



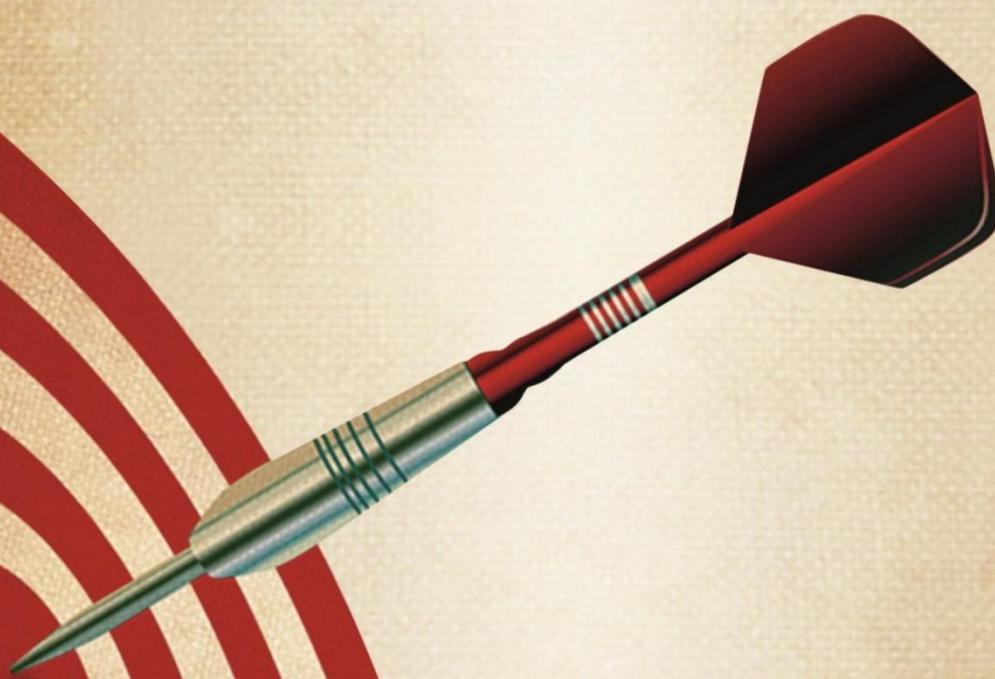
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TARGET 2020

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



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SHANKAR IAS ACADEMY



TARGET 2020

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. UNITED NATIONS & ITS ORGANS

- It is an international organization founded in 1945 after the World War II.
- Its charter was signed in San Francisco on June 26, 1945 and came into existence on October 24, 1945 after 51 countries have signed the charter.
- Its predecessor, the League of Nations, created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 was disbanded in 1946.
- Its mission is to maintain international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights.
 1. HQ - New York
 2. Official Languages - Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Spanish, Russian
 3. Members - 193 (Latest Member South Sudan)
 4. Secretary General - Antonio Guterres (Portugal)
- **UN System** is made up of the
 1. Main Organs established by the Charter of the United Nations,
 2. Specialized agencies provided for in Article 57 of the Charter &
 3. Funds & Programmes established by the General Assembly under its authority derived from Article 22 of the Charter.

Indian Members in the UN

- Soumya Swaminathan, director general of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), was appointed as the Chief Scientist at the **WHO**.
- An Indian Justice Dalveer Bhandari was re-elected as a judge to the **International Court of Justice**.
- International law expert Neeru Chadha was elected to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

Main Organs

1.1 UN-General Assembly

- It is the main deliberative organ and composed of all member states, each of which has one vote.
- The mandate of UNGA is to discuss, debate, and make recommendations on subjects pertaining to international peace and security, including development, disarmament, human rights, international law, and the peaceful arbitration of disputes between nations.
- It considers reports from the other four organs of the United Nations, assesses the financial situations of member states, and approves the UN budget, its most concrete role.
- **Sessions**- The assembly meets in **Regular session** (annually from Sep to Dec), **Special session** and **Emergency Special Session** (within 24 hours) at the request of UN security council or majority of members or one-member state if the majority of states concur.
- **Appointments by UNGA**- It appoints Secretary General of UN based on the recommendations given by Security Council.
- General Assembly elects Non-Permanent members in Security Council and elects Members for Social and Economic Council.
- Along with Security Council, General Assembly elects Judges to International Court of Justice.
- **Membership** -There are 193 UN member states, each with a vote in the General Assembly.
- The assembly's president changes with each annual session and is elected by the body itself.

- The membership can be contentious. Taiwan has been denied UN membership for more than two decades due to objections from China. Palestine's status has also been controversial.
- At the 2012 General Assembly passed a resolution to upgrade Palestine from a **non-member observer entity to non-member observer state**.
- Palestine and Vatican City are the United Nations' two non-member observer states, which have the right to speak at assembly meetings but cannot vote on resolutions.
- **Assembly Actions** - Decision on important questions such as those on peace and security, UN budget, admission, suspension and expulsion of members to various organs of UN requires special majority.
- Make recommendations on any matters within the scope of the UN, except matters of peace and security that are under consideration by the Security Council.
- In 1948, it promulgated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which contained 30 articles outlining global standards for human rights.
- In 1950, it initiated "Uniting for Peace" resolution which states that if UNSC fails to exercise its primary responsibility" for maintaining international peace and security, UNGA should take up the matter itself and urge collective action.
- In 2000, it set forth the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), a time bound and measurable targets for reducing poverty, halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, and improving access to primary education followed by Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- It has the **power to censure states** for violating UN Charter principles.
- In 2012, UNGA voted to denounce the Syrian government for atrocities since the start of the Syrian uprising in March 2011.
- In 2014, Crimea's referendum to leave Ukraine and join Russia was held invalid by the UNGA by adopting a nonbinding resolution. It also held that Russia's annexation of Crimea is illegal.
- **UN budget**- United Nation is funded by its member states through compulsory and voluntary contributions.
- The size of each state's compulsory contribution depends mainly on its economic strength, though its state of development and debt situation are also considered.
- Member countries can make voluntary contribution to UNESCO, WHO, UN Programmes and Funds such as Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Adoption of Resolution

- Resolution in GA can be adopted in two ways i.e reaching consensus among member states and by voting on the resolution.
- **Consensus**- All member states have agreed to adopt the text of a draft resolution **without taking a vote**.
- Consensus is not reached, even if just one Member State requests a vote.
- It is important to note that consensus does not mean that all Member States agree on every word in the draft resolution and they still have reservation about certain parts.
- Thus, the viewpoint of every member countries is taken into consideration. This process is inclusive in nature.
- **Voting** -It need to get a simple majority to agree on the text of a resolution.
- There is no need to care about the perspectives of the minority who disagree.
- Those countries that did not vote in favour of a resolution on a particular agenda item will be less likely to implement the actions on an agenda item that are recommended in a resolution, hence it is divisive.

Universal Declaration on Human rights

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.
- The Declaration consists of 30 articles affirming an individual's rights which, although not legally binding in themselves, have been elaborated in subsequent international treaties, economic transfers, regional human rights instruments, national constitutions, and other laws.

- The Declaration was the first step in the process of formulating the International Bill of Human Rights, which was completed in 1966, and came into force in 1976 after a sufficient number of countries had ratified them.
- India is the signatory of UDHR.

Recent developments

- UNGA held a first ever high-level meeting on the fight against Tuberculosis, under the theme “United to end Tuberculosis: an urgent global response to a global epidemic”.
- The special session aims at accelerating efforts in ending TB and reaching all affected people with prevention and care.
- The declaration marks the endorsement of the Resolution by all Member States of the UN.
- India has pledged to eliminate the disease five years before the UN Development Goal of 2030.
- Venezuela and Libya have been suspended from voting in the UN General Assembly for the third time in 3 years because of millions of dollars in unpaid dues to the world body.

1.2 United Nations Security Council

- It has primary responsibility for the maintenance of International peace and security.
- The council has 15 members: **5 Permanent** - US, UK, Russia, France & China and 10 members elected by the General Assembly for 2-year terms.
- The main criterion for eligibility is contribution “to the maintenance of international peace and security”, often defined by financial or troop contributions to peacekeeping operations or leadership on matters of regional security.
- Equitable geographical distribution is also taken in to account for membership - African Group (3), Asia-Pacific Group (2), Latin American and Caribbean Group (2), Western European and Others Groups (WEOG)(2)and Eastern European Group (1).
- Arab states are given 1 seat alternately drawn from either Africa’s quota or Asia’s by informal agreement.
- Turkey and Israel, which has never served on the council, is represented in WEOG.
- Current non-permanent members (with end of term) are Côte d’Ivoire (2019), Equatorial Guinea (2019), Kuwait (2019), Peru (2019), Poland (2019), Belgium (2020), Dominican Republic (2020), Germany (2020), Indonesia (2020) and South Africa (2020).
- While other organs of the UN can only make recommendations to member states, the Security Council has the power to make **binding decisions** on member states.
- All the members have one vote and permanent members have veto power.
- Decisions on procedural matters should have vote of at least 9 of the 15 members and decision on substantive matters require nine votes and the absence of negative vote by any of the 5 permanent members.
- Veto powers of P5 countries have been used most frequently by Russia, blocking more than 100 resolutions since the council’s founding.
- Most recently, in 2018, the U.S vetoed a resolution condemning Israel for Palestinian civilian deaths during border protests in Gaza.
- The presidency of the Security Council rotates alphabetically among 15 members every month.
- **G4 Nations**- 4 countries bids for permanent seats in UNSC. They are Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan.
- **Uniting for Consensus (Coffee Club)**- These are group of countries who are opposing the expansion of permanent seats in the UNSC under the leadership of Italy.
- Members - Italy, Spain, Malta, San Marino, Pakistan, South Korea, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia & Turkey.
- Despite drastic changes in geopolitics and international relations the Council has not been reformed yet.



Proposed Reforms in UNSC

- The demands for reform of the UNSC is based on five key issues:
 1. Categories of membership (permanent, non-permanent).
 2. The question of the veto held by the five permanent members.
 3. Regional representation.
 4. The size of an enlarged Council and its working methods.
 5. The relationship between Security Council and General Assembly.
- Notably, any reform of the Security Council would require the agreement of at least two-thirds of UN member states.
- Importantly, the agreement of all the permanent members of the UNSC enjoying the veto right is also required.

India & UNSC

- India recently won the unanimous support of all countries in the 55-member Asia-Pacific Group at the UN in support of its bid for a non-permanent seat at the UNSC for a 2-year term in 2021-22.
- India has already held a non-permanent seat on the UNSC for 7 terms.
- In total, India has been in the UNSC for 14 years.
- This represents roughly a fifth of the time the United Nations (UN) has existed.
- India is to re-enter the Council now, after a gap of 10 year (the previous time, in 2011-12, followed a gap of 20 years).

Recent Developments

- UNSC has recently adopted a **Resolution 2427** aimed at a framework for mainstreaming protection, rights, well-being and empowerment of children throughout the conflict cycle.
- The resolution won **unanimous** approval from all the members of the council.
- It condemns the recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict as well as their re-recruitment, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and abductions
- It also condemns attacks against schools and hospitals and the denial of humanitarian access by parties to armed conflict.
- It demands that all relevant parties immediately put an end to such practices and take special measures to protect children.

1.3 UN Economic & Social Council

- It is the principal organ that guides sustainable development policies and coordinates the activities of several UN units and organisations working on development and social and economic issues.
- It is the principle body for the implementation of internationally agreed development goals.
- It has **54 members**, which are elected by the General Assembly for a **three-year term**.
- Seats in the council are allocated based on geographical representation. 11 of them are allotted to Asian states.
- For the nations to be the elected as members of ECOSOC for a three-year term, it needs **2/3rd majority** of UN General Assembly votes.
- Each member of the council has one vote and generally voting in the council is by simple majority.
- The president is elected for a one-year term.

India & ECOSOC

- In 2017, UNGA re-elected India to another 3-year term starting from Jan, 2018 (as its previous term was set to expire in 2017).



- India received backing of the Asian and Pacific group of nations and secured 183 of the 188 votes to serve again.
- In 2018, India got elected to various crucial subsidiary bodies working under ECOSOC such as
 - i. Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations for a term of 2019-2023 and India got the highest number of votes followed by Pakistan,
 - ii. Commission on Population and Development for a term of 2018 – 2021,
 - iii. Commission for social development for a term of 2018-2022,
 - iv. Commission on crime prevention and criminal justice for a term of 2019 – 2021,
 - v. Council to the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) for a term of 2019-2021,
 - vi. Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) for a term of 2019-2021.
- Election to committee on NGO is considered as crucial, because it scrutinises the NGOs applying for consultative status with ECOSOC and can recommend or block them.

1.4 Secretariat

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

1.5 International Court of Justice

- It is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations also called the “World Court”.
- It is seated at the Peace Palace, Hague (Netherlands), and the only principal organ of UN to be not located in New York.
- It settles legal disputes between states and gives advisory opinions to the UN and its specialized agencies.
- It hears cases related to war crimes, illegal state interference, ethnic cleansing, and other issues.
- It is presided over by **15 judges** elected to 9 year terms by the UNGA and the UNSC from a list of people nominated by the national groups in the Permanent Court of Arbitration.
- A candidate needs to get an absolute majority in both the chambers i.e. the UNGA and the UNSC.
- **5 judges** are elected every **3 years** to ensure continuity within the court and are eligible for re-election.
- No two judges can be the nationals of the same country.
- Of the 15 judges, the composition is mandated to be as follows -
 - i. 3 from Africa
 - ii. 2 from Latin America and the Caribbean
 - iii. 3 from Asia
 - iv. 5 from Western Europe and other states
 - v. 2 from Eastern Europe
- The President and Vice-President are elected by secret ballot to hold office for 3 years.
- The P5 members of the UNSC always have a judge on the Court.
- The exception was China, which did not have a judge on the Court from 1967 to 1985 because it did not put forward a candidate.
- Judges may deliver joint judgments or give their own separate opinions.
- The Court settles **legal disputes between nations only** and not between individuals, organizations and private enterprises in accordance with international law.



- The Court can only hear a dispute when requested to do so by one or more States. It cannot deal with a dispute of its own motion.
- If a country does not wish to take part in a proceeding it does not have to do so, unless required by special treaty provisions. Once a country accepts the Court's jurisdiction, it must comply with its decision.
- Decisions and Advisory Opinions are by majority, and, in the event of an equal division, the President's vote becomes decisive always have a judge on the Court.
- Other existing international thematic courts, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) are not under the umbrella of the ICJ and it is legally and functionally independent from United Nations.
- **India and ICJ** - An Indian Justice Dalveer Bhandari was re-elected as a judge to the ICJ.
- India recently won the plea against Pakistan to grant counsellor access to Indian national Kulbhushan Jadhav and ICJ has directed to Pakistan to stop carrying out the execution of Jadhav.

Recent Developments

- ICJ has made a ruling on the military excesses on Rohingya in Myanmar against Rohingya Muslims recently
- It has finally pinned legal responsibility on Myanmar's government for the military's large-scale excesses of 2017
- Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi led Myanmar's defence against charges of carrying out genocide against its Muslim Rohingya minority.
- In another case of its advisory opinion on Chagos Islands issue, it stated that the UK Government is "under an obligation" to end its administration of the Chagos Archipelago "as rapidly as possible"
- It calls the continued administration of the archipelago "unlawful," and "a wrongful act."
- The Chagos Islands were retained by the UK during negotiations over independence for the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius, which came to fruition in 1968.
- The islands have since been used for defence purposes by the UK and the United States, which established a military base on the island of Diego Garcia.

1.6 Trusteeship Council

- It was formed to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories that had been placed under the administration of Member States, and to prepare the territories for self-government and independence.
- By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government or independence, with the last nation being Palau.
- So, UN suspended its operation on 1994, and it continues to exist only on paper.
- By a resolution adopted in May 1994, the Council amended its rules of procedure to drop the obligation to meet annually and agreed to meet as occasion required by its decision or the decision of its President, or at the request of a majority of its members or the General Assembly or the Security Council.
- Its future role and existence remain uncertain.

Specialised Agencies

Specialized Agencies are legally independent international organizations with their own rules, membership, organs and financial resources, which were brought into relationship with the United Nations through negotiated agreements.

1.7 World Bank Group

- The World Bank Group (WBG) is a family of five international organizations that make leveraged loans to developing countries.
- The organizations are,
 1. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).
 2. International Development Association (IDA).



3. International Finance Corporation (IFC).
 4. Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).
 5. International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).
- **UN and World Bank Group** - IBRD, IFC and IDA are Specialized Agencies of the UN. ICSID and MIGA are not Specialized Agencies
 - While five institutions have their own country membership, governing boards, and articles of agreement, they work as one to serve our partner countries.
 - The IBRD and IDA provide loans at preferential rates to member countries, as well as grants to the poorest countries.
 - IFC, MIGA, and ICSID focus on strengthening the private sector in developing countries by providing financing, technical assistance, political risk insurance, and settlement of disputes to private enterprises, including financial institutions.
 - IFC established in 1956, provides various forms of financing without sovereign guarantees, primarily to the private sector.
 - ICSID, established in 1966, works with governments to reduce investment risk.
 - MIGA, established in 1988, provides insurance against certain types of risk, including political risk, primarily to the private sector.
 - Each member countries in the organisation get voting power according to the shares held in the organisation's capital.
 - **Governing Bodies** -The two main governing bodies are Board of Governors and Board of Directors.
 - BOG are appointed by world bank members and meets annually in joint meeting with Board of Governors of IMF.
 - There is a separate BOD for IBRD, IDA, IFC and MIGA.
 - India is a member of four of the five constituents of the World Bank Group except ICSID.
 - India is one of the founder members of IBRD, IDA and IFC.

World Bank

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

International Bank for Reconstruction & Development

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

1.8 International Monetary Fund

- IMF was conceived at a UN conference in Bretton Woods in July 1944.
- The 44 countries at that conference sought to build a framework for economic cooperation to avoid a repetition of the competitive devaluations that had contributed to the Great Depression of the 1930s.
- With the membership of 189 countries, the Fund's mandate was updated in 2012 to include all macroeconomic and financial sector issues that bear on global stability.
- A core responsibility of the IMF is to provide loans to member countries experiencing actual or potential balance of payments problems.
- Unlike development banks, the IMF does not lend for specific projects.
- The SDR is an international reserve asset, created by the IMF in 1969 to supplement its member countries' official reserves.
- Gold remains an important asset in the reserve holdings of several countries, and the IMF is still one of the world's largest official holders of gold.
- Unlike the General Assembly of the United Nations, where each country has one vote, decision making at the IMF was designed to reflect the relative positions of its member countries in the global economy.
- **Reports** - World economic outlook, Global Financial stability report.

Developments in IMF

- The members of IMF have recently agreed a new deal that would allow to maintain its funding at \$ 1 trillion but postponed changes to its voting structure.
- **Source of funding in IMF** - Quotas are the IMF's main source of financing. Each member of the IMF is assigned a quota, based broadly on its relative position in the world economy.
- Through New Arrangement to Borrow (NAB), a number of member countries and institutions stand ready to lend additional resources to the IMF.
- The NAB constitutes a second line of defense to supplement IMF resources.
- Bilateral Borrowing Agreements serve as a third line of defense after quotas and the NAB.

- Concessional lending and debt relief for low-income countries are financed through separate contribution-based trust funds.
- NAB is a renewable funding mechanism that has existed since 1998 and bilateral borrowings from countries after the 2008 financial crisis.
- **Recent Developments** - In its new deal, IMF members have decided to extend the bilateral borrowing facility by a year to the end of 2020 and a potential doubling of the NAB.
- But the new deal will leave IMF quotas (the primary source of IMF funds), which determine voting shares, unchanged. Instead, these will be reviewed before the end of 2023.
- This is mainly due to veto power of US which has objected to changing IMF quota.
- IMF quotas are distributed according to a four-pronged formula that considers a member country's GDP, its economic openness, its "economic variability" and international reserves.
- India's quota is 2.76% and China's is 6.41%, while the U.S.'s quota is 17.46 % (translates to a vote share of 16.52%).
- Many of the crucial decision in IMF requires 85% supermajority and US vote share give it unique veto power.

1.9 International Labor Organization

- It was created in 1919 by the Versailles Peace Treaty ending World War I.
- After the demise of the League of Nations, the ILO became the first specialized agency associated with the UN.
- The organization has 187 of the 193 UN member states plus the Cook Islands (a nation in the South Pacific, with political links to New Zealand).
- Its secretariat is in Geneva, Switzerland.
- It is responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards.
- Unlike other United Nations specialized agencies, the International Labour Organization has a tripartite governing structure – representing governments, employers, and workers.
- ILO designates some member countries as nations of "Chief Industrial Importance".
- The designated nations are Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- In 1988, the international labour conference adopted the "**Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work**".
- The declaration aims to eliminate all forms of forced or compulsory labour, abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation.
- It publishes **Global Wage report**.

Core Conventions of the ILO

- The 8 Core Conventions of the ILO (also called fundamental/human rights conventions) are:
 1. Forced Labour Convention (No. 29)
 2. Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No.105)
 3. Equal Remuneration Convention (No.100)
 4. Discrimination (Employment Occupation) Convention (No.111)
 5. Minimum Age Convention (No.138)
 6. Worst forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182)
 7. Freedom of Association and Protection of Right to Organised Convention (No.87)
 8. Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (No.98)
- Conventions 87 & 98 have not been ratified by India.

India and ILO

- **India** is a founder member of the ILO
- In 2017, India has **ratified two key ILO global conventions**- Convention 138 and Convention 182.
- Convention 138 calls for the minimum age for employment to be not less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling. In India, it is 14 years according to RTE act.
- Convention 182 penalises and prohibits the worst form of child labour. It includes

1. all forms of slavery including sale and trafficking, debt bondage, serfdom, forced labour, recruitment in armed conflict
 2. prostitution or production of pornography
 3. production and trafficking of drugs etc
- Conventions 138 and 182 of the United Nations body leave it to the member-states to determine what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable work for children at different ages.
 - Countries which ratify any of the ILO conventions must go through a periodical reporting system every 4 years. The government has to prove they are making progress.
 - An **ILO Recommendation** is a non-binding instrument which seeks to serve as a guiding principle for national policy process.
 - ILO in June, 2015 adopted recommendations regarding “The Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience”.
 - The Recommendation provides guidance to member States on the measures to be taken to generate employment and decent work for the purposes of prevention, recovery, peace and resilience with respect to crisis situations arising from conflicts and disasters.
 - Each member state of ILO is required to submit the instruments so adopted before the competent authority (the Parliament in case of India). India supported the adoption of Recommendation.
 - Accordingly, Union Cabinet has accorded the approval to place the new instrument of recommendation before the parliament. But it does not create any immediate obligation on the parliament.

1.10 Food and Agriculture Organization

- It was established in 1945 with the objective of eliminating hunger and improving nutrition and standards of living by increasing agricultural productivity.
- Its secretariat is in Rome, Italy.
- Some of the important key programmes of FAO are Food Security Programmes, Codex Alimentarius, International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) etc.,
- The **Codex Alimentarius Commission** established by FAO and WHO is an **international food standard** setting body.
- It has recently adopted three Codex standards for black, white and green pepper, cumin and thyme owing to India's efforts to benchmark global spices trade.
- With the adoption of codex standards, spices have been included for the first time as commodities that will have universal standards.
- **International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)** - It aims to protect cultivated and wild plants by preventing the introduction and spread of pests.
- **Globefish** - It is a unit within the FAO, responsible for information and analysis on international fish trade and markets.
- Globefish's flagship reports cover over 14 of the most major traded seafood commodities, including shrimp, tuna, salmon, small pelagics and other species with detailed statistics.

India & FAO

- FAO council approved India's membership to the Executive Board of the World Food Program (WFP) for 2020 and 2021.
- It has also decided to observe 'International Year of Millets' in 2023, upon the request from Indian government.
- India celebrated 2018 as "National Year of Millets" and notified millets as nutri-cereals & allowed its inclusion in Public Distribution System (PDS).
- WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency that fights hunger by providing food assistance, school meals, cash-based transfers etc.

- In India, WFP has moved from providing direct food aid to providing technical assistance and capacity building services. Ministry of Agriculture is the nodal agency.

1.11 UNESCO

- UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization is responsible for promoting peace, social justice, human rights and international security through International cooperation on educational, science and cultural programs.
- It has 195 member states and is based in Paris, France.
- It accorded recognition in 2011 to Palestine as its 195th member.
- It is a global development agency with missions that include promoting sex education, literacy, clean water and equality for women.
- It is responsible for promoting peace, social justice, human rights and international security through International cooperation on educational, science and cultural programs.
- It is known for its **World Heritage Mission** which encourages world countries to protect Natural and Cultural Heritage sites.
- It publishes the **Global Education Monitoring report** and **Gender Parity Index**.
- It also leads the **Man and Biosphere Programme** for protecting Biosphere reserves across the world.

UNESCO Creative City

- The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) was launched in 2004 to promote cooperation among cities which recognized creativity as a major factor in their urban development.
- It aims to foster mutual international cooperation with and between member cities committed to investing in creativity as a driver for sustainable urban development, social inclusion and cultural vibrancy.
- The Network recognizes the following creative fields:
 1. Crafts and Folk Arts
 2. Media Arts
 3. Film
 4. Design
 5. Gastronomy
 6. Literature
 7. Music
- The overall situation and activities within the Network are reported in the UCCN Membership Monitoring Reports, each for a 4-year period for a particular city.
- The Network recognizes the concept of creative tourism, defined as a travel associated with creative experience and participation
- The following three Indian cities has been added to UCCN - Varanasi for Music, Jaipur for Crafts and Folk Art and Chennai for Music.
- Some of the other cities included are Alba (Italy) for gastronomy (the practice or art of choosing, cooking, and eating good food), Almaty (Kazakhstan) for music and Auckland (New Zealand) for music.
- To become part of the network of 180 cities, where development is believed to be intricately linked to their creative traditions.
- **Recent Developments** - Hyderabad has now been officially designated as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy and Mumbai in Film Category.
- These 2 cities are among 66 cities named by the UNESCO in the list of new Creative Cities which aims at pushing the Sustainable Development Goals through innovative thinking and action.
- Hyderabad is the city of biryanis, kebabs, haleem, kallu, shikampur and chowki dinners.



- Pre-Islamic Kakatiya cuisines (12th century) have interacted in an incredible fashion with the arrival of Turks in 15th century, followed by Mughal influences in the 17th century.

World Heritage Site

- The UNESCO seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.
- This is embodied in an international treaty called the 'Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage', adopted by UNESCO in 1972.
- The World Heritage Committee is the main body in charge of the implementation the Convention.
- It consists of representatives from 21 of the States Parties to the Convention elected by their General Assembly, it meets once a year.
- The site should have an Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) for World Heritage nomination.
- To determine OUV for World Heritage nomination, there are 10 enlisted criteria.
- The proposed nomination must satisfy at least one of these ten criteria.
- Ahmedabad became the first Indian city to get into the list.
- Following it, Jaipur became the second city made its entry in to the list.
- The decision was taken at the 43rd Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee (WHC) in the historic city of Baku, Azerbaijan.
- With its inclusion, the number of UNESCO World Heritage sites across India has grown to 38, including 30 cultural properties, 7 natural properties and 1 mixed site.

India & UNESCO

- The Intergovernmental committee has added "Kumbh Mela" as an intangible heritage.
- **UNESCO Asia Pacific Award for Cultural Heritage Conservation** - Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple in Srirangam, has won the award in 2017.
- It has become the first temple in Tamil Nadu to be given the prestigious award from the UN body.
- **The LAMO Centre**, Ladakh won the Award of Distinction in 2018
- **Rajabai Clock Tower & University of Mumbai Library Building, & Ruttonjee Muljee Jetha Fountain**, Mumbai were honourable mentions

Other Developments

- U.S and Israel have formally quit the UNESCO.
- It was following the criticism by UNESCO against Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem and the grant of full-time membership to Palestine.
- The withdrawal from both the countries would not affect the UN organisation financially as both Israel and the US had stopped funding it since Palestine's membership was granted in 2011.
- UNESCO has also earlier declared a contested shrine in Hebron city as an endangered Palestinian heritage site.

Jaipur

- Jaipur is a fortified city in Rajasthan and also known as the Walled City, the Pink City
- It was founded in 1727 by Sawai Jai Singh II and known for its iconic architectural legacy and vibrant culture.
- The city was nominated for its value of being an exemplary development in town planning and architecture
- Unlike other cities in the region located in hilly terrain, Jaipur was established on the plain and built according to a grid plan interpreted in the light of Vedic architecture.
- The city's urban planning shows an exchange of ideas from ancient Hindu and modern Mughal as well as Western cultures.
- Its iconic monuments such as the Govind Dev temple, City Palace, Jantar Mantar and Hawa Mahal excel in artistic and architectural craftsmanship of the period.
- Jaipur is an expression of the astronomical skills, living traditions, unique urban form.

- Even in 1984, U.S. withdrew from the UNESCO, accusing it of favouring the Soviet Union; nevertheless, it re-joined the U.N. body in 2002.

1.12 World Health Organization

- WHO is the first global health organization, replacing many regional and national health bodies
- It has 194-member countries, and its secretariat is in Geneva, Switzerland.
- It has the authority of directing and coordinating matters related to International health.
- World Health Assembly is the supreme decision-making body of WHO, attended by delegations from all member states.
- The Executive Board of WHO implements the decisions and policies of the World Health Assembly.

World Health Assembly

- It is the forum through which WHO is governed by its 194 member states.
- It is the world's highest health policy setting body and is composed of health ministers from member states.
- The members of the World Health Assembly generally meet every year in May in Geneva, the location of WHO Headquarters.
- The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed program budget.
- Recently World Health Assembly in Geneva agreed on three resolutions to ensure that the world meets the universal health coverage (UHC) target of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Burn out Condition

- The World Health Organization has for the first time recognized "burn-out" in its International Classification of Diseases (ICD) which is widely used as a benchmark for diagnosis and health insurers.
- WHO defines burn-out as "a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed"
- It said the syndrome was characterized by three dimensions:
 1. Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion.
 2. Increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job.
 3. Reduced professional efficacy.
- According to the classification burn-out refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life.

Universal Health Coverage

- UHC is about ensuring all people and communities have access to quality health services where and when they need them, without suffering financial hardship.
- It includes the full spectrum of services needed throughout life from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care and is best based on a strong primary health care system.
- Achieving UHC is one of the key targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Other Developments

- During its 71st World Health Assembly, WHO released its "Saving lives, spending less" report.
- It has for the first time measured the health and economic benefits of implementing the most cost-effective and feasible interventions to prevent and control NCDs in low- and lower-middle-income countries.
- The report recommends, what is now known as the 'Best Buys' formula, that by spending on prevention.
- Soumya Swaminathan, a Deputy Director-General of the WHO has been named its Chief Scientist.
- WHO has recently announced sweeping reforms to modernize and strengthen the organization.
- It would align its processes and structures with the triple-billion targets:
 1. One billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage



2. One billion more people better protected from health emergencies
3. One billion more people enjoying better health and well-being

1.13 International Maritime Organization

- It is the global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping.
- Its main role is to create a regulatory framework for the shipping industry that is fair and effective, universally adopted and universally implemented.
- It is the only UN special agency to have its headquarters in the United Kingdom. It is the first ever international organization devoted exclusively to maritime matters.
- The objective of IMO is the improvement of Maritime safety and the prevention of marine pollution.
- IMO measures cover all aspects of international shipping including ship design, construction, equipment, manning, operation and disposal.
- It covers accidental and operational oil pollution along with different types of pollution by chemicals, goods in packaged form, sewage, garbage and air pollution.
- One of the important committee under IMO is The Maritime Environment Protection Committee which is responsible for coordinating the organisation's activities in prevention and control of pollution of the marine environment from ships.
- The IMO council consists of 40 members in which category A consists of 10 members, category B 10 members and category C 20 members -
 - i. Category-A has countries which have interest in providing international shipping services
 - ii. Category-B has large nations with interest in international seaborne trade
 - iii. Category-C has States, not elected under A or B, that have special interests in maritime transport or navigation
- Observer status is granted to qualified non-governmental organisations.

Ballast Water

- Ballast water is water carried in ships' ballast tanks to improve stability, balance and trim.
- It is taken up or discharged when cargo is unloaded or loaded, or when a ship needs extra stability in foul weather.
- When ships take on ballast water, plants and animals that live in the ocean are also picked up. Discharging this ballast water releases these organisms into new areas where they can become marine pests.

India and IMO

- India has had the privilege of being elected to and serving the council of the IMO, ever since it started functioning, except for two years during 1983-1984.
- In the 30th session of IMO held in London, **India has been re-elected to the council of IMO under "Category B" for two years (2018-2019).**
- **Ballast water management convention** was adopted in IMO in 2004 and came into force in September, 2017.
- The convention aims to prevent the spread of harmful aquatic organisms from one region to another.
- It establishes standards and procedures for the management and control of ships' ballast water and sediments.
- All ships in international traffic are required to manage their ballast water and sediments to a certain standard according to the management plan.
- The **Bunker convention** was adopted in 2001 and came into force in 2008.
- Its aim is to ensure that adequate, prompt, and effective compensation is available to persons who suffer damage caused by oil spills, when carried as fuel in ships' bunkers.
- It applies to damage caused on the territory, including the territorial sea, and in exclusive economic zones of States Parties.
- It is modelled on the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969.



- In India's case, it applies to an Indian vessel, wherever it is situated, and to a foreign flag vessel while it is within Indian jurisdiction.
- By the end of 2017, India was in the advanced stage of ratifying Ballast Water Convention and Bunker Convention.

1.14 International Civil Aviation Organization

- It was created after the Chicago convention on International Civil Aviation.
- It became a specialized agency of the United Nations linked to Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- Secretariat - Montreal, Canada.
- It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency as well as for aviation environmental protection.
- Recently, ICAO introduced a scheme to measure carbon emission, called as “**CORSIA** - Carbon Offsetting and Reporting Scheme for International Aviation”.

CORSIA

- The CORSIA is a global market-based measure adopted by ICAO.
- It intends to offset annual increases in CO₂ emissions from international civil aviation above 2020 levels.
- A market-based measure is a policy tool that is designed to achieve environmental goals at a lower cost and in a more flexible manner than traditional regulatory measures. e.g Levies, emissions trading systems, and carbon offsetting.
- It relies on the use of emissions units to offset the amount of CO₂ emissions.
- One emissions unit represents one tonne of CO₂ emissions reduced.
- It compares the total CO₂ emissions for a year (from 2021 onwards) against a predetermined baseline.
- Any international aviation CO₂ emissions that exceed the baseline level should implement offsetting measures.
- It only applies to international flights. Domestic emissions fall under the purview of UNFCCC, and are covered by the Paris Agreement.

1.15 World Meteorological Organization

- WMO was created in 1950 as an intergovernmental organization.
- It became a specialized agency of the United Nations, in 1951, for meteorology (weather and climate), operational hydrology and related geophysical sciences.
- WMO is the UN system's authoritative voice on weather, climate and water.
- Secretariat - Geneva, Switzerland.
- Through its members, WMO provides forecasts and early warnings to nations, which help prevent and mitigate disasters.
- WMO monitors and forecast the transport of chemical and oil spills, forest fires, volcanic ash, haze and nuclear isotopes.
- It also draws world attention to the depletion of the ozone layer.
- The Climate Centre at Indian Meteorological Department, Pune has recently been recognized as the Regional Climate Centre by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) for providing regional climate services to South Asian countries.

India and WMO

- India has been designated as a nodal centre for preparing flash-flood forecasts by the WMO.
- India will develop a customised model that can issue advance warning of floods in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand.
- The system is called the Flash Flood Guidance System which aims to provide forecasts 6 hours in advance.



- The WMO says flash floods account for 85% of flooding incidents across the world, causing some 5,000 deaths each year.

1.16 World Intellectual Property Organization

- It is designed to promote the worldwide protection of both industrial property (inventions, trademarks, and designs) and copyrighted materials (literary, musical, photographic, and other artistic works).
- HQ - Geneva, Switzerland
- WIPO's predecessor was The United International Bureaux for the Protection of Intellectual Property (BIPRI).
- BIPRI administered two conventions such as the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. BIRPI is thus transformed to become WIPO.
- **Marrakesh Treaty of WIPO** - It is to facilitate access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired and print disabled.
- India was the first country to sign this treaty.
- EU has recently ratified to ease access to reading material for print-disabled people. With this, the treaty expands to 70 countries.
- The governments that are party to the Marrakesh treaty are obliged to adopt laws authorizing the conversion of books into accessible formats such as braille, e-text, audio and large print by designated organisations.

India and WIPO

- Union Cabinet has approved the proposal regarding accession to the WIPO Copyright Treaty and WIPO Performers and Phonograms Treaty.
- The treaty extends coverage of copyright to the internet and digital environment.
- It is seen as a step towards the objective laid in the National Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy, 2016.
- The treaty came to force in 2002 and has been adopted by 96 contracting parties till date.
- It is a Special agreement under **Berne Convention**.

1.17 International Telecommunication Union

- It is responsible for the allocation of radio spectrum and satellite orbits, and for the standardization and development of ICTs worldwide.
- The ITU has 193-member states that elect representatives to the ITU Council.
- Founded - 1865, Secretariat - Geneva, Switzerland.
- The work of ITU covers the whole ICT sector, from digital broadcasting to the Internet and from mobile technologies to 3D TV.
- Apart from member countries, ITU currently has a membership of more than 700 private-sector entities.
- ITU has recently said that by the end of 2018, world will surpass the **50/50 milestone** for internet use.
- It means that for the first time, more than half of the global population will be using internet.
- According to ITU, the world's richest countries have been showing slow and steady growth in Internet use, from 51% in 2005 to 80% now.

Berne Convention

- It is an international agreement governing copyright (for protection of literary and artistic works), which was first accepted in Berne, Switzerland, in 1886.
- The Convention is open to all States and Instruments of ratification or accession must be deposited with the Director General of WIPO.
- The Convention deals with the protection of works and the rights of their authors.
- It is based on three basic principles
 1. principle of national treatment
 2. principle of automatic protection
 3. principle of independence of protection
- It contains a series of provisions determining the minimum protection to be granted, as well as special provisions available to developing countries.

India and ITU

- India has been elected as a Member of the ITU Council for another 4-year term (2019-2022).
- India has been a regular member of the ITU council since 1952.
- ITU has recently decided to set up the ITU South Asia Area Office and Technology Innovation Centre in New Delhi.

1.18 International Fund for Agricultural Development

- It is an international financial institution and specialized UN agency based in Rome, the UN's food and agriculture hub.
- It was setup after "The World Food Conference 1974" which was organized in response to the food crises of 1970s in Sahelian Countries of Africa.
- IFAD is dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries.
- It provides low-interest loans and grants to developing countries to finance innovative agricultural and rural development programmes and projects.

Sahel

- It is a semiarid region of western and north-central Africa forming a transitional zone between the arid Sahara in the north and humid savannas in the south.
- It comprises of portions of 10 countries including Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan & Eritrea.

1.19 UN Industrial Development Organization

- **UNIDO** is an UN coordinating body central to the promotion of industrial development, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.
- HQ – Vienna, Austria
- Its mission is to promote Inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) in was described in the 'Lima Declaration'.
- The main objectives of UNIDO are,
 1. The promotion of industrial growth and technological progress,
 2. Most effective use of human resources,
 3. Equitable development through industrialization, industrial development and environmental protection,
 4. International cooperation in industrial investment and technology.
- At present there are 170 Member States in UNIDO.
- It has a Regional Office in New Delhi
- It acts as a focal point to promote UNIDO's mandate.
- The UNIDO Country Programme (2013-2017) serves as the portfolio of development interventions by UNIDO.
- The Programme is aligned with the 12th Five Year Plan and the United Nations Development Action Framework (2013-2017).

1.20 UN World Tourism Organization

- It is responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.
- HQ - Madrid, Spain.
- The UNWTO Executive Council represents the Organization's governing body.
- The executive council take all necessary measures in consultation with the Secretary-General, for implementation of its own decisions and recommendations of the Assembly.
- The Council meets at least twice a year.
- The council consists of 30 Full Members elected by the assembly.

- **Recent developments** - Suman Billa, the former director and secretary of Kerala Tourism, joined UNWTO as the director, technical cooperation and silk road development.

Funds and Programmes

- They are subordinate to the United Nations, but since they are immediately controlled by distinct inter-governmental bodies and derive most of their financial resources from other sources than the United Nations budgets, they are somewhat more akin to specialized agencies than to "subsidiary organs" such as UN commissions and committees.
- Moreover, as their activities are more operational and carried out at field level, they have needs dictated by an environment quite different from that of headquarters-centred administrations.

1.21 UN Women

- It was established in 2010 to improve the coordination and coherence of gender equality and empowerment of women, and promote more effective gender mainstreaming.
- It has recently praised the Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik for proposing 33% women's reservation in Parliament and the state Assemblies.

1.22 UNCTAD

- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was formed specifically to handle the problems of developing countries dealing with trade, investment and development issues.
- HQ - Geneva, Switzerland
- It is a part of UN Secretariat.
- **Reports published by UNCTAD** include Trade and Development Report, World Investment Report, The Least Developed Countries Report, World Economic Situation and Prospects, Information and Economy Report, Technology and Innovation Report, and Commodities and Development Report.

1.23 UN-Habitat

- The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the United Nations agency for human settlements and sustainable urban development.
- UN-Habitat was established in 1978 and maintains its headquarters at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, Kenya.
- Its mission is to **promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development** and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.
- It reports to the United Nations General Assembly.
- The first UN-Habitat Assembly was held in Nairobi, Kenya.
- United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat conference) is held once in bi-decennial cycle (1976, 1996 & 2016).
- Habitat III took place in Quito, Ecuador in 2016 to ratify the "New Urban Agenda", building on the Habitat Agenda of Istanbul in 1996.
- Habitat III was one of the first UN global summits after the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Paris Climate Change Agreement.
- India has been unanimously elected as the President of the UN-Habitat in the year 2017.
- Accordingly, India will preside over the governing council meeting for 2 years (2017-2019).
- India is elected as an executive board member in the assembly.
- Since the UN-Habitat came into being in 1978, it is only the third time that India is elected to lead this important organization, after 1988 and 2007.

1.24 World Food Programme

- It is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations and the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.
- It was formally established in 1963 by the **FAO and the United Nations General Assembly**.
- HQ - Rome
- The operations are funded by voluntary donations from world governments, corporations and private donors.
- It strives to eradicate **hunger and malnutrition**, with the ultimate goal of eliminating the need for food aid itself.
- Its efforts focus on emergency assistance, relief and rehabilitation, development aid and special operations.
- In India, WFP has moved from providing direct food aid to providing technical assistance and capacity building services to the Government, with Ministry of Agriculture being the nodal ministry.
- **Food-for-work** programmes help promote environmental and economic stability and agricultural production.
- WFP has coordinated the five-year **Purchase for Progress (P4P)** pilot project which assists smallholder farmers by offering them opportunities to access agricultural markets and to become competitive players in the market place.

1.25 United Nations Development Programme

- UNDP was formed in 1965 to help countries eliminate poverty and achieve sustainable human development.
- The status of UNDP is that of an executive board within the United Nations General Assembly.
- UNDP is working to strengthen new frameworks for development, disaster risk reduction and climate change. It also encourages the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women in all of its programmes.
- The UNDP Human Development Report Office also publishes an annual **Human Development Report** (since 1990) to measure and analyze developmental progress.
- In addition to a global Report, it also publishes regional, national, and local Human Development Reports.
- **UNDP Projects in India** - In partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), UNDP, through the Governance & Accelerated Livelihoods (GOALS) project, helps promote affordable housing for the rural poor.
- The Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network, or eVIN, developed by UNDP India with support from the Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, uses technology to help health workers ensure that vaccines reach every child, everywhere.
- In partnership with Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, funded by Global Environment Facility, the project aims to demonstrate and develop the market for Renewable Energy Technology Packages for Rural Livelihoods (RETPRLs) in three selected states Assam, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh.
- Disha is a partnership between the India Development Foundation and UNDP, supported by IKEA Foundation, that aims to support one million underprivileged women in India learn marketable skills and connect with income opportunities.

Sustainable Development Goals

- The UNDP is one of the main UN agencies involved in the development of the Post-2015 Development Agenda widely known as the sustainable development goals.
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.



1.26 United Nations Environment Programme

- UNEP/UN Environment is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda.
- HQ - Nairobi, Kenya
- It works on 7 broad thematic areas
 1. Climate change,
 2. Disasters and conflicts,
 3. Ecosystem management,
 4. Environmental governance,
 5. Chemicals and waste,
 6. Resource efficiency, and
 7. Environment under review
- Our work is made possible by partners who fund and champion our mission. We depend on voluntary contributions for 95 per cent of our income.
- It honoured PM Narendra Modi with 'Champions of the Earth' award in the leadership category for 'his pioneering work in championing the International Solar Alliance and for his unprecedented pledge to eliminate all single-use plastic in India by 2022'.
- **Reports** - Global Environment Outlook, Emission Gap Report, Actions on Air Quality & Rise of Environmental Crime Report (along with INTERPOL)

Related Organizations

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

1.27 International Atomic Energy Agency

- It seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and to inhibit its use for any military purpose, including nuclear weapons and materials by the early detection of the misuse.
- It was established as an autonomous organization which is not under direct control of the UN, but reports to both the UNGA and Security Council.
- It is widely known as the world's "Atoms for Peace" organization.

- HQ – Vienna. North Korea has withdrawn its candidature from IAEA.
- IAEA Safeguards are a set of technical measures applied by IAEA and countries accept these measures through the conclusion of safeguards agreements.
- It is an essential component of Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which states that each Non-Nuclear Weapon State is required to conclude a safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

India and IAEA

- India has ratified an Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which means that its civilian reactors are under IAEA safeguards and open for inspections.
- Currently, 26 Indian nuclear facilities are placed under IAEA Safeguards.

1.28 Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

- It is an independent, autonomous international organisation with a working relationship with the UN.
- It is the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which entered into force in 1997.
- It has 193 Member States working together to achieve a world free of chemical weapons.
- HQ - The Hague, Netherlands
- It was awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.
- Until now, OPCW could only say whether chemical weapons were used but not who had used them.
- It has been recently **granted additional powers** by its members voting in two-third majority which allows it to assign blame for attacks.
- This process of extending its jurisdiction was heavily opposed by Russia.
- But, Britain was supporting the move arguing that new powers were needed to deal with repeated chemical attacks in Syria.

1.29 World Trade Organization

- It operates a global system of trade rules, acts as a forum for negotiating trade agreements, it settles trade disputes between its member countries and it supports the needs of developing countries.
- WTO officially commenced under the **Marrakesh Agreement**, replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).
- It is created by Uruguay round of negotiations and established in 1995. HQ - Geneva.
- The trade agreements are signed by representatives of member governments and ratified by their parliaments.
- WTO has 164 members and 22 observer governments, with Afghanistan and Liberia being the latest to join.
- The members need not have to be fully independent states.
- Even **customs territory** with full autonomy in the conduct of their external commercial relations can join with the consent of other members. eg: Hong Kong.
- Five principles which WTO follows are non-discrimination, reciprocity, binding and enforceable commitments, transparency, safety values.
- General Council is the top day-to-day decision-making body. It has representatives from all member governments and also meets, under different rules, as the Dispute Settlement Body.

5th Ministerial Conference, Doha 2001

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



- Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making body, where members are represented by its trade ministers, which meets every 2 years.
- WTO is attempting to complete negotiations on the Doha Development Round.
- The WTO has no specific agreement dealing with the environment. But a number of WTO agreements include provisions dealing with environmental concerns.
- The Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade and the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures address environment related issues.
- The 11th biennial ministerial conference was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2017.
- WTO members have accepted Kazakhstan's invitation to host 12th Ministerial Conference to be held in Astana in 2020.

Dispute Settlement Body in WTO

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

India & WTO

- India suffered a setback at the WTO in a dispute against the US that had challenged its key export subsidy schemes including the one for special economic zones.
- The WTO has ruled that these export subsidy programmes violated provisions of the trade body’s norms.
- India is likely to appeal the ruling before the organisation’s Appellate Body

World Cotton Day

- WTO is organizing World Cotton Day event in collaboration with FAO, UNCTAD, International Trade Centre (ITC) and International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC).
- WTO is hosting it at the request of the Cotton – 4 countries - Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali.
- It is to celebrate their official application for the recognition of 7th October as World Cotton Day by the United Nations.
- It is an opportunity for members, the private sector and the international development community to share knowledge and showcase cotton related activities and products.

1.30 International Organization for Migration

- It was established in 1951. It had been an observer to the UN since 1992 and joined the UN system in 2016.
- HQ - Geneva, Switzerland.
- It works in the field of migration with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.
- The organisation has 166 member countries (including India) and 8 observer states.
- IOM works in the four broad areas of migration management:
 1. Migration and development
 2. Facilitating migration
 3. Regulating migration
 4. Forced migration
- It aims to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.
- It published the “**World Migration Report 2018**” in the IOM council held at Geneva.

CEB Member Organizations

- United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) is the main instrument for supporting and reinforcing the coordinating role of the UN intergovernmental bodies on social, economic and related matters.
- The membership includes
 1. The United Nations
 2. All 15 specialized agencies
 3. Related Organizations - WTO, OPCW, IAEA, UNFCCC&IOM
 4. 12 funds and programmes created by the General Assembly.
- IOM is the newest member to join the CEB.

Other UN Initiatives

1.31 UN-DESA

- UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) is an entity of the UN Secretariat responsible for economic, social and environmental issues.
- It promotes international cooperation in the pursuit of sustainable development.
- It helps countries individually and regionally to formulate and implement national development strategies.
- Its in-depth policy analysis has helped resolve many of the world's most pressing socio-economic issues.
- Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018 was prepared by the UN DESA which is an annual assessment of global and regional progress towards the Goals.
- It also publishes World's Women Report once in 5 years, World Economic Situation & Prospects (along with UNCTAD), World Youth Report etc.

1.32 United Nations Human Rights Council

- UNHRC is an inter-governmental body within the UN system (a subsidiary body of UNGA)
- It was established in 2006 as part of the UN's reform process.
- It replaced the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
- It is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights around the world.
- UNHRC has 47 seats with a term of 3 years. No member may occupy a seat for more than 2 consecutive terms.
- Members are elected by the UN General Assembly with 3-year terms by **absolute majority**, with a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.
- It meets 3 times a year to examine human rights violations worldwide.
- Its resolutions are not legally binding but carry moral authority.
- The General Assembly, via a two-thirds majority, can suspend the rights and privileges of any Council member that it decides has persistently committed gross and systematic violations of human rights during its term of membership.
- The Universal Periodic Review of the UNHRC assesses the human rights situations in all UN Member States by taking into account information from different sources including the NGOs.
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)/UN Human Rights is the leading UN entity on human rights.
- It supports different human rights monitoring mechanisms in the UN system including UNHRC.

UNHRC & India

- The 18 new members (for next 3 years) were elected by absolute majority through a secret ballot.

- India was also elected beginning January 1, 2019, in the Asia-Pacific category with highest number of votes among all candidates.
- Brazil, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Fiji and Philippines were also elected in the same regional group.
- Venezuela were elected despite widespread criticism of its poor human rights record.

1.33 UNICEF Cryptocurrency Fund

- It is a special program of the United Nations.
- It is devoted to aiding national efforts to improve the health, nutrition, education, and general welfare of children.
- It becomes first UN organisation to hold and make transactions in cryptocurrencies ether and bitcoin.
- It will use cryptocurrencies to fund open source technology benefiting children and young people around the world.
- Under the structure of the fund, contributions will be held in their cryptocurrency of contribution, and granted out in the same cryptocurrency.
- The first contributions to the Fund will benefit UNICEF Innovation Fund and **GIGA initiative** to connect schools across the world to the internet.

1.34 UNCITRAL

- United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) is the core legal body of the United Nations system in the field of international trade law, specializing in commercial law reform.
- Its business is the modernization and harmonization of rules on international business.
- In order to increase trade opportunities worldwide, UNCITRAL is formulating modern, fair, and harmonized rules on commercial transactions. These include:
 - i. Conventions, model laws and rules which are acceptable worldwide
 - ii. Legal and legislative guides and recommendations of great practical value
 - iii. Updated information on case law and enactments of uniform commercial law
 - iv. Technical assistance in law reform projects
 - v. Regional and national seminars on uniform commercial law
- **Recent Developments** - A deliberation on resolution of commercial disputes was convened by UNCITRAL in New York recently. India is also a part of this deliberation.
- It has formulated principles on which countries should recognise and enforce mediation agreements arising from cross-border disputes.
- The draft convention defines **mediation** as a “process whereby parties attempt to reach an amicable settlement of their dispute with the assistance of a third person (the mediator). The mediator lacks the authority to impose a solution upon the parties to the dispute.”
- In India, Insolvency Law Committee, constituted by Ministry of Corporate Affairs, has recommended the adoption of the UNCITRAL Model Law of Cross Border Insolvency, in IBC, as it provides for a comprehensive framework to deal with cross border insolvency issues.

1.35 Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development

- It was established in 1977 under UNESCO to achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in the Asia-Pacific region through policy and resource development.
- Secretariat - Kuala Lumpur
- The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), UNDP and the UNESCO are founding organisations of the Institute and they are non-voting members of the General Conference.
- India has been elected as the President of AIBD for 2 years.

1.36 U.N. Central Emergency Response Fund

- It was established by the UNGA in 2005 as an emergency response fund.
- It mainly funds projects in countries at war or experiencing other crises like natural disasters, a U.N. official told Reuters, adding that other U.N. agencies may have provided funding to Venezuela through separate programs.
- It has recently approved \$9.2 million in health and nutritional aid for crisis-stricken Venezuela

1.37 UN Report for Social Inclusion

- The UN Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2018 was launched recently.
- It urged countries to take advantage of high growth rate and share the benefits with the national society.
- The report on the Asia-Pacific region has also urged the regional powers to invest in inclusive and sustainable growth.
- The report described South and Southwest Asia as the fastest growing sub-region of the Asia-Pacific region.
- It also highlights the need to increase the social spending by the government.
- It is released by the UNEconomic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific.

1.38 Global Digital Content Market

- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) organizes Global Digital Content Market (GDCM).
- It is a conference to showcase the latest opportunities and challenges in the creative industries and, changes brought about by digital technologies.
- This year, the special focus of the conference is Asia-Pacific region.
- India has been chosen as a host nation for the conference by WIPO.

1.39 Astana Declaration

- 120 UN members including India have recently signed the Astana Declaration, which vows to **strengthen primary healthcare and achieve universal health coverage by 2030.**
- The declaration marked 40 years of the historic Alma Ata Declaration, which declared health a human right for all.
- Though Alma-Ata was signed to ensure health for all, its progress was uneven, with several countries missing out on several indicators set under the declaration.
- The new declaration will renew political commitment to primary health care from governments, non-governmental organisations, professional organisations, academia and global health and development organisations.

1.40 Dubai Declaration

- It was adopted in the 2018 UN World Data Forum in Dubai.
- It is conducted by United Nations Statistical Commission with support the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- It details measures to boost funding for data and statistical analysis for monitoring and speeding up progress towards the 2030 SDGs.
- It supports the implementation of the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, a plan adopted in 2017 forum that guides the implementation of programmes and activities to respond to the data needs of the 2030 Agenda.



1.41 Global Compact for Migration

- It is the first intergovernmental negotiated agreement, prepared under the auspices of UN to cover all dimensions of migration.
- The agreement was signed in the UNGA by adopting a political declaration “New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants” in 2016.
- It is framed consistent with one of the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which member States have committed to cooperate internationally to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration.
- The pact is not binding on member countries.
- All the 193 member countries of UNGA became part of the global pact for migration.
- However, few countries have refused to sign or withdrawn from the agreement – USA, Australia, Hungary, Australia, Israel, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Latvia, Italy, Switzerland and Chile.

1.42 United Nations Global Compact

- It is a voluntary initiative to implement universal sustainability principles and to take steps to support UN goals.
- Global Compact Network India (GCNI), is the Indian arm of the organisation and it held the second Gender Equality Summit

2. INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Economic

2.1 New Development Bank

- It is a multilateral development bank jointly founded by the BRICS countries.
- Its focus is to finance infrastructure and sustainable development in emerging market and developing countries.
- It supports sovereign and non-sovereign projects through loans, guarantees, equity participation and other financial instruments
- HQ - Shanghai, China.
- The first regional office of the NDB will be opened in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- It is planning to launch its Regional Office in Brazil, with a Regional Centre already in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- It has an initial authorized capital of 100 billion dollars, and an initial subscribed capital of 50 billion dollars.
- The initial subscribed capital shall be equally distributed amongst the founding members (BRICS countries).
- The initial authorized capital of the Bank was divided in to 1 million shares and made available for subscription to members, to which all members subscribed equally.
- Hence the voting power that was based number of the subscribed shares is equally shared among the members.
- All members of UN could be members of the NDB, however the share of the BRICS nations can never be less than 55% of voting power.
- **Recent Developments** -NDB's first non-sovereign project was a \$200 million loan to Brazil's Petrobras for an environmental protection scheme and the second a \$200 million loan to South Africa's Transnet to reconstruct a port in Durban.

2.2 Contingent Reserves Arrangement

- The focus of CRA is to deal with any short-term balance of payments pressures that the BRICS nations may face.
- It is a framework for the provision of support through liquidity and precautionary instruments to strengthen financial stability.
- The initial committed resources is \$100 billion with individual commitments as follows,
 1. China – \$ 41 billion
 2. Brazil – \$ 18 billion
 3. Russia – \$ 18 billion
 4. India – \$ 18 billion
 5. South Africa – \$ 5 billion

2.3 Asian Development Bank

- It was conceived in 1966 as a financial institution that would be Asian in character and foster economic growth and cooperation in one of the poorest regions in the world.
- HQ - Manila, Philippines
- ADB now has 67 members of which 48 from within Asia and Pacific while remaining 19 from outside.
- The bank admits member countries from Asian region and non-regional developed countries.
- Some of the non-regional member countries are Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, United States, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany etc.
- ADB assists its members, and partners, by providing loans, technical assistance, grants, and equity investments to promote social and economic development.
- ADB finances projects in four ways,
 - i. **Public sector (sovereign) financing** - Financial products for developing member country governments and public sector entities.
 - ii. **Private sector (non-sovereign) financing** - Direct financial assistance to private sector projects
 - iii. **ADB funds and resources** - ADB funds activities in various sectors through loans and grants, financed from ordinary capital resources as well as special and trust funds.
 - iv. **Cofinancing partnerships** - ADB partners with multilaterals, bilateral and private institutions and with commercial finance institutions to finance development projects in the region.
- It was modelled closely on the World Bank and has a similar weighted voting system where votes are distributed in proportion with members' capital subscriptions.
- It is preparing **Strategy 2030**, which is a new long-term strategy, to respond to the changes brought about by a rapidly evolving Asia and the Pacific.

India & ADB

- India is a founding member and the 4th largest shareholder.
- ADB is developing New Delhi as a regional hub for its operations in South Asia.
- Mumbai Metro Rail System Project, Assam Integrated Flood and Riverbank Erosion Risk Management Investment Program, East coast economic corridor, South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Program etc are sponsored by ADB.

2.4 Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

- It is a multilateral financial institution which brings countries together to address the daunting infrastructure needs across Asia.
- HQ - Beijing, China.
- The membership in AIIB is open to members of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the Asian Development Bank.

- It has authorized capital of US 100 billion dollars and subscribed capital of USD 50 billion.
 - China, India and Russia are the three largest shareholders of AIIB with voting shares are 26.06%, 7.5% and 5.92% respectively.
 - **US & Japan** are not its members.
 - It aims to stimulate growth and improve access to basic services by furthering interconnectivity and economic development in the region through advancements in infrastructure.
 - It has invested in 13 member regions.
 - It offers sovereign and non-sovereign finance for projects in various sectors with an interest rate of London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) plus 1.15 % and a repayment period of 25 years with 5 years in grace period.
 - The 4th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of AIIB was held in Luxembourg in 2019 and upcoming meet is going to be held in Beijing, China
- **Sovereign Backed financing** is considered a loan to a member or a loan guaranteed by a member.
 - **Nonsovereign Backed financing** includes any financing that is not backed by a guarantee of a member.
 - It is for the benefit of a private enterprise or a subsovereign entity (such as a political or administrative subdivision of a member or a public sector entity).

India & AIIB

- Power transmission and distribution projects in Assam, metro rail projects in Chennai, Mumbai and rural water supply system in Karnataka, major irrigation and flood management project in West Bengal, 250MW solar project in Rajasthan, Mumbai urban transport project etc are some of the projects sponsored by AIIB.

2.5 European Bank for Reconstruction & Development

- It was set up after the fall of the Berlin wall to promote private and entrepreneurial initiative in emerging Europe.
- HQ - London.
- It is not to be confused with the European Investment Bank (EIB) which is owned by EU member states and used to support EU policy.
- EBRD is owned by 66 countries and two EU institutions i.e EU & EIB.
- US is the biggest shareholder.
- Besides Europe, member countries of the EBRD are also from other continents - North America (Canada and US), Africa (Morocco), Asia (Japan, China, South Korea) and Australia.
- EBRD's core operations pertain to private sector development in their countries of operation.
- The minimum initial investment towards the membership of EBRD will be approximately one million Euros.

India & EBRD

- In 2017, the Union Cabinet has approved India's membership for EBRD and shareholders of EBRD also voted for India's full membership.
- The International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has signed a pact for cooperation on energy projects.

