacific Cooperation

The National Maritime foundation of India and Taiwan Asia Exchange Foundation recently signed a memorandum of understanding to foster cooperation in the Indo-pacific region. The two groups are major think tanks of the countries.

Highlights

The think tanks will set up a joint task force to deepen the bilateral dialogue in the Indo-pacific region. They will also conduct joint Research and expand cooperation. The Asia exchange Foundation is waiting for the covid-19 travel restrictions to get over in order to send a delegation to India to hold direct talks. The foundation is the organiser of the Yushan Forum.

Taiwan recently named India as one of its new south bound policy target countries.

Southbound policy

Under the new South Bound policy, the Government of Taiwan is to enhance cooperation with 18 South Asian, Southeast Asian countries and Australia. The aim of the policy is to make Taiwan less dependent on the China mainland. It was officially launched in 2016

Taiwan Asia exchange Foundation

it is the first policy-based think tank of Taiwan. It focuses on South Asia and South East Asian countries. The goal of the organisation is to promote comprehensive ties between ASEAN countries and Taiwan.

National Maritime Foundation

It is a Non-governmental think tank that aims to study and analyse issues of maritime domain. Organised by the national Maritime Foundation. It is considered as a knowledge partner of Indian Navy. It was established in 2005.

Indo Pacific regional dialogue

It was first conceptualized in 2018. The main objective of the dialogue is to review India's opportunities and challenges in the indo-pacific region

India-Taiwan

India has not formally recognised Taiwan so far. This means that India is formally adhering to One China policy. However, in May 2020 India attended the newly elected

president of Taiwan Tsai's swearing in ceremony. Also, in July 2020 India appointed A top career diplomat as its new envoy to Taiwan.