

NEWS D.A.D.

100% COVERAGE OF EACH & EVERY RELEVANT NEWS

— SOURCES —

**PIB » The Hindu » Live Mint » HT » TOI
RBI » ET » Indian Express » PRS Blog** and more.....

14
leading sources for
CURRENT AFFAIRS
covered on
Daily basis.



Topic-wise
Daily News

For all those who don't
want to be left out

“Every News counts and we make sure that
you don't miss any relevant News.”



CRACKACADEMY

Index

Over the borderline: on Pakistan and its security situation with Afghanistan	2
Coup in Niger: The Hindu Editorial on the ouster of President Mohamed Bazoum.....	4
The trajectory of progress must change.....	6
G20 Ministerial Conference of WCD Ministry on Women’s Empowerment inaugurated in Gandhinagar today.....	9
Vietnamese Delegation visits India to enhance bilateral cooperation in infrastructure and logistics sector.....	18
Strike three: on the indictment of former U.S. President Donald Trump.....	21
Nuclear signalling, the need for new guard rails.....	23
The lessons of Hiroshima must not drift away.....	26
America’s pursuit of Saudi-Israel rapprochement.....	29
Commerce Secretary advocates innovative approach to diversify exports, calls for greater collaboration between India and Latin American & Caribbean countries.....	32
BRICS Health Minister’s Meeting.....	35
Stifling dissent: On Imran Khan’s arrest and Pakistan’s democracy.....	40
China’s worldview, its postulates and a reality check.....	42
Joint Statement on the official level dialogue as follow-up to the 9th India-U.S. Economic and Financial Partnership.....	45
ASEAN- India S&T meeting highlights need to leverage more on S&T to bridge urban & rural divide with focus on affordable technologies.....	47
Chasing consensus: The Hindu Editorial on Jeddah conference and ending the Ukraine-Russia conflict.....	50
Stop the fence-sitting in cluster bomb use.....	52
India’s Myanmar quandary, its paradoxical policy.....	55
Cartel politics: The Hindu Editorial on an assassination and Ecuador’s fight against drugs.....	58
Democracy in India, a gift and a warning.....	60
Awaiting the age of moderation.....	63
Saudi Arabia and the Russia–Ukraine War.....	66
Cabinet approves Mutual Recognition Arrangement of Authorised Economic Operators between India and Australia.....	68
More than 75 nations participates in the first-ever global Summit on Traditional Medicine.....	70
A ‘fab’ way to conduct India-Japan tech diplomacy.....	74
G20 India Presidency.....	77
The Youth 20 (Y20) Summit concludes successfully today in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.....	88
G20 India Presidency.....	90
The BRICS test for India’s multipolarity rhetoric.....	98
The Saudi Arabia-UAE divide becomes public.....	101
India participates in 20th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers’ Meeting in Semarang, Indonesia..	104
EXERCISE MALABAR -23 CONCLUDES.....	108
No bulwark for Pakistan’s minorities.....	112

OVER THE BORDERLINE: ON PAKISTAN AND ITS SECURITY SITUATION WITH AFGHANISTAN

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 01, 2023 12:10 am | Updated 12:10 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

The terror attack in Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa region, which has claimed 54 lives and left over 200 injured, is a grave reminder of the worsening security situation in the country's border region with Afghanistan. Ever since the Taliban seized Afghanistan in August 2021, Pakistan has witnessed rising terror. In January, at least 74 were killed in an attack on a mosque in Peshawar, the provincial capital of KP, by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (also known as the Pakistan Taliban which have close ideological links with the Afghan Taliban but are organisationally different). A month later, another attack there left over 100 dead. The Pakistan Taliban have distanced themselves from the attack, which targeted a political rally by the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), a hardline party led by Maulana Fazlur Rehman, a key member of Pakistan's ruling coalition. Provincial police say the Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K) was behind the attack. The IS-K, which has stepped up attacks in Afghanistan since 2021, has repeatedly targeted Taliban-affiliated groups besides Afghanistan's minorities. The JUI-F, which has maintained ideological ties with the Afghan Taliban, has been targeted by the IS-K in the past.

In a sense, Pakistan is now paying a heavy price for its decades-long strategy of supporting Islamist extremists for its geopolitical goals. During Afghanistan's anti-communist civil war, Pakistan supported the Mujahideen with weapons and training. In the early 1990s, during the intra-Mujahideen civil war, Pakistan backed the emerging Taliban. After the Taliban were toppled in the U.S. invasion in 2001, Pakistan played a double game — joining America's war yet harbouring the Taliban. Without Pakistan's active support, the Taliban would never have been able to return to power. But decades of civil war radicalised Muslim youth across the Af-Pak region, also posing security threats to the Pakistani establishment. In 2014-15, Pakistan carried out a combing operation in the border region to crush the Pakistan Taliban. But the Taliban's return in Afghanistan seems to have emboldened their Pakistani brethren and allowed the IS-K to emerge as the most powerful armed opposition to the Taliban regime in Kabul. And the porous borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan, which the latter once used to support militancy in the former, are now used by terrorists to spread terror across the frontier. Pakistan, which is grappling with a political gridlock and a deteriorating economy, now faces a two-front security challenge — the Pakistani Taliban and the IS-K. Cracking down on terror might produce temporary results in bringing calm in the border region. But for permanent peace, Pakistan should stop differentiating between Islamist militants as "good terrorists" and "bad terrorists" based on its geopolitical interests.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Pakistan](#) / [terrorism \(crime\)](#) / [Afghanistan](#) / [economy \(general\)](#) / [war](#) / [Islamic State](#) / [USA](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS!

COUP IN NIGER: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON THE OUSTER OF PRESIDENT MOHAMED BAZOUM

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 03, 2023 12:10 am | Updated 12:45 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

The [ouster of Niger's President Mohamed Bazoum](#) on July 26 is a blow against political stability in the nascent democracy and efforts to counter fast-spreading Islamist insurgency in the Sahel region. Mr. Bazoum, who became President in 2021 in the West African country's first peaceful democratic transition since it got independence from the French in 1960, was a symbol of democratic order in an otherwise tumultuous coup-ridden region. He had built strong security partnerships with the U.S. and France, which have troops based in Niger. But pressure was also building on Mr. Bazoum as his rule was struggling to meet people's expectations. Sections of the military were frustrated with the spread of insurgency in the south and unhappy with his over-reliance on France. The President had also taken steps to curtail the military's influence — he forced some generals into retirement, sent others abroad and cut back on the perks given to the Presidential Guard. But the public was also growing weary of the administration amid rising jihadist attacks and a cost of living crisis. The Presidential Guard exploited this public resentment when it moved in to oust the President citing the "deteriorating security situation and bad social and economic governance".

The U.S. and France see Niger, the largest country in West Africa, as a bulwark against Islamist insurgency in the region. Al Qaeda, the Islamic State and several other jihadist groups operate in the Sahel region, with Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali particularly hit. In Mali and Burkina Faso, which saw coups in 2021 and 2022, the putschists ousted UN peacekeepers and French troops, and moved to build closer security ties with Wagner, Russia's notorious military company. In Niger, supporters of the coup staged demonstrations in the capital Niamey, holding Russian flags and demanding the ouster of French troops. The long French presence and the lack of results in the West's fight against terrorism seem to have added to the resentment among the militaries and people in the affected countries, which power-hungry generals with a disregard for democratic practices have exploited to seize power. France and the Economic Community of West African States, a regional grouping, have issued an ultimatum to the putschists to restore President Bazoum. But a military intervention would further destabilise the country, helping the insurgents exploit the chaos. Instead, the U.S. and France, which still have influence in Niger, should push for talks between the generals and the presidency, seeking an amicable settlement of the disputes and the restoration of democracy.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[democracy](#) / [African Union](#) / [terrorism \(crime\)](#) / [Russia](#) / [France](#) / [war](#) / [Islamic State](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

THE TRAJECTORY OF PROGRESS MUST CHANGE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 03, 2023 12:16 am | Updated 01:23 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'People experience realities which statisticians' numbers cannot reveal' | Photo Credit: The Hindu

The G-20 has provided Prime Minister Narendra Modi an opportune stage before the next general election in 2024. Promotions of the G-20, with Mr. Modi's picture a part of them, are everywhere. Of greater significance to the world is that the G-20 is being led by India, the world's most populous country. Global financial crises in the last 30 years compelled the G-7, the United States-led cabal of western countries (and Japan) that controls global financial institutions, to expand the G-20 by adding China, India, Russia, Brazil, and a few other countries for solutions to global problems. The G-20 is at an impasse because the U.S. wants its members to shut out Russia and China who it sees as threats to its global hegemony. India is not easily swayed by pressure from the G-7. It wants the G-20 to concentrate on the agenda of 90% of humanity outside the G-7.

Global governance is in bad shape. The trajectory of progress must change. The world is being divided by wars amongst nations, and strife within them — wars with military weapons and with financial and trade weapons. Desperate millions are being pushed back to their deaths while trying to cross borders and oceans in search of better lives and safety, while three multi-billionaires are competing to create commercial space ventures to take a handful of wealthy people (paying hundreds of thousands of dollars each), for a brief joyride in borderless space.

Humanity cannot carry on the way it is. The trajectory of progress must be changed to make economic growth more equitable and sustainable. Economists try to prove with numbers that poverty is reducing, and incomes are increasing for everyone. They should look around and listen to real people struggling in precarious livelihoods. People experience realities which statisticians' numbers cannot reveal. The planet is heating up inexorably. It cannot take the pressure of the present consumptive model of economic growth any longer. More economic growth will not solve the world's problems. It must be sustainable and equitable too.

India, as chair of the G-20, has offered a vision of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (One Earth, One Family, One Future) to bring all citizens of the world together and make the world better for everyone.

To continue to solve systemic problems with the same approach that caused them is madness, Einstein declared. A new paradigm is required for global governance. In 2015, all countries adopted the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to be achieved by 2030. Time is

running out. Climate change is racing ahead. Rich countries are unwilling to find equitable solutions. Precarity of employment is increasing even in rich countries.

The SDGs describe 17 complex combinations of environmental, social, and economic problems. All 17 problems do not appear in every country, and when they do, they do not appear in the same form. For example, problems of the oceans are immediately life-threatening to island countries but not to land-locked countries as yet. Environmental problems are not the same in Canada and Barbados. Opportunities for decent work (SDG 8) are inadequate everywhere, but much fewer in countries in the Global South than in the rich North.

No country has only one of the SDG problems; every country has at least six or seven. Calculations show that even seven problems (out of a possible 17) can combine in 98 million different ways. Clearly, one global solution for the environment, society, or economy, cannot apply everywhere. People on the ground know where their shoes pinch. Standard solutions cannot fit all.

The McKinsey Global Institute has produced a detailed map of realities on the ground, [in its report, "Pixels of Progress: A granular look at human development around the world" \(December 7, 2022\). It divides the world into 40,000 micro-regions.](#) Using advanced statistical techniques, it zooms in to examine actual progress on the ground which statistical averages at country level and growth of GDP cannot reveal. It applies the yardsticks of life expectancy and incomes to compare the well-being of people in these regions. The report concludes that growth of GDP at a country level explains only 20% of the progress on the ground. The remaining 80% is local and specific.

The present theory-in-use of top-down problem-solving is conceptually flawed. It does not matter how smart the expert or manager on top of the system is. Complex systemic problems that appear in many places require local systems solutions that are found using cooperation and implemented by communities that combine solutions to economic, environment, and social problems.

India has proposed an approach of LiFE (lifestyles for sustainable development) to the G-20. It requires "coherent actions amongst stakeholders at all levels rooted in collective actions across society". Principle 7 of LiFE also requires the world's leaders to "recognize and amplify the role of local communities, local and regional governments and traditional knowledge in supporting sustainable lifestyles".

Democracy is government of, for, and by people. A government elected by the people that provides benefits top-down to people is not a complete democracy. Government must be by the people themselves too. India has elections, but its citizens do not have "poorna swaraj" yet. Its political leaders since Independence have paid only lip service to the vision of local governance in its Constitution which is required for Poorna Swaraj (full political, social, and economic freedom) for all citizens.

The Prime Minister has inaugurated a world-class venue for the G-20 Summit at Pragati Maidan ("field of progress") in Delhi. The text of the resolutions adopted at the Summit will not matter. Paradigms are hardly ever changed from their centres because people in power do not want to let go of power. It will not matter who wins the Indian elections in 2024, and whose pictures are on billboards thereafter, if the system of governance remains a top-down, expert-driven, centralised system. Pressure to change and new solutions must come from the peripheries of power systems, with movements on the ground in India and around the world.

Arun Maira is the author of Transforming Systems: Why the World Needs a New Ethical

Toolkit

COMMENTS

SHARE

[economy \(general\)](#) / [G20](#) / [Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#) / [development](#) / [war](#) / [public finance](#) / [defence equipment](#) / [climate change](#) / [global warming](#) / [environmental issues](#) / [United Nations](#) / [democracy](#) / [local authority](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

ENDDownloaded from **crackIAS.com**© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS

G20 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF WCD MINISTRY ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT INAUGURATED IN GANDHINAGAR TODAY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: International Treaties & Agreements, and other important organizations

The G20 Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment was inaugurated in Gandhinagar, Gujarat today . This conference, taking place from 2nd to 4th August 2023 includes participation by Women and Gender Equality Ministers from across the G20 and Guest countries.

The Conference had a total participation of over 138 International delegates from 15 G20 Countries namely Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, European Union, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, United Kingdom, and USA and 5 Guest Countries namely Bangladesh, Mauritius, Netherlands, Singapore and UAE. There will be over 60 speakers at the Conference.



The Inaugural session of Conference was virtually addressed by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi; Chief Coordinator, India's G20 Presidency, Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla; Hon'ble Minister for Women & Child Development and Minority Affairs, India, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani; Hon'ble Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Indonesia, Ms. I Gusti Ayu Bintang Darmawati; Hon'ble Vice Minister of Women, Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Ms. Maria Helena Guarezi; and Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, India, Sh. Indevar Pandey.

Through the course of India's G20 Presidency, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has been the nodal Ministry for both G20 EMPOWER (Empowerment and Progression of Women's Economic Representation), an initiative under the Sherpa track comprising the government as well as the private sector, and W20, an Engagement Group.

At the Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi summarized India's vision of women-led development with his words: "When women prosper, the world prospers. Their economic empowerment fuels growth, their access to education drives global progress, their leadership fosters inclusivity, and their voices inspire positive change."

During India's G20 Presidency, **women-led development** has emerged as a crucial focus area on a life-course approach basis, marking a shift from focus on women's empowerment alone. Through consensus-building on the global stage, India modelled a vision for progress in uplifting women worldwide with six in-person conferences and 86 virtual international meetings that witnessed the participation of over 300 delegates from 18 G20 countries and 7 Guest countries. India has also added focus on the empowerment and recognition of women at the local or community level. Indeed, this was recognized by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi, who stated that empowerment of women is the bedrock of our society's development and their leadership, especially at the grassroots, is crucial for our inclusive and sustainable progress.



At the outset of the Ministerial Conference, Hon'ble Minister for Women & Child Development and Minority Affairs, India, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani, reminded the participants of the core focus areas of India's G20 Presidency. These include Education: A Game-changing Pathway to Women's Empowerment, Women's Entrepreneurship: A Win-Win for Equity and Economy, and Creating a Partnership for Promoting Women's Leadership at all Levels including Grassroots. An essential enabler for all three has been Digital Inclusion. The Hon'ble Minister stated that India had achieved several tangible takeaways and had several differentiators – leadership of women at local or grassroots levels, a *Jan Bhagidari* or Citizen's engagement, and emphasis on women and climate change resilience.



India calibrated efforts toward education with a focus on STEM and one of the critical contributions of its presidency included **'TechEquity', a Digital Inclusion Platform** through which girls and women can skill, upskill and reskill themselves in digital literacy, financial literacy and other technical subjects. With contributions from across G20 Member States, courses in over 120 Indian and international languages will be available on the platform. This platform will address the gender digital divide with an expected outreach of 1 million girls and women. Indeed, during the Ministerial Conference, the Hon'ble Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Indonesia, Ms. I Gusti Ayu Bintang Darmawati highlighted the importance of the education and ensuring girls and women are equitably represented in technology-related education. She stated that education is the key for a future where women leaders are the norm and not the exception. The Hon'ble Vice Minister of Women, Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Ms. Maria Helena Guarezi emphasized the need to take action to ensure reduction in the gender pay gap.

Under India's Presidency, 149 model initiatives from 19 G20 countries have been added to the **Best Practices Playbook** for G20 EMPOWER, substantially scaling up the insights and best practices from across industries and businesses available to the public and private sectors. The Playbook has been digitised to make it easily accessible. Previously, the Best Practices Playbook had 3 focus areas; India added a new chapter in the EMPOWER playbook to support women at the grassroots.

Such importance of leadership of women at all levels was highlighted by Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, India, Shri Indevar Pandey who stated that such leadership is ever prevalent in India with the President of India being a woman, along with the vast majority of frontline health workers and members of Self Help Groups.

For the first time, the **KPI Dashboard** for G20 EMPOWER would look at the role of women in Small and Medium Enterprises.

India's Presidency has added substantially to G20 EMPOWER **advocates** (comprising CEOs, association heads and other leaders) promoting women's advancement. These have increased

from 380 to 544, with 100 of the new additions coming from India. The G20 EMPOWER **advocacy pledge** has also be updated to strengthen commitments to gender equality.

73 inspirational stories from 9 G20 countries highlighted women surmounting barriers have been placed on the G20 EMPOWER website.

Over 300,000 citizens were engaged through **Janbhagidari events or Citizen Engagement** to showcase Women–Led Development through Women community leaders, artisans, Self Help Groups, SMEs, corporates, and business entities from various states participated in these events to make this is a truly people’s G20. The Chief Coordinator, India’s G20 Presidency, Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla reflected on the wide-ranging innovations towards citizen’s engagement ranging from walkathons to flashmobs, as well as the broad range of participations and stories shared.

The W20 engagement group added emphasis on the role of women in climate change resilience with a first responders’ framework having been developed towards this. This aligns with India’s Mission LiFE or Lifestyle for Environment. As Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi highlighted, women are brand ambassadors for Mission LiFE as they, for example, reduce, reuse, recycle and repurpose waste based on traditional wisdom.

In bilateral meetings held as part of the Ministerial Conference, G20 countries expressed appreciation for the Poshan Tracker, a unique ICT platform developed as a governance tool for monitoring nutrition services and early childhood care service delivery for close to 100 million registered beneficiaries including pregnant women, lactating mothers, children under 6 years of age and adolescent girls across 1.4 million Anganwadi Centres. In line with India’s G20 motto of One Earth One Family One Future, India expressed readiness to assist G20 countries to develop localised applications of the Poshan Tracker in the area of nutrition and early childhood care to develop a healthy tomorrow.

At the Ministerial Conference, along with the previous G20 EMPOWER and W20 meetings held under India’s Presidency, cultural performances, excursions and cuisine were carefully curated to showcase the rich cultural heritage, traditions & history of India. Exhibitions were organised to showcase women-led development. Women community leaders, artisans, Self Help Groups and entrepreneurs from various states exhibited their products with great enthusiasm.

As part of the Ministerial Conference, an exhibition organized by Ministry of Women and Child Development in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), was inaugurated by Hon’ble Minister for Women & Child Development and Minority Affairs, India, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani with Hon’ble Chief Minister of Gujarat as the Chief Guest, Shri Bhupendrabhai Patel. The exhibition titled ‘India@75: Contribution of Women’ focused on women in craft; women in health; women in trade and economy; women in STEM, science and technology; women in nutrition and food; women in education and skill; women in sports; women in defence services; and a showcase of Padma awardees. Innovative anamorphic content was used to highlight women’s achievements in these areas.

With women-led development as the guiding light, India’s G20 presidency outlined solutions tailored for women across education, entrepreneurship, technology, finance and beyond. Partnerships were strengthened, mindsets shifted, and policies transformed through camaraderie, consensus and teamwork.

Gender equality has been called “the greatest human rights challenge of our time”, and through its presidency, India advanced the G20’s role in meeting this challenge. Its legacy lies in enabling women’s contributions across all levels of the economy and society through a

presidency which incisive, decisive and action- oriented for 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' for the upliftment of not just women but humanity.

The baton now passes to Brazil to continue championing women-led development. With consensus and collaboration at its core, India's legacy of gender-equitable policies and targeted interventions that have reimagined women as architects of progress and development rather than being passive recipients of the fruits of development shall continue to inspire positive change.