2.6 Bank for International Settlements

- It is a bank for central banks.
- HQ - Basel, Switzerland
- The mission of the BIS is to serve central banks in their pursuit of monetary and financial stability, to foster international cooperation in those areas and to act as a bank for central banks.
- The BIS has 60-member central banks, representing countries from around the world that together make up about 95% of world GDP.

2.7 World Customs Organization

- WCO established in 1952, is an independent intergovernmental body whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs administrations.
- It is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters.
- It represents 182 Customs administrations across the globe that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade.
- The organisation has divided its membership into six regions. Each of the regions is represented by an elected vice-chairperson to the WCO council.
- It is considered as the voice of the International Customs community.
- India has become the Vice-Chair (Regional Head) of the Asia Pacific Region of WCO for a period of two years (2018-2020).
- The 20th Conference of the Regional Heads of Customs Administration of Asia Pacific Region of the WCO was recently organised in Kochi.

Judicial

2.8 International Criminal Court

- It is an international tribunal headquartered in The Hague in the Netherlands.
- It has the jurisdiction to **prosecute individuals** for the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, crime of aggression and war crimes.
- ICC is the world's first permanent international criminal court.
- It is intended to complement existing national judicial systems and it may therefore only exercise its jurisdiction when certain conditions are met.
- States which become party to the Rome Statute becomes member of ICC.
- There are 123 members. Malaysia is the latest member to join.
- The co-operation of the non-party states with the ICC is of voluntary nature.
- But when a case is referred to the ICC by the UN Security Council all UN member states are obliged to co-operate, since its decisions are binding for all of them.
- 6 official languages - English, French, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish.
- India is not a signatory to the Rome Statute.
- Burundi has become the first country to officially quit the International Criminal Court (ICC).

ICJ	ICC
Principal Organ of UN.	Set up under the Rome Statute in 2002, not governed by UN
All the member states of UN automatically become members of ICJ	nations must individually become members by signing Rome Statute
Not a criminal court and therefore, it does not have a prosecutor able to initiate proceedings	Criminal court
Settles disputes between member states , with their consent, on issues of sovereignty, trade, natural resources, treaty violations, treaty interpretation, and etc.	Tries individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression.

Rome Statute

- It is a multilateral treaty which serves as ICC's foundational and governing document.

- States becomes party to Rome Statute by signing it and subsequently becomes member of ICC by ratifying it.
- While Russia had withdrawn its signature to the initial statute last year, it was never a member of ICC as it never ratified the statute.
- USA, Israel, UAE and several other countries are also signatories to the 'Rome Statute' but haven't ratified yet.
- Philippines has recently submitted its letter of withdrawal from the Rome Statute.

Recent Developments

- The Congolese warlord Bosco Ntaganda was recently pronounced guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity (CAH) by the ICC.
- In **2014**, the ICC charged the **Kenyan President** of crimes against humanity, relating to the death of hundreds in the 2007 post-election ethnic violence.
- This ruling convicted the former Vice President of DRC in 2016 and handed an 18-year sentence.
- In **2019**, former **President of Ivory Coast** was acquitted of crimes against humanity.

2.9 Permanent Court of Arbitration

- It is an intergovernmental organization located at The Hague in the Netherlands.
- It was the first permanent intergovernmental organization to provide a forum for the resolution of international disputes through arbitration and other peaceful means.
- It provides services of arbitral tribunal to resolve disputes between member states, international organizations, or private parties arising out of international agreements.
- The cases span a range of legal issues involving territorial and maritime boundaries, sovereignty, human rights, international investment, and international and regional trade.
- PCA has no sitting judges; instead parties themselves select the arbitrators.
- The organization is not a United Nations agency but has observer status in the UN General Assembly.
- The rulings of PCA are binding but the tribunal has no powers for enforcement.

2.10 Inter-American Court of Human Rights

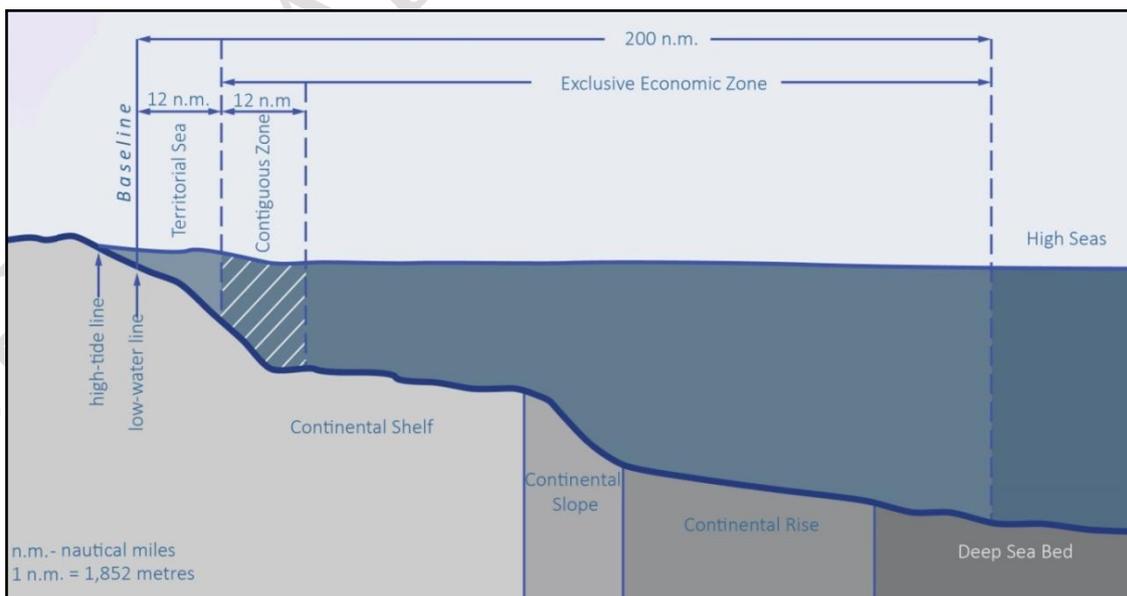
- It was formed by the American Convention on Human Rights 1969.
- Seat - San José, Costa Rica
- 25 American nations have ratified or adhered to the Convention.
- Venezuela denounced it.
- The court has ruled that all nations have an obligation to ensure safe passage for asylum seekers to their final territory of asylum.
- This assumes significance in the light of asylum of Julian Assange, Editor-in-chief of Wiki Leaks, in Eucadorian embassy in U.K.
- He has been granted political asylum and citizenship by Eucador in 2012.
- But he is unable to come out of the embassy in U.K because of the arrest warrant issued by U.K court in the charges of sexual assault and rape allegations.
- In this scenario, the advisory opinion by IACHR gives him the moral victory.
- The ruling would mean that, U.K. has an obligation to allow safe passage for Mr. Assange to Ecuador, where he has been granted political asylum as well as citizenship.



Maritime

2.11 UNCLOS

- UN Convention on the Law of the Sea is the international agreement that resulted from the 3rd United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.
- It provides a regulatory framework for the use of the world's seas and oceans, to ensure the conservation and equitable usage of resources and the marine environment and to ensure the protection and preservation of the living resources of the sea.
- 167 countries plus the UN Observer state Palestine, as well as the Cook Islands, Niue and the European Union have joined in the Convention.
- The convention has created 3 new institutions on the international scene,
 1. International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea,
 2. International Seabed Authority,
 3. Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.
- UN has no direct operational role in the implementation of the Convention.
- However, there is a role played by organizations such as the International Maritime Organization, the International Whaling Commission, and the International Seabed Authority.
- The most significant issues covered by convention were setting limits, navigation, archipelagic status and transit regimes, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), continental shelf jurisdiction, deep seabed mining, the exploitation regime, protection of the marine environment, scientific research, and settlement of disputes.
- The convention gives a clear definition on Internal Waters, Territorial Waters, Archipelagic Waters, Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone, and Continental Shelf.
- Mineral resource exploitation in deep seabed areas beyond national jurisdiction is regulated through an International Seabed Authority and the Common heritage of mankind principle.
- According to UNCLOS, Landlocked states are given a right of access to and from the sea, without taxation of traffic through transit states.
- Ships and aircraft of all countries are allowed "transit passage" through straits used for international navigation.
- Coastal States have sovereign rights in EEZ with respect to natural resources and certain economic activities, and exercise jurisdiction over marine science research and environmental protection.



- All other States have freedom of navigation and over flight in the EEZ, as well as freedom to lay submarine cables and pipelines.



- Land-locked and geographically disadvantaged States have the right to participate on an equitable basis in exploitation of an appropriate part of the surplus of the living resources of the EEZ's of coastal States of the same region or sub-region.
- All marine scientific research in the EEZ and on the continental shelf is subject to the consent of the coastal State, but in most cases, they are obliged to grant consent to other States when the research is for peaceful purposes.
- Disputes can be submitted to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea established under the Convention, to the International Court of Justice, or to arbitration.
- The Tribunal has exclusive jurisdiction over deep seabed mining disputes.

2.12 ITLOS

- International Tribunal for the Law of the Seas is an independent judicial body established by the UNCLOS to adjudicate disputes arising out of the interpretation and application of the UNCLOS Convention.
- Base - Hamburg, Germany.
- The Tribunal is composed of 21 independent members, elected from among persons enjoying the highest reputation for fairness and integrity and of recognized competence in the field of the law of the sea.
- The Tribunal is open to States Parties to the Convention
- It is also open to entities other than States Parties, i.e., States or intergovernmental organisations which are not parties to the Convention and to state enterprises and private entities.
- **Dr. Neeru Chadha** has become the first Indian woman to be elected as a judge at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Seas (ITLOS).

2.13 International Sea Bed Authority

- It is an intergovernmental body established by the Law of the Sea Convention to organize, regulate and control all mineral-related activities in the international seabed area beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.
- It helps in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14 "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources".
- Base - Kingston, Jamaica.
- UNCLOS defines the international seabed area as "the seabed and ocean floor and the subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction".
- It has obtained its observer status in the United Nations.
- The Authority operates by contracting with private and public corporations and other entities authorizing them to explore, and eventually exploit, specified areas on the deep seabed for mineral resources essential for building most technological products.
- The Convention also established a body called the Enterprise which is to serve as the Authority's own mining operator, but no concrete steps have been taken to bring this into being.
- With a 15-year contract period ISA has allowed 8 players to exploit sea bed for polymetallic nodules.
- The 8 contractors are India, Germany, Russian Federation, Interoceanmetal Joint Organization (IOM) (Bulgaria, Cuba, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland and Russian Federation), Republic of South Korea, China, Japan, and France.
- In 2008, the Authority received two new applications coming for the first time from private firms in developing island nations of the Pacific like Nauru and Tonga.

India & ISA

- India was re-elected as a member of the Council of ISA (2017-2020).
- India's exclusive rights to explore polymetallic nodules from seabed in Central Indian Ocean Basin have been extended by 5 years.
- India is implementing a programme on exploration of Polymetallic nodules through the Ministry of Earth Sciences.



2.14 International Whaling Commission

- It was set up under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry.
- Its objectives are
 1. Setting out catch limits by species and area which may be zero as it the case for commercial whaling,
 2. Designating specified areas as whale sanctuaries,
 3. Protection of calves and females accompanied by calves,
 4. Prescribe open and closed seasons and areas for whaling and restrictions on hunting methods.
- An integral part of the Convention is legally binding Schedule which sets out specific measures.
- These measures include **catch limits** (which may be zero as it the case for commercial whaling) by species and area, designating specified areas as whale sanctuaries, protection of calves and females accompanied by calves, prescribe open and closed seasons and areas for whaling and restrictions on hunting methods.
- The Commission also co-ordinates and funds conservation work on many species of cetaceans.
- The IWC has no ability to enforce any of its decisions through penalty imposition.
- HQ - Impington, near Cambridge, England.
- India is a member of IWC.
- **Aboriginal subsistence hunting** is allowed in several countries including the US, Russia, Greenland, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean for people who are historically and culturally depend on whale for subsistence and not for profit.
- In 1982 the IWC adopted a moratorium on **commercial whaling** and is binding on all the members.
- Norway and Iceland allow commercial whaling, objecting the moratorium.
- Russian has also registered an objection to the moratorium decision but does not exercise it.
- Japan continued to hunt whales despite the moratorium, exploiting a loophole that allowed hunting for "scientific research".
- In 1994, the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary was created by the IWC members.

Whale Sanctuary

- It was proposed in South Atlantic by 39 countries in IWC.
- It was meant to provide haven for endangered marine mammals.
- The idea was proposed by Brazil in 2001 in IWC meeting.

Japan and IWC

- Japan recently announced its withdrawal from IWC and resumes commercial whaling.
- Whale hunting was banned in 1986 by the IWC due to dwindling whale populations, with a worldwide moratorium placed on the practice to allow the species to rebound.
- But Japan then began what it called scientific whaling.
- Japan has been whaling in their own waters every year, despite the moratorium on whaling in 1986.
- Whaling is deeply ingrained in Japanese culinary culture and the Whale meat also served as critical sources of protein in the post-war period as the nation grappled with poverty.
- The Japanese government was trying hard to persuade the IWC to allow its commercial whaling operations.
- IWC refused to budge and rejected the proposal which made Japan to move out of IWC.
- Iceland and Norway are the only other nations which allows commercial whaling.

Recent Developments

- 2018 meeting of IWC held in Brazil adopted "**Florianopolis Declaration**" proposed by Brazil.
- The declaration insists that commercial whaling is no longer a necessary economic activity and would allow the recovery of all whale population to pre-industrial whaling levels.
- It also aimed to give indefinite protection for the world's whale population.
- It is a non-binding agreement and was backed by 40 countries, with 27 pro-whaling states voting against.

2.15 RIMES

- Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES) is an intergovernmental institution registered with UN, for the generation and application of early warning information.
- It was established in 2009, evolved from the efforts of countries in Africa and Asia, in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.
- It works with 12 member states and 19 collaborating countries.
- The member states are Bangladesh, Cambodia, Comoros, India, Lao PDR, Maldives, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste.
- It works with a multi-hazard framework for the generation and communication of early warning information and capacity building for preparedness and response to trans-boundary hazards.
- It operates from its regional early warning centre in Pathumthani, Thailand.
- At the 3rd ministerial meeting of RIMES in 2017, the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) inaugurated the Ocean Forecasting System for Comoros, Madagascar, and Mozambique.
- The meeting was held at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.
- **India and RIMES** – Odisha government signed an MoU with RIMES for enhancing early warning system for effective management of disasters in the state.
- It will help state government to integrate new generation digital algorithm-based technologies and best practices from 48 RIMES member countries with the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA).

2.16 Indian Ocean Rim Association

- It was set up with the objective of strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean Region.
- It is a regional forum, tripartite in nature, bringing together representatives of Government, Business and Academia, for promoting co-operation and closer interaction among them.
- It is based on the principles of Open Regionalism for strengthening Economic Cooperation particularly on Trade Facilitation and Investment, Promotion as well as Social Development of the region.
- The association comprises 22 Member States and 10 Dialogue Partners.
- India, Australia, Iran, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, South Africa, Mozambique, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Singapore, Maldives, Mauritius, Madagascar, UAE, Yemen, Seychelles, Somalia, Comoros and Oman are members of IORA.
- Neither Pakistan nor Myanmar is a member. Maldives has become the latest member.
- **Dialogue Partners** –Italy, Japan, Germany, China, USA, UK, France, Turkey, Korea and Egypt.
- The apex body is the Council of (Foreign) Ministers.
- The Coordinating Secretariat of IORA is located at Ebene, Mauritius.
- India hosted 2nd IORA Renewable Energy Ministerial meet in 2018.
- It has adopted "Delhi Declaration on Renewable Energy in the Indian Ocean Region".
- As per the declaration, IORA member nations will collaborate with the ISA member nations to exchange knowledge and share potential interests in the renewable energy sector.
- **Global Renewable Energy Atlas** is the world's largest-ever joint renewable resource data project.
- IORA countries will undertake the expansion of Atlas which will be coordinated by International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

Indian Ocean Dialogue

- The Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) is a flagship initiative of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
- It is originated in the 13th Council of Ministers meeting, held in 2013 in Perth, Australia.
- The first IOD was held in Kerala, India in 2014,
- Areas of discussion includes economic cooperation, maritime safety and security, blue economy, human assistance and disaster relief, etc.

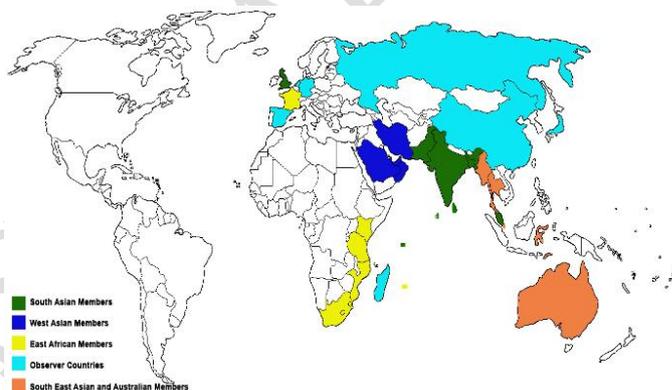
- The 6th Indian Ocean Dialogue will be held in New Delhi on 13th and 14th December 2019.

Delhi Dialogue

- Delhi Dialogue is a premier annual track 1.5 event between India and ASEAN.
- Track 1.5 diplomacy involves both officials and non-officials such as business leaders, business organisations and all possible non diplomats of two states.
- Delhi dialogue discusses politico-security, frameworks on economic and socio-cultural engagements.
- Delhi Dialogue XI (2019) will be held along with Indian Ocean dialogue VI in New Delhi.

2.17 Indian Ocean Naval Symposium

- It is a voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime co-operation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues.
- It includes 23 nations that permanently hold territory that lies within the Indian Ocean, and 9 observer nations
- **Members** - Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE, France, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Eritrea, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand & Timor
- **Observer** - China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Netherlands, Russia and Spain.
- The Chairmanship rotates for every 2 years. Iran assumes chairmanship (2018-2020) and France will assume in 2020.
- The theme for the 10th anniversary seminar is "IONS as a Catalyst for SAGAR" i.e Security and Growth for All in the Region
- SAGAR' is in consonance with India's 'Act East' policy and the nation's diplomatic, economic and military outreach in the region.



2.18 Seabed 2030

- Seabed 2030 project was launched at the United Nations (UN) Ocean Conference in June 2017.
- It is a collaborative project between the Nippon Foundation of Japan and the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO).
- It aims to bring together all available bathymetric data (depth and shape of the ocean floor) to create a map of the world ocean floor by 2030 and make it available to all.
- The data is fundamental for understanding ocean circulation, tides, tsunami forecasting, fishing resources, underwater geo-hazards, cable and pipeline routing, mineral extraction, oil and gas exploration.
- The project is aligned with the UN's SDG 14 to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.
- It comprises a global center and 4 regional centers (Arctic and North Pacific center, Atlantic and Indian Ocean center, South and West Pacific center and Southern Ocean center).

GEBCO

- It is an international group of mapping experts developing a range of bathymetric data sets and data products.
- It operates under the joint auspices of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC).
- IHO is an intergovernmental organization, established in 1921 to support safety of navigation and the protection of the marine environment.
- Its secretariat is in Monaco, which coordinates IHO's programmes.

2.19 Caspian Sea Breakthrough Treaty

- Caspian Sea is bounded by 5 nations - Kazakhstan, Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Turkmenistan.

- Recently, these nations reached an agreement on sovereign rights to the sea after more than 2 decades of disputes.
- It paves the way for new oil and gas extraction and pipelines.
- It ends a spat over whether the Caspian is a sea or a lake, granting it special legal status meaning that it is not defined as a sea or a lake.
- The surface water will be in common usage, meaning freedom of access for all littoral states beyond territorial waters.
- But the seabed - which is rich in natural resources - will be divided up.
- It also allows each to lay pipelines offshore with consent only from the neighboring states affected, rather than from all Caspian Sea nations.
- It also removes a legal barrier to building a trans-Caspian gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Europe.



2.20 Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

- It was established by a resolution adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO.
- It assists governments to address their individual and collective ocean and coastal management needs, through the sharing of knowledge, information and technology.
- It also coordinates and fosters the establishment of regional intergovernmental coordinating tsunami warning and mitigation systems in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, in the North East Atlantic, Mediterranean and Caribbean seas.
- HQ - Paris
- There are 150 members of which India is also a member.
- General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO), Tara Expeditions, Océanopolis Brest are some of its partners.