Click here for the complete address of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1944919>

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1944922>

SS/AKS

The G20 Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment was inaugurated in Gandhinagar, Gujarat today . This conference, taking place from 2nd to 4th August 2023 includes participation by Women and Gender Equality Ministers from across the G20 and Guest countries.

The Conference had a total participation of over 138 International delegates from 15 G20 Countries namely Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, European Union, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, United Kingdom, and USA and 5 Guest Countries namely Bangladesh, Mauritius, Netherlands, Singapore and UAE. There will be over 60 speakers at the Conference.



The Inaugural session of Conference was virtually addressed by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi; Chief Coordinator, India's G20 Presidency, Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla;

Hon'ble Minister for Women & Child Development and Minority Affairs, India, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani; Hon'ble Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Indonesia, Ms. I Gusti Ayu Bintang Darmawati; Hon'ble Vice Minister of Women, Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Ms. Maria Helena Guarezi; and Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, India, Sh. Indevar Pandey.

Through the course of India's G20 Presidency, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has been the nodal Ministry for both G20 EMPOWER (Empowerment and Progression of Women's Economic Representation), an initiative under the Sherpa track comprising the government as well as the private sector, and W20, an Engagement Group.

At the Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi summarized India's vision of women-led development with his words: "When women prosper, the world prospers. Their economic empowerment fuels growth, their access to education drives global progress, their leadership fosters inclusivity, and their voices inspire positive change."

During India's G20 Presidency, **women-led development** has emerged as a crucial focus area on a life-course approach basis, marking a shift from focus on women's empowerment alone. Through consensus-building on the global stage, India modelled a vision for progress in uplifting women worldwide with six in-person conferences and 86 virtual international meetings that witnessed the participation of over 300 delegates from 18 G20 countries and 7 Guest countries. India has also added focus on the empowerment and recognition of women at the local or community level. Indeed, this was recognized by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi, who stated that empowerment of women is the bedrock of our society's development and their leadership, especially at the grassroots, is crucial for our inclusive and sustainable progress.



At the outset of the Ministerial Conference, Hon'ble Minister for Women & Child Development and Minority Affairs, India, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani, reminded the participants of the core focus areas of India's G20 Presidency. These include Education: A Game-changing Pathway to

Women's Empowerment, Women's Entrepreneurship: A Win-Win for Equity and Economy, and Creating a Partnership for Promoting Women's Leadership at all Levels including Grassroots. An essential enabler for all three has been Digital Inclusion. The Hon'ble Minister stated that India had achieved several tangible takeaways and had several differentiators – leadership of women at local or grassroots levels, a *Jan Bhagidari* or Citizen's engagement, and emphasis on women and climate change resilience.



India calibrated efforts toward education with a focus on STEM and one of the critical contributions of its presidency included '**TechEquity**', a **Digital Inclusion Platform** through which girls and women can skill, upskill and reskill themselves in digital literacy, financial literacy and other technical subjects. With contributions from across G20 Member States, courses in over 120 Indian and international languages will be available on the platform. This platform will address the gender digital divide with an expected outreach of 1 million girls and women. Indeed, during the Ministerial Conference, the Hon'ble Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Indonesia, Ms. I Gusti Ayu Bintang Darmawati highlighted the importance of the education and ensuring girls and women are equitably represented in technology-related education. She stated that education is the key for a future where women leaders are the norm and not the exception. The Hon'ble Vice Minister of Women, Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Ms. Maria Helena Guarezi emphasized the need to take action to ensure reduction in the gender pay gap.

Under India's Presidency, 149 model initiatives from 19 G20 countries have been added to the **Best Practices Playbook** for G20 EMPOWER, substantially scaling up the insights and best practices from across industries and businesses available to the public and private sectors. The Playbook has been digitised to make it easily accessible. Previously, the Best Practices Playbook had 3 focus areas; India added a new chapter in the EMPOWER playbook to support women at the grassroots.

Such importance of leadership of women at all levels was highlighted by Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development, India, Shri Indevvar Pandey who stated that such leadership is ever prevalent in India with the President of India being a woman, along with the vast majority of

frontline health workers and members of Self Help Groups.

For the first time, the **KPI Dashboard** for G20 EMPOWER would look at the role of women in Small and Medium Enterprises.

India's Presidency has added substantially to G20 EMPOWER **advocates** (comprising CEOs, association heads and other leaders) promoting women's advancement. These have increased from 380 to 544, with 100 of the new additions coming from India. The G20 EMPOWER **advocacy pledge** has also be updated to strengthen commitments to gender equality.

73 inspirational stories from 9 G20 countries highlighted women surmounting barriers have been placed on the G20 EMPOWER website.

Over 300,000 citizens were engaged through **Janbhagidari events or Citizen Engagement** to showcase Women-Led Development through Women community leaders, artisans, Self Help Groups, SMEs, corporates, and business entities from various states participated in these events to make this is a truly people's G20. The Chief Coordinator, India's G20 Presidency, Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla reflected on the wide-ranging innovations towards citizen's engagement ranging from walkathons to flashmobs, as well as the broad range of participations and stories shared.

The W20 engagement group added emphasis on the role of women in climate change resilience with a first responders' framework having been developed towards this. This aligns with India's Mission LiFE or Lifestyle for Environment. As Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi highlighted, women are brand ambassadors for Mission LiFE as they, for example, reduce, reuse, recycle and repurpose waste based on traditional wisdom.

In bilateral meetings held as part of the Ministerial Conference, G20 countries expressed appreciation for the Poshan Tracker, a unique ICT platform developed as a governance tool for monitoring nutrition services and early childhood care service delivery for close to 100 million registered beneficiaries including pregnant women, lactating mothers, children under 6 years of age and adolescent girls across 1.4 million Anganwadi Centres. In line with India's G20 motto of One Earth One Family One Future, India expressed readiness to assist G20 countries to develop localised applications of the Poshan Tracker in the area of nutrition and early childhood care to develop a healthy tomorrow.

At the Ministerial Conference, along with the previous G20 EMPOWER and W20 meetings held under India's Presidency, cultural performances, excursions and cuisine were carefully curated to showcase the rich cultural heritage, traditions & history of India. Exhibitions were organised to showcase women-led development. Women community leaders, artisans, Self Help Groups and entrepreneurs from various states exhibited their products with great enthusiasm.

As part of the Ministerial Conference, an exhibition organized by Ministry of Women and Child Development in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), was inaugurated by Hon'ble Minister for Women & Child Development and Minority Affairs, India, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani with Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat as the Chief Guest, Shri Bhupendrabhai Patel. The exhibition titled 'India@75: Contribution of Women' focused on women in craft; women in health; women in trade and economy; women in STEM, science and technology; women in nutrition and food; women in education and skill; women in sports; women in defence services; and a showcase of Padma awardees. Innovative anamorphic content was used to highlight women's achievements in these areas.

With women-led development as the guiding light, India's G20 presidency outlined solutions

tailored for women across education, entrepreneurship, technology, finance and beyond. Partnerships were strengthened, mindsets shifted, and policies transformed through camaraderie, consensus and teamwork.

Gender equality has been called “the greatest human rights challenge of our time”, and through its presidency, India advanced the G20’s role in meeting this challenge. Its legacy lies in enabling women’s contributions across all levels of the economy and society through a presidency which incisive, decisive and action- oriented for ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’ for the upliftment of not just women but humanity.

The baton now passes to Brazil to continue championing women-led development. With consensus and collaboration at its core, India’s legacy of gender-equitable policies and targeted interventions that have reimagined women as architects of progress and development rather than being passive recipients of the fruits of development shall continue to inspire positive change.

Click here for the complete address of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1944919>

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1944922>

SS/AKS

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS

VIETNAMESE DELEGATION VISITS INDIA TO ENHANCE BILATERAL COOPERATION IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS SECTOR

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry hosted a delegation from Vietnam to promote bilateral cooperation between India and Vietnam in the infrastructure and logistics sector. The five-day visit of the delegation from 31st July to 04th August 2023, is a follow-up to an Indian delegation's visit, headed by Special Secretary, DPIIT, Smt Sumita Dawra to Vietnam between 29th and 31st March, 2023.

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Sh. Som Parkash graced this event with his presence. In his address, he stated that these bilateral interactions will foster collaboration and foreign investments in the logistics sector in both countries and promote investments.

First two days of the programme included Government to Business (G2B) and Business to Business (B2B) meetings with stakeholders from private and public sectors from both countries. Followed by site visits planned to Integrated Industrial Township - Greater Noida, Aurangabad Industrial City (AURIC), Maharashtra and Airport Cargo Terminal and Custom Facility, Bangalore, Karnataka, to gain first-hand experience of the logistics ecosystem in the country.

Around 80 participants including Vietnamese delegates from various logistics and supply chain companies and associations such as Sotrans Group, InterLogistics, Vietnam Logistics Association, KNF Global Supply Chain Co., Ltd, etc.; Indian Officials from M/o Textiles, Council of Leather Exports, Central Warehousing Corporation, Invest India, National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Limited (NICDC) and States (Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh), and Indian industry representatives from Activair Airfreight India Pvt Ltd, Transport Corporation of India Ltd., (TCIL), FIEO, Association of Multimodal Transport Operators of India (AMTOI), Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations in India (FFFAI), FICCI, Warehousing Association of India, among others, had fruitful discussions on both days.

On Day One, Government to Business (G2B) Sessions were held. Focus of G2B meetings was on showcasing investment opportunities across NICDC industrial parks; logistics parks across different States; textile PM MITRA parks, leather parks, etc.

Secretary, DPIIT, Sh. Rajesh Kumar Singh set the context, and emphasized on the importance of this visit in identifying areas of mutual interest, exploring investment opportunities and knowledge sharing between both the countries.

Key takeaways from Day one is summarised below:

On Day One, the session ended with the closing remarks from Special Secretary, DPIIT, Smt. Sumita Dawra who reemphasized on the potential areas of cooperation and how Vietnam should be part of Indian growth story

On Day Two, Business to Business Sessions were held. The B2B sessions covered the following deliberations:

In his closing remarks, Consul General of India in Vietnam, Sh. Madan Mohan Sethi, reiterated

the commitment of both nations to enhance bilateral trade and investment and expressed confidence in the positive outcomes of the delegation's visit. He invited Indian entrepreneurs to explore trade and investment opportunities in Vietnam.

AD/VN

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry hosted a delegation from Vietnam to promote bilateral cooperation between India and Vietnam in the infrastructure and logistics sector. The five-day visit of the delegation from 31st July to 04th August 2023, is a follow-up to an Indian delegation's visit, headed by Special Secretary, DPIIT, Smt Sumita Dawra to Vietnam between 29th and 31st March, 2023.

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Sh. Som Parkash graced this event with his presence. In his address, he stated that these bilateral interactions will foster collaboration and foreign investments in the logistics sector in both countries and promote investments.

First two days of the programme included Government to Business (G2B) and Business to Business (B2B) meetings with stakeholders from private and public sectors from both countries. Followed by site visits planned to Integrated Industrial Township - Greater Noida, Aurangabad Industrial City (AURIC), Maharashtra and Airport Cargo Terminal and Custom Facility, Bangalore, Karnataka, to gain first-hand experience of the logistics ecosystem in the country.

Around 80 participants including Vietnamese delegates from various logistics and supply chain companies and associations such as Sotrans Group, InterLogistics, Vietnam Logistics Association, KNF Global Supply Chain Co., Ltd, etc.; Indian Officials from M/o Textiles, Council of Leather Exports, Central Warehousing Corporation, Invest India, National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Limited (NICDC) and States (Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh), and Indian industry representatives from Activair Airfreight India Pvt Ltd, Transport Corporation of India Ltd., (TCIL), FIEO, Association of Multimodal Transport Operators of India (AMTOI), Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations in India (FFFAI), FICCI, Warehousing Association of India, among others, had fruitful discussions on both days.

On Day One, Government to Business (G2B) Sessions were held. Focus of G2B meetings was on showcasing investment opportunities across NICDC industrial parks; logistics parks across different States; textile PM MITRA parks, leather parks, etc.

Secretary, DPIIT, Sh. Rajesh Kumar Singh set the context, and emphasized on the importance of this visit in identifying areas of mutual interest, exploring investment opportunities and knowledge sharing between both the countries.

Key takeaways from Day one is summarised below:

On Day One, the session ended with the closing remarks from Special Secretary, DPIIT, Smt. Sumita Dawra who reemphasized on the potential areas of cooperation and how Vietnam should be part of Indian growth story

On Day Two, Business to Business Sessions were held. The B2B sessions covered the following deliberations:

In his closing remarks, Consul General of India in Vietnam, Sh. Madan Mohan Sethi, reiterated the commitment of both nations to enhance bilateral trade and investment and expressed

confidence in the positive outcomes of the delegation's visit. He invited Indian entrepreneurs to explore trade and investment opportunities in Vietnam.

AD/VN

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

STRIKE THREE: ON THE INDICTMENT OF FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 04, 2023 12:10 am | Updated 12:10 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

After facing prior charges relating to hush money paid to cover up an affair and the illegal retention of top-secret documents, former U.S. President Donald Trump has been indicted for the third time. The most recent felony charges stem from allegations that he sought to block the peaceful transfer of power by seeking to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election, which current President Joe Biden won. The four charges at this juncture include conspiracy to defraud, witness tampering, conspiracy against the rights of citizens, and obstruction of and attempt to obstruct an official proceeding. The obstruction charges relate to the actions of Mr. Trump on January 6, 2021, when he is alleged to have incited a violent mob to march on the Capitol buildings in Washington even as lawmakers were meeting there to certify the election results, as required by law. The mob broke barricades and vandalised Congressional offices and property, injuring at least 140 law enforcement officers. A wide-ranging Justice Department investigation has led to the arrest and prosecution of more than 1,000 people said to be involved in one of the worst attacks on the very heart of U.S. democracy. Beyond the charges in the most recent indictment, Mr. Trump is also likely to be slapped with charges in the State of Georgia this month, relating to his attempts, in concert with allies, to overturn his 2020 election loss there.

Not surprisingly, Mr. Trump has denounced the indictment as evidence of the “corruption, scandal, and failure” of the Biden White House, and his lawyers have attacked it as being the “first time that the First Amendment has been criminalised”. U.S. politics is already shifting gear as it enters the deep end of the 2024 presidential election cycle. Mr. Trump leads by a significant margin the cohort of at least 14 Republican candidates seeking their party’s nomination for the election. Some legal experts say that even if he is found guilty in one or more of the indictment cases, there is nothing in the U.S. constitution that bars him from contesting the 2024 election. This could lead to the unprecedented situation of the U.S. being led by a convicted President, or a President who governs from prison, if not a President who takes office and then has all of his convictions dismissed. The bizarreness of this scenario is only exceeded by the extreme levels of political polarisation of the U.S. electorate across the liberal-conservative spectrum on a variety of critical issues including the role of the government in the economy, reproductive and civil rights, immigration, foreign policy and much more. Unless bipartisanship somehow gains a foothold in this deeply conflicted polity, there is a real risk that U.S. exceptionalism may soon be a thing of the past.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[USA](#) / [politics](#) / [US PRESIDENTIAL POLLS](#) / [arrest](#) / [laws](#) / [constitution](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

NUCLEAR SIGNALLING, THE NEED FOR NEW GUARD RAILS

Relevant for: Science & Technology | Topic: Nuclear science

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 04, 2023 12:16 am | Updated 01:05 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'Today, there is no Warsaw Pact, and NATO has expanded to include a number of former Warsaw Pact members' | Photo Credit: AP

The conflict in Ukraine and the recourse to nuclear rhetoric have revived concerns about nuclear escalation management between the major nuclear powers. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States-Russia nuclear rivalry had taken a back seat. Instead, North Korea, Iran and India-Pakistan got attention, with many analysts getting nostalgic about 'nuclear stability' during the Cold War. But, as it is becoming clear now, in today's changed political environment the escalation management lessons of the Cold War no longer seem to work for the U.S. and Russia.

In June 2021, U.S. and Russian Presidents, Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin, met in Geneva. Nuclear arms control was a high priority item on the agenda but no progress proved possible. As concerns grew about the Russian troop presence in Belarus on the Ukrainian border, Central Intelligence Agency Director Bill Burns flew to Moscow in November to spell out the consequences of aggression. In January 2022, U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Geneva to reiterate the message. On February 24, Russia began its "special military operation" in Ukraine. U.S. attempts to deter Russian aggression had failed.

Even as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) leaders met to decide their response, Mr. Biden made it clear that the U.S. was determined to avoid a Third World War or allowing the conflict to escalate into a NATO-Russia conflict. After the freezing of Russian reserves and a slew of financial, energy-related and political sanctions, other elements of military assistance, lethal and non-lethal, began to take shape. Intelligence sharing and restoring Internet connectivity was the first step. The second was the supply of ammunition and some weapon systems which the Ukrainian forces were familiar with. NATO deepened its military involvement by providing gradually more and more sophisticated weapon systems, beginning with the Javelin and Stinger missiles, and moving on to Patriot missile defence batteries, long-range Himars, Storm Shadow and Scalp long-range missiles, and now F-16s. Russian attempts to deter NATO involvement had failed.

On February 7, 2022, Mr. Putin warned that "if Ukraine attempts to take back Crimea, European countries will be in conflict with Russia, which is a leading nuclear power superior to many

NATO countries in terms of nuclear force". Annual nuclear exercises, normally scheduled for autumn, were announced for February 17, with Mr. Putin personally witnessing them. Announcing the launch of "special military operations", his words of caution were, "whoever tries to hinder Russia will face consequences never seen in history". To drive home the threat, on February 27, Russian nuclear forces were placed on a "special combat readiness" with leave for all personnel cancelled.

Even as the U.S. issued blunt warnings to Russia against using tactical nuclear weapons, in the first week of March, NATO decided against a no-fly-zone and Poland, Slovakia and Bulgaria announced that they would not be sending MiG aircraft to Ukraine on account of Russian threats against their airfields from where these aircraft were to take off. Russian officials tried to downplay the nuclear threat by pointing out that Russia would resort to nuclear use only if faced with an existential threat, while U.S. officials tried to convey reassurance to their European allies that while Mr. Putin's threats were to be taken seriously, there were no indications of unusual activity at nuclear sites.

Mr. Biden declared on April 24, "We are neither encouraging nor enabling Ukraine to strike beyond its borders," adding that the "U.S. was not seeking regime change in Russia." In short, the U.S. objectives were to support Ukraine, bolster NATO unity and avoid any direct conflict with Russia. Ukraine is not a NATO member and so does not have the security of the nuclear umbrella provided by U.S. policy of 'extended deterrence'. Russia's resort to nuclear rhetoric failed to deter NATO involvement though it influenced its pace and timing. Therefore, both Russia and the U.S. are operating in a grey zone, taking turns at escalatory rhetoric even as they probe each other's red lines. During the Cold War, the U.S. and the former Soviet Union engaged in multiple proxy wars, Vietnam in the 1960s and Afghanistan in the 1980s, but these were in distant theatres.

Deterrence is fundamentally based on the assumption that both adversaries are rational enough to judge when costs outweigh the benefits of the act. Nuclear deterrence adds a conundrum. With their huge arsenals that provided for assured second strike capability, neither the U.S. nor the Soviet Union had an incentive to try a surprise first strike. This realisation was crucial in shaping nuclear deterrence theory.

Thomas Schelling, whose writings during the 1960s and 1970s shaped nuclear deterrence thinking (he won the Economics Nobel in 2005), concluded that nuclear weapons were not usable but had political utility in terms of preventing a war with another nuclear power. Clearly, Schelling was looking at the situation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union which had no territorial dispute. Schelling also concluded that even though any use was "irrational", the nuclear threat had to be "credible" in order to deter. This introduced a degree of uncertainty into the equation. Using his economics training, he interpreted the uncertainty as risk that could be analysed in terms of probabilities. Risk was intended to induce rationality in the adversaries. Realising the conundrum, he concluded that the key to making nuclear deterrence credible is through escalation and raising the risk, that in the final analysis, "leaves something to chance".

This, along with the lessons of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis kept the U.S. and Soviet rhetoric in check during the Cold War even as they engaged in proxy wars outside Europe, and away from NATO and Warsaw pact territories. Today, there is no Warsaw Pact, and NATO has expanded to include a number of former Warsaw Pact members. The Ukraine conflict has persuaded Sweden and Finland to give up their long-standing neutrality and seek security under NATO's nuclear umbrella.

Russia's nuclear doctrine issued on June 2, 2020 specifies two conditions under which Russia would use nuclear weapons: "...in response to the use of nuclear weapons and other types of

weapons of mass destruction against it/or its allies” and “in the case of aggression against the Russian Federation with the use of conventional weapons, when the very existence of the state is put under threat”. Mr. Putin has declared more than once that Ukrainians and Russians are one people with a shared history. Russia, therefore, does not see Ukraine as entirely ‘sovereign’.

Second, there is the oft-cited escalate-to-deescalate approach, that implies using tactical nuclear weapons to overcome a stalemate on the battlefield, thus forcing a termination of hostilities on favourable terms. In its 2022 National Security Strategy, the U.S. rejected this by declaring that first use would not lead to de-escalation on Russian terms, “but alter the nature of conflict creating potential for uncontrolled escalation”.

U.S. caution is reflected in calibrating the supply of more sophisticated weapons by continuously probing Russian red lines even though Ukrainian demands continue to grow. Meanwhile, it suits Russia to increase ambiguity. It is also likely that since Russia failed to achieve its military objectives, its thresholds are evolving.

The path-breaking studies of Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky in economics showed that humans often tend to double down on bad bets because of ‘loss aversion’. The Cold War escalation management lessons applied to a different world; today, the U.S. and Russia no longer enjoy parity and Russia’s red lines are fuzzy.

Nuclear signalling today is taking place in uncharted political territory. New guard rails are necessary if the nuclear taboo has to be preserved.

Rakesh Sood is a former diplomat who served as India’s first Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and also as the Prime Minister’s Special Envoy for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation in 2013-14

COMMENTS

SHARE

[USA](#) / [Russia](#) / [Russia-Ukraine Crisis](#) / [nuclear policy](#) / [nuclear weapons](#) / [war](#) / [history](#) / [NATO](#) / [Ukraine](#) / [Vietnam](#) / [Afghanistan](#) / [history](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by [crackIAS.com](#)

THE LESSONS OF HIROSHIMA MUST NOT DRIFT AWAY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 05, 2023 12:16 am | Updated 01:58 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'There are people in Japan still living with the consequences of August 1945' Photo: Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum via AFP

The morning of August 6, 1945, dawned clear and sunny as the Enola Gay wheeled over Hiroshima and dropped its payload on the city centre. The 15kt uranium bomb exploded 600 metres above the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall, instantly flattening everything and everyone below. Only the skeletal structure of the hall remained, bearing witness to the moment when our beliefs about weapons and wars changed.

In the intervening 78 years, we have witnessed the rise and fall of nuclear threats. The concept of nuclear deterrence attracted the sharpest minds in countries that both possessed nuclear weapons and abjured them. Especially as nuclear weapons became more powerful, it became clear that any nuclear use would be a global problem. This allowed a parallel development to occur: even as nuclear weapons states developed ever more destructive nukes, a taboo against their actual use began to develop. The political scientist Nina Tannenwald has defined the nuclear taboo as a coalescing norm against using nuclear weapons because these weapons are seen as so beyond the pale that there are almost no circumstances in which their use can be justified. Crucially, this taboo extends across the whole class of weapons, regardless of their yield, leading to a blanket prohibition of use that each passing year reinforces. However, this taboo has no legal basis; it rests on ideas of morality, proportionality and responsibility.

The taboo is grounded firmly in our treating nuclear weapons as different: nuclear weapons, in Bernard Brodie's celebrated phrase, are the 'absolute weapon'. This special treatment is grounded not so much in the power of the atomic bomb — we are able to dial up or down the destructive capability of modern nukes, and we have developed conventional munitions that rival some nuclear destructiveness; or even in the ability to flatten a city in moments. The special status of nuclear weapons rests on the continually reaffirmed knowledge gained from the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that nuclear weapons are indiscriminate and do not distinguish between combatants and non-combatants; they contaminate the environment for decades; and the effects of the radiation are felt for generations. There are people in Japan still living with the consequences of August 1945.

Events since Russia's invasion of Ukraine have tested our notions of deterrence and the taboo. Russian President Vladimir Putin has issued several veiled and not-so-veiled nuclear threats, ranging from reminding the world of Russia's nuclear weapons status at the start of the war

against Ukraine on February 24, 2022 to ordering Russia's nuclear forces into a 'special regime of combat duty' a few days later (which left analysts scrambling to decode what that formulation might mean), to declaring in September 2022 that Russia was prepared to 'make use of all weapon systems available to [them]. This is not a bluff.' Dmitry Medvedev, currently deputy chairman of the Security Council of Russia and others have echoed Mr. Putin's threats.

Thirty-eight years after the leaders Ronald Reagan of the United States and Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union declared that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought' (and less than a year after Mr. Putin and President Joe Biden reaffirmed this pledge in June 2021), Russia was raising the spectre of nuclear Armageddon in Europe.

Future historians will decide how credible these threats were. Potentially, September and October 2022 might come to be regarded as a time when the nuclear taboo was tested almost to breaking point. Following battlefield reversals in late summer and Mr. Putin's declaration that Russia was prepared to use 'all weapons systems available', speculation arose about whether Russia might use a tactical nuclear weapon and if so, where and how.

This was dangerous on multiple counts. To begin with, this conjecture risked creating expectations of its own that might have pushed the Russian leadership to behave in a certain way. Loose talk about what sort of nuclear weapons might be acceptable to 'send a message' also risked undermining the nuclear taboo. And finally, there is still no consensus on what constitutes a tactical nuclear weapon. Battlefield or tactical weapons (as opposed to strategic weapons) are delivered over shorter distances and are smaller than strategic weapons, but beyond that, there is significant variability in yield, depending on the delivery method. The U.S., for example, has tactical weapons ranging from a fraction of 1kt to 170kt. The bomb that fell on Hiroshima was 15kt. It would be beyond insulting to the memory of the estimated 70,000 people who died immediately and the many tens of thousands of hibakusha who have lived with the consequences of that bomb to suggest that this was just a small, tactical weapon.

There is, however, room for hope in the official responses by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other nuclear weapons states to Mr. Putin's sabre-rattling and the subsequent speculation. The U.S. was at the forefront on this, and what it did do is as important as what it did not do. Washington made it abundantly clear that any nuclear use would be met with a very strong and commensurate response. However, it did not specify that that response would be nuclear: quite the opposite, as it emphasised a calibrated, conventional response to any nuclear adventurism at NATO's doorstep.

The U.S. also did not change its nuclear preparedness, thereby not fuelling the nuclear speculation building up in Europe. Crucially, in November, even China's President Xi Jinping called on the international community to 'jointly oppose the use of, or threats to use, nuclear weapons'.

That nuclear crisis passed, but the world could still be held hostage to Russia's movement of tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus, at Minsk's invitation. Like Ukraine, Belarus gave up its nuclear weapons in the 1990s in return for security guarantees from Russia, the U.S. and the United Kingdom. Reversing that agreement now seems a pointless provocation — high on symbolism and risk.

At the height of the Cold War, there were almost 70,000 nuclear weapons scattered around the globe, either in storage or deployed, some on hair trigger warnings. That we avoided a nuclear exchange is down in part to the lessons of Hiroshima, and in part to sheer, dumb luck, as the history of near misses throughout the Cold War demonstrates.

As an insurance policy, it is not much.

Priyanjali Malik is the author of India's Nuclear Debate: Exceptionalism and the Bomb

COMMENTS

SHARE

[nuclear radiation victims](#) / [nuclear weapons](#) / [Japan](#) / [USA](#) / [Russia](#) / [NATO](#) / [Russia-Ukraine Crisis](#) / [war](#) / [United Kingdom](#) / [history](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by [crackIAS.com](#)

CrackIAS

AMERICA'S PURSUIT OF SAUDI-ISRAEL RAPPROCHEMENT

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 05, 2023 12:08 am | Updated 02:00 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'While the U.S., Saudi Arabia and Israel may converge at the proposed reconciliation, their respective motives differ' | Photo Credit: Getty Images/iStockphoto

The proverbial propensity of the 'Middle East' to spring surprises is on call again. This time it is about the chances of success of dogged, albeit quiet, United States diplomacy to reconcile two regional powerhouses, viz. Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Ironically, this quest by the Biden administration is taking place under challenging circumstances. The White House has had tepid relations with leaders of both countries, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman. Mr. Netanyahu heads an extreme right-wing coalition determined to accelerate the Jewish settlements in the Occupied West Bank and curb the judiciary's independence — the U.S. strongly opposes both. Under the Saudi Crown Prince, initially ostracised by the Biden Administration for his alleged involvement in the Jamal Khashoggi murder, the Kingdom has been nonchalant towards Washington.

After nearly eight decades of the U.S.-Saudi "Energy for Security" compact of 1945, Riyadh has been assiduously diversifying its strategic options. It has reconciled, at least tactically, with its arch-enemy Iran through Chinese mediation, hosted the Chinese President for three summits in Riyadh (President Xi Jinping met separately with his counterparts in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Countries), cooperated with Russia under the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries-Plus (OPEC+) rubric for higher oil prices and facilitated the return of Syria to the Arab fold. All these in-your-face Saudi initiatives challenge the U.S. interests. They disserve President Joe Biden's bid for re-election next year. Against this obstructive backdrop, the White House has waged a concerted campaign to persuade Saudi Arabia to normalise its relations with Israel. The proposal has been on the Saudi table since November 2020 when the Saudi Crown Prince and Mr. Netanyahu had an unpublicised meeting in Neom, Saudi Arabia, in the presence of the then-U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo. It has gained traction in recent months with the U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan and U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken visiting Saudi Arabia to be received by the Saudi Crown Prince. While the Saudis have not rejected the idea out of hand, they have reportedly put forth daunting pre-conditions said to include North Atlantic Treaty Organization-like U.S. security guarantees, access to advanced American weapons systems, approval for the acquisition of

civilian nuclear technology, and an Israeli commitment to a process leading to a two-state solution with the Palestinians. The specifics are under negotiation among the three tight-lipped stakeholders.

While the U.S., Saudi Arabia and Israel may converge at the proposed reconciliation, their respective motives differ. First, the Biden administration, deeply concerned with the growing ingress by China and Russia in the 'Middle East', wants to re-entrench the Pax Americana over the region by bringing two traditionally pro-west regional players together. It also feels that fostering such a reconciliation would ingratiate Mr. Biden with the two miffed leaders. Lastly, the powerful Jewish lobby's gratitude would help Mr. Biden win the U.S. presidential election next year.

Saudi Arabia under the Saudi Crown Prince has adopted an assertive and ambitious foreign policy, commensurate with its oil wealth, to become primus inter pares for the region and emerge as an important global player. By reconciling with Israel, it takes away the first movers' advantage that the United Arab Emirates has had for the past three years as a member of the "Abraham Accords". Moreover, diplomatic ties with Israel would balance the Kingdom's recent reconciliation with Iran and Syria and help it emerge as a more nationalist power than an Islamic one. Despite its moves, Riyadh needs a stronger U.S. security commitment and access to Israeli technology. The Saudi Crown Prince may, however, need to mitigate the scepticism about Israel at home and within Al-Saud.

For Israel, a Star of David flying in Riyadh would be a major geopolitical victory, symbolising its final acceptance as a legitimate Jewish state by the centre of Islam after 75 years as a regional outcast. Given the Kingdom's trendsetting role as the custodian of Islam's two holy shrines, the Riyadh-Tel Aviv détente would herald Israel's integration with the Arab-Islamic world. It would provide direct air and land access to Asia, enabling better leveraging of the economic opportunities as the economic centre of gravity shifts eastwards.

The global fallout from such a development would be quite profound. The Islamic mainstream would likely follow the Saudi lead, with countries such as Pakistan and Indonesia in the first row. However, it would further marginalise the "Palestinians' Cause" and may polarise and radicalise them and other opponents of Israel such as Iran and Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas and the Islamic State.

Having invested considerable diplomatic capital in this quest, the U.S. may eventually succeed despite the formidable odds, particularly as the Israeli government would have to moderate some of its hard-held policies.

Saudi-Israeli rapprochement would have a mildly positive impact on India. It would remove a contradiction in India's regional policy and better align Saudi Arabia with us. It may open opportunities as the U.S. pushes back China from the region. But then, it may also give Israel reasons to hyphenate India with Islamic countries, including Pakistan.

Mahesh Sachdev is a retired Indian Ambassador and an Arabist. He is currently president of Eco-Diplomacy and Strategies, a Delhi-based consultancy

COMMENTS

SHARE

[USA](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [Saudi Arabia](#) / [Israel](#) / [China](#) / [Iran](#) / [security measures](#) / [economy \(general\)](#) / [Pakistan](#) / [Indonesia](#) / [Syria](#) / [Islamic State](#) / [India](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

COMMERCE SECRETARY ADVOCATES INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO DIVERSIFY EXPORTS, CALLS FOR GREATER COLLABORATION BETWEEN INDIA AND LATIN AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

During the closing ceremony of the '9th CII India-LAC Conclave', focused on enhancing South-South Cooperation, Shri Sunil Barthwal, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, highlighted the immense potential for expanding bilateral trade between India and Latin American & Caribbean (LAC) countries.

He emphasized upon the need for innovative approaches to diversify trade exchanges, especially in the context of a re-globalized world and changing energy landscapes. He highlighted the role of the G20, particularly under India's presidency, in addressing the concerns of the Global South and deeper engagements with the LAC region during the G20 Presidency of Brazil in 2024.



Shri Barthwal underscored the significance of India-LAC collaboration in achieving energy transition goals. He called for fresh perspectives in renewable energy, battery manufacturing, energy storage technology, and the chemical industry to align with the Net Zero objective.

Proposing a collaborative framework, Shri Barthwal suggested a Joint Economic & Trade Cooperation model and emphasized the importance of unified efforts in addressing issues at the international forums. He reiterated the remarks of the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles, Shri Piyush Goyal that "Trust is the bedrock of cooperation and collaboration between Indian and the Latin American and the

Caribbean countries”.

The closing ceremony of the '9th CII India-LAC Conclave' was graced by the Union Minister of State for External Affairs, Ms. Meenakshi Lekhi and H.E. Ms. Delcy Eloína Rodríguez Gómez, Executive Vice President and Minister of People's Power for Economy, Finance & Foreign Trade of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

AD/VN

During the closing ceremony of the '9th CII India-LAC Conclave', focused on enhancing South-South Cooperation, Shri Sunil Barthwal, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, highlighted the immense potential for expanding bilateral trade between India and Latin American & Caribbean (LAC) countries.

He emphasized upon the need for innovative approaches to diversify trade exchanges, especially in the context of a re-globalized world and changing energy landscapes. He highlighted the role of the G20, particularly under India's presidency, in addressing the concerns of the Global South and deeper engagements with the LAC region during the G20 Presidency of Brazil in 2024.



Shri Barthwal underscored the significance of India-LAC collaboration in achieving energy transition goals. He called for fresh perspectives in renewable energy, battery manufacturing, energy storage technology, and the chemical industry to align with the Net Zero objective.

Proposing a collaborative framework, Shri Barthwal suggested a Joint Economic & Trade Cooperation model and emphasized the importance of unified efforts in addressing issues at the international forums. He reiterated the remarks of the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles, Shri Piyush Goyal that “Trust is the bedrock of cooperation and collaboration between Indian and the Latin American and the

Caribbean countries”.

The closing ceremony of the '9th CII India-LAC Conclave' was graced by the Union Minister of State for External Affairs, Ms. Meenakshi Lekhi and H.E. Ms. Delcy Eloína Rodríguez Gómez, Executive Vice President and Minister of People's Power for Economy, Finance & Foreign Trade of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

AD/VN

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

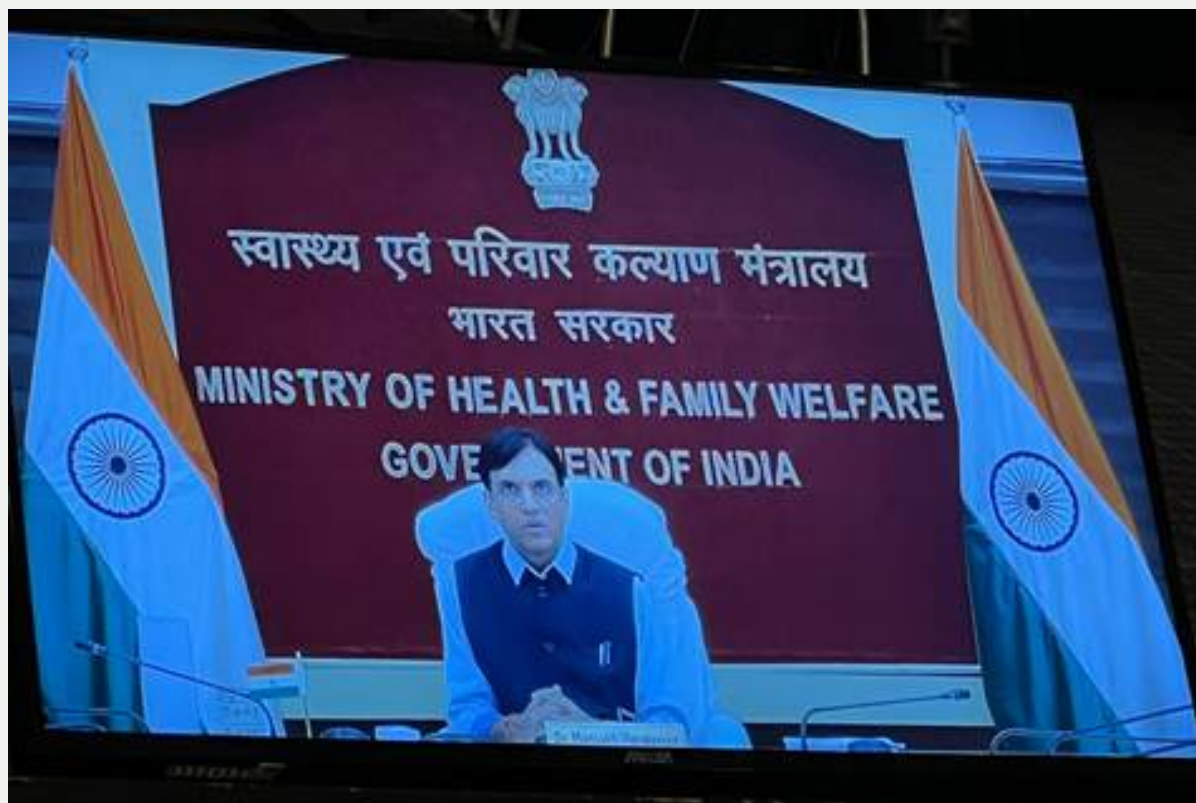
© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

BRICS HEALTH MINISTER'S MEETING

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Nepal

“India's G20 Presidency has provided a distinctive platform to amplify the concerns of the Global South, benefiting from its role as both the predecessor (Indonesia) and the successor (Brazil) are in the G20 Troika. This positioning would underscore and highlight the challenges faced by the Global South and would offer a valuable opportunity to address these issues at the highest level of global governance.” This was stated by Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare today while virtually addressing the BRICS Health Minister's Meeting being held in Durban, South Africa.



The Union Health Minister complimented South Africa's initiatives for prioritizing the agenda of Universal Health Coverage through the theme of “Bridging the Gap on Sustainable Health on the Road to UHC 2023”. He also emphasized that South Africa's BRICS initiative is aligned with India's G20 priorities including on health emergency management, medical countermeasures and most specifically ‘Digital Health innovations and solutions which shall aid Universal Health Coverage and improve healthcare service delivery’.



Dr Mandaviya said that India supported South Africa's initiative to strengthen cooperation in the field of Integrated Early Warning systems as it shall enhance preparedness for future health crises. "The collaboration shall play a pivotal role in designing effective interventions to contain cross-border spread of infection while minimizing their impact on BRICS countries' social and economic conditions, in accordance with International Health Regulations (2005)", he noted.

The Union Minister also welcomed Russia's initiative for BRICS Collaboration in Nuclear Medicine and expressed his support to constitute an International Expert Forum on Nuclear Medicines. He stated that "collaboration in this arena shall not only encourage knowledge sharing but also enhance technological advancements in BRICS nations".