2.21 Indian Ocean Conference

- It is an initiative to bring the state leaders, diplomats and bureaucrats from across the Indian ocean region under one roof to strengthen the understanding among each other.
- It is organized by India Foundation, an independent research centre along with the partners from Singapore, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Weapons

2.22 Chemical Weapons Convention

- It aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of chemical weapons by States Parties.
- Israel has signed but not ratified the agreement.
- Egypt, North Korea and South Sudan have neither signed nor acceded to the treaty.
- The convention has provisions for systematic evaluation of chemical production facilities, as well as for investigations of allegations of use and production of chemical weapons based on intelligence of other state parties.
- Some chemicals which have been used extensively in warfare but have numerous large-scale industrial uses such as phosgene are highly regulated.
- Chlorine gas is highly toxic, but being widely used for peaceful purposes, is **not** officially listed as a chemical weapon.



- Other chemicals, such as white phosphorous, are highly toxic but are legal under the CWC when they are used by military forces for reasons other than their toxicity.
- Chemicals have few or no uses outside chemical weapons may be produced or used for research, medical, pharmaceutical or chemical weapon defence testing purposes but production above 100 grams per year must be declared to the CWC.
- **India and CWC** - As a signatory, India enacted Chemical Weapons Convention Act in 2000.
- It defines chemical weapons and empowers the Centre to set up a **National Authority**.
- It defines chemical weapons as toxic chemicals, including munitions and devices, specifically designed to cause death or other harm.
- The definition includes in its ambit “any equipment” specifically designed for employing chemical weapons.
- The Act contains provisions for restriction on transfer of any toxic chemical or precursor.

2.23 UN Disarmament Commission

- It is a subsidiary organ of UN General Assembly, created in 1978.
- It is composed of all UN member states.
- It reports annually to General Assembly.
- It was created as a deliberative body, with the function of considering and making recommendations on various issues in the field of disarmament.
- Its mandate is to prepare proposals for a treaty for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments, including the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.
- The UNDC is serviced substantively by the Office for Disarmament Affairs and technically by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services.
- The United Nations disarmament chief made a statement about disarming North Korea recently.

2.24 Conference on Disarmament

- It is the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.
- Though it includes practically all multilateral arms control and disarmament problems, it focuses on nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.
- India recognizes CD as the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum and discards any other forum.

2.25 Nuclear Suppliers Group

- It is a voluntary, non-legally binding export control regime.
- Originally called “London Club”, it was founded in response to the Indian nuclear test in 1974.
- It is a group of nuclear supplier countries that seeks to contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of Guidelines for nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports.
- According to this, a supplier authorizes a transfer only when satisfied that the transfer would not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons.
- It has 48 members with European Commission and the Chair of Zangger Committee as observers.
- After India U.S Civil Nuclear Agreement, India has been trying to become a member. But its membership has been blocked by China.

India-US Civil Nuclear Deal 2005

- It recognised India as a nuclear weapons power.
- It emphasised on non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.
- Even though India did not officially join NPT, this agreement afforded the same benefits as other leading nuclear powers like civilian space programmes, high-technology trade, and missile defence.
- It included separation of civilian and military nuclear facilities and bringing civilian nuclear facilities under the IAEA safeguards.



2.26 Wassenaar Arrangement

- It promotes transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies.
- It came into being in 1996 to succeed the Cold War-era Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls.
- It has 42 members and with the exception of China, all the other permanent UNSC members are signatories.
- India has been admitted as the 42nd member, which will strengthen India's credentials as a responsible nuclear power.

2.27 Missile Technology Control Regime

- It was established in 1987 by Japan.
- It aims to limit the spread of ballistic missiles and other unmanned delivery systems that could be used for chemical, biological, and nuclear attacks.
- It has 35 members, which include most of the world's key missile manufacturers, including India.
- It seeks to restrict the exports of missiles and related technologies of any type of weapon of mass destruction.

2.28 Australia Group

- It seeks to ensure that exports do not contribute to the development of chemical or biological weapons.
- It has 43 members including India.
- China is not a member of AG nor of MTCR nor Wassenaar Arrangement.
- Delegations representing the countries meet every year in Paris.

2.29 Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty

- The treaty was signed in the year 1987 between United States and the then Soviet Union.
- The treaty prohibited land-based cruise or ballistic missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 km. It did not cover air- or sea-launched weapons,
- The treaty marked the first time the superpowers had agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenal & eliminate entire category of nuclear weapons.
- In 2014, US has alleged that Russia violated the treaty and it has deployed the non-compliant missile.
- On August 2 2019, the US formally quits the treaty.

Others

2.30 International Press Institute

- It is a global network of editors, journalists and media executives who share a common dedication to quality, independent journalism.
- HQ - Vienna.
- It represents leading digital, print and broadcast news outlets in nearly 100 countries.
- IPI's Death Watch names journalists and media staff who were deliberately targeted because of their profession either because of their reporting or simply because they were journalists as well as those who lost their lives while on assignment.
- According to the recent list, 78 journalists were killed in 2018.
- According to its 2017 report, India and Mexico are the two countries where the greatest number of recent cases are pending investigation.

2.31 World Petroleum Congress

- It is widely recognized as the ‘**Olympics**’ of the oil and gas industry and is organized by World Petroleum Council.
- It is conducted tri-annually.
- It attracts Ministers, CEOs of Oil and Gas MNCs, experts and academics from the hydrocarbon sectors and provides an ideal forum to showcase the potential of hydrocarbon sector in various countries.
- **World Petroleum Council** is a non-advocacy, non-political organisation with charitable status in the U.K. and has accreditation as a Non-Governmental Organization from the United Nations.
- It is dedicated to the promotion of sustainable management and use of world’s petroleum resources for the benefit of all.

2.32 World Travel and Tourism Council

- It is a forum for the travel and tourism industry, is made up of members from the global business community and works with governments to raise awareness about the industry.
- HQ - London
- It is known for being the only forum to represent the private sector in all parts of the travel and tourism industry worldwide.
- It publishes research in conjunction with Oxford Economics on the economic and social impact of the industry.
- In its recent report on the Caribbean region, it states that the hurricanes Irma and Maria which struck Dominica, Puerto Rico has caused widespread devastation in its tourism potential.
- In the Caribbean region, travel and tourism account for a higher share of the GDP than in any other region of the world.

2.33 International Coffee Organization

- It is a London based body set up under the auspices of the United Nations in 1963 under the International Coffee agreement of 1962.
- It was formed to highlight the economic importance of coffee.
- It has 50 members which includes Exporting (44) and Importing (6) countries.
- India is in major exporting countries and European Union in importing countries.
- It represents 98% of world coffee production and 67% of world consumption.
- It organises “The World Coffee Conference” in which its 5th edition was held in India.
- The earlier conferences were held in London, Guatemala, Brazil and Ethiopia.
- In its recent report, it highlighted that the next wave of growth in international coffee industry will come from Asia, and India is expected to play a lead role in driving this growth.

2.34 World Economic Forum

- It was established in 1971 as a not-for-profit foundation and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland
- The Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum is held in Davos, Switzerland.
- The theme of WEF 2019 is “Globalization 4.0: Shaping a New Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution”.
- Its objective is to improve the state of the world.
- The key reports & indices by WEF are
 1. Global Competitiveness Report
 2. Global Enabling trade Report



3. Global Gender Gap Index
 4. Human Capital Index
 5. Inclusive Development Index
- It established the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in **San Francisco** to develop policy frameworks and advance collaborations that accelerate the benefits of science and technology.

India Economic Summit

- World Economic Forum's 33rd edition of the India Economic Summit was organised in New Delhi.
- It is jointly organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and industry body CII.
- The theme of the summit is 'Innovating for India: Strengthening South Asia, Impacting the World'.
- It will host world leaders to discuss issues like Inclusive growth, the environment and innovation.

2.35 International Disability Alliance

- The International Disability Alliance (IDA) was established in 1999 as a network of global and regional organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) and their families.
- IDA is a key player in the negotiation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).
- The Alliance aims to promote the effective and full implementation of the UN CRPD worldwide.
- IDA represents the estimated one billion people worldwide living with a disability.
- This is the world's largest and most frequently overlooked minority group.
- IDA is hosting its 2nd Global Disability Summit in Argentina.

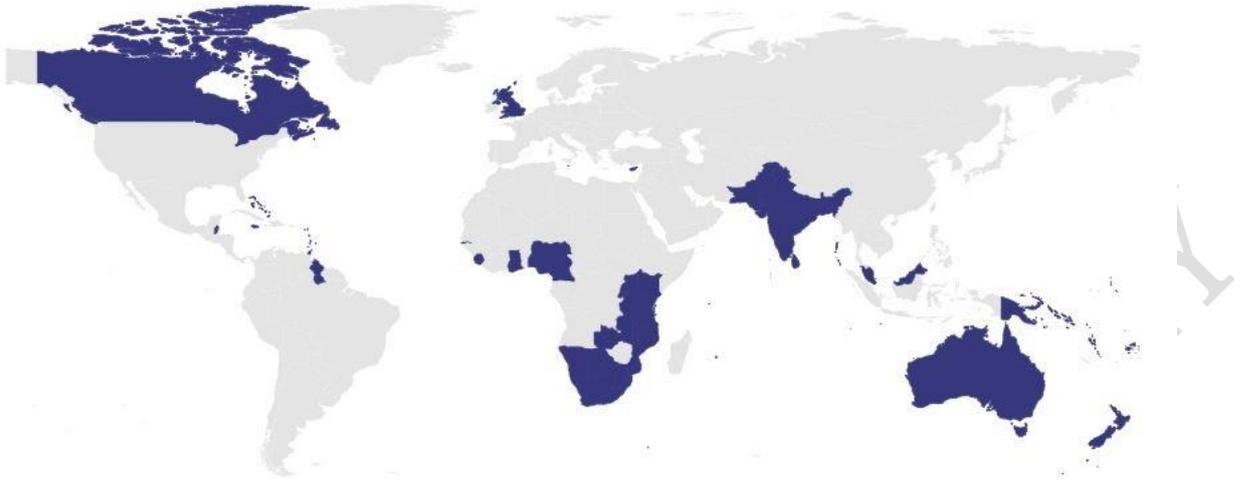
3. INTERNATIONAL GROUPS

3.1 Commonwealth of Nations

- It is an organisation of **54 member states** that are mostly former territories of the British Empire.
- It operates by intergovernmental consensus of the member states, organised through the Commonwealth Secretariat and non-governmental organisations, organised through the Commonwealth Foundation.
- Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and the monarch of 16 members of the Commonwealth, known as Commonwealth realms.
- Member states have no legal obligation to one another.
- Instead, they are united by language, history, culture and their shared values of democracy, free speech, human rights, and the rule of law.
- Every 2 years, member countries meet to discuss issues affecting the Commonwealth and the wider world at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).
- All members have an equal voice, regardless of size or economic stature.
- Some members treat resident citizens of other Commonwealth countries preferentially to citizens of non-Commonwealth countries.
- Britain and several others, mostly in the Caribbean, grant the right to vote to Commonwealth citizens who reside in those countries.
- In non-Commonwealth countries in which their own country is not represented, Commonwealth citizens may seek consular assistance at the British embassy.
- The first member to be admitted without having any link to the British Empire was Mozambique followed by Rwanda in 2009.
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- **Recent Developments** - The Maldives has recently re-joined the Commonwealth as 54th member, reversing its earlier policy of isolation.



CHRI

- The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) is an independent, non-partisan, international non-governmental organization, headquartered in New Delhi.
- The organization works for the practical realization of human rights across the Commonwealth.
- In 1987, several Commonwealth associations founded CHRI as a response to South Africa's policy of racism.
- These groups felt that while member countries had a common set of values and legal principles from which to work and a forum within which to promote human rights, there was relatively little focus on human rights issues.
- CHRI's objectives are to promote awareness of and adherence to the Harare Commonwealth Declaration, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other internationally recognized human rights instruments, as well as domestic instruments supporting human rights in member states.

Harare Commonwealth Declaration

- The Harare Commonwealth Declaration was a declaration of the Commonwealth of Nations, issued in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 1991.
- It sets out the Commonwealth's core principles and values, detailing the Commonwealth's membership criteria, and redefining and reinforcing its purpose.

3.2 European Union

- It is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe.
- The United Kingdom withdrew from the European Union on 31 January 2020.
- The Maastricht Treaty established the European Union in 1993 and introduced European citizenship.
- The latest major amendment to the constitutional basis of the EU, the Treaty of Lisbon, came into force in 2009.
- The EU has developed an internal single market through a standardised system of laws that apply in all member states.
- The Union reached its current size of 28 member countries with the accession of Croatia on 1 July 2013.
- EU policies aim to ensure the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital within the internal market, enact legislation in justice and home affairs, and maintain common policies on trade, agriculture, fisheries, and regional development.
- Within the Schengen Area, passport controls have been abolished.
- A monetary union has been established within union but lacks common Fiscal union.



- It consists of a President and commissioners from the 28-member nations.

Art. 13 of EU Copyright Law

- It is an attempt to reshape copyright law for the internet age.
- It is based around the relationship between copyright holders and online platforms, compelling the latter to enforce tighter regulation over protected content.
- It stipulates that online platforms should prevent the availability of protected works, suggesting these ISPs will need to adopt technology that can filter work created by someone other than the person uploading it.
- By this proposed article memes, remixes and other types of user-generated content would all be put at risk as these could technically be seen as breaches of copyright.

European Council

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

3.3 Council of Europe

- It aims to **uphold human rights**, democracy, and rule of law in Europe and promote European culture.
- HQ - Strasbourg, France.
- It has 47 member states and is distinct from the EU.
- Some of the members in Council of Europe who are outside EU are Russia, Iceland, Switzerland, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Japan, Canada, U.S, Mexico, Israel.
- No country has ever joined the EU without first belonging to the Council of Europe.
- Unlike the EU, the Council of Europe cannot make binding laws, but it does have the power to enforce select international agreements reached by European states on various topics.
- The best-known body of the Council of Europe is the **European Court of Human Rights**, which enforces the European Convention on Human Rights.
- The Commissioner for Human Rights is an independent institution within the Council of Europe, mandated to promote awareness of and respect for human rights in the member states.
- Turkey is also a member.

European Court of Human Rights

- The European Court of Human Rights is an international court set up in Strasbourg, France in 1959.
- It rules on individual or state applications alleging violations of the civil and political rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights.
- Recently, the court has ruled against the Russian government, that it violated the Article 2 of the convention in its planning and use of lethal force to tackle the hostage crisis in Beslan region.



3.4 Eurasia Economic Union

- It is a political and economic union of 5 states located in central and northern Eurasia i.e Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia.
- It facilitates the free movement of goods, capital, services, and people among its member countries.
- India is holding negotiations to finalize free trade agreement with EEU.

European Economic Area (EEA)

- It unites the EU Member States and 3 EFTA States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) into a Single Market governed by the same basic rules.
- It aims to enable goods, services, capital, and persons to move freely in 31 EEA States in an open and competitive environment.
- It entered into force in 1994.

3.5 Eastern Economic Forum

- EEF was established by a decree of the President of the Russian Federation, in 2015.
- It aims to support economic development of Russia's 'Far East'. and to expand international cooperation in Asia-Pacific region.
- It takes place each year in Vladivostok.
- It serves as a platform for the discussion of key issues in,
 - World economy, regional integration and the development of new industrial and technological sectors.
 - The 'Far East' is the easternmost part of Russia.
 - The macro-region borders 2 oceans, the Pacific and the Arctic, and 5 countries, China, Japan, Mongolia, the United States and the N.Korea.
 - The Far East is rich in natural resources like diamonds, stannary, gold, tungsten, fish and seafood.
 - About 1/3rd of all coal reserves and hydro-engineering resources of the Russia are available here.

3.6 European Free Trade Association

- It is a bloc comprising of four countries - Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
- The four EFTA countries are not part of the EU.
- **India EFTA Pact** - India and EFTA started negotiating a broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement in 2008, shortly after India started FTA talks with the European Union.
- The agreement is expected to promote economic ties between the countries.
- The talks resumed in Geneva in 2016, but hit a rough patch after the Switzerland insists on stringent IPR regime in India.
- This is mainly due to number of Swiss pharmaceutical MNCs, including Novartis and Roche, having been aggressively fighting for their patent rights in India over the past few years.

3.7 North Atlantic Treaty Organization

- It was founded in 1949 as a defence alliance.
- It is an intergovernmental political and military alliance among 29 independent member countries across North American and European states.
- HQ - Brussels, Belgium
- The key member States included the United States, Canada, and American allies in Europe.
- Montenegro is the latest country to join the alliance in 2017.
- North Macedonia (ex-Yugoslav republics) has recently signed accession agreement with NATO.

Warsaw Pact

- It is a treaty establishing a mutual-defense organization among then Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania.
- It was signed in 1955.
- It was formed on the immediate aftermath of admitting West Germany to NATO, during cold war.
- After democratic revolutions in eastern Europe and the dissolution of Soviet Union, the pact was formally declared "nonexistent" in 1991.

- The move must be ratified by 29 member countries, which typically takes about a year.
- After the ratification, it is expected to formally join the alliance in 2020, as its 30th member.
- Three other ex-Yugoslav republics (Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro) have already joined NATO.
- NATO is committed to the principle that an attack against one or several of its members is considered as an attack against all. This is the **principle of collective defence**, which is enshrined in Article 5 of the **Washington Treaty**.
- Core tasks - collective defence, crisis-management and cooperative security.
- All Alliance decisions are taken by consensus, with each ally having an equal say.
- **Recent Developments** – Members of NATO are gathered in London to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the defence alliance.

3.8 G7

PM attended the G7 Summit in France.

- The countries that are part of the G7 include the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United States.
- It is a group consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the US.
- EU is also represented within the G7.
- These countries are the seven major advanced economies as reported by the IMF.
- Formerly called G8 with Russia in it, but due to Crimean crisis Russia was ejected from the group.
- The organization was founded to facilitate shared macroeconomic initiatives by its members in response to the collapse of the exchange rate 1971.
- G7 summit is being held annually to discuss economic policies, while the G7 finance ministers have met at least semi-annually.
- For the first time in the last 44 years, Gender Equality Advisory Council was set up.
- The aim of the council is to convince private sector companies to set up such council and eradicate the problem of gender inequality from the root.
- It carries out its mandate advising the G7 Presidency and recommending concrete actions for the G7 to advance gender equality and women's empowerment across all areas of the G7's work.
- Although India is not a member of the G7 group, PM attended the G7 Summit as a special guest as he has been personally invited by French President.

3.9 Financial Action Task Force

- It was set up in 1989 by the G7 countries, with headquarters in Paris.
- The objectives are to 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.
- It is therefore a **“policy-making body”** which works to generate the necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in these areas.
- It is empowered to curtail financing of UN-designated terrorist groups.
- It can publicly sensor countries that are not abiding by its norms.
- It has 39 members that include all 5 permanent members of UNSC and 2 regional organisations - Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Commission.
- Saudi Arabia and Israel are “observer countries” (partial membership).
- India became a full member in 2010.
- **Recent Development** - Pakistan will continue to remain on the grey list for its alleged laxity in curtailing finances of terrorist groups within its soil

Asia Pacific Group

- In 1995 an Asia-Pacific regional office called the "FATF-Asia Secretariat" was established and funded by the government of Australia.
- It worked with countries in the Asia-Pacific to generate wide regional commitment to implement anti-money laundering policies.
- In 1997, the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) was officially established as an autonomous regional anti-money laundering body.
- It was set up by unanimous agreement among 13 original founding members.
- A new secretariat was also established to serve as the focal point for APG activities, in Sydney, Australia.

3.10 G20

- It is an international forum that brings together the world's leading industrialised and emerging economies.
- Members are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, US, Russia, Australia, Canada, Saudi Arabia, India, South Africa, Turkey, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, China and Indonesia and EU.
- The members are divided into **5 groups**, consisting of a maximum of four states for choosing the President:
 1. **Group 1:** Australia, Canada, United States, Saudi Arabia.
 2. **Group 2:** India, Russia, South Africa, Turkey.
 3. **Group 3:** Argentina, Brazil, Mexico.
 4. **Group 4:** France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom.
 5. **Group 5:** China, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea.
- In addition to the member countries, Spain is a permanent guest and always participates in the G20 summits. Every year, the host country also chooses other guests.
- It acts as a forum for the governments and central bank governors from 20 major economies.
- It was founded with the aim of studying, reviewing, and promoting high level discussion of policy issues pertaining to the **promotion of international financial stability**.
- The group **does not have permanent offices or employees**.
- The **President** is chosen by a rotation system amongst the member countries.
- There are **two working channels of G20**,
 1. **Finance Channel** - It covers meetings between **finance ministers and central bank presidents**.
 2. **The Sherpas Channel** - It covers **non-financial issues**, such as political commitment, the fight against corruption, development, gender equality, trade and energy.