Cracku



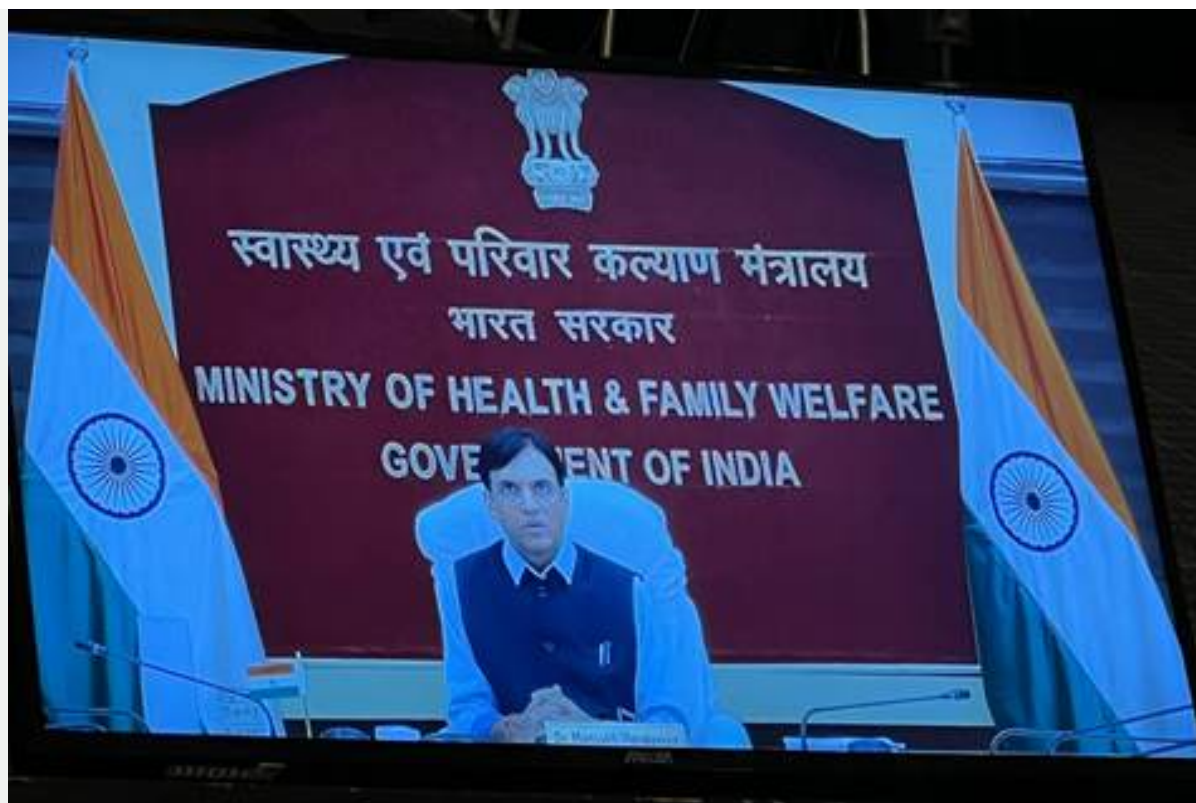
Dr Mandaviya also reiterated India's ongoing commitment to the BRICS TB Research Network Initiative, acknowledging the progress since its launch, and expressed that this shall strengthen our efforts in ending TB by 2030.

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya urged BRICS nations to implement the outcomes of meeting with a sense of urgency and commitment and thanked the Ministry of Health, South Africa for organizing the constructive engagement. He also expressed his best wishes to Russia for the upcoming BRICS Presidency.

MV

HFW/HFM-BRICS HMM/05th August 2023/1

"India's G20 Presidency has provided a distinctive platform to amplify the concerns of the Global South, benefiting from its role as both the predecessor (Indonesia) and the successor (Brazil) are in the G20 Troika. This positioning would underscore and highlight the challenges faced by the Global South and would offer a valuable opportunity to address these issues at the highest level of global governance." This was stated by Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare today while virtually addressing the BRICS Health Minister's Meeting being held in Durban, South Africa.



The Union Health Minister complimented South Africa's initiatives for prioritizing the agenda of Universal Health Coverage through the theme of "Bridging the Gap on Sustainable Health on the Road to UHC 2023". He also emphasized that South Africa's BRICS initiative is aligned with India's G20 priorities including on health emergency management, medical countermeasures and most specifically 'Digital Health innovations and solutions which shall aid Universal Health Coverage and improve healthcare service delivery'.



Dr Mandaviya said that India supported South Africa's initiative to strengthen cooperation in the field of Integrated Early Warning systems as it shall enhance preparedness for future health crises. "The collaboration shall play a pivotal role in designing effective interventions to contain

cross-border spread of infection while minimizing their impact on BRICS countries' social and economic conditions, in accordance with International Health Regulations (2005)", he noted.

The Union Minister also welcomed Russia's initiative for BRICS Collaboration in Nuclear Medicine and expressed his support to constitute an International Expert Forum on Nuclear Medicines. He stated that "collaboration in this arena shall not only encourage knowledge sharing but also enhance technological advancements in BRICS nations".



Dr Mandaviya also reiterated India's ongoing commitment to the BRICS TB Research Network Initiative, acknowledging the progress since its launch, and expressed that this shall strengthen our efforts in ending TB by 2030.

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya urged BRICS nations to implement the outcomes of meeting with a sense of urgency and commitment and thanked the Ministry of Health, South Africa for organizing the constructive engagement. He also expressed his best wishes to Russia for the upcoming BRICS Presidency.

MV

HFV/HFM-BRICS HMM/05th August 2023/1

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

STIFLING DISSENT: ON IMRAN KHAN'S ARREST AND PAKISTAN'S DEMOCRACY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Pakistan

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 08, 2023 12:20 am | Updated 08:28 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

For the second time in three months, [Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan has been arrested](#), this time after a conviction in a case involving the misappropriation of official gifts meant for the 'Toshakhana'. He was last arrested on May 9 in the 'Al Qadir' trust case charge sheet. The [latest conviction, which carries a sentence of three years](#), means that he is now disqualified from Parliament for the next five years, and will not be able to stand for election in polls due by November. Last week, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif had announced that he would dissolve Parliament on August 9, after which an interim government will step in. It is significant that Mr. Khan's arrest came days before the transition. The legal battle Mr. Khan faces now is formidable, but he is by no means the [first Pakistani Prime Minister to face jail time and disqualification](#). During his tenure, his government had pursued cases against former Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Shahid Khaqan and other major Opposition leaders including former President Asif Ali Zardari. The common factor is that all these arrests appear orchestrated not so much by political rivalry, but due to problems with the powerful military. In Mr. Khan's case, he faced months of house arrest under former Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf, but subsequently came to good terms with the military. His stunning electoral win in 2018 was believed to have been achieved with General Qamar Bajwa's blessings. However, after they developed differences, Mr. Khan's political troubles began to mount.

The government's actions are excessive by any measure. The case Mr. Khan has been arrested for is just one amidst about 100 cases he has been charged in ever since he was ousted from office in April 2022. Apart from the litany of legal cases against him and his family, there has been a systematic attempt to prosecute leaders of his party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. In addition, cases of terrorism, sedition and blasphemy against Mr. Khan and his colleagues indicate there could be more serious sentences to follow. At the same time, his ouster from power and the cases have not visibly challenged his popularity in Pakistan, going by the by-election results last October, and the anger after his arrest in May. In that sense, the fact that his conviction and arrest in the latest case were not accompanied by similar protests is not an achievement for Pakistan's government, but demonstrates the effectiveness of its establishment in silencing public expression. None of this augurs well for Pakistan's democracy.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Pakistan](#) / [arrest](#) / [politics](#) / [parliament](#) / [democracy](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

CHINA'S WORLDVIEW, ITS POSTULATES AND A REALITY CHECK

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 08, 2023 12:16 am | Updated 12:16 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'Beijing's current economic prescriptions have led to serious reverses in recent years' | Photo Credit: AFP

Chinese leaders, especially current paramount leader, Xi Jinping, constantly refer to 'changes unseen in a Century', implying that the decline of the West-promoted 'rules based order' is inevitable, and that a new Chinese-promoted world order is set to prevail. Implicit also is that a Chinese-driven world is better suited to a world defined by disorder, asymmetry and fragmentation.

'Changes unseen in a Century' is one of the underlying principles of 'Xi Jinping Thought'. This presupposes that the struggle for future dominance revolves around not merely military security but also technological, cultural, as also biological aspects, and that given China's rise, accelerated by technology and shaped by its economic strength and demographic potential, its success is inevitable.

The current crop of Chinese leaders believes that ongoing threats to China, however, remain and that the main threat comes from the United States. They hew to the view that growing polarisation within U.S. society and loss of power across the globe were impacting U.S. attitudes, causing aggravated tensions between the U.S. and China. In turn, it had led to a marked shift in U.S. attitudes; from an earlier policy of 'engagement and partial containment' to one of all-out competition with China, for global influence. The war in Ukraine, talk of an increasing divide between democracies and autocracies, the forging of new security partnerships such as the AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom and the U.S.) and the Quad (Australia, India, Japan and the U.S.) were all symptoms of this malaise. China's concerns had also increased that the Ukraine war could lead the U.S. to be more assertive on Taiwan. Beijing's riposte has been to enlarge its Global Security Initiative (GDI) and further expand the China-led Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

Chinese scholars further believe that the world has currently entered an era of 'Polycentric Competition and Cooperation'. According to China, the U.S. was unprepared, however, for a shift of this nature, and already the consequences could be seen, as for instance, in West Asia. Here, as in many areas of U.S. dominance previously, China was displacing the U.S. The Iran-Saudi Arabia truce brought about at China's initiative was an indication that U.S. influence here

was on the wane and that China was gaining in strength in the regional and global sweepstakes.

China's influence, in the meantime, had grown, according to Chinese sources, in quite a few international organisations such as the World Health Organization. It had also succeeded in binding as many countries as possible to Chinese systems, norms and standards. Another set of claims is that China had succeeded in having a decisive voice in various international standards setting bodies. Consequently, Chinese standards had become the staple for many countries and, together with its model of subsidised state capital, China was set to emerge triumphant.

Leaving aside for the moment China's worldview, and its theoretical postulates as formulated by Deng Xiaoping such as the 'Four Modernizations' (which paved the way for China's emergence as an economic superstar), the reality that China confronts today appears somewhat different. The issue before China is not one of the decline of the U.S., as much as how China can possibly reproduce the mind-boggling growth of the first two decades of the current century — an over 800% increase in overall trade volume, an unimaginable increase in GDP, and the lifting of nearly 800 million Chinese people out of poverty. Policy prescriptions needed to maintain this kind of impetus and tempo of growth, are nowhere in evidence today.

In marked contrast, Beijing's current economic prescriptions have led to serious reverses in recent years. Many of these policies stem from Mr. Xi's efforts to provide safeguards for his more orthodox version of Communist philosophy as distinguished from a market-oriented policy, accompanied by a determination to increase governmental control in the economic realm, restrict private enterprise, and achieve greater rule by decree.

The COVID-19 pandemic which necessitated adoption of certain draconian measures, including an unprecedented three-year lockdown, has been responsible for a severe economic setback, apart from hardship for its people. Several laws enacted by Beijing to contain the pandemic have again adversely impacted the image of China in the eyes of the world. Many multinational concerns have, hence, preferred to leave China, being uncertain of what the future holds. Beijing's crackdown on major technology companies and the real-estate sector have only added to the concerns of investors already grappling with the loss of several thousand millions of dollars in market value.

If China is to try and outdistance the U.S. in a period that Beijing itself affirms as featuring both Polycentric Competition and Cooperation, Beijing will need to make several shifts and changes in both approach and policy. However, the odds are stacked against China. China's current GDP growth has declined to around 3%, while China will need to more than double this figure to ensure healthy growth. Employment risks have increased and lack of employment among youth is no longer a statistic but an aspect of grave concern. An ageing population adds to these concerns. Evidently, major shifts and changes in both approach and policies are called for, including a new economic model and an undertaking to raise wages and pursue other economic and structural reforms. What China needs to realise is that it might need to come up with an alternative theory of modernity, reducing the role of the state in promoting innovation so as to bolster the economy, if at all it hopes to beat the West's free market concepts and beliefs.

The real question is whether China can indeed produce a model that can supplant the West's so-called 'rule based international order' and create one better suited to a fragmented world order. In turn, much would also depend on whether the Chinese view that the West is disintegrating is true. The only purpose the war in Ukraine has served is to demonstrate that when 'push comes to shove', a disunited West can rally its forces under U.S. auspices and effectively checkmate Russia. It could be seen as a vivid demonstration of the superiority of 'free will' over 'managed systems'.

China is, no doubt, contemplating putting in place certain corrective steps. Beijing's decision to appoint an acknowledged economist with a proven record as Governor of the Peoples' Bank of China, can be expected to boost global confidence in China's banking sector. It could be a steadying influence during a period of uncertainty and might have a favourable impact. The new Chinese Premier, Li Qiang, is again apparently making serious efforts to reinvigorate the private sector, but it is uncertain whether he would go so far as to convert China into a multi-oriented economy which satisfies the international business community. All this is still history in the making.

The issue of Taiwan, like Banquo's ghost, also hovers over the scene. Notwithstanding current tensions and despite sabre-rattling by both sides, it would seem that a major conflict on the lines of the Ukraine conflict — one that could impact both the fortunes of China and much of the world in the Asia-Pacific region — is not yet on the anvil. Any such conflict would have a severe and deleterious impact on the global economy. Notwithstanding this, neither the U.S. nor China can possibly step back from the issue of Taiwan. One possible scenario is that it might induce more realistic efforts to define objectives of which Taiwan is merely a symbol. Strategic commentators believe that Taiwan is only one of several areas where China and the U.S. will find themselves in conflict in the coming period. Finding common ground at this time would be important to ensure that matters do not go out of control.

M.K. Narayanan is a former Director, Intelligence Bureau, a former National Security Adviser, and a former Governor of West Bengal

COMMENTS

SHARE

[China](#) / [USA](#) / [national security](#) / [economy \(general\)](#) / [demography](#) / [Australia](#) / [United Kingdom](#) / [India](#) / [Japan](#) / [Iran](#) / [Saudi Arabia](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [health](#) / [United Nations](#) / [poverty](#) / [Coronavirus](#) / [technology \(general\)](#) / [investments](#) / [employment](#) / [wage and pension](#) / [banking](#) / [central bank](#) / [Taiwan](#) / [Russia-Ukraine Crisis](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

JOINT STATEMENT ON THE OFFICIAL LEVEL DIALOGUE AS FOLLOW-UP TO THE 9TH INDIA-U.S. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIP

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - USA

Senior officials from India's Ministry of Finance and the U.S. Department of Treasury met in New Delhi on August 3, 2023, as their second sub-ministerial meeting following the 9th ministerial meeting of the Indian-U.S. Economic and Financial Partnership (EFP) held in November of 2022. The Indian delegation was led by Chief Economic Adviser, Dr. V. Anantha Nageswaran and the U.S. delegation was led by Assistant Secretary for International Finance Mr. Brent Neiman. Representatives from the Reserve Bank of India and the U.S. Federal Reserve in Washington DC participated virtually.

Discussions were productive and will help prepare for the next ministerial meeting of the Indian-U.S. Economic and Financial Partnership.

Indian and U.S. officials discussed a range of economic and financial issues that included the economic outlook in both countries, Indian and U.S. priorities in addressing global debt challenges, joint efforts to advance the clean energy transition and mobilize climate finance, progress on creating innovative investment platforms to accelerate deployment of renewable energy projects, and recent developments in the area of cross-border payments that included discussion about the G20 Cross-Border Payments Roadmap, India's United Payments Interface (UPI) payments platform, and the Federal Reserve's implementation of the FedNow payments system.

Both sides agreed to continue their collaboration and will build on successful meetings that took place between Prime Minister Modi and President Biden during the Prime Minister's visit to the U.S. in June of 2023.

PPG/KMN

Senior officials from India's Ministry of Finance and the U.S. Department of Treasury met in New Delhi on August 3, 2023, as their second sub-ministerial meeting following the 9th ministerial meeting of the Indian-U.S. Economic and Financial Partnership (EFP) held in November of 2022. The Indian delegation was led by Chief Economic Adviser, Dr. V. Anantha Nageswaran and the U.S. delegation was led by Assistant Secretary for International Finance Mr. Brent Neiman. Representatives from the Reserve Bank of India and the U.S. Federal Reserve in Washington DC participated virtually.

Discussions were productive and will help prepare for the next ministerial meeting of the Indian-U.S. Economic and Financial Partnership.

Indian and U.S. officials discussed a range of economic and financial issues that included the economic outlook in both countries, Indian and U.S. priorities in addressing global debt challenges, joint efforts to advance the clean energy transition and mobilize climate finance, progress on creating innovative investment platforms to accelerate deployment of renewable energy projects, and recent developments in the area of cross-border payments that included discussion about the G20 Cross-Border Payments Roadmap, India's United Payments Interface

(UPI) payments platform, and the Federal Reserve's implementation of the FedNow payments system.

Both sides agreed to continue their collaboration and will build on successful meetings that took place between Prime Minister Modi and President Biden during the Prime Minister's visit to the U.S. in June of 2023.

PPG/KMN

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

ASEAN- INDIA S&T MEETING HIGHLIGHTS NEED TO LEVERAGE MORE ON S&T TO BRIDGE URBAN & RURAL DIVIDE WITH FOCUS ON AFFORDABLE TECHNOLOGIES

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: South-East Asia, ASEAN and India

The Meeting of The Governing Council of ASEAN-INDIA Science and Technology Development Fund (GC-AISTDF-8) highlighted the importance of India's ASEAN technology partnership for prosperity of today and for the next generations.

“India recognizes that science and technology will be the enabling tool to meet the unmet needs of society and address the global challenges that we all face. We therefore need to leverage more on science and technology to bridge disparities between urban and rural divide with focus on affordable technologies for inclusive development, economic growth, and employment generation. We, therefore, need to leverage more on science and technology to bridge disparities between urban and rural divide with focus on affordable technologies for inclusive development, economic growth, and employment generation,” Dr. Rajesh Gokhale, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Chair of India ASEAN Working Group said during the GC-AISTDF-8 meeting.

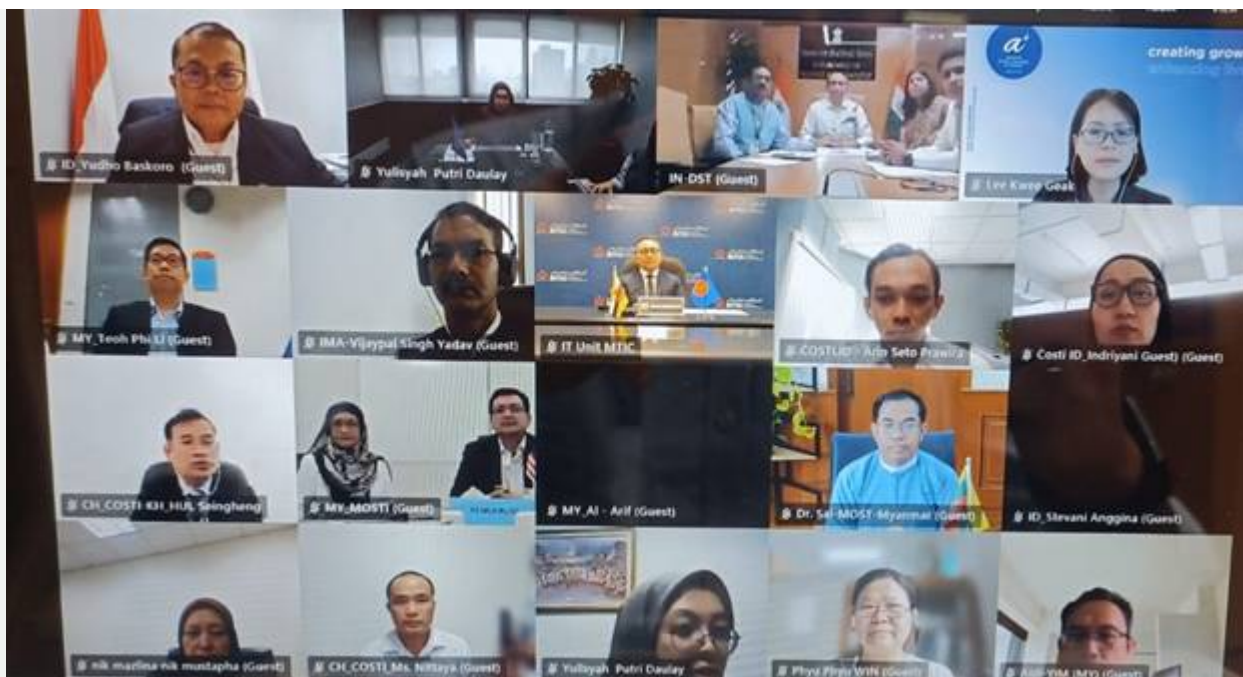
The India ASEAN Science and Technology partnership encompasses all aspects of Research and Innovation, essential for both nations to achieve new heights together. Through the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund (AISTDF) and the Plans of Action for Peace, Progress, and Shared Prosperity, the collaboration extends to various areas like blue economy, healthcare, climate action, and sustainable development. The aim is to leverage science and technology to bridge disparities between urban and rural areas, with a specific focus on developing affordable technologies.

While highlighting the remarkable progress in India and ASEAN relations, which have grown into a multi-dimensional partnership in recent years, Dr. Gokhale emphasized the significance of using science and technology to positively impact the lives of people, enhance human capacity and excellence, and contribute to the knowledge economy of both countries.

Chair of the ASEAN COSTI and Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications of Brunei Darussalam, Mohammad Nazri Mohammad Yusof said that India is the only dialogue partner allocating exclusive development fund for ASEAN-India S&T cooperation which has resulted in several research and capacity building initiatives.

Several DST officials attended the meeting that took place in the year of the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations which was celebrated with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region, elevating the partnership to a comprehensive strategic partnership and envisioning a broader vision for the future.

During the meeting, the ongoing joint cooperation initiatives between ASEAN and India were discussed. The commitment to furthering cooperation in science, technology, and innovation between India and ASEAN reflects a shared vision to address pressing challenges and drive growth and development in the region.



SNC/PK

The Meeting of The Governing Council of ASEAN-INDIA Science and Technology Development Fund (GC-AISTDF-8) highlighted the importance of India's ASEAN technology partnership for prosperity of today and for the next generations.

“India recognizes that science and technology will be the enabling tool to meet the unmet needs of society and address the global challenges that we all face. We therefore need to leverage more on science and technology to bridge disparities between urban and rural divide with focus on affordable technologies for inclusive development, economic growth, and employment generation. We, therefore, need to leverage more on science and technology to bridge disparities between urban and rural divide with focus on affordable technologies for inclusive development, economic growth, and employment generation,” Dr. Rajesh Gokhale, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Chair of India ASEAN Working Group said during the GC-AISTDF-8 meeting.

The India ASEAN Science and Technology partnership encompasses all aspects of Research and Innovation, essential for both nations to achieve new heights together. Through the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund (AISTDF) and the Plans of Action for Peace, Progress, and Shared Prosperity, the collaboration extends to various areas like blue economy, healthcare, climate action, and sustainable development. The aim is to leverage science and technology to bridge disparities between urban and rural areas, with a specific focus on developing affordable technologies.

While highlighting the remarkable progress in India and ASEAN relations, which have grown into a multi-dimensional partnership in recent years, Dr. Gokhale emphasized the significance of using science and technology to positively impact the lives of people, enhance human capacity and excellence, and contribute to the knowledge economy of both countries.

Chair of the ASEAN COSTI and Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications of Brunei Darussalam, Mohammad Nazri Mohammad Yusof said that India is the only dialogue partner allocating exclusive development fund for ASEAN-India S&T cooperation which has resulted in several research and capacity building initiatives.

Several DST officials attended the meeting that took place in the year of the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations which was celebrated with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region, elevating the partnership to a comprehensive strategic partnership and envisioning a broader vision for the future.

During the meeting, the ongoing joint cooperation initiatives between ASEAN and India were discussed. The commitment to furthering cooperation in science, technology, and innovation between India and ASEAN reflects a shared vision to address pressing challenges and drive growth and development in the region.



SNC/PK

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© Zuccess App by crackIAS.com

CHASING CONSENSUS: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON JEDDAH CONFERENCE AND ENDING THE UKRAINE-RUSSIA CONFLICT

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 10, 2023 12:10 am | Updated 12:10 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

The [Jeddah conference](#) on the [Ukraine war](#), in which 42 nations participated, was one of the most serious efforts by the world in finding a way to end the conflict. This was not a typical peace conference. Russia was not invited, and the main goal of Ukraine and its western partners was to build consensus among major powers, especially in the Global South, on working towards a fair and durable peace. After the talks, diplomats said there was broad acceptance about respecting the central pillars of international law such as [Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity](#), and that there was agreement to meet again. China had stayed away from the Copenhagen conference in June, which was a precursor to the Jeddah talks. But with China's participation this time, along with India and South Africa — all countries that maintain good ties with Russia despite the war — global efforts towards peace have gained much more seriousness. China, in February, had issued a position paper on the war calling for a “political settlement”, where it said the “sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all countries must be effectively upheld”, while also backing Russia's security concerns. Western countries had slammed China's position, saying it could never be a neutral backer. But today, concerned parties appear to be more pragmatic and want China and India to play a bigger, constructive role in convincing Russia to take the path of talks.

Eighteen months after the war began, it is now evident that it has no military solution. Russia has made some advances since last year's humiliating retreat from Kherson and Kharkiv, but is still far from meeting its objectives, and is struggling to cope with the war's effects — from political and economic stability to security issues. Ukraine's much-awaited counteroffensive which started with advanced western weapons and training, has not achieved any major breakthrough. While Ukraine has shown its capability to strike deep inside Russia with drones, Moscow keeps bombing Ukrainian cities and ports. But the stalemate does not push either side towards talks. According to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's peace plan, Russia has to withdraw from all occupied territories for talks to begin. Moscow demands recognition of the annexed Ukrainian territories, including regions its military does not control. Amid these maximalist positions, there is hardly any room for direct talks. This is where the international community could make a difference. It should work with Russia and Ukraine to build an agenda for future talks. The coming together of Ukraine's western backers, neutral developing powers and Russia's close partners could be the first step in building this consensus.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Russia-Ukraine Crisis](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [peace negotiations](#) / [China](#) / [India](#) / [South Africa](#) / [war](#) / [politics](#) / [economy \(general\)](#) / [Saudi Arabia](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by [crackIAS.com](#)

CrackIAS

STOP THE FENCE-SITTING IN CLUSTER BOMB USE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 10, 2023 12:08 am | Updated 12:46 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

Cluster bomb units at a Lebanese military base in 2011. File | Photo Credit: AP

The decision by the United States to send cluster munitions to Ukraine, as part of a new military aid package to bolster [Kyiv's war efforts against Russia](#), has raked up controversy. [Cluster munitions, or cluster bombs](#), are weapons that release multiple explosive submunitions, also called bomblets, into the air. These submunitions explode as soon as they hit the ground, killing and maiming people in the area. Many bomblets do not blow up instantly and remain dormant for years (also known as the dud rate). These inactive bomblets act as precarious landmines, posing a grave threat to the civilian population, including women and children, for a long time. According to the Human Rights Watch, which is a civil society organisation, Russia, since launching a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, has used cluster bombs against Ukraine in cities such as Kharkiv, resulting in hundreds of civilian deaths and damaging civilian objects such as homes, hospitals, and schools. Now, Ukraine using these dangerous weapons will worsen the situation.

Cluster bombs have a notorious history. They were used in the Second World War. Since then, cluster bombs have been used on multiple occasions including by the U.S. in the wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. According to the Cluster Munition Monitor, anywhere between 56,000 to 86,000 people have died in cluster munition-affected countries, since the 1960s.

Along with its increasing use, the international campaign against cluster bombs led by the civil society organisations such as Human Rights Watch also gathered momentum. This resulted in an international treaty called the [Convention on Cluster Munitions](#) (CCM) being enacted in May 2008. The enactment of the CCM has been a major step in eradicating cluster bombs. However, the treaty is not universal — 112 countries have acceded to the CCM including many North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members such as Canada, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. But important countries such as the U.S., Russia, China, Israel, and India have not signed the CCM. Ukraine is not a member.

Article 1 of the CCM bans the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of cluster bombs. The convention further obligates countries to destroy existing stockpile of cluster munitions in their possession. Countries are also legally bound to develop a victim assistance programme to provide support and rehabilitation to the cluster bomb victims in their jurisdiction.

Given that there is such an international treaty, are Russia and Ukraine violating international

law by using cluster bombs? Since these countries are not signatories to the CCM, it is argued that they are not bound by international law banning cluster bombs. This is not correct.

Editorial | [Blurred lines: On the U.S.'s new move in the Ukraine war](#)

International law on armed conflicts has always drawn a distinction between combatants and civilian populations and between civilian objects and military objectives. In this regard, a fundamental customary international law (CIL) norm applicable to armed conflicts is the prohibition of indiscriminate attacks. In other words, an essential canon of international law is that the use of force must be discriminate, that is, the force should target specific military objectives and not civilians. This CIL norm is codified in Article 51(4) of Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, to which both Russia and Ukraine are parties. Given the nature of cluster bombs, their usage is a classic example of indiscriminate use of force that fails to differentiate between combatants and civilians, or between civilian objects and military objectives, and is thus illegal.

Another fundamental international humanitarian law norm relevant here is proportionality. Codified in Article 51(5) of the Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, this rule prohibits excessive use of force that causes incidental damage to the civilian population or civilian objects, when compared to military benefits anticipated. Given the fact that the use of cluster bombs is inherently indiscriminate, harming civilians, their use will amount to disproportionate use of force and is thus illegal. In sum, even if Russia and Ukraine are not signatories to the CCM, their use of cluster bombs violates international law.

But what about the U.S.? Arguably supplying cluster bombs to Ukraine outside of the CCM, that Washington has not signed, is not a violation of international law. Moreover, it is claimed that the U.S.-made cluster bombs, unlike the Russian ones, have a low dud rate, that is, the prospects of unexploded bomblets are slim. Thus, questionably, they meet the requirements of the use of force being proportional and discriminate. Nonetheless, supplying cluster bombs to any country is an irresponsible act. The usage and the possession and transfer or supply of cluster bombs should be banned universally, as envisaged in the CCM. For this to happen, all United Nations member-countries should accede to the CCM and eradicate cluster bombs from the face of the earth.

Prabhash Ranjan teaches at the Faculty of Legal Studies, South Asian University. The views expressed are personal

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Russia-Ukraine Crisis](#) / [international law](#) / [USA](#) / [Russia](#) / [defence equipment](#) / [China](#) / [Israel](#) / [India](#) / [NATO](#) / [Canada](#) / [Germany](#) / [France](#) / [United Kingdom](#) / [human rights](#) / [war](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

INDIA'S MYANMAR QUANDARY, ITS PARADOXICAL POLICY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 11, 2023 12:08 am | Updated 01:17 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'The junta's decision to reduce Ms. Suu Kyi's sentence and shift her from the prison is a move that has perplexed a few. Yet, it is not a step towards democracy' | Photo Credit: AFP

July 31 and August 1 will be recorded as the crucial dates when the history of Myanmar's ongoing tragedy was written. In the first case, the acting President of Myanmar, Myint Swe, announced the fourth extension of the 'emergency' for another six months, which is in violation of the 2008 Constitution. In the second instance, the military regime decided to release several political prisoners and even reduced the sentences imposed on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the deposed President Win Myint. Ms. Suu Kyi was also moved out of prison to house arrest. However, these developments do not signal the dawn of a democratic and peaceful Myanmar.

The extension of the emergency further delays the elections proposed by the military. Min Aung Hlaing, the coup orchestrator, justified the extension due to the failure to establish 'normalcy' in large parts of the country. However, it is this pursuit of 'normalcy' that has resulted in suffering, with ACLED, or the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (a disaggregated data collection, analysis, and crisis mapping project) reporting that Myanmar civilians witness two and a half times more violence than those in Afghanistan.

The military regime's relentless campaign includes an average of over 30 airstrikes per month in 2023. Surprisingly, the Tatmadaw (the military of Myanmar) exerts real control in only 30%-40% of the territory, as in admissions from the Burmese military and a report of the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar (SAC-M). A factitious national election would lead to the loss of further credibility if it is conducted only in a third of the country.

Moreover, the reshuffling within the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) under Khin Yi, is aimed at adding more military hard-liners, further raising concerns about the junta's commitment to democracy. The decision by the National League for Democracy decision not to participate in the new elections, combined with the exclusion of smaller parties through the new party registration laws, leaves no viable opposition to the USDP in a parliament whose constitutional structure gives the military a practical veto.

The junta's decision to reduce Ms. Suu Kyi's sentence and shift her from the prison is a move that has perplexed a few. Yet, it is not a step towards democracy. Despite being the Tatmadaw's

biggest rival, Ms. Suu Kyi has demonstrated a willingness to compromise and work with the military. She remains the rallying point for political change in Myanmar despite international criticism over her position/stand and role in the Rohingya persecution. Some protest may ease with these symbolic gestures. But more importantly,

Ms. Suu Kyi's return could potentially split the National Unity Government (NUG)-led resistance. A young generation of activists is leading the NUG and its cooperation with ethnic armed organisations and even reconciliation with Rohingyas. This could all change if Ms. Suu Kyi is back in active politics.

These symbolic gestures by the junta, as said, may ease some protests and allow the military to claim progress over international and regional appeals, possibly leading to a lifting of sanctions and revived economic prospects. Additionally, they offer political bandwidth and a face-saving token to actors engaging with the junta, such as India.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the coup, India took a proactive approach by providing food and vaccine assistance. However, the plight of the Myanmar people seems to have faded from memory, with accusations of instigating violence in Manipur replacing it. Communities along the border have already defied the Home Ministry by providing shelter to the refugees. Concerns over trafficking and drug smuggling in Myanmar led to India suspending the Free Movement Regime in September 2022. India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar raised the issue of infrastructure projects and stability in border areas with his Myanmar counterpart Than Swe in Bangkok in July, on the sidelines of the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) meeting. India has also supported the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' 'Five-Point Consensus'. Nevertheless, India's policy towards Myanmar presents a paradox.

India's official rhetoric on commitment to democracy in Myanmar is in contrast with its policy framed through the lens of its security concerns in north-east India and relations with China. For example, India's announcement of the Sairang-Hmawngbuchhuah railway project near the Myanmar border, under India's Act East Policy, aims to counter China's railway access in Myanmar through Yunnan and the ambitious China-Myanmar Economic Corridor.

Disturbingly, sources such as Justice for Myanmar, SAC-M, and the United Nations Special Rapporteur have reported an increase in India's arms supply to the military since the coup. Arming the Tatmadaw not only undermines India's position on restoring democracy but also adds fuel to the fire, which spills over regularly across the border.

India's policy options in Myanmar are challenging, but not limited. The relaxation of Ms. Suu Kyi's prison sentence may provide an opportunity for India to engage with her and pro-democracy actors, including the NUG. Additionally, the government and media must avoid blanket securitisation and profiling of incoming refugees, many of whom have ties of kinship in India. This approach is essential to prevent further violence and foster an environment of care and compassion.

Chetan Rana is a doctoral candidate at the Centre for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. X: @ChetanRana96

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Myanmar](#) / [India](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [democracy](#) / [constitution](#) / [prison](#) / [politics](#) / [election](#) / [political parties](#) / [China](#) / [economic policy](#) / [Mizoram](#) / [railway](#) / [United Nations](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

CARTEL POLITICS: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON AN ASSASSINATION AND ECUADOR'S FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 12, 2023 12:10 am | Updated 12:33 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

The [assassination of a presidential candidate in Ecuador](#), just 11 days ahead of voting, shows that even its top politicians are not safe from organised gangs that have, in recent years, turned this South American nation into a hub of narco-trafficking. Fernando Villavicencio, a former journalist and lawmaker, was one of the most outspoken critics of what he called “narco-politics”. During the election campaign, he had promised measures to tackle gang violence such as building a maximum-security prison in the Amazon for gang leaders, enhancing anti-drug cooperation with the U.S., cracking down on cocaine exports from Ecuador and rooting out corruption in the government, police and judiciary. He rose to fame during the presidency of leftist leader Rafael Correa. In 2014, when Mr. Correa, now in exile, was the President, Villavicencio had to flee fearing a government crackdown; he briefly sought asylum in Peru. He returned after Mr. Correa’s presidency ended and was elected to the National Assembly where he made a name for himself as an enemy of drug cartels. It is this relentless fight against organised crime that seemed to have cost him his life. Officials say criminal gangs are behind his murder, and police have arrested six Colombian nationals who they say have ties with a drug trafficking cartel.

Ecuador, a relatively peaceful country of 18 million people until 2017-18, is now one of the most dangerous countries in Latin America. Situated between Colombia and Peru, both major producers of cocaine, it has seen a spurt in violent crimes with drug cartels shifting their focus to the country in order to get drugs shipped to North America and Europe. Murders have quadrupled since 2019, with 4,800 recorded last year. Officials say two international crime organisations, a Mexican cartel and a Balkan one (known as the Albanian mafia), have recruited local gangs to build drug networks, and their fight to take control of the supply routes has led to rising gang violence. The gangs have turned prisons into operating bases and ports into fighting zones, while extortion networks flourish across the country. The government of President Guillermo Lasso, a conservative who is facing serious allegations of corruption, has remained largely helpless when cartels built a parallel system. It is this impunity that led to the assassination of Villavicencio. If Ecuador’s politicians and state institutions continue to let criminal gangs have their way, it is only a matter of time before the country becomes a failed state. Investigators have to find out how and why Villavicencio’s security broke down, and bring the perpetrators to justice. But a bigger message of the murder is that Ecuador should start an uncompromising war against organised crimes. Other countries in the Americas should offer a

helping hand to Quito in this battle.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Ecuador](#) / [election](#) / [politics](#) / [USA](#) / [narcotics & drug trafficking](#) / [European Union](#) / [crime](#) / [corruption & bribery](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS

DEMOCRACY IN INDIA, A GIFT AND A WARNING

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Indian Diaspora

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 15, 2023 12:15 am | Updated 12:15 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

Pali scripture. Photo: Wikipedia Commons

In the 76th year of our Independence, the Prime Minister's statement welcoming G-20 delegates to "the mother of democracy" is plastered on billboards across the nation's capital. Is this claim a boast without substance? Haven't we all learned at school that Greece is where democracy originated?

With all due respect to the Greeks, both countries may have a point. Contrary to the linear narrative that democracy was invented in ancient Athens before being rediscovered and spreading around the globe in modern times, we must accept that democratic government was more common in the ancient world than many believe, even if the proportion of the population participating in Athenian democracy may have been more extensive than other places.

India's claims are shrouded in antiquity. Some see allusions to democratic forms of government in the Rig Veda, for that most ancient of sacred texts does mention something very similar to popular government (with references to equitable resource distribution, amicable discussion, and resolution of disputes). The Rig Veda has mentioned Gramini, the village head employed by the king for civil and military purposes; while the Atharva Veda refers to the institutions of sabha, samiti, babhapati and a sabkasad (primarily performing judicial functions). Nonetheless, there is really no corroborating material evidence to authenticate a claim of "democracy". On the other hand, Dr. Ambedkar's arguments in favour of such practices flourishing in the Buddhist era, a period contemporary to the Greek city-states and their republics, stand up rather better.

Whereas some saw Ambedkar, with his three-piece suit and formal English, as a Westernised exponent of Occidental constitutional systems, he was inspired far more by the democratic practices of ancient India, in particular the Buddhist sanghas. As chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly, Ambedkar argued that the constitutional roots of Indian republicanism ran deep. He remarked that some ancient Indian states were republics, notably those of the Lichhavis who ruled northern Bihar and lower Nepal in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE (around the Buddha's time), the Mallas, centred in the city of Kusinagara, and the Vajji (or Vriji) confederation, based in the city of Vaishali. Early Indian republicanism can be traced back to the independent gana sanghas, which appear to have existed between the sixth and fourth centuries BCE.

Ambedkar referred to the Vinay-pitaka, a Theravada Buddhist scripture, as evidence of existing democratic procedures in India. The scripture regulated meetings of the Bhikkhus (monks) and

included rules for debates, motions, and voting through a secret ballot system in their sanghas.

The Greek historian Diodorus Siculus, describing India at the time of Alexander the Great's invasion in 326 BCE (though he was writing two centuries later), recorded that independent and democratic republics existed in India. They seemed, however, to include a monarch or a raja, and a deliberative assembly that met regularly and discussed all major state decisions. The gana sanghas had full financial, administrative, and judicial authority and elected the raja, who therefore was not a hereditary monarch. The raja reported to the assembly and in some states, was assisted by a council of other nobles.

The Buddhist scriptures in Pali provide a vivid depiction of the city-state of Vaishali during the fifth century BCE and describe the different groups that managed their own affairs. Some of these groups were probably warrior formations; others were groups with avowed economic aims; some were religious fraternities. These organisations, of whatever type, were usually designated as gana or sangha, while less important political structures were known by such terms as sreni (guilds).