G20 members



Note: The European Union is also a member

- Civil societies through, **Affinity groups** participate in the **G20** that seeks to enrich submit.
- The G20 heads of government or heads of state have annually met at summits, and the group also hosts separate meetings of finance ministers and central bank governors.
- Singapore formed the Global Governance Group (3G), an informal grouping of 28 non-G20 countries (including several microstates and many Third World countries) with the aim of collectively channelling their views into the G20 process more effectively.

Recent developments

- The 14th edition of G-20 meeting was held in **Osaka, Japan**.

- “Osaka Track” on the “digital economy” was initiated and sought the participation of G-20 countries.
- It aims to legitimize the informal plurilateral (two or more countries) negotiations on digital trade that were never approved at the World Trade Organization.
- The Osaka Track, according to the 50 signatories, is a process for promoting “international policy discussions, inter alia, international rule-making on trade-related aspects of electronic commerce at the WTO.”
- India, South Africa, and Indonesia have boycotted the “Osaka Track” on the “digital economy”
- The Osaka declaration welcomed the **UNSC Resolution 2462**, which calls upon countries to prevent and counter the financing of terrorism, especially in its new forms.
- For the first time, India will host the annual G20 summit in 2022.
- G20 Health Ministers Meeting was recently held under the Presidency of Japan in Okayama City.
- Four major global health issues were focussed –
 - i. Achievement of Universal Health Coverage
 - ii. Response to population aging
 - iii. Management of health risks and
 - iv. Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and its containment
- India’s Health Minister shared 2 best practices
 - i. Successful pulse polio campaign in Delhi in 1994 threatened by a major outbreak of Plague during the same period and
 - ii. The risk communication management to bring down the mass hysteria created by Social media during Nipah outbreak in Kerala in 2018.
- The 6th Parliamentary Speakers’ Summit of G 20 Countries was recently held in Tokyo, Japan.
- India’s Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla took part in the meeting highlighting the impact of terrorism on society and its significant effects on economy.

3.11 Gulf Cooperation Council

- It is a regional political and economic alliance of six Gulf States i.e Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.
- HQ - Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- Its aim is to achieve ever closer union between the energy rich Gulf countries.
- The UAE has recently announced that it has formed a new economic and partnership group with Saudi Arabia, separate from the GCC.
- This move could undermine the popularity of GCC.
- It has failed to resolve a diplomatic crisis that continues to grip the region.
- Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE and Egypt have imposed an air, land and sea blockade on Qatar since June 2017.
- The blockading countries have accused Qatar of supporting terrorism.
- **Recent Development** – The 40th summit was recently held in Riyadh, for second year in a row.
- **Qatar and GCC** - Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain and non-GCC member Egypt imposed a political and economic boycott of Qatar in June 2017 over allegations that Doha backs terrorism.
- Kuwait and the United States have tried to mediate the rift.
- After 2 years of strained relationship, Qatar’s Prime Minister has attended the recent meeting which is the sign of thaw in a regional dispute.
- PM is the most senior Qatari to attend the annual gathering since 2017, follows an intensification of efforts to resolve the Gulf dispute.

3.12 Organization of Islamic Cooperation

- It is an international organization founded in 1969, consisting of 57 member states.
- Its administrative centre is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- Turkey currently holds the chairmanship of the organization.
- The organisation works to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony.
- India is not a member to this organisation but was invited to the meeting as a **guest of honour** in 2019.
- However, Pakistan skipped the meeting citing the Indian minister's presence.

3.13 Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

- It is an intergovernmental organization of 14 nations to coordinate and unify their petroleum policies and ensure the stabilization of oil markets, in order to have regular supply of petroleum to consumers, a steady income to producers, and a fair return on capital for those investing in the petroleum industry.
- HQ – Vienna
- **Members** -Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Libya, UAE, Algeria, Nigeria, Gabon, Angola, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea and Congo.
- Qatar announced its termination of its membership from January 2019.
- Russia is not a member of OPEC.
- The countries accounted for an estimated 42% of global oil production and 73% of the world's "proven" oil reserves.
- 2/3rd of OPEC's oil production and reserves are in its 6 Middle Eastern countries that surround the oil-rich Persian Gulf.
- OPEC collaborated with five other international organizations (APEC, Eurostat, IEA, OLADE (es), UNSD) to improve the availability and reliability of oil data.
- Since 2007, OPEC has published the "**World Oil Outlook**" annually, in which it presents a comprehensive analysis of the global oil industry including medium- and long-term projections for supply and demand.



3.14 Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development

- It started with 18 European countries plus the US and Canada to create an organisation dedicated to economic development.

- It now has 36 member including not only most advanced countries but also emerging countries like Mexico, Chile and Turkey.
- European Commission also participates alongside Members in discussions on the OECD.
- It also works closely with non-members like China, India, Brazil and South Africa through "Enhanced Engagement" programmes.
- It administers and publishes the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which is a regular assessment of the attainment of 15-year-olds in three areas of knowledge thus measuring the performance of educational systems across countries.
- India is a signatory of this policy.
- **Recent Developments** - India recently became the signatory of the Multilateral Instrument (MLI).
- It is an agreement put out by OECD to prevent base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS).
- It will help them crack down on abuse of bilateral tax treaties and treaty shopping.
- India and 68 other jurisdictions became signatories of MLI.
- MLI will preside over 2,300 treaties worldwide.
- It is expected to be transparent and balanced in dispute resolution.
- Under General Anti-Avoidance Rule (GAAR), the taxman has powers to look into any corporate transactions.
- But MLI has set principal purpose test (PPT) and limit of benefit (LoB) measures, which if fulfilled will shield entities from "harassment".

Base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS)

- It refers to tax planning strategies used by multinational companies to exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules.
- They artificially shift profits to low or no-tax locations where there is little or no economic activity.
- In general BEPS strategies are not illegal, rather they take advantage of different tax rules operating in different jurisdictions.

3.15 International Energy Agency

- It is an autonomous intergovernmental organization established in the framework of the OECD.
- It was initially designed to help countries co-ordinate a collective response to major disruptions in the supply of oil.
- Only OECD member states can become members of the IEA.
- Except for Chile, Iceland, Israel, Latvia, Slovenia all OECD member states are members of the IEA.
- In 2018, Mexico officially joined IEA as its 30th member country. It is the first Latin American country in IEA.
- Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Singapore and Thailand are the associate members of IEA.
- The IEA examines the full spectrum of energy issues including oil, gas and coal supply and demand, renewable energy technologies, electricity markets, energy efficiency, access to energy, demand side management etc.
- The IEA acts as a policy adviser to its member states, but also works with non-member countries, especially China, India, and Russia.
- Its flagship releases are World Energy Outlook and Key World Energy Statistics.
- IEA member countries are required to maintain total oil stock levels equivalent to at least 90 days of the previous year's net imports.

India & IEA

- **Ocean Energy Systems Technology Collaboration Programme** is an intergovernmental collaboration between countries operates under the framework established by IEA.
- India became an associate member due to which India would have access to advanced research and development teams, technologies and data in the area of ocean energy across the world.

- **Advanced Motor Fuels Technology Collaboration Programme** under IEA is an international platform for co-operation among countries to promote cleaner and more energy efficient fuels & vehicle technologies.
- Union Cabinet has recently approved India's membership in this programme.

3.16 International Energy Forum

- It consists of 70 member countries, aiming to foster greater mutual understanding and awareness of **common energy interests** among its members.
- Its member countries are accounting for around 90% of global supply and demand for oil and gas.
- It is unique because it comprises not only countries of the IEA and OPEC, but also other major players outside of IEA and OPEC, including Argentina, China, India, Mexico, Russia and South Africa.
- The Forum's biennial Ministerial Meetings are the world's largest gathering of Energy Ministers.
- It is promoting the Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable which is a biennial event bringing together Energy Ministers and experts from Asian countries.

3.17 Shanghai Cooperation Organization

- It is a Eurasian political, economic, and military organisation which was founded by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan.
- Current member states (8) - China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.
- Observer States (4) - Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia.
- Dialogue Partners (6) - Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, Sri Lanka.
- The official working languages of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation are Chinese and Russian.
- The SCO Secretariat, based in Beijing, is the main permanent executive body of the SCO
- The Council of Heads of State is the top decision-making body in the SCO.
- The **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)**, headquartered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, is a permanent organ of the SCO which serves to promote cooperation of member states against terrorism, separatism and extremism.
- All SCO members, except for China, India & Pakistan, are also members of the Eurasian Economic Community.
- The original purpose of the SCO was to serve as a counterbalance to NATO and in particular to avoid conflicts that would allow the United States to intervene in areas bordering both Russia and China.
- **Recent developments** – SCO's Council of Foreign Ministers was held in Kyrgyz capital Bishkek.
- India skipped a meeting of the 'Eurasian Economic Union' (EAEU), which was organised by **SCO** in China.
- The entire event is foreshadowed by the China's 'Belt and Road Initiative' (**BRI**).
- In 2018, China and Russia in the 23rd annual meeting between heads of government both sides expressed,
 1. Willingness to dovetail the China's **BRI** and Russia's 'Eurasian Economic Union'.
- The BRI is a mammoth infrastructure project unveiled by China which plans to connect Asia, Europe, and Africa.
- The 'China-Pakistan Economic Corridor', an important part of the **BRI**, passes through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK).





- So, India strongly opposed the BRI, as no country can accept a project that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- This made India to skip the SCO's Eurasian Economic Forum as the entire event is foreshadowed by **BRI**.

India & SCO

- India hosted SCO's meeting on Urban Disaster Handling.
- It involves the joint mock exercise on urban earthquake search and rescue by National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).
- The 5th meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)'s Heads of Ministries and Department of Science and Technology was held in Russia.
- In this meeting, members have agreed to the India's proposal for hosting the Heads of Ministries (Prime Ministers) meeting in 2020.
- India will also host the SCO Forum of Young Scientists and Innovators in 2020.
- Shanghai Cooperation Organization's

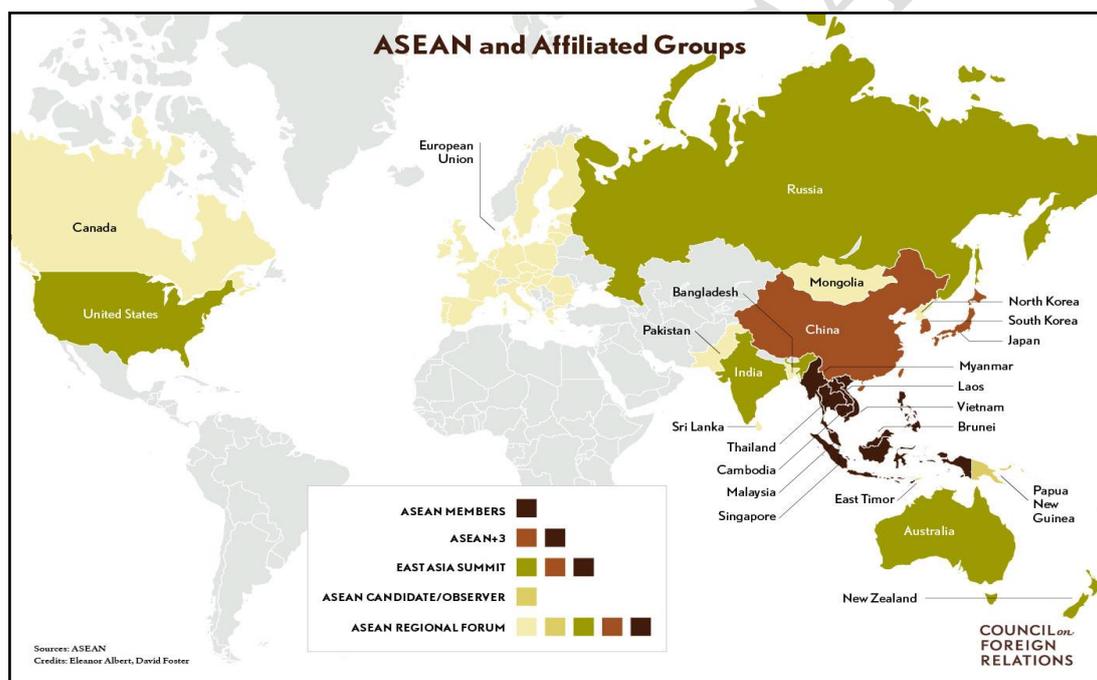
3.18 Ashgabat Agreement

- It aims to create multi modal international transport transit corridor.
- It has Oman, Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as founding members. Kazakhstan has also joined this arrangement subsequently.
- Pakistan joined Ashgabat agreement in 2016.
- India has also become member of the agreement, which would enable India to utilize this existing transport and transit corridor to facilitate trade and commercial interaction with the Eurasian region.
- Further, this would synchronise with our efforts to implement the International North South Transport Corridor for enhanced connectivity.
- The Lapis Lazuli Corridor is an agreement between Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey seeking to foster transit and trade cooperation by reducing barriers facing transit trade.

3.19 Association of Southeast Asian Nations

- It is a regional organisation comprising 10 Southeast Asian states which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic integration amongst its members.
- Its principal aim is to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and socio cultural evolution, promote Southeast Asian studies, alongside the protection of regional stability.
- Member nations are Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam.
- ASEAN shares land borders with India, China, Bangladesh, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea, and maritime borders with India, China, Palau, and Australia.
- ASEAN plus Three was created to improve existing ties with the People's Republic of China, Japan, and South Korea.
- ASEAN became ASEAN Plus Six with additional countries: Australia, New Zealand and India
- In 2006, ASEAN was given observer status at the United Nations General Assembly.
- In response, the organisation awarded the status of "dialogue partner" to the UN.
- **Delhi Dialogue** - India hosted the 10th edition of the Delhi Dialogue (DD X) under the theme "Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation" in New Delhi in 2018.
- It is a premier annual event to discuss politico-security, the economic and socio-cultural engagement between India and ASEAN.
- India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit was held in 2018, marking 25 years of India-ASEAN ties.
- The Delhi Declaration was released after the summit.

- The declaration urges countries to strengthen cooperation and collaboration in combating transnational crimes, including people smuggling, trafficking in persons, illicit drug trafficking, cybercrime.
- **ASEAN-INDIA Connectivity Summit** - It is being organized by the Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- The summit was with the theme “Powering Digital and Physical Linkages for Asia in the 21st Century”.
- Vietnam and Cambodia have participated from the ASEAN side.
- **Recent Developments** - The 34th ASEAN Summit was recently held in Thailand’s capital Bangkok.
- **Indo-Pacific Outlook** - Ten leaders of the ASEAN member state have agreed to adopt the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific concept which was led by Indonesia.
- There are 5 main points related to the Outlook - the background and reason behind, the key elements, objectives, principles, and areas of cooperation.
- The outlook reflects the centrality and strength of ASEAN in respecting peace and dialogue culture and strengthening cooperation.
- The outlook on the Indo-Pacific issue has come amidst the current global developments in the region
- With the Indo-Pacific strategy, ASEAN has reserved a special place for India's BIMSTEC grouping as one to connect with.
- This will be the first sign of acceptance in the region of India's renewed interest in BIMSTEC.



3.20 East Asia Summit

- It is a regional premier forum for strategic dialogue.
- It has 18 members - the 10 ASEAN countries along with Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, the US and Russia.
- Annual leaders' Summit is usually held alongside ASEAN meetings.
- 2018 meet held in Manila included discussion about terrorism and violent extremism, the South China Sea, the Korean Peninsula, the situation in Rakhine, cyber security, women's economic empowerment, regional economic integration etc
- They also meet for ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus meet.

3.21 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation

- It is a regional forum for 21 Pacific Rim member economies that aims to promote balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth by accelerating regional economic integration.
- HQ - Singapore.
- The 21 Members Economies are Australia, Brunei, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, United States, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Chile, Peru, Russian and Vietnam.
- These countries collectively account for nearly 50% of world's trade and about 57% of GDP.
- **3 official observers** - ASEAN, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council.
- India is not in the grouping and has applied for membership.
- It was established due to growing inter dependence among Asia Pacific regions, increasing regional trade blocs, to diffuse growing power of Japan; establish agricultural products and raw materials beyond Europe.
- The criterion for membership is that the member is a separate economy, rather than a state and the result of it is the inclusion of Taiwan.

Recent Developments

- The APEC summit was held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea in 2018.
- The meeting was topped by disputes between the US and China over trade, security and which would be the better investment partner for the region.
- For the first time in APEC history, the summit closed without a joint statement from the leaders.

3.22 Asia Pacific Trade Agreement

- It was signed in 1975 as an initiative of UN- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.
- It is previously named the **Bangkok Agreement**.
- Members - Bangladesh, China, India, South Korea, Laos & Sri Lanka.
- Mongolia is soon to become the 7th member of APTA.
- It is a **preferential trade agreement**, under which the basket of items as well as extent of tariff concessions are enlarged during the trade negotiating rounds.
- APTA is the only operational trade agreement linking China and India.
- Recently, India has agreed to provide tariff concessions on 3,142 products to APTA members.

3.23 Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia

External Affairs Minister attended the 5th CICA, Summit in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

- CICA is a pan-Asia forum for enhancing cooperation and promoting peace, security and stability in Asia.
- During the Summit, CICA Leaders are deliberate on the existing and emerging issues of common concern to the members and underline implementation of confidence-building measures for developing Asia into a prosperous, secure and peaceful region.
- India is a member of CICA since its inception.
- India has been actively participating in various activities conducted under the aegis of CICA.
- The theme of the 5th Summit is "Shared Vision for a Secure and More Prosperous CICA Region."

3.24 BRICS

- It is an association of 5 major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- All five are G-20 members.
- It represents over 40% of the world's population and accounts for 22% of global GDP.
- Since 2009, the BRICS nations have met annually at formal summits.

- The 11th summit of the grouping was held in Brasilia, Brazil.
- Theme - 'Economic Growth for an Innovative Future'
- Outcome – Brasilia declaration to spell out the leaders’ shared worldview and spectrum of their work
- The 10th summit was held recently in Johannesburg, South Africa which has produced **Johannesburg Declaration**, which mentions about looming trade wars among major powers and calls for a transparent, open and inclusive multilateral trading based on WTO.
- It also discussed the problem of international terrorism.
- BRICS leaders will soon commence the full operationalization of the **BRICS Partnership on New Industrial Revolution (PartNIR)**.
- PartNIR will deepen BRICS cooperation in digitalization, industrialization, innovation, inclusiveness and investment.
- It aims to maximize the opportunities and address the challenges arising from the 4th Industrial Revolution.
- **BRICS Plus** - China introduced the “BRICS Plus” format at the Xiamen summit last year.
- It involved inviting a few countries from different regions.
- South Africa emulated it, with representation of 5 nations of its choice - Argentina, Jamaica, Turkey, Indonesia and Egypt.
- **India and BRICS** - Union Cabinet has recently given its ex-post facto approval for the MoU among BRICS nations, regarding Cooperation in the Social and Labour Sphere.
- The MoU provides a mechanism for cooperation, collaboration and maximum synergy with the common objective of inclusive growth and shared prosperity in the new industrial revolution.

BRICS Media Forum

- It is a high-level dialogue among media organisations from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- It was held at Cape Town in South Africa recently under the theme ‘Fostering an Inclusive, Just World Order’.
- It was organised on the occasion of on former South African President Nelson Mandela’s 100th birth anniversary on July 18.
- It was attended by 38 mainstream media organisations from BRICS nations, including five from India.
- The forum unanimously agreed to adopt the **Cape Town Declaration 2018**.
- It pledged to strive to create a media landscape that upholds the integrity of news that is created and shared through the BRICS nations.
- A decision to establish BRICS Media Academy and a BRICS news portal was also taken.

3.25 BIMSTEC

- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization came into being in 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration.
- The objective was to harness growth through mutual cooperation in different areas of common interests by mitigating the onslaught of globalization and by utilizing regional resources and geographical advantages.
- It comprises of India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal.
- Kathmandu declaration was released during the summit in 2018.
- It described terrorism as a “great threat” to international peace and security.
- An MoU was signed on establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection.
- It provides for optimisation of using energy resources in the region and promoting efficient power system.





BIMSTEC Ports' Conclave

- The first ever BIMSTEC Ports' Conclave was organised at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.
- The conclave is expected to explore the possibility of increasing economic cooperation by furthering EXIM trade and coastal shipping.
- It discussed on various investment opportunities, best practices adopted for productivity and safety at Ports.
- Objective of BIMSTEC is to harness trade and accelerated growth with mutual cooperation in different areas of common interest by utilising the regional resources and geographical advantage.

3.26 Mekong Ganga Cooperation

A key meeting of the Mekong Ganga Cooperation was recently held to review the progress.

- The Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) was established in 2000 and it comprises 6 member countries - India, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.
- The 11th Mekong Ganga Cooperation Senior Officials' Meeting, reviewed the progress made since the 9th MGC ministerial meeting held in Singapore in 2018 in all seven areas of cooperation –
 1. Tourism and Culture,
 2. Education, Science and Technology,
 3. Traditional Medicine and Health,
 4. Agriculture and Allied Sectors,
 5. Water Resources Management,
 6. Transportation and Communication, and
 7. Small and Medium Enterprises.
- They also discussed the draft MGC Plan of Action (2019-22) to be adopted at the 10th MGC ministerial meeting in Bangkok on August 1, 2019.
- India's assistance to Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) under the MGC Quick Impact Project Scheme (QIPS) since its inception in 2014 is moving at a steady pace.

3.27 South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme

- SACEP is an inter-governmental organization, established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia.
- The objective is to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region
- The member countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- It also acts as the Secretariat for the South Asian Seas Programme, which comes under the purview of UNEP's Regional Seas Programme.
- The 15th meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) is was organised in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- India's Environment Minister will represent the country in this meeting.

3.28 Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal Initiative

- In 1996, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal, formed the South Asian Growth Quadrangle to boost energy and power, trade and investment, transport, and tourism.
- They requested ADB's assistance.

- The addition of Maldives and Srilanka to this group lead to the creation of the SASEC Program, leaving the four-party idle.
- In 2014, when SAARC Motor Vehicle Agreement failed due to rejection by Pakistan, BBIN Initiative was formulated to push the agenda.
- The landmark BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement was signed by Transport Ministers of the BBIN in 2015.
- It will allow seamless movement of passenger and cargo vehicles among the four countries.
- Bangladesh, India and Nepal have agreed on the operating procedures for passenger vehicle movement in the sub-region under the MVA.
- Bhutan did not ratify it, demanding a cap on vehicles entering its territory for some time.
- Three signatory countries have anyway agreed to start implementation of the MVA among them.

3.29 South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation

- It is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of nations in South Asia.
- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are its members.
- Its secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- It launched the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) in 2006.
- States with observer status include Australia, China, European Union, Iran, Japan, Mauritius, Myanmar, South Korea and United States.
- Pakistan was to host the Summit in 2016, but India had pulled out accusing Pakistan of supporting anti-India terrorist groups.
- SAARC foreign ministers' meet was recently held at the sidelines of UNGA meet.
- Cabinet approved the Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries in 2012.
- The intention is to provide a line of funding for short term foreign exchange requirements or to meet balance of payments crises.
- Under the agreement, RBI offers swaps of varying sizes in USD, Euro or INR to each SAARC member country depending on their 2 months import requirement.
- This will not exceed US\$ 2 billion in total.
- Recently union cabinet approved an amendment to the arrangement to incorporate 'Standby Swap' amounting to USD 400 million operated within the overall size of the facility USD 2 billion.

SAARC Development Fund

- It was created by SAARC member states in 2010 to promote welfare of the people of SAARC region, improve their quality of life, and accelerate economic growth, social progress and poverty alleviation in the region.
- It has an authorised capital of \$1.5 billion and a total capital base of \$500 million.
- It aims to become a full-fledged regional development bank in the near future.
- **SDF partnership conclave** was recently organized to rope in top institutions such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the AIIB.

3.30 Quadrilateral Strategic Dialogue

Quad held its first Minister-level meeting since it was revived in 2017.

- It is an informal strategic dialogue between India, Australia, Japan and the U.S.
- The group is seen as a regional counter-weight to China and has only met at the Joint or Assistant Secretary level since 2017.
- The Ministers met to discuss collective efforts in our shared commitments and close cooperation on counter terrorism, mentoring, assistance in disaster relief, airtime security, cooperation, development, finance and cybersecurity efforts.

- India has been hesitant about the Quad, in part because it does not want to isolate China and because it has had a history of staying clear of security alliances.
- Members of the Quad, barring Australia, are currently engaged in the annual Malabar exercises – military exercises that started between India and the U.S. in 1994 and became trilateral (with Japan) in 2015.
- India has not permitted Australia to participate in these exercises, concerned about what message it would send to China, which is wary of the exercise.

3.31 India-Africa Forum Summit

- It is the official platform for the African-Indian relations.
- It was the first such meeting between the heads of state and government of India and 14 countries of Africa chosen by the African Union.
- The topics discussed varied from rising oil and food prices to agriculture, trade, industry and investment, peace and security, promotion of good governance, ICT.

3.32 Trans-Pacific Partnership

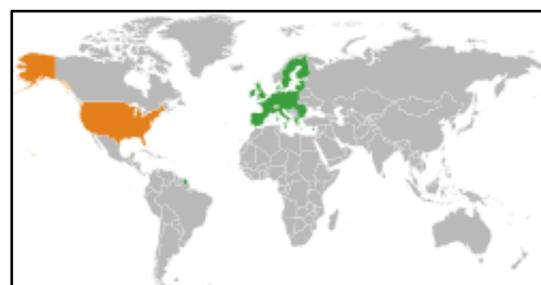
- It is a trade agreement between Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam.
- It had measures to lower both non-tariff and tariff barriers to trade, and establish an investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism.
- But US withdrew from TPP leaving the deal idle.

3.33 Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership

- CPTPP/TPP-11 is a free trade agreement between Canada and 10 other countries in the Asia-Pacific region: Australia, Brunei, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.
- It came to replace TPP.
- It removed the provision that mandated that the deal's final members must account for at least 85% of the combined gross domestic product of the original signatories.
- It also suspended some two dozen provisions that the U.S. had fought for but that the other countries had been reluctant to include.
- It came in to force on December 2018
- Canada, Australia, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Vietnam and Singapore have so far ratified the treaty.

3.34 TTIP

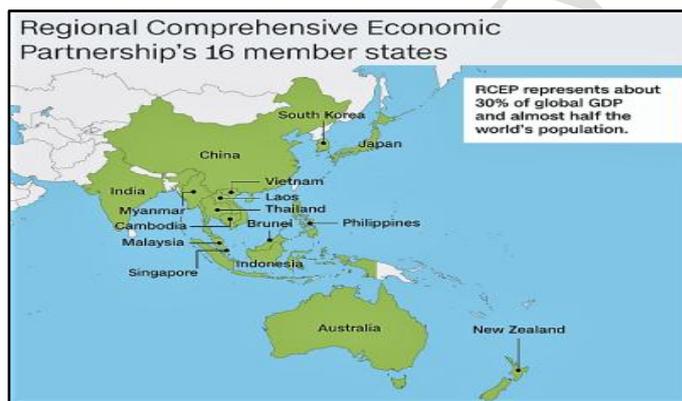
- It is a proposed trade agreement between the EU & US, with the aim of promoting trade and multilateral economic growth.
- Its main three broad areas are market access, specific regulation, and broader rules and principles and modes of co-operation.
- Common criticisms of TTIP contains "reducing the regulatory barriers to trade for big business, things like food safety law, environmental legislation, banking regulations and the sovereign powers of individual nations", or more critically as an "assault on European and US societies by transnational corporations".



- The EU member governments will have to approve of the partnership, via unanimous voting.
- The European Parliament is empowered to approve or reject the agreement.

3.35 Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

- It is a trade deal that is currently under negotiation among 16 countries.
- These countries include 10 member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and 6 countries with which the ASEAN bloc has free trade agreements (FTA).
- The ASEAN countries have FTAs with India, Australia, China, South Korea, Japan and New Zealand.
- Negotiations on the details of the RCEP have been on since 2013.
- RCEP is viewed as an alternative to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a proposed trade agreement which includes several Asian and American nations but excludes China and India.
- With withdrawal of the US from the TPP, the chances of success for RCEP have improved.
- RCEP will cover trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic and technical co-operation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement and other issues.
- Negotiations of RCEP will aim to achieve the high level of tariff liberalisation, through building upon the existing liberalisation levels between participating countries.
- It takes into account the East Asia Free Trade Agreement (EAFTA) and the Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (CEPEA) initiatives, with the difference that the RCEP is not working on a pre-determined membership.
- Instead, it is based on open accession which enables participation of any of the ASEAN FTA partners (China, Korea, Japan, India and Australia-New Zealand).
- **Recent Developments**—All the participants aim to finalise and sign the deal by November 2019.
- India has decided not to join RCEP



3.36 ReCAAP

- Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) is the first regional Government-to-Government agreement to deal with piracy and armed robbery at sea in Asia.
- The ReCAAP Presently 20 countries are members of ReCAAP.
- Information sharing, capacity building and mutual legal assistance are the three pillars of co-operation under the ReCAAP agreement.
- An ISC has been established at Singapore to collate and disseminate the information among the contracting parties and the maritime community.
- India played an active role in the setting up and functioning of ReCAAPISC along with Japan and Singapore.
- Capacity building workshop is organized annually by the ISC and is co-hosted by one of the contracting parties.
- The main objective of this workshop is to share updated situation of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia and best practices of Asian countries.
- The capacity building workshop for 2019 is being held in Delhi, India.

3.37 NAFTA

- The North American Free Trade Agreement is an agreement signed by Canada, Mexico, and the United States, creating a trilateral trade bloc in North America.
- The goal of NAFTA was to eliminate barriers to trade and investment between the U.S., Canada and Mexico.
- It established the CANAMEX Corridor for road transport between Canada and Mexico, also proposed for use by rail, pipeline and fiber optic telecommunications infrastructure.

- However, it was criticized in recent times for causing loss of American jobs and depressing American wages.

3.38 U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement

- It is the recently concluded agreement among the countries to replace 25-year-old NAFTA.
- Once ratified, the agreement will create more balanced, reciprocal trade that supports high-paying jobs for Americans.
- It gives U.S. greater access to the dairy markets of Canada and Mexico & allows extra imports of Canada cars.
- Canada managed to preserve the dispute settlement mechanism as a protection for its wood industry.
- This deal covers more than \$1 trillion trade.

3.39 MERCOSUR

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



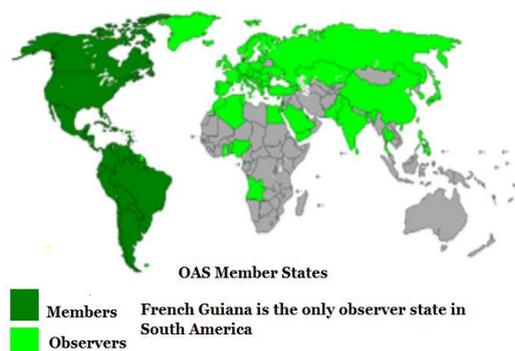
3.40 CARICOM Countries

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



3.41 Organization of American States

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



3.42 International Solar Alliance

- It is an Indian initiative, jointly launched by India and France in Paris, on the sidelines of COP-21, the UN Climate Conference held at Paris.
- It is instituted to connect 121 solar-resource-rich nations for research, low-cost financing and rapid deployment of clean energy.
- HQ - India (Interim Secretariat - Gurgaon)
- It aims to channel \$300 billion in 10 years to promote renewable energy projects under a global mega fund for clean energy.
- **Membership** - The 121 prospective member countries (those falling between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn) of the ISA and are also the United Nations member, can join the Alliance by signing and ratifying the Framework Agreement or by acceptance or approval.
- 73 countries have so far signed the Framework Agreement and 50 have ratified it.
- UN member countries which are located beyond the Tropics can join the ISA as **Partner Countries**.
- UN including its organs can join the ISA as **“Strategic Partners”**.
- Organizations that have potential to help the ISA achieve its objectives, constituted by sovereign states at least one of which is a member of the ISA can join the ISA as a **“Partner Organization”**.
- There are no targets or legal obligations imposed on member-countries.
- There is no membership-fee to join the ISA.
- **Structure** - The ISA will have a two-tier structure – the Assembly and the Secretariat.
- Each member-country is represented on the Assembly, which meets annually at the Ministerial level at the seat of the ISA. The Assembly may also meet under special circumstances.
- The Assembly makes all necessary decisions regarding the functioning of the ISA, including the selection of the Director General and approval of the operating budget.
- Each Member has one vote in the Assembly.
- Partner Countries, Partner Organizations, Strategic Partners, and Observers may participate without having the right to vote.
- **India and ISA** - Government of India has committed to host ISA Secretariat for 5 years duration from 2016-17 to 2020-21 and will contribute US\$ 27 million to the ISA for creating corpus.

Recent Developments

- **Global Solar Bank** - ISA plans to setup global solar bank to finance \$150 billion of power projects.
- ISA will approach multilateral development banks (MDBs) to create a special purpose vehicle (SPV). This SPV would become a Global Solar Bank.
- **First Assembly of ISA** - The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy organized the first assembly of International Solar Alliance (ISA) in New Delhi.
- The assembly is the supreme decision-making body of ISA.
- Ministers from countries which ratified ISA treaty framework will attend the assembly as members.
- Countries that have signed but are yet to ratify the ISA Treaty Framework will attend the Assembly as Observers.
- A resolution was moved in the assembly by India for amending the framework agreement to expand the scope of membership of ISA to all countries that are members of the United Nations.
- It will help induction of countries - Germany, Italy, Spain, Tunisia, Nepal and Afghanistan, which have shown interest in becoming ISA members.
- Solar Technology Application Resource Centre (**STAR C**) project was approved in its first assembly.
- The aim of the project is to set up centres in all eligible member-countries to be train personnel on solar infrastructure.
- **Delhi Solar Agenda** was adopted in the assembly, under which ISA member States have agreed to pursue an increased share of solar energy in the final energy consumption in respective national energy mix.

- **Second Assembly of ISA** - Ministry of New and Renewable Energy hosted 2nd assembly of International Solar Alliance at New Delhi.
- The assembly had the participation from member countries, ISA Partners, and other invitees.
- As of now, there are 83 member countries with Eritrea and St. Kittis and Nevis latest countries to join ISA.
- The Assembly is the supreme decision-making body of the ISA.
- It gives directions on various administrative, financial and programme related issues.
- India's Minister for New and Renewable Energy and Power is President of the ISA Assembly and France's Minister of State for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition is the Co-President of the Assembly.

3.43 Asia Europe Meeting

- It is an exclusively Asian–European forum, established in 1996.
- It currently has 51 nations including 2 regional organisations (ASEAN, EU) as partners.
- India is also a member.
- The 3 pillars of ASEM are Political, Economic, Socio Cultural and Educational.
- The grouping is a platform for non-binding discussion on economic and trade issues.
- 2018 Meeting was held under the theme 'Global Partners for Global Challenges'.
- Ulaanbaatar declaration was adopted in 2017 to resolve fight against terrorism was signed in the summit.
- National Human Rights Commission of Korea has been hosting international conferences at the ASEM level for the last three years since 2015 regarding human rights of older persons.
- Accordingly, Conference on "Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons" was held in 2018.

3.44 African Union

- The African Union (AU) is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent.
- It was officially launched in 2002 in Durban, South Africa.
- It is successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, 1963-1999).
- HQ - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- The main objectives of the OAU were to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonisation and apartheid
- **Vision** - An Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.
- **Recent Developments** – Members have signed the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) for goods and services at the 12th AU Summit.
- It would be world's largest FTA.
- Actual cross-border free trade could **start by July 2020**

3.45 Southern African Development Community

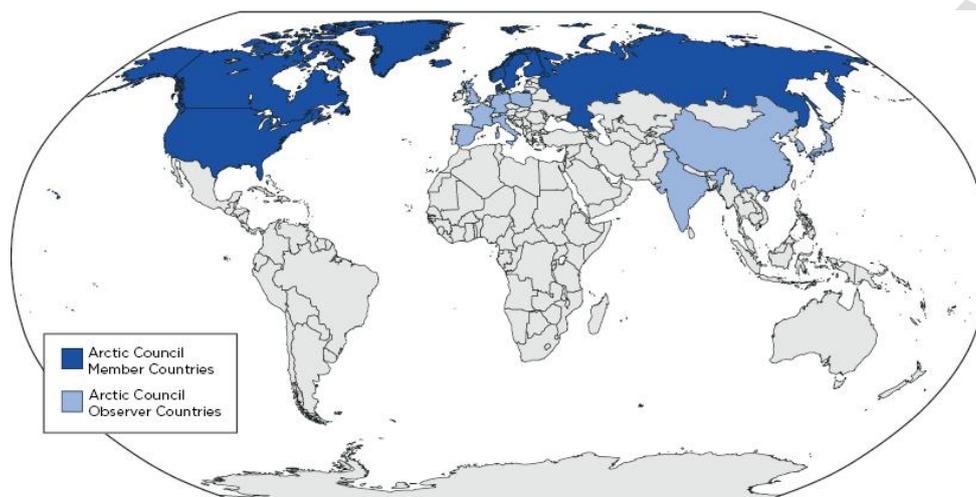
- It is an inter-governmental organization with a goal to further socio-economic cooperation and integration as well as political and security cooperation among 16 Southern African states.
- They are Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Eswatini (Swaziland), Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Madagascar.
- HQ - Gaborone, Botswana.



- Southern African Customs Union is a customs union within SADC and the oldest customs union in the world
- It includes Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Eswatini (Swaziland).

3.46 Arctic Council

- It is the leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular on issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.
- The Ottawa Declaration lists the following countries as Members of the Arctic Council - Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States.
- In addition, 6 organizations representing Arctic indigenous peoples have status as Permanent Participants.



- The Observer status in the Arctic Council is open to Non-Arctic States. Observers primarily contribute through their engagement in the Council at the level of Working Groups.
- Observers - China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Netherlands, Poland, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland and UK.

3.47 IPBES

- The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an independent intergovernmental body.
- The objective is to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Currently has over 130 member States.
- A large number of NGOs, civil society groupings, individual stakeholders, also participate in the meet.
- It found that many of the world's pollinator species are on the decline.

3.48 NAM Summit

- NAM was established in 1961 with 29 members. India is one of the founding members.
- It has since grown to 120 members to become one of the largest groupings of nation-states.
- It was envisioned as a platform for those who didn't want to be dictated by the then two superpowers - USSR and USA.
- It held its first ministerial in Belgrade (erstwhile Yugoslavia) in 1961 and complete independence of members in their foreign policy was ingrained.
- **NAM 2.0** - There were calls for rejigging the non-alignment concept in 2012 to suit the emerging current realities of an emerging and assertive China.

- The 18th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was held at **Baku, Azerbaijan**.
- The theme is “Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure concerted and adequate response to the challenges of contemporary world”.
- The Vice-President of India lead the Indian delegations to the 18th summit.

3.49 BASIC

- The 29th ministerial meeting of the BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) countries on Climate Change was organised at Beijing, China recently.
- The meeting has called for "comprehensive" implementation of the Paris climate deal amid threats by US President Donald Trump to withdraw from it.
- The meeting worked out priorities and issues as a group to be highlighted at the UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Chile in December 2019.
- The Chile meeting will discuss the implementation of the Paris deal to cut the greenhouse gas emissions as well as mitigation, adaption and climate finance.
- UN Conference will discuss the implementation of the Paris deal to cut the greenhouse gas emissions as well as mitigation, adaption and climate finance.

3.50 APRACA

- The Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA) aims to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of rural finance and access to sustainable financial services for small farmers in its member countries.
- Currently, APRACA has members in over 23 countries, and it acts to promote the exchange of information and expertise on rural finance between them.
- It also provides rural finance-related training, consultancy, and research publications to assist them.
- They were established to provide financial services to small farmers and rural people in general.
- The two other regional agricultural credit associations are
 1. NENARACA (Near East - North Africa Agricultural Credit Association).
 2. AFRACA (African Rural and Agricultural Credit Association)
- All the three credit associations were established, with the help of FAO, following the 1975 World Conference on Agricultural Credit.
- Recently APRACA co-hosted 6th World Congress on Rural and Agricultural Finance along with NABARD in New Delhi.

3.51 World Gold Council

- The World Gold Council is the market development organization for the gold industry.
- Headquartered in London, United Kingdom, they have offices in India, China, Singapore and the United States.
- It works across all parts of the industry, from gold mining to investment, and their aim is to stimulate and sustain demand for gold.
- They frequently publish research that demonstrates gold's strength as a preserver of wealth both for investors and countries.
- They have also launched various products such as SPDR GLD and gold accumulation plans in India and China.
- WGC also helps to support its members to mine in a responsible way and developed the Conflict Free Gold Standard.



- WGC recently released Gold Demand Trends Report, which highlights that Gold is the third most consistently bought investment, 46% of global retail investors have chosen gold products, behind savings accounts (78%) and life insurance (54%).