The terms gana and sangha initially meant "multitude", but by the sixth century BCE, these words came to mean a self-governing multitude. In this system, all decisions were taken by the sangha members themselves, and the governing style was stabilised by conventions applicable to such groups. The strongest of these groups functioned as sovereign governments, very similar to republics.

While hailing all this, Ambedkar was somewhat more sceptical of the Gandhian ideal of the self-governing village republic. He saw villages as 'cesspools' of caste oppression and social and economic backwardness, considering, from a Dalit point of view, the Indian village to be 'a sink of localism, a den of ignorance, narrow-mindedness and communalism'. It is true that a sort of democracy prevailed in ancient Indian villages: Kautilya's Arthashastra gives a comprehensive account of the system of village administration prevailing in antiquity, and evidence of the village panchayats is also discerned in the Mauryan and Chola dynasties and during the golden era of the Gupta period.

But Ambedkar was right to point to a major flaw in ancient India's democratic practice, the omission of an entire class of people. As he explained it: 'Indian villages represent a kind of colonialism of the Hindus designed to exploit the Untouchables. The Untouchables have no rights. They are there only to wait, serve and submit. They are there to do or to die. They have no rights because they are outside the village republic and because they are outside the so-called republic, they are outside the Hindu fold.'

However, such omissions also existed in Greece, where people classified as slaves and barbarians exercised no rights; and till well into the 20th century, an even larger community of people was excluded from all forms of democratic practice everywhere – women. Within the restricted category of male citizens, therefore, the ancient Indian village republics were just as democratic as the city-states of ancient Greece.

American political scientist David Stasavage has persuasively argued that efforts to create institutions that limited the power of any one actor in the political system are to be found in many parts of the world in the remote and the recent past; no single society can claim credit for it. As a corollary to Stasavage's argument, Indian democracy is as ancient as Greek democracy and both evolved independently, as did other states with assemblies throughout the rest of the world. Instead of conceiving of democracy as something that was invented, it is better to think of it as one of the elemental forms of government common to all of humanity. Democracy is our gift to ourselves – though of course, we must protect it, since like all gifts, it can also be snatched

away.

Ambedkar constantly expressed fear that the democracy he had helped create in the Constitution could be undemocratically transformed: 'It is quite possible for this new-born democracy to retain its form, but give place to dictatorship in fact. If there was a landslide of popular support, the danger of that possibility becoming an actuality is much greater.' Amid all the self-congratulation, it is fair to say that we have been warned.

Shashi Tharoor is third-term MP (Congress) for Thiruvananthapuram and the Sahitya Akademi Award-winning author of 24 books, including 'The Battle of Belonging: Patriotism, Nationalism and What It Means to Be Indian' and most recently, 'Ambedkar: A Life'

(Armaan Mathur assisted in the preparation of this article.)

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Indian National Congress / Independence Day](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

Crack

AWAITING THE AGE OF MODERATION

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: International Treaties & Agreements, and other important organizations

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 16, 2023 12:15 am | Updated 11:11 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

Twitter image of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

Last month, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), a coalition of 57 Muslim countries, suspended the status of Sweden's special envoy, accusing the Scandinavian nation of enabling "the repeated abuse of the sanctity of the Holy Quran and Islamic symbols".

One of the reasons for this sort of Islamophobia to rage unabated across the world is the failure of Muslim societies to question clerical interpretations that present Islam as an exclusivist and intolerant religion.

Although Muslim supremacism is more than a millennium old, its widespread prevalence today owes mainly to the mid-eighteenth century religio-political alliance between Muhammad bin Saud (1687-1765), founder of the Saudi kingdom, and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792), the founder of modern Salafism who believed that a rejection of his narrow understanding of monotheism renders Muslims outside the pale of Islam, or *kafirs*.

The pact with Saud was, therefore, to seek autarchic assent to impose this blinkered interpretation across Arabia. In return, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab promised to provide theological underpinning to Saud's rule over the region.

In *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*, David Commins writes about the remarkable endurance of this symbiotic deal which "survived traumatic defeats and episodes of complete collapse". And, in *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, Gilles Kepel describes how, after the discovery of oil, the Saudis spread Wahhabi thought across the world and even normalised it through the liberal distribution of charity and construction of mosques in Muslim societies.

In addition, writes Kepel, the Saudi ministry for religious affairs sent at no cost millions of translations and commentaries of the *Koran* (reflecting the Salafi worldview) to the world's mosques. The doctrinal uniformity this strategy managed to enforce upon the religiously diverse Muslim world has been so huge that it obtrudes itself into all Muslim thinking today.

In an allusive acknowledgement of this fact, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) told *The Washington Post* in March 2018 that [investments in mosques and madrassas overseas were rooted in the Cold War](#), when allies asked Saudi Arabia to use its resources to prevent inroads in Muslim countries by the Soviet Union.

Nonetheless, MBS's public recantation of the Wahhabi ideology and his push for moderate interpretations of Islam is an epochal moment in the history of Saudi Arabia which needs to be supported because of the transformative impact it is likely to have on Muslim thought.

In pursuance of the recast *raison d'état* of Saudi Arabia — Islamic moderation — Secretary-General of the Mecca-based Muslim World League (MWL), Mr. Mohammed bin Abdul-Karim Al-Issa, was in India last month to talk about the need for an “alliance of civilisations” to counter the fatalistic idea of “clash of civilisations”. The MWL is the force behind the promotion of what it [calls the “Prophetic approach of moderation”](#).

In his address to Muslims at the India Islamic Cultural Centre (IICC) on July 11 in Delhi (during which this author was present), Al-Issa stated that Islam is a tolerant and open religion which obliges Muslims to live in peace with everyone.

The inherent tolerance of Islam needed to be highlighted because the aetiological roots of the extremism exhibited by groups such as the Taliban lie in the arrogant otherisation of non-Muslims as *kafirs* and judging them to be beyond redemption for not following Islam.

But the *Koranickafir* is not a non-Muslim. It is anyone (including a Muslim) who wilfully rejects and suppresses truth, or is ungrateful. Thus it is not religious belief but thanklessness and repudiation of established facts that make a person a *kafir*.

If Muslims today are in the dark about the philosophy of language and intentionality of the *Koran* it is because sectarian exegetes have distorted it beyond recognition. To give just one example, The *Noble Quran* (one of the most widely distributed English translations from Saudi Arabia) [renders a prayer in verses](#) 1: 6-7 as, “*Guide us to the Straight Way. The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians).*”

The reference to Jews and Christians is not part of the Arabic text of the *Koran*. In other words, this parenthetical interpolation (which is freely accessible online) indoctrinates Muslims to look down upon the followers of Judaism and Christianity in violation of the *Koran's* original meaning.

In fact, most Salafi-minded translations are full of similar ideological transclusions. The *Koran* in 5:77 prohibits such travesties of facts and tells Muslims that the promotion of anything other than the truth (*ghairal haq*) is an act of extremism (*ghulu*).

If the moderateness of Islam is to be successfully propagated across the globe, Saudi authorities must see to it that translations disseminated from their soil are re-examined and changed to reflect the original intent of the *Koran*.

The Muslim community in India is perhaps the only Islamic society in the world which did not succumb to the temptations of any extremist ideology. This fact stood endorsed when India's National Security Advisor Mr. Ajit Doval, speaking after Al-Issa at the IICC, pointed out that despite their huge population the involvement of Indian Muslims in global terrorism has been [“incredibly low”](#).

Mr. Doval warned that if communities don't sail together they are “doomed to sink together”. For it is “only with mutual trust and cooperation among nations, civil societies, religions and people of the world that security, stability, sustainable development and a dignified life for all citizens can be ensured”.

Mr. Doval's compelling advocacy of communal cooperation needs to percolate down because

the progress of our country could be seriously affected by needless violence of the horrifying kind witnessed recently in Manipur and Haryana.

In the context of Islamophobia, the extra-judicial lynching of Muslims in the name of saving Hindus and their religion, burning of mosques, calling for the social and economic boycott of Muslims, and ultimatums to Muslims to leave town or vacate houses should open our eyes to the stark reality that moderation needs to be practised not just by members of any one community.

The perpetrators of the aforementioned atrocities must, apart from being proceeded against legally, be made to understand that the assimilative pluralism of Hinduism is so wide in scope that it accommodates diverse philosophies such as Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Buddhism, Vedanta, Mimamsa, and even the atheistic Charvaaka school of thought.

Then why can't Islam, Christianity, and other religious or non-religious belief systems peacefully co-exist with Hinduism in a democratic India? This is [what our Prime Minister meant when he said](#) during his recent visit to the USA that in India "there is no place for discrimination on the grounds of caste, creed, gender, religion".

In the end, self-restraint and moderateness are mechanisms of sociological transmutation. If we don't use them to convert hate into harmony, peace and progress would remain elusive.

A. Faizur Rahman is Secretary-General of the Islamic Forum for the Promotion of Moderate Thought. E-mail: themoderates2020@gmail.com

COMMENTS

SHARE

[summit / Organisation of Islamic Countries](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

SAUDI ARABIA AND THE RUSSIA–UKRAINE WAR

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

[More from the author](#)

Saudi Arabia's approach towards the Russia–Ukraine War is characterised by a commitment to neutrality, mediation efforts and providing humanitarian assistance to the Ukrainian refugees. While Riyadh's primary political and security focus has traditionally remained within the Arab and Islamic world, it has displayed a profound concern for the ongoing developments in the Russia–Ukraine War. This Saudi stance towards the Russia–Ukraine War underscores the Kingdom's dynamic and forward-looking foreign policy initiatives, as championed by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

On 5–6 August 2023, Saudi Arabia hosted a meeting of the National Security Advisers/representatives of over 40 countries along with the representatives of the United Nations, the European Commission and the European Council. The meeting, held in Jeddah, agreed to continue consultations and exchange opinions to find a way to restore peace between Russia and Ukraine. Ironically, Russia was not invited to the meeting. While Ukraine described the meeting as “fruitful consultations”,¹ Russia stated that “without ... taking into account its interests, no meetings on the Ukrainian crisis have the slightest added value”.²

Since the beginning of the Russia–Ukraine War, Saudi Arabia has adhered to a stance of neutrality while consistently advocating for a peaceful resolution through diplomatic negotiations. Over time, this neutrality has evolved into a more proactive diplomatic engagement, with Saudi Arabia striving to mediate between Russia and Ukraine.

Despite the deepening engagements with Russia, Saudi Arabia has voted in favour of the UN resolutions calling for the cessation of conflicts, the withdrawal of Russian forces and the Russian annexation of Ukrainian territory.³ The Kingdom has maintained a good relationship with both Russia and Ukraine which makes it believe that it is uniquely positioned as a neutral, and credible mediator in the crisis.

While appealing for a halt to the war, Saudi Arabia has provided humanitarian assistance for the Ukrainian refugees. In February 2023, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud visited Ukraine and met President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Both countries signed agreements worth US\$ 400 million that included US\$ 300 million in oil derivatives for Ukraine and providing humanitarian assistance of US\$ 100 million through the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSRelief).⁴

The Saudi foreign minister also expressed his country's willingness to mediate in the conflict and help in resolving the situation. In less than two weeks, on 9 March 2023, Farhan Al Saud visited Moscow and met his counterpart, Sergey Lavrov. He also reiterated the Saudi willingness to mediate between Russia and Ukraine to end the war.⁵

Since the creation of OPEC+ in 2016, Saudi–Russian cooperation in the energy sector has significantly deepened. For the US, the Saudi–Russia bonhomie in the OPEC+ and its impact on the global oil market has been a major concern. At a time when the US and the European countries have imposed an import ban on Russian oil, the OPEC+ deal has helped the Russian economy during the war. It has also helped Saudi Arabia to maintain its dominance in the oil market and keep its economy in shape.

Thus, Saudi Arabia has ample reasons to uphold a neutral stance in the war, evading pressure from the US. Its relationship with Ukraine has also been warm with good political and economic ties. Saudi Arabia invited Zelenskyy to participate in the Jeddah summit of the Arab League in May 2023, where he sought the support of the organisation against Russian aggression.

Riyadh is seeking to strengthen its reputation as a credible mediator in its neighbourhood and beyond. In recent years, Saudi Arabia has been mediating in a number of regional conflicts and mediation has become an important feature of Saudi diplomacy. It has mediated in regional conflicts in the Arab/Islamic region such as in Lebanon, between Hamas and Fatah in Palestine, and most recently between the conflicting parties in Sudan. Riyadh often uses its religious soft power to establish its credibility as a mediator and also provides financial aid to support and pacify the conflicting parties.

In December 2022, Saudi Arabia and the UAE mediated between the US and Russia for the release of Brittney Griner, an American sportsperson jailed in Russia, and Victor Bout, a Russian citizen who was in a US prison.⁶ This has lent Riyadh a degree of confidence to engage in mediation between Russia and Ukraine.

Success in mediation in the 18-month long Russia–Ukraine War, however, would be a formidable task for Riyadh as the war is taking place in a region which is beyond its Arab/Islamic neighbourhood where its soft power is ineffective. Despite maintaining good relations with them, Riyadh's political and diplomatic leverages to influence the decisions of Moscow and Kiev are limited. Convincing Russia to withdraw without an acceptable deal would be difficult to achieve. In the current situation, where Russia has captured Ukrainian territory, the US and NATO are actively supporting Ukraine in the War and a refugee crisis continues to exist, the efficacy of Riyadh's mediation would remain constrained.

In the Jeddah meeting, Riyadh has made a good start to bring the key stakeholders from across the world for consultation. Saudi mediation efforts have the potential to build an international consensus to bring the war to an end, but the intricate challenge lies in the successful translation of this consensus into tangible and effective actions on the ground.

Views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Manohar Parrikar IDSA or of the Government of India.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CABINET APPROVES MUTUAL RECOGNITION ARRANGEMENT OF AUTHORISED ECONOMIC OPERATORS BETWEEN INDIA AND AUSTRALIA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Australia

The Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the signing and ratification of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) between the Central Board of Indirect taxes and Customs (CBIC), Department of Revenue, Government of India and the Department of Home Affairs incorporating the Australian Border Force, Australian Government.

The arrangement is aimed at providing reciprocal benefits to accredited and trusted exporters of both the signatories in the clearance of goods by the Customs authorities of the importing country. Mutual recognition of Authorized Economic Operators is a key element of the World Customs Organisation's SAFE Framework of Standards to secure and facilitate global trade to strengthen end-to-end security of supply chains while providing higher facilitation to trade at the global level. This arrangement shall benefit our exporters to Australia and thereby promote a trade relationship between the two countries.

Mutual Recognition of the Australian Trusted Trader Program in Australia and the Authorized Economic Operator Program in India shall enter into force from the date of signing by the authorized representatives of both the countries. The text of the proposed Mutual Recognition Arrangement has been finalized with the concurrence of the Customs Administrations of both the countries.

DS/SK

The Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the signing and ratification of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) between the Central Board of Indirect taxes and Customs (CBIC), Department of Revenue, Government of India and the Department of Home Affairs incorporating the Australian Border Force, Australian Government.

The arrangement is aimed at providing reciprocal benefits to accredited and trusted exporters of both the signatories in the clearance of goods by the Customs authorities of the importing country. Mutual recognition of Authorized Economic Operators is a key element of the World Customs Organisation's SAFE Framework of Standards to secure and facilitate global trade to strengthen end-to-end security of supply chains while providing higher facilitation to trade at the global level. This arrangement shall benefit our exporters to Australia and thereby promote a trade relationship between the two countries.

Mutual Recognition of the Australian Trusted Trader Program in Australia and the Authorized Economic Operator Program in India shall enter into force from the date of signing by the authorized representatives of both the countries. The text of the proposed Mutual Recognition Arrangement has been finalized with the concurrence of the Customs Administrations of both the countries.

DS/SK

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

MORE THAN 75 NATIONS PARTICIPATES IN THE FIRST-EVER GLOBAL SUMMIT ON TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: International Treaties & Agreements, and other important organizations

The first World Health Organization Global Summit on Traditional Medicine was inaugurated today at Gandhinagar, Gujarat alongside the G20 health ministerial meet. Director-General of WHO Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and the Union Minister of Ayush, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya were invited to light the ceremonial lamp to the accompaniment of auspicious hymns dedicated to Dhanvantari, the god of Ayurveda.

Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Bhupendra Rajnikant Patel, Union MoS for Ayush Dr Munjpara Mahendrabhai Kalubhai, and senior delegates of WHO were also present on this occasion



On his inaugural address Dr Tedros Adhanom said, “Traditional Medicine is as old as humanity itself. However, it is not a thing of the past. It has a growing relevance in communities and cultures even today.” Commending the Indian Government's Ayushman Bharat Initiative, he praised the country's medical system. Dr Tedros also noted the seamless integration of traditional medicine into primary healthcare in rural areas.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said that the outcome of the historic WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit will help to propose recommendations for a dedicated forum within future G20 presidencies. He reminded the gathering that the integrative approach of the government of India is resulting in the establishment of dedicated Ayush Departments in all AIIMS. He said that it all has happened just because Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji had a clear vision about the efficacy of Ayush and he strongly supported the efforts to give allround boost to the Ministry of Ayush for the benefit of masses of India and the world.

On this occasion, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, highlighted the significant contributions of Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel in nation-building. He emphasized that with the WHO GCTM leading

the way towards a more prominent role of traditional medicine in mainstream healthcare, India is well-positioned to become a knowledge hub and unlock the full potential of TM. The pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries are both showing significant interest in traditional medicine and more than 170 countries around the world are utilizing it. The summit provides an ideal platform for international collaboration and the exchange of ideas to promote best practices in the sector, he concluded.



Speaking next, the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendra Patel shared how the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi believed that traditional medicine could play an effective role in dealing with a crisis like the covid pandemic. Following this thought, he began connecting other countries of the world with the mission of Traditional Medicine. His initiative has now emerged as the world's first Traditional Medicine Global Summit.

Many visitors were drawn to the experiential Ayush Exhibition Zone which took place alongside an exhibition of traditional medicine systems from WHO's six regions. The theme of the exhibition was 'Ayush for Planetary Health and Well-being' and is envisioned with showcasing the achievements of the Ministry of Ayush in areas of Education, Healthcare, Research and Public health. The Zone welcomed visitors with a display of medicinal plants including those used in Ayurveda.

The ministry's pursuit of sustainable Ayush manufacturing and zero-waste was highlighted through an impressive pavilion. The exhibition featured their recycling practices and interactive kiosks, which allowed visitors to access comprehensive information about Ayush, including the location of all Ayush hospitals and a digital library with research papers related to the field. A virtual reality experience of Ayush Healthcare services was available. The mythical wish-fulfilling tree, the Kalpavriksha was the highpoint of the Ayush Exhibition Zone. In addition, visitors could engage in an immersive experience, featuring an AI-based Ayurveda Pulse diagnosis, body constitution analysis, and even a live Yoga demonstration.

SK

The first World Health Organization Global Summit on Traditional Medicine was inaugurated today at Gandhinagar, Gujarat alongside the G20 health ministerial meet. Director-General of WHO Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and the Union Minister of Ayush, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya were invited to

light the ceremonial lamp to the accompaniment of auspicious hymns dedicated to Dhanvantari, the god of Ayurveda.

Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Bhupendra Rajnikant Patel, Union MoS for Ayush Dr Munjpara Mahendrabhai Kalubhai, and senior delegates of WHO were also present on this occasion



On his inaugural address Dr Tedros Adhanom said, “Traditional Medicine is as old as humanity itself. However, it is not a thing of the past. It has a growing relevance in communities and cultures even today.” Commending the Indian Government's Ayushman Bharat Initiative, he praised the country's medical system. Dr Tedros also noted the seamless integration of traditional medicine into primary healthcare in rural areas.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said that the outcome of the historic WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit will help to propose recommendations for a dedicated forum within future G20 presidencies. He reminded the gathering that the integrative approach of the government of India is resulting in the establishment of dedicated Ayush Departments in all AIIMS. He said that it all has happened just because Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji had a clear vision about the efficacy of Ayush and he strongly supported the efforts to give allround boost to the Ministry of Ayush for the benefit of masses of India and the world.

On this occasion, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, highlighted the significant contributions of Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel in nation-building. He emphasized that with the WHO GCTM leading the way towards a more prominent role of traditional medicine in mainstream healthcare, India is well-positioned to become a knowledge hub and unlock the full potential of TM. The pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries are both showing significant interest in traditional medicine and more than 170 countries around the world are utilizing it. The summit provides an ideal platform for international collaboration and the exchange of ideas to promote best practices in the sector, he concluded.