3.52 International Geological Congress

- International Geological Congress (IGC) is the prestigious global platform for advancement of Earth Science.
- It was founded as a non-profit scientific and educational organization in 1878 but came under the aegis of International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) in 1961.
- Since 1961, the meetings of IGC are held in collaboration and under scientific sponsorship of IUGS.
- So far 35 congresses have been held throughout the world at 3 to 5-year intervals.
- The last session (35th) was held in Capetown, South Africa in 2016.
- This time (36th) congress is going to be held in Delhi, India with the theme "Geosciences: The Basic Science for a Sustainable Future".
- India had already hosted a congress in 1964 (24th congress). Thus, India becomes the first Asian country to host the event twice.
- The 36th IGC is funded by the Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India.
- It is supported by the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and the science academies of Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- Geological Survey of India is the nodal agency for organizing the event.

3.53 Clean Energy Ministerial

- It is a high-level global forum to promote policies and programs that advance clean energy technology and to encourage the transition to a global clean energy economy.
- At the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change conference of parties in Copenhagen in December 2009, Clean Energy Ministerial meeting was proposed by U.S. Secretary of Energy.
- It is focused on three global climate and energy policy goals - Improve energy efficiency worldwide, Enhance clean energy supply, Expand clean energy access.
- The framework for the CEM was adopted at the 7th CEM meeting in 2016.
- The 10th CEM meeting was held in Vancouver, Canada in 2019.
- SEAD initiative - The Super-efficient Equipment and Appliance Deployment (SEAD) of CEM is a voluntary collaboration among governments to promote use of energy efficient appliances worldwide.
- It is a task of the International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation (IPEEC).
- Presently, there are 18 participating governments to this initiative.
- If all SEAD governments were to adopt current policy best practices for product energy efficiency standards, 2,000 TWh of annual electricity could be saved in 2030, equal to the energy generated by 650 mid-sized power plants.

4. TREATIES & CONVENTIONS

4.1 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

- It is a multilateral treaty that bans all nuclear explosions, for both civilian and military purposes, in all environments.
- It was adopted by the United Nations 1996 but has not entered into force as eight specific states have not ratified the treaty.

- **Signing a treaty** expresses just the willingness of the signatory state to continue the treaty-making process.
- **Ratification** indicates the state's consent to be bound to a treaty.
- **Accession** is the act whereby a state accepts the offer to become a party to a treaty already negotiated and signed by other states.
- It has the same legal effect as ratification except that it occurs after the treaty has entered into force.

- 166 states have ratified the CTBT and another 17 states have signed but not ratified it.
- China, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the United States have signed but not ratified the Treaty.
- India, North Korea & Pakistan have not signed it. They have neither signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty 1968.
- According to CTBT each State Party undertakes not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, and to prohibit and prevent any such nuclear explosion at any place under its jurisdiction or control.
- **Recent Developments** - CTBTO has invited India to be an observer in the treaty
- It is expected to give India access to data from the International Monitoring System, which can detect even small nuclear explosions using seismology, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide technology.

4.2 Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty

- The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted recently in the United Nations
- It is the first multilateral legally-binding instrument for complete nuclear disarmament.
- Even the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968 and nuclear-weapon-free zone contains only partial prohibitions.
- This treaty prohibits a full range of nuclear-weapon related activities, such as undertaking to develop, test, produce, manufacture, acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.
- It also prohibits the use or threat of use of these weapons as well.
- 122 of the 124 nations that participated in the negotiations had voted in favour of the treaty.
- The treaty will enter into force 90 days after it has been ratified by at least 50 countries.
- The eight nuclear weapon states i.e US, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan and North Korea along with Israel had not participated in the negotiations.
- India maintained that it recognises the ‘Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament’-(CD) as the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum & it is not convinced of the potential of the current treaty to address the disarmament issue.

4.3 Pelindaba Treaty

- The African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty/Pelindaba treaty prohibits the research, development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition, testing, possession, control or stationing of nuclear explosive devices in the territory of parties to the Treaty and the dumping of radioactive wastes in the African zone by Treaty parties.
- It also prohibits any attack against nuclear installations in the zone by Treaty parties.
- The Treaty requires all parties to apply full-scope IAEA safeguards to all their peaceful nuclear activities.
- A mechanism to verify compliance, including the establishment of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, has been established by the Treaty.
- The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (ANWFZ) covers the entire African continent as well as the following islands: Cabo Verde, Canary Islands, Chagos Archipelago Diego Garcia, Comoros, Europa Island, Madagascar, Mauritius, Prince Edward & Marion Islands, Réunion, Rodrigues Island, Seychelles, Tromelin Island, and Zanzibar and Pemba Islands.
- South Sudan is not a signatory to this treaty.
- Other Nuclear Free zone Treaties- Antarctica, Tlatelolco (Latin American and Caribbean), Rarotonga (South Pacific), Bangkok (ASEAN).



4.4 New START Treaty

- New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) is a nuclear arms reduction treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation.
- The formal name of the treaty is Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms.
- It was signed on 2010 in Prague and entered into force in 2011, it is expected to last at least until 2021.
- New START replaced the Treaty of Moscow (SORT).
- Under terms of the treaty, the number of strategic nuclear missile launchers will be reduced by half.
- A new inspection and verification regime will be established, replacing the SORT mechanism.
- It does not limit the number of operationally inactive stockpiled nuclear warheads that remain in the high thousands in both the Russian and American inventories.

4.5 Hague Code of Conduct

- The International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation/HCOOC was established in 2002 as an arrangement to prevent the proliferation of ballistic missiles.
- The HCOOC does not ban ballistic missiles, but it does call for restraint in their production, testing, and export.
- India joined the HCOOC in 2016.
- While MTCR has a similar mission, it is just an export group with only 35 members.

4.6 Hague Adoption Convention

- It was adopted in 1993 to protect children and their families against the risks of illegal, irregular, premature or ill-prepared adoptions abroad.
- It seeks to prevent the abduction, the sale of, or traffic in children.
- It reinforces Article 21 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The convention operates through a system of national Central Authorities.
- In India, Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is the nodal agency designated to deal with the provisions of this convention.
- Recently, the government of Australia has decided to recommence the adoption programme with India as per this convention.
- The Australian government had earlier put the adoptions from India on hold citing the charges of trafficking of child by the Indian agencies for inter-country adoption.

4.7 Biological Weapons Convention

- It was the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning the production of an entire category of weapons.
- The Geneva Protocol prohibits use but not possession or development of chemical and biological weapons.
- BWC commits the 182 states to prohibit the development, production, and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons.
- Egypt, Haiti, Somalia, Syria and Tanzania have signed but not ratified it.
- Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Israel, Kiribati, Micronesia, Namibia, South Sudan, Tuvalu have neither signed nor ratified it.
- However, the absence of any formal verification regime to monitor compliance has limited the effectiveness of the Convention.
- Permitted purposes under the BWC are defined as prophylactic, protective and other peaceful purposes.



4.8 Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage

- It is a multilateral treaty relating to liability and compensation for damage caused by a nuclear incident.
- It was adopted in 1997 aiming at increasing the amount of compensation available in the event of a nuclear incident through public funds.
- The fund is to be made available by the Contracting Parties on the basis of their installed nuclear capacity and UN rate of assessment.
- It also aims at establishing treaty relations among States that belong to the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy or neither of them
- India had also passed its own domestic nuclear liability law, the Civil Law for Nuclear Damage (CLND) Act in 2010.
- Countries such as the U.S. have said that the Indian law's provisions are violative of the CSC, but this has been denied by India.

4.9 Hong Kong Convention for Ship Recycling

- India has recently acceded to the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships.
- The convention is aimed at ensuring that recycling ships, do not pose any unnecessary risk to human health and safety or to the environment.
- It was adopted by International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in 2009.
- It was developed with input from IMO, International Labour Organization and the Parties to the Basel Convention.
- It addresses all concerns about working and environmental conditions in ship recycling facilities,
- It regulates the design, construction, operation and preparation of ships so as to facilitate safe and environmentally sound recycling.
- It checks for scrapping ships that may contain environmentally hazardous substances such as asbestos, heavy metals, hydrocarbons, ozone depleting substances and others.
- It requires ships to be sent for recycling will be required to carry an inventory of hazardous materials.
- Ship recycling yards will be required to provide a Ship Recycling Plan and parties will be required to take effective measures to ensure that ship recycling facilities under their jurisdiction comply with the Convention.

4.10 Budapest Convention

- It is the sole legally binding multilateral treaty that coordinates **cybercrime investigations** between nation-states and criminalises certain cybercrime conduct.
- The convention is led by Council of Europe, which is distinct from European Union.
- Both members and non-members of Council of Europe are parties to the convention.
- Totally 64 nations are party to this convention and 3 countries have signed but yet to ratify the convention.
- India, Russia and China are not members to this convention.
- The 2nd additional protocol to the convention is under preparation and the member countries recently met at Strasbourg.
- Russia recently passed a resolution in United Nation General Assembly (UNGA), to create a **new treaty** that can coordinate and share data to prevent cybercrime.
- India voted in favour of Russia's resolution.



4.11 1951 Refugee Convention

- It is a United Nations multilateral treaty that defines who is a refugee, and sets out the rights of individuals who are granted asylum and the responsibilities of nations that grant asylum.
- The Convention also sets out which people do not qualify as refugees. e.g War criminals.
- It also provides for some visa-free travel for holders of travel documents issued under the convention.
- It builds on Article 14 of the 1948 **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which recognizes the right of persons to seek asylum from persecution in other countries.
- The core principle is **non-refoulement**, which asserts that a refugee should not be returned to a country where they face serious threats to their life or freedom.
- The 1967 Protocol broadens the applicability of the Convention. The Protocol removes the geographical and time limits that were part of the 1951 Convention.
- UNHCR serves as the 'guardian' of the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol.
- USA and Venezuela are parties only to the Protocol.
- Countries that have ratified the Refugee Convention are obliged to protect refugees that are on their territory, in accordance with its terms.
- India is not a member to this convention nor to the protocol.

4.12 UN Convention against Torture

- It was adopted by UNGA in 1984 to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment
- It is ratified by 161 nations including Pakistan, China and Afghanistan.
- India has signed but is still among the only 9 countries worldwide which are yet to ratify this crucial convention.
- It requires amendment to Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 to accommodate provisions regarding compensation and burden of proof.
- This UN convention will help to tide over difficulties in extraditing criminals from foreign countries due to the absence of a law preventing harsh treatment by authorities.
- Some of the key provisions are,
 1. Prohibition against torture shall be absolute and be upheld even in a state of War.
 2. Each State party shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent acts of torture and consider it as a criminal offence within the legal system.
 3. Each State party shall ensure to victims of torture an enforceable right to fair and adequate compensation
 4. No expel or extradition of a person to a State where there are substantial grounds for danger and being subjected to torture.
 5. State shall ensure that that an individual who alleges that he has been subjected to torture will have his case examined by the competent authorities.
 6. State shall take a person suspected of the offence of torture into custody and initiate investigation or extradite that person.
- The Law Commission of India recommended that the government should ratify it.
- Law Commission also recommended life in jail for public servants convicted of torture.

4.13 Bali Declaration

- Indian parliamentary delegation refused to be a part of the Bali declaration adopted recently in Indonesia.
- The declaration was adopted at the 'World Parliamentary Forum on Sustainable Development', in Indonesia.
- It went on to "call on all parties to contribute to the restoration of stability and security, exercise maximum self-restraint from using violent means.

- It claimed to respect the human rights of all people in Rakhine State regardless of their faith and ethnicity, as well as facilitate safe access for humanitarian assistance.
- The declaration adopted carried “inappropriate” reference to the violence in Rakhine State from where 1,25,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh.
- India repeated its stance that the purpose of convening the parliamentary forum was to arrive at a mutual consensus for implementation of SDGs.
- The proposed reference to the violence in Rakhine State in the declaration was considered as not consensus-based and inappropriate.
- India senses that the conclusion of the Forum was not in line with the agreed global principles of ‘sustainable development.
- India objected forum’s view on Myanmar, as never before country specific issues have been included in the declaration, because doing so dilutes the objective of these forums.

4.14 Warsaw Convention

- It refers to an international agreement that defines the rules and regulations that govern civil aviation.
- It defines the potential liability that an international carrier faces with regards to the air transport of people and luggage of various kinds.
- It helps provide a common framework for dispute resolution between parties belonging to different countries.
- **Montreal Convention** is a multilateral treaty adopted by member states of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).
- It amended important provisions of the Warsaw Convention's regime concerning compensation for the victims of air disasters.

4.15 Vienna Convention 1961

- It is an international treaty that defines a framework for diplomatic relations between independent countries.
- It specifies the privileges of a diplomatic mission that enable diplomats to perform their function without fear of coercion or harassment by the host country.
- The convention forms the legal basis for diplomatic immunity.
- It is ratified by 192 countries except Palau, the Solomon Islands, and South Sudan.

4.16 Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights

- It is an international legal agreement between all the member nations of the WTO.
- It sets down minimum standards for the regulation by national governments of many forms of intellectual property (IP) as applied to nationals of other WTO member nations.
- TRIPS was negotiated at the end of the Uruguay Round of (GATT) in 1994 and was administered by the WTO.
- It introduced intellectual property law into the international trading system for the first time and remains the most comprehensive international agreement on intellectual property to date.
- The Doha declaration stated that TRIPS should be interpreted in light of the goal "to promote access to medicines for all."
- TRIPS requires WTO members to provide copyright rights, geographical indications, industrial designs, integrated circuit layout-designs,





patents, new plant varieties, trademarks.

- The obligations under TRIPS apply equally to all member states, however developing countries were allowed extra time to implement the applicable changes to their national laws.

4.17 Kimberley Process

The Intersessional meeting of Kimberley Process (KP) was hosted by India in Mumbai.

- The Kimberley Process is a joint initiative involving Government, international diamond industry and civil society to stem the flow of Conflict Diamonds.
- Conflict Diamonds means 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.
- KPCS came into effect from 2003 and evolved into an effective mechanism for stopping the trade in Conflict Diamonds.
- At present, KPCS has 55 members representing 82 countries including EU with 28 members.
- India is one of the founder members of Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.
- Department of Commerce is the nodal Department and Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) is designated as the KPCS Importing and Exporting Authority in India.
- GJEPC is responsible for issuing KP Certificates and is also the custodian of KP Certificates received in the country.

4.18 Mission Innovation

- It is a global initiative of 23 countries and the European Commission (on behalf of the European Union).
- India is founding member of Mission Innovation and part of the Steering Committee.
- It was announced at COP21 of UNFCCC on November 30, 2015, as world leaders came together in Paris to commit to ambitious efforts to combat climate change.
- It works to accelerate global clean energy innovation with the objective to make clean energy widely affordable.
- It committed to seek to double public investment in clean energy RD&D and are engaging with the private sector, fostering international collaboration and celebrating innovators.
- So far, 3 ministerial meetings were held with the latest one held at Malmo, Sweden.
- It developed an Action Plan in its 2nd ministerial meeting. It sets out 4 objectives to deliver the overall goal.
- In 3rd ministerial meeting, it endorsed a number of key initiatives and activities to deliver the Action Plan through to 2021.
- It co-leads innovation challenges on smart grids, off grids and sustainable bio-fuels.
- The other innovation challenges are Carbon Capture, Converting sunlight, clean energy materials and Affordable heating and cooling of buildings.

4.19 TIR Convention

- Transports Internationaux Routiers Convention is an international transit system under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
- It came into force from 1975 to facilitate the seamless movement of goods within and amongst the Parties to the Convention.
- It facilitates the international carriage of goods from one or more customs offices of departure to one or more customs offices of destination and through as many countries as necessary.
- India also ratified the convention.

- It would enable India to move goods seamlessly along the **International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** and also boosting trade with the Central Asian Republics and other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

4.20 Cape Town Convention Act

- In 2001, the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment and the Protocol to the Convention on Matters Specific to Aircraft Equipment were adopted.
- While Cape Town Convention is for three sectors -- aviation, railways and space equipment -- there are separate protocols for each of the three. The aircraft protocol was adopted at Cape Town in 2001.
- It was signed in the conference organised by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT).
- The main objective of the Convention/ Protocol is to ensure efficient financing of high value mobile equipment like airframes, helicopters and engines, in order to make the operations as cost effective and affordable as possible.
- Indian government plans to bring in the Cape Town Convention Act which will help reduce risks related to asset-based financing and leasing transactions in the civil aviation space.

4.21 India's Law on Antarctica

- In future, Antarctica might see more tourists, over-exploited fisheries, disputes and crime.
- India is also expanding its infrastructure development in Antarctica.
- Dakshin Gangotri, the first Indian base established in 1984, has weakened and become just a supply base.
- The government is rebuilding its station, Maitri, to make it bigger and long lasting.
- India also acceded to the Antarctica Treaty.
- Keeping these in mind, India is drafting a dedicated Antarctica policy and a law.
- Ministry of Earth Sciences is tasked with drafting the law.
- Countries like South Africa and Australia already have specific laws.
- **Antarctic Treaty** is framed to ensure that Antarctica shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene of international conflict.
- It prohibits military activity, except in support of science.
- It also prohibits nuclear explosions and the disposal of nuclear waste.
- It promotes scientific research and the exchange of data and suspends all territorial claims.

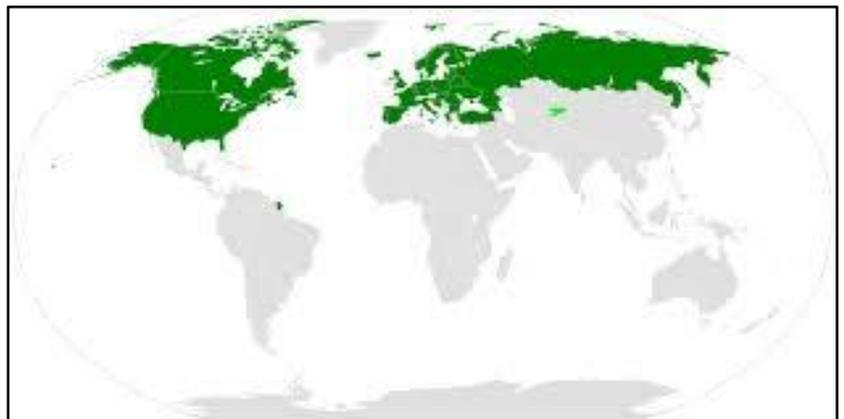
4.22 Open Skies Treaty

- The Treaty on Open Skies establishes a regime of **unarmed aerial observation flights** over the territories of its signatories.

- It is designed to enhance mutual understanding and confidence by giving all participants, a direct role in gathering information through aerial imaging on military forces and activities of concern to them.

- It is one of the most wide-ranging international arms control efforts to date to promote openness and transparency in military forces and activities.

- Currently, it has 34 member states. Russia and U.S. are signatories to the treaty.



4.23 Outer Space Treaty

- It is an international treaty binding the parties to use outer space only for peaceful purposes.
- The treaty came into force in 1967, after being ratified by the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and several other countries.
- It represents the basic legal framework of international space law.
- 108 countries are parties to this treaty, including India.
- It was formulated to bar its signatory countries from placing weapons of mass destruction in orbit of the Earth, on the Moon or any other celestial body or the outer space.
- However, the Treaty does not prohibit the placement of conventional weapons in orbit and thus some highly destructive attack strategies such as kinetic bombardment are still potentially allowable.
- The treaty explicitly forbids any government from claiming a celestial resource such as the Moon or a planet.

4.24 Raisina Dialogue

- It is India's flagship conference of Geopolitics and geo-economics held annually in New Delhi.
- It is organized by Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with Observer Research Foundation, an independent think tank in India.
- It is designed on the lines of Singapore's Shangri-La Dialogue.
- The name "Raisina Dialogue" comes from Raisina Hill, the seat of the Government of India, as well as the Rashtrapati Bhavan
- The conference is committed to address the most challenging issues facing the global community.

4.25 Libya Summit

World leaders made a fresh push for peace in Libya at a summit in Berlin

- UN-led talks in Berlin made a bid to curb military interference, help relaunch political dialogue and to stop it from turning into a "second Syria".
- The Presidents of Russia, Turkey and France joined other global chiefs at the talks hosted by Chancellor Angela Merkel.
- The summit's main goal is to get foreign powers wielding influence in the region to stop interfering in the war - be it through weapons, troops or financing.
- Libya has been torn by fighting between rival armed factions since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising killed dictator Moamer Kadhafi.
- The flaring oil crisis underlined the devastating impact of foreign influence in the conflict, in which head of Tripoli's UN-recognised government Fayeze al-Sarraj GNA is backed by Turkey and Qatar while strongman Khalifa Haftar has the support of Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.
- Leaders of both warring factions were also in Berlin.
- The UN hopes all sides will sign up to a plan to refrain from interference.