Speaking next, the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendra Patel shared how the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi believed that traditional medicine could play an effective role in dealing with a crisis like the covid pandemic. Following this thought, he began connecting other countries of the world with the mission of Traditional Medicine. His initiative has now emerged as the world's first Traditional Medicine Global Summit.

Many visitors were drawn to the experiential Ayush Exhibition Zone which took place alongside an exhibition of traditional medicine systems from WHO's six regions. The theme of the exhibition was 'Ayush for Planetary Health and Well-being' and is envisioned with showcasing the achievements of the Ministry of Ayush in areas of Education, Healthcare, Research and Public health. The Zone welcomed visitors with a display of medicinal plants including those used in Ayurveda.

The ministry's pursuit of sustainable Ayush manufacturing and zero-waste was highlighted through an impressive pavilion. The exhibition featured their recycling practices and interactive kiosks, which allowed visitors to access comprehensive information about Ayush, including the location of all Ayush hospitals and a digital library with research papers related to the field. A virtual reality experience of Ayush Healthcare services was available. The mythical wish-fulfilling tree, the Kalpavriksha was the highpoint of the Ayush Exhibition Zone. In addition, visitors could engage in an immersive experience, featuring an AI-based Ayurveda Pulse diagnosis, body constitution analysis, and even a live Yoga demonstration.

SK

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

A 'FAB' WAY TO CONDUCT INDIA-JAPAN TECH DIPLOMACY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Japan

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 19, 2023 12:08 am | Updated 12:08 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'This collaborative approach accelerates both innovation and the development of cutting-edge solutions' | Photo Credit: Getty Images

India and Japan, in July 2023, agreed to collaborate on semiconductors in a bid to create a more resilient supply chain for this critical technology and work together for the joint development of the semiconductor ecosystem. The partnership will focus on five areas: 'semiconductor design, manufacturing, equipment research, establishing resilience in the semiconductor supply chain, and talent development', paving the way for government-to-government and industry-to-industry collaborations.

The deal comes in the wake of the rapid expansion in the semiconductor industry, particularly the importance of specialised chips, which has prompted the need for growing the pool of talent available in the industry alongside increasing the number of semiconductor fabrication plants (fabs). The partnership fosters the exchange of technical knowledge, research, and innovation between the Indian and Japanese semiconductor industries, facilitates technology transfer, and enables Tokyo and New Delhi to stay at the forefront of semiconductor advancements.

Both nations have aligned their policies to support semiconductor manufacturing and research. India's "Make in India" initiative and Japan's "Society 5.0" vision share the goal of technological self-reliance and innovation-driven growth. Bilateral agreements have been signed to promote technology transfer, cooperation in semiconductor research, and reciprocal trade in semiconductor-related products.

The collaboration stands as a testament to the power of strategic alliances and technological synergy. Both nations recognise the critical importance of semiconductor technology in driving innovation, economic growth, and national security. Japan, with its advanced semiconductor industry, has long been a global leader in chip manufacturing and research. India has a growing information technology sector and a burgeoning demand for semiconductor products across industries. The convergence of these strengths has laid the foundation for a mutually beneficial collaboration.

Supply chain disruptions and geopolitical tensions, which are of particular significance in the Indo-Pacific region, have underscored the need for diversifying semiconductor supply chains and cross-country collaboration. Joint research initiatives enable the pooling of resources and

expertise to tackle complex challenges in semiconductor design, manufacturing processes, and materials science. This collaborative approach accelerates both innovation and the development of cutting-edge solutions. The partnership also emphasises human resource development through skill exchange programmes, workshops, and training.

India's strength in semiconductor design and packaging offers scope for it to join forces with leaders in the industry. The agreement with Japan follows close on the heels of the charting of a technology partnership for the future between the United States and India which also covers investment, innovation, and workforce development, facilitating the long-term strategic development of complementary semiconductor ecosystems. As part of the agreement with Washington, New Delhi is set to sign an agreement with Georgia Tech University. All this also follows from investments by Micron Technology and Applied Materials to set up a semiconductor unit and a research and development centre.

The India-Japan partnership is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the global semiconductor landscape. As technology continues to evolve, their collaboration will remain dynamic, addressing new challenges such as semiconductor miniaturisation, AI integration, and quantum computing. This partnership will also have far-reaching implications for the global technology ecosystem and the dimensions of geopolitical partnerships in the Indo-Pacific. Coming in the wake of the U.S.'s CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, which places strategic curbs on the expansion of semiconductor manufacturing by countries posing a direct threat to the U.S., including China, the bilateral agreements of both Washington and Tokyo with New Delhi demonstrate the consolidation among like-minded partners in the Indo-Pacific towards critical technologies and the acknowledgment of the same vis-à-vis geostrategic and national security concerns.

In January 2023, Japan and the Netherlands joined the U.S. in restricting exports of semiconductor manufacturing materials required in the making of advanced chips to China. Tighter export controls on China's chip manufacturing ability is among the Joe Biden administration's key diplomatic pursuits in the Indo-Pacific. Although the move is expected to affect the sales of Japanese chip companies which rely on sales to China, Tokyo is on board because of the geopolitical concerns over China's expanding chip-making capabilities. This is also why the partnership with India is significant as a means of diversifying the landscape of the semiconductor industry.

Both agreements indicate the confidence placed in India by the two Quad countries (The Quad has India, Japan, Australia and the U.S.) and also signal the coming of age of India's own capabilities in the development of semiconductors and related technologies. By combining Japan's technological prowess and India's innovation and design capacities, the collaboration on semiconductors paves the way for a future characterised by advanced electronics, enhanced connectivity, and a shared commitment to pushing the boundaries of technological excellence.

Harsh V. Pant is Vice President – Studies and Foreign Policy at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi and Professor of International Relations at King's College London. Pratinashree Basu is an Associate Fellow with the Strategic Studies Programme at the Observer Research Foundation, Kolkata

COMMENTS

SHARE

[India-Japan](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [Australia](#) / [USA](#) / [semiconductors and active components](#) / [research / technology \(general\)](#) / [economy \(general\)](#) / [laws](#) / [China](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

G20 INDIA PRESIDENCY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

In line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of an inclusive, ambitious, and action oriented G20 Presidency, the G20 Health Minister's Meeting concluded with the adoption of an Outcome Document, as well as the launch of the Global Initiative of Digital Health which aims to consolidate and amplify recent and past gains in global digital health for health systems while strengthening mutual accountability to enhance the impact of future investments in healthcare.

As the G20 Health Minister's Meeting drew to a close in Gandhinagar, Gujarat today, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare said "Let us continue working together, fostering collaborations, and leveraging the potential of digital health, research, and innovation to ensure equitable access to quality healthcare for all. We must continue to ensure multilateral cooperation and, nurture partnerships in the field of health. It is vital to share expertise, resources, and strategies, to address global health challenges effectively." He was joined by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General, World Health Organization (WHO), Union Ministers of State for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar, and Prof S.P. Singh Baghel.

The second day of the Health Minister's Meeting saw sessions on India's two G20 Health Priorities- Strengthening Cooperation in Pharmaceutical Sector with focus on Availability & Access to Safe, Effective, Quality and Affordable Medical Countermeasures- Vaccine, Therapeutics & Diagnostics, and Digital Health Innovation & Solutions to aid Universal Health Coverage & Improve Healthcare Service Delivery. The last day of the G20 Health Minister's Meeting also saw the 1st Joint Finance and Health Ministerial under the Indian Presidency.



Dr. Mandaviya while speaking about medical countermeasures said, "We as G20 countries need

to work towards strengthening global collaboration to ensure accessibility and availability of equitable medical countermeasures particularly focusing on LMICs and LICs.”



Underlining the importance of global collaboration and partnerships, the Union Health Minister stated “As G20 members it is our collective responsibility to create a “minimum viable product” by leveraging the lowest common denominator.” He further added “India’s G20 presidency prioritised this agenda in alignment with other forums including G7, WHO, and Johannesburg processes to create a Global medical countermeasure coordination mechanism adopting a “Network of Networks” approach.”

Cracku



Dr. Mandaviya reiterated, “The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted that the world needs a coordinated strategy to manage any health emergency, and to facilitate accessibility and availability of equitable medical countermeasures, specifically to those in need in an equitable manner.” He further stated “The effects of Climate Change is the biggest threat that humanity is currently facing and it is having an immense impact on health systems. I’m heartened to learn that the Asian Development Bank will be establishing the Climate and Health Initiative to work on mitigating this impact as well as building climate resilience within global health system architecture.”

Créd



Dr Ghebreyesus, stated that vaccines, treatments and other products, play a central role in combating the Covid-19 pandemic. He emphasized that it is imperative to bridge the existing gaps, hence there is a need of a mechanism that enables accessibility to life-saving tools and stated “We are stronger when we work together.”

During the second session of the day, a World Bank Report titled Digital-in-Health: Unlocking the Value for Everyone, was launched. It presents a new way of thinking from simple digitization of health data to fully integrating digital technology in health systems. It focuses on infusing digital technologies in health financing, service delivery, diagnostics, medical education, pandemic preparedness, climate and health efforts, nutrition, and aging.

The first Joint Finance and Health Ministerial was chaired by Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, the Union Finance Minister, and Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya. In the course of discussions in the Meeting, the Finance and Health Ministers expressed their commitment to continue strengthening the global health architecture for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPR) through enhanced collaboration between Finance and Health Ministries under the Joint Finance and Health Task Force (JFHTF). At the Task Force meeting, Dr. Mandaviya announced the First Call for proposals by the Pandemic Fund. He further said, “It’s worth noting that more than 75% of the projects, that will receive support from this initial Call are located within LICs/LMICs Countries. He further acknowledged the need for Day Zero Financing as a crucial lesson for future health crises. In this regard, he said, “There is a need to converge the ongoing efforts to build a mechanism, to address this issue in G20 and G7 along with WHO & World Bank. Sustaining this collaboration beyond the emergency phase and exploring various coordination arrangements will aid G20 countries and the wider international community in developing critical strategies and approaches, for finance and health institutional coordination.”



At the meeting Ms. Nirmla Sitharaman said “The Task Force under Indian Presidency has adopted a multi-year work plan for the first time and has also invited selected key regional organizations, thereby enhancing the voice of low-income countries.” The Ministers welcomed the outputs delivered by the JFHTF during the course of the Indian Presidency which include the following:

The Framework for Economic Vulnerabilities and Risks (FEVR) created through collaboration between World Health Organization, World Bank, IMF, and European Investment Bank.

The Report on Mapping Pandemic Response Financing Options and Gaps developed by the WHO and the World Bank.

The Report on Best Practices on Finance Health Institutional Arrangements during Covid-19.

Shri VK Paul (Member) Health, NITI Aayog, Shri Sudhansh Pant, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Rajeev Bahl, Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, Shri Lav Aggarwal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and other senior officials from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare participated in the event. Health Ministers and delegates of the G20 member countries and invitee countries, as well as representatives of various international organization also joined the meeting.

MV/JJ

HFH/HMM Day 2 /19th Aug2023/3

In line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of an inclusive, ambitious, and action oriented G20 Presidency, the G20 Health Minister's Meeting concluded with the adoption of an Outcome Document, as well as the launch of the Global Initiative of Digital Health which aims to consolidate and amplify recent and past gains in global digital health for health systems while strengthening mutual accountability to enhance the impact of future investments in healthcare.

As the G20 Health Minister's Meeting drew to a close in Gandhinagar, Gujarat today, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare said "Let us continue working together, fostering collaborations, and leveraging the potential of digital health, research, and innovation to ensure equitable access to quality healthcare for all. We must continue to ensure multilateral cooperation and, nurture partnerships in the field of health. It is vital to share expertise, resources, and strategies, to address global health challenges effectively." He was joined by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General, World Health Organization (WHO), Union Ministers of State for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar, and Prof S.P. Singh Baghel.

The second day of the Health Minister's Meeting saw sessions on India's two G20 Health Priorities- Strengthening Cooperation in Pharmaceutical Sector with focus on Availability & Access to Safe, Effective, Quality and Affordable Medical Countermeasures- Vaccine, Therapeutics & Diagnostics, and Digital Health Innovation & Solutions to aid Universal Health Coverage & Improve Healthcare Service Delivery. The last day of the G20 Health Minister's Meeting also saw the 1st Joint Finance and Health Ministerial under the Indian Presidency.



Dr. Mandaviya while speaking about medical countermeasures said, “We as G20 countries need to work towards strengthening global collaboration to ensure accessibility and availability of equitable medical countermeasures particularly focusing on LMICs and LICs.”



Underlining the importance of global collaboration and partnerships, the Union Health Minister stated “As G20 members it is our collective responsibility to create a “minimum viable product”

by leveraging the lowest common denominator.” He further added “India’s G20 presidency prioritised this agenda in alignment with other forums including G7, WHO, and Johannesburg processes to create a Global medical countermeasure coordination mechanism adopting a “Network of Networks” approach.”



Dr. Mandaviya reiterated, “The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted that the world needs a coordinated strategy to manage any health emergency, and to facilitate accessibility and availability of equitable medical countermeasures, specifically to those in need in an equitable manner.” He further stated “The effects of Climate Change is the biggest threat that humanity is currently facing and it is having an immense impact on health systems. I’m heartened to learn that the Asian Development Bank will be establishing the Climate and Health Initiative to work on mitigating this impact as well as building climate resilience within global health system architecture.”



Dr Ghebreyesus, stated that vaccines, treatments and other products, play a central role in combating the Covid-19 pandemic. He emphasized that it is imperative to bridge the existing gaps, hence there is a need of a mechanism that enables accessibility to life-saving tools and stated “We are stronger when we work together.”

During the second session of the day, a World Bank Report titled Digital-in-Health: Unlocking the Value for Everyone, was launched. It presents a new way of thinking from simple digitization of health data to fully integrating digital technology in health systems. It focuses on infusing digital technologies in health financing, service delivery, diagnostics, medical education, pandemic preparedness, climate and health efforts, nutrition, and aging.

The first Joint Finance and Health Ministerial was chaired by Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, the Union Finance Minister, and Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya. In the course of discussions in the Meeting, the Finance and Health Ministers expressed their commitment to continue strengthening the global health architecture for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPR) through enhanced collaboration between Finance and Health Ministries under the Joint Finance and Health Task Force (JFHTF). At the Task Force meeting, Dr. Mandaviya announced the First Call for proposals by the Pandemic Fund. He further said, “It’s worth noting that more than 75% of the projects, that will receive support from this initial Call are located within LICs/LMICs Countries. He further acknowledged the need for Day Zero Financing as a crucial lesson for future health crises. In this regard, he said, “There is a need to converge the ongoing efforts to build a mechanism, to address this issue in G20 and G7 along with WHO & World Bank. Sustaining this collaboration beyond the emergency phase and exploring various coordination arrangements will aid G20 countries and the wider international community in developing critical strategies and approaches, for finance and health institutional coordination.”



At the meeting Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman said “The Task Force under Indian Presidency has adopted a multi-year work plan for the first time and has also invited selected key regional organizations, thereby enhancing the voice of low-income countries.” The Ministers welcomed the outputs delivered by the JFHTF during the course of the Indian Presidency which include the following:

The Framework for Economic Vulnerabilities and Risks (FEVR) created through collaboration between World Health Organization, World Bank, IMF, and European Investment Bank.

The Report on Mapping Pandemic Response Financing Options and Gaps developed by the WHO and the World Bank.

The Report on Best Practices on Finance Health Institutional Arrangements during Covid-19.

Shri VK Paul (Member) Health, NITI Aayog, Shri Sudhansh Pant, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Rajeev Bahl, Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, Shri Lav Aggarwal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and other senior officials from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare participated in the event. Health Ministers and delegates of the G20 member countries and invitee countries, as well as representatives of various international organization also joined the meeting.

MV/JJ

HFV/HMM Day 2 /19th Aug2023/3

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

Crack

THE YOUTH 20 (Y20) SUMMIT CONCLUDES SUCCESSFULLY TODAY IN VARANASI, UTTAR PRADESH

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

Under the overall framework of G20 Presidency, the Y20 India engagement Group meeting concluded successfully in Varanasi today (20th August, 2023).

Y20, as part of overall framework of G20 under Presidency of India has set new milestones for the world. During the summit, Y20 Communiqué was discussed and negotiated, thereafter, it has been signed successfully with unanimous consent.

The major recommendations included in the Communiqué are -

A plenary session was held on the last day in Rudraksh International Cooperation and Convention Centre (RICCC). Sh. Sharad Vivek Sagar, Sh. Anmol Sovit, Y20 India; Sh. Pathikrit Payne, Coordination Head, Y20 India; Sh. Falit Sijariya, Head of Delegation, Y20 India and Smt. Aditi Narayani Paswan, Track Chair, Y20 India led the session. The Y20 2023 communiqué was released by the troika countries comprising of Chair Y20 India, Indonesia Organising Committee Representative and Brazil Organising Committee Representative. The Flag was officially handed over by Y20 India Chair to the Brazilian Head of Delegation.

Outcome of the Summit in form of the Y20 Communiqué was signed by Heads of Delegation, which marked the conclusion of the various discussions held during the last few months. It is a testament to the collective common vision across the five identified themes of Y20, which will ensure that the voices of young people are heard by the highest-level decision-makers on global platform.

During the 4 day summit, delegates visited Sarnath, the famous Kashi Vishwanath Temple and the Ganga ghat during a river cruise. India's rich art, culture and heritage left a long-lasting impression on the delegates from across the world. Rich and diverse cultural heritage of the holy city of Varanasi; its spirituality, literature, art, and music also mesmerized the delegates from G20 countries, guest countries and international organisations.

The Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India were entrusted with the responsibility to organize Youth20 (Y20) Summit-2023. A number of events were organised including the Y20 Curtain Raiser in New Delhi, Inception meeting in Guwahati, Y20 Pre-Summit at Leh, Ladakh, 14 Y20 Consultations at various universities across the country and 50 brainstorming sessions each by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS).

NB/SK

Under the overall framework of G20 Presidency, the Y20 India engagement Group meeting concluded successfully in Varanasi today (20th August, 2023).

Y20, as part of overall framework of G20 under Presidency of India has set new milestones for the world. During the summit, Y20 Communiqué was discussed and negotiated, thereafter, it

has been signed successfully with unanimous consent.

The major recommendations included in the Communiqué are -

A plenary session was held on the last day in Rudraksh International Cooperation and Convention Centre (RICCC). Sh. Sharad Vivek Sagar, Sh. Anmol Sovit, Y20 India; Sh. Pathikrit Payne, Coordination Head, Y20 India; Sh. Falit Sijariya, Head of Delegation, Y20 India and Smt. Aditi Narayani Paswan, Track Chair, Y20 India led the session. The Y20 2023 communiqué was released by the troika countries comprising of Chair Y20 India, Indonesia Organising Committee Representative and Brazil Organising Committee Representative. The Flag was officially handed over by Y20 India Chair to the Brazilian Head of Delegation.

Outcome of the Summit in form of the Y20 Communiqué was signed by Heads of Delegation, which marked the conclusion of the various discussions held during the last few months. It is a testament to the collective common vision across the five identified themes of Y20, which will ensure that the voices of young people are heard by the highest-level decision-makers on global platform.

During the 4 day summit, delegates visited Sarnath, the famous Kashi Vishwanath Temple and the Ganga ghat during a river cruise. India's rich art, culture and heritage left a long-lasting impression on the delegates from across the world. Rich and diverse cultural heritage of the holy city of Varanasi; its spirituality, literature, art, and music also mesmerized the delegates from G20 countries, guest countries and international organisations.

The Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India were entrusted with the responsibility to organize Youth20 (Y20) Summit-2023. A number of events were organised including the Y20 Curtain Raiser in New Delhi, Inception meeting in Guwahati, Y20 Pre-Summit at Leh, Ladakh, 14 Y20 Consultations at various universities across the country and 50 brainstorming sessions each by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS).

NB/SK

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](https://crackias.com)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

G20 INDIA PRESIDENCY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

“Our vision is clear, our goals are ambitious, and our determination is unyielding.” This was stated by Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers in his keynote address to the Indian Industry leaders in pharmaceuticals, and G20 Ministers and Delegates, on the sidelines of the G20 Health Minister’s Meeting in Gandhinagar.

Dr. Mandaviya proudly acknowledged India's prowess in the pharmaceuticals and medical devices field, emphasizing its role as a global hub for pharmaceutical excellence. "India is recognized as a cornerstone in the global pharmaceutical landscape," he stated. The country's dedication to providing affordable, high-quality drugs and its significant contribution to global accessibility were underscored, with India supplying around 60% of the world's vaccine needs and 20-22% of generic exports.



Dr. Mandaviya underscored India's unwavering commitment to the well-being of humanity, particularly demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. "In the battle against the pandemic, India supplied essential drugs to approximately 185 countries," he proudly shared, emphasizing India's role as a global leader.

The keynote address focused on India's vision for the future of healthcare, centered around a transition from volume-based approaches to a value-based leadership model. "Our commitment to quality, accessibility, and affordability in healthcare is unwavering," he added. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's government is resolute in driving meaningful change in the healthcare sector.



Acknowledging the paramount importance of research and development in healthcare advancement, Dr. Mandaviya announced India's strides in fostering an innovative environment. He stated that India is in the final stages of introducing a national policy to promoting research and development and innovation in the pharma-medical devices sectors.

Dr. Mandaviya's call to action resonated throughout his address, inviting countries, government bodies, industry leaders, healthcare professionals, and researchers to join forces in a united effort. "Our collective strength has the potential to elevate the pharmaceutical and medical devices sectors to unprecedented heights," he proclaimed. Dr. Mandaviya emphasized, "Healthcare is not just a sector, but a mission, one that aligns with India's commitment to providing the highest quality healthcare to every citizen. Our pharmaceutical and medical devices industry stands as a vital partner in this mission," he reaffirmed.

Mr. Budi G Sadikin, Minister of Health for the Republic of Indonesia, and Dr. Ernst Kuipers, Minister of Netherlands in their opening remarks highlighted India's success in health, and pharmacology, and stressed the need for collaboration between nations. "The medicines manufactured in India saves lives- in Netherlands, in Europe and across the world. I look forward to intensified collaboration with India. There are tremendous opportunities for partnership in innovative medicines. With the capacity and knowledge that India has in generic and specific drugs, we look forward to more integrated collaboration with India." Dr. Kuipers said.

Dr. Mandaviya also had a successful bilateral meeting with the Indonesian Health Minister today. They discussed several issues of cooperation and collaboration in the health sector.



Ms. S Aparna, Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, at the event, highlighted that a platform like this provides an opportunity for industry, and governments across the global to learn from each other, and to support each other towards a common goal of Universal Health Coverage.

She also stressed on the lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic, and said, "The pandemic has taught us that the response to health emergencies cannot be created at will, they require long term development and investment."

Dr. Mandaviya also led a delegation of G20 delegates and ministers, including the Indonesian Health Minister, Mr. Budi G Sadikin to a Jan Aushadhi Kendra to share with them India's success in providing, accessible, affordable, and quality medicines to it's citizens.

Mr. Budi Gunadi Sadikin after the visit said, "I want to give the best medicines to my people in Indonesia. I have seen many models of different countries, and India 's Jan Aushadhi Kendra model the best in the world in terms of providing quality, accessibility and affordability of medicines to the people. "



MV/JJ**C&F/Industry-G20 Minister interaction /20th Aug2023/1**

“Our vision is clear, our goals are ambitious, and our determination is unyielding.” This was stated by Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers in his keynote address to the Indian Industry leaders in pharmaceuticals, and G20 Ministers and Delegates, on the sidelines of the G20 Health Minister’s Meeting in Gandhinagar.

Dr. Mandaviya proudly acknowledged India's prowess in the pharmaceuticals and medical devices field, emphasizing its role as a global hub for pharmaceutical excellence. "India is recognized as a cornerstone in the global pharmaceutical landscape," he stated. The country's dedication to providing affordable, high-quality drugs and its significant contribution to global accessibility were underscored, with India supplying around 60% of the world's vaccine needs and 20-22% of generic exports.



Dr. Mandaviya underscored India's unwavering commitment to the well-being of humanity, particularly demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. "In the battle against the pandemic, India supplied essential drugs to approximately 185 countries," he proudly shared, emphasizing India's role as a global leader.

The keynote address focused on India's vision for the future of healthcare, centered around a transition from volume-based approaches to a value-based leadership model. "Our commitment to quality, accessibility, and affordability in healthcare is unwavering," he added. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's government is resolute in driving meaningful change in the healthcare sector.

Cracku



Acknowledging the paramount importance of research and development in healthcare advancement, Dr. Mandaviya announced India's strides in fostering an innovative environment. He stated that India is in the final stages of introducing a national policy to promoting research and development and innovation in the pharma-medical devices sectors.

Dr. Mandaviya's call to action resonated throughout his address, inviting countries, government bodies, industry leaders, healthcare professionals, and researchers to join forces in a united effort. "Our collective strength has the potential to elevate the pharmaceutical and medical devices sectors to unprecedented heights," he proclaimed. Dr. Mandaviya emphasized, "Healthcare is not just a sector, but a mission, one that aligns with India's commitment to providing the highest quality healthcare to every citizen. Our pharmaceutical and medical devices industry stands as a vital partner in this mission," he reaffirmed.

Mr. Budi G Sadikin, Minister of Health for the Republic of Indonesia, and Dr. Ernst Kuipers, Minister of Netherlands in their opening remarks highlighted India's success in health, and pharmacology, and stressed the need for collaboration between nations. "The medicines manufactured in India saves lives- in Netherlands, in Europe and across the world. I look forward to intensified collaboration with India. There are tremendous opportunities for partnership in innovative medicines. With the capacity and knowledge that India has in generic and specific drugs, we look forward to more integrated collaboration with India." Dr. Kuipers said.

Dr. Mandaviya also had a successful bilateral meeting with the Indonesian Health Minister today. They discussed several issues of cooperation and collaboration in the health sector.



Ms. S Aparna, Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, at the event, highlighted that a platform like this provides an opportunity for industry, and governments across the global to learn from each other, and to support each other towards a common goal of Universal Health Coverage.

She also stressed on the lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic, and said, "The pandemic has taught us that the response to health emergencies cannot be created at will, they require long term development and investment."

Dr. Mandaviya also led a delegation of G20 delegates and ministers, including the Indonesian Health Minister, Mr. Budi G Sadikin to a Jan Aushadhi Kendra to share with them India's success in providing, accessible, affordable, and quality medicines to it's citizens.

Mr. Budi Gunadi Sadikin after the visit said, "I want to give the best medicines to my people in Indonesia. I have seen many models of different countries, and India 's Jan Aushadhi Kendra model the best in the world in terms of providing quality, accessibility and affordability of medicines to the people. "



MV/JJ

C&F/Industry-G20 Minister interaction /20th Aug2023/1

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© Zuccess App by crackIAS.com

Crack

THE BRICS TEST FOR INDIA'S MULTIPOLARITY RHETORIC

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: BRICS, IBSA and India

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 22, 2023 12:16 am | Updated 08:20 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'The geopolitical developments of the past year or so and the challenges faced by the United Nations system may have given another lease of life to BRICS' | Photo Credit: AP

Once again, New Delhi is back in the thick of global geopolitics of things — chairing summits, navigating tricky Manichaean choices, ducking geopolitical whirlwinds, and negotiating a place at the high table of global governance. The upcoming BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) summit in South Africa, from August 22 to August 24, will be an important stress test for Indian diplomacy, and a harbinger of the shape of geopolitics to come.

For sure, the ability of BRICS to reorder or steer the global economy in any significant manner is deeply suspect, its appetite to create economic agreements amongst its own members limited, and its historical capability to influence global geopolitics overestimated. And, as a bloc, it is hardly an attractive investment destination. More so, BRICS today sounds more revisionist and reactive, than proactive or clear headed, on what it wants to do. And yet, it could, going forward, become an entity capable of influencing the future of world politics. The geopolitical developments of the past year or so and the challenges faced by the United Nations system may have given another lease of life to BRICS. BRICS, after all, is also more globally represented than the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the G-7, though less than the G-20 which is dominated by the West. In that sense, the choices that BRICS makes at the summit and thereafter could have major implications for the international system.

That global governance has failed, or that it reeks of deeply undemocratic practices, needs no repetition. If the deeply unrepresentative character of global governance institutions and mechanisms has led to their failure, and there is little possibility of a more inclusive system anytime soon, forums such as BRICS will invariably fill such important institutional vacuum, no matter how inadequate. That 40-odd countries have formally or informally expressed interest in joining an expanded BRICS, just five countries today, is reflective of the deeply-held sense of angst and anger in the global South countries about their place in the world.

At a time of global geopolitical uncertainty, with the global order going through a major churn, middle powers, regional heavyweights and the outliers that are weighing their options, exploring where they belong or trying to belong where they can, would want to utilise forums such as BRICS to make sense of global geopolitical headwinds, hedge or place their bets, and influence the geopolitics around them. For instance, the uncertainties arising out of the Ukraine war and

the steady rise of China have clearly provided a new lease of life to the otherwise moribund BRICS.

Not that BRICS or the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will lead to truly democratic global governance or multipolarity (perhaps nothing can); these forums too are replete with competing interests and calculations including inbuilt or unsaid hierarchies. And yet, these very forums could ignite a genuine conversation on making global governance more representative and inclusive. In global governance, more imperfect institutions reflecting the realities of today are better than one imperfect institutional structure that is alien to the world of today. International politics should not be the place for hegemonic perfection, but of democratic imperfections.

For India, the geopolitical choices today are neither crystal clear nor easy to make. For one, where does India belong in the global geopolitical landscape? There is, for instance, a tendency in the West to view India's membership of BRICS and the SCO in the context of the Ukraine war and the United States/West versus the standoff with Russia. An oft-repeated question is: "How can India be a part of the Quad [Australia, Japan, the U.S., India], G-20, G-7 and BRICS, SCO and global South at the same time?" That is a deeply ahistorical view. India's active participation in non-western multilateral forums such as BRICS, SCO and global South must also be seen as India's response to the undemocratic and inequitable governance structures of post-Second World War institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the UNSC. At the same time, India's objective is not (and should not be) to create or belong to an anti-U.S./West bloc either.

Developmentally, historically and geographically, India belongs to BRICS, SCO, and the global South. But India does not only belong to them. More so, China's overwhelming presence in them makes it a less than perfect geopolitical choice for India. Structurally and aspirationally, the G-20, G-7, Quad and the like are where New Delhi is headed. But India's accommodation in the most influential among those forums is a long shot. India, as a result, is located right in the middle of an emerging geopolitical faultline with interests on either side, welcomed by either side, but fully belonging to neither. This could either make India a bridge between the great divides or its lack of loyalty to neither could make it a victim of emerging geopolitical contestations. The sharper the faultline becomes, the harder it will be for New Delhi to balance it.

One of the major dangers of the current churn in global geopolitics is the rise of competing blocs in the international system. With China and Russia aligning their global interests, the organisations they are part of whose membership they are attempting to enhance, are likely to be pitted against the status quo order led by the U.S. and its allies. India has traditionally opposed the creation of blocs as they go against the fundamental spirit of equitable global governance and multipolarity.

Multipolarity, in the Indian historical imagination, is about equity, inclusion and representation, not bloc rivalry, ideological or otherwise. However, even if New Delhi vehemently opposes bloc politics, it will continue to get drawn into it.

The question that New Delhi must ask every step of the way as it pursues a multipolar world and alternative mechanisms for global governance is whether (or not) it helps boost the rise of China globally. No doubt, a multi-polar world requires strong, alternative global forums, and perhaps even attempts at de-dollarisation. But those very forums will go on to aid the rise of China and the strengthening of the yuan. To think de-dollarisation would lead to strengthening of the rupee is delusional as is the belief that China and India share larger geopolitical interests. They may find value in the instrumental utility of non-western institutions, but their end goals are

fundamentally divergent. Given its size, economic influence and the spread of the Belt and Road Initiative and diplomatic bandwidth, China will influence an expanded BRICS; and India, with its limited resources, would struggle to match this. Paradoxically, and perhaps tragically, the more India helps strengthen non-western institutions and frameworks, thereby weakening the post-Second World War order, the more it helps, albeit indirectly, China's revisionist agenda. The challenge before India is to choose between a China-centric world order or a West-centric world order, or balance the two. If the latter is too preachy for India, the former is too Machiavellian. And balancing is going to get tougher.

India must, therefore, keep its eyes firmly fixed on its goal: promote a more representative and equitable global governance on the one hand and ensure that such an order does not end up undercutting its own national interests. While India must moderate the influence of China in non-western forums, in doing so, it must also make sure not to alienate other countries in the global South who may see merit in China's efforts at expanding the membership of those forums.

The geopolitical predicament this poses before New Delhi is hardly an easy one to navigate: asserting itself in non-western global forums such as BRICS and the SCO, checking the steadily growing Chinese influence in them, and dealing with western normative expectations while negotiating a place for itself in Eurocentric forums such as the UNSC and the G-7. It must do all this simultaneously.

Happymon Jacob teaches at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and is the founder of the Council for Strategic and Defense Research

COMMENTS

SHARE

[India](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [China](#) / [Brazil](#) / [Russia](#) / [South Africa](#) / [economic policy](#) / [United Nations](#) / [G20](#) / [Russia-Ukraine Crisis](#) / [international relations](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

THE SAUDI ARABIA-UAE DIVIDE BECOMES PUBLIC

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 22, 2023 12:08 am | Updated 12:08 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'Differences also became apparent in several areas of regional politics' | Photo Credit: Getty Images/iStockphoto

In mid-July, The Wall Street Journal reported that earlier in December, the Saudi Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman (known as MbS), had told a group of Saudi journalists that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has “stabbed us in the back” and had threatened, “They will see what I can do.” He had added that his retaliation would be “worse than what I did with Qatar”, recalling the harsh four-year political and economic blockade of the kingdom’s neighbour from 2017.

The Crown Prince was possibly irked by the absence of the UAE ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed (MbZ), for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit meeting with the visiting Chinese President, Xi Jinping.

This surprising outburst signals the end of the camaraderie between the Saudi Crown Prince and the UAE President. When MbS first came into public life with his father’s accession to the throne in 2015, it was obvious that he had a special bond with Mohammed bin Zayed; many observers believed that the Saudi prince, in his late twenties then, saw the more experienced MbZ as a mentor.

The two royals bonded their countries as strategic partners. They were partners in the war in Yemen, worked together to strengthen al-Sisi’s regime in Egypt, viewed Iran as a regional threat, disliked the Muslim Brotherhood, and then collaborated closely to implement the blockade of Qatar. In 2019, they also subverted the nascent democratic process in Sudan by backing the armed forces against the civilian Prime Minister.

But, over the last few years, their differences have become obvious. In July 2017, the UAE abruptly rejected the proposal to cut oil production put forward by “OPEC +” on the ground that its base production needed to be significantly increased. Abu Dhabi was then investing heavily in augmenting its oil production to monetise its potential to the maximum extent.

Differences then became apparent in several areas of regional politics. The UAE abruptly withdrew its troops from Yemen in 2019, but continued to pursue a separate agenda of supporting the secessionist movement in the south and mobilising local fighters backing the independence of the south. The UAE also expanded its maritime footprint in the region by taking control of Yemeni ports and Socotra Island in the Gulf of Aden, and Perim Island at the mouth of

the Bab al-Mandab.

The UAE then established bases in Eritrea and Somaliland, thus putting in place an unassailable strategic network that links the Gulf with the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, was left to do the fighting in Yemen, with little to show for its efforts over eight years.

The kingdom also experienced setbacks in Syria, where Russian intervention in 2015 ensured that the Assad government would not be toppled, and vis-à-vis Iran, when the United States failed to respond to repeated missile and drone attacks in 2019. This parlous scenario encouraged Saudi Arabia to pursue de-escalation and dialogue in the region. This started with the lifting of the Qatar blockade in January 2021 and initiation of the dialogue with Iran in Baghdad in April 2021. The UAE was a reluctant participant in both initiatives: it maintains a studied coolness towards Qatar and is pursuing its own engagement with Iran.

The UAE also normalised ties with Israel in August 2020, thus publicly dumping the Saudi-sponsored Arab Peace Initiative that requires Israel to accommodate Palestinian interests before Arab states normalise relations. Later, the kingdom initiated the readmission of Syria into the Arab League in May this year, but MbZ failed to attend the summit.

In Sudan, the two Gulf neighbours are now backing different generals — while the kingdom supports Army chief al-Burhan, the UAE is backing militia leader Dagalo, thus prolonging the destructive civil conflict. The UAE is also said to be uncomfortable with the speed with which Saudi Arabia normalised ties with Iran in March this year.

Saudi-UAE competition has now touched domestic areas as well. The two countries are seeking regional primacy in the same sectors — global business, tourism, finance and technology. Saudi Arabia is also wanting to become the principal hub for regional trade, thus challenging the UAE which is presently the dominant player. Both countries are pursuing ambitious plans to develop ports in the Gulf and the Red Sea and emerge as the major presence in the logistical connectivity projects under China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Though much smaller in size, the UAE has made it clear it will not be the kingdom's junior partner in the political, economic and logistical arenas. It compensates for its small size with the vision, dynamism and ambition of its leaders, its head start in global interactions in the areas of trade, connectivity, tourism, finance and technology, and the attractive image as a business-friendly and people-friendly locale it has successfully cultivated over several decades.

Hence, competition rather than cooperation is likely to define ties between the two Gulf neighbours. However, the kingdom's leadership position in the Arab and the Islamic world and its central place in global energy, business and finance will ensure that its preeminent place in regional and world politics and economics will remain unchallenged.

Talmiz Ahmad is a former Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Saudi Arabia](#) / [United Arab Emirates](#) / [politics](#) / [Qatar](#) / [China](#) / [summit](#) / [Yemen](#) / [war](#) / [Egypt](#) / [Sudan](#) / [oil and gas - upstream activities](#) / [Somalia](#) / [Syria](#) / [Russia](#) / [USA](#) / [Iran](#) / [Israel](#) / [business \(general\)](#) / [tourism](#) / [finance \(general\)](#) / [technology \(general\)](#) / [trade agreements](#) / [energy resources](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

INDIA PARTICIPATES IN 20TH ASEAN-INDIA ECONOMIC MINISTERS' MEETING IN SEMARANG, INDONESIA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: South-East Asia, ASEAN and India

Shri Rajesh Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry represented India in the 20th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers' meeting held on 21st August 2023 in Semarang, Indonesia and co-chaired the meeting with Dr. Zulkifli Hasan, Minister of Trade, Indonesia. The Economic Ministers or their representatives from all the 10 ASEAN countries viz. Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam participated in the meeting. Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste also joined the Meeting as an observer.

The Ministers reviewed the bilateral trade and investment relations between India and ASEAN and underscored their commitment to strengthen and enhance the economic partnership between India and ASEAN to ensure that the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership delivers meaningful benefits for both sides, particularly in the post-pandemic era. India and ASEAN registered a bilateral trade of USD 131.5 billion in 2022-23. The trade with ASEAN accounted for 11.3% of India's global trade in 2022-23.

The Ministers also interacted with the ASEAN-India Business Council (AIBC) and took note of the activities undertaken by AIBC in 2023, including the 5th ASEAN-India Business Summit held on 6th March 2023 in Kuala Lumpur. The Ministers noted the Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) flagged by the businesses and appreciated the growing exchanges between the stakeholders from both sides.

The Ministers exchanged views on the regional and global challenges, such as the multidimensional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, heightened volatility in the global financial market, inflationary pressures, and geopolitical tensions. Both sides identified resilient supply chains, food security, energy security, health and financial stability as priority areas of cooperation.

The main agenda of this year's meeting was the timely review of ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) which was signed in 2009. The Economic Ministers' meeting was preceded by AITIGA Joint Committee meeting, which deliberated the roadmap for the review and finalised the Term of Reference and the Work Plan of the AITIGA Review Negotiations. After constructive discussions, the Ministers endorsed the above review documents, which would pave way for the formal commencement of negotiations with defined modalities. The review of the AITIGA was a long-standing demand of Indian businesses and the early commencement of the review would help in making the FTA trade facilitative and mutually beneficial. The Ministers agreed to follow a quarterly schedule of negotiations and conclude the review in 2025. The review of AITIGA is expected to enhance and diversify trade while addressing the current asymmetry in the bilateral trade. The decision for review of AITIGA will now be placed in the forthcoming India-ASEAN Leaders' Summit scheduled in early September for further guidance.



AD/VN

Shri Rajesh Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry represented India in the 20th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers' meeting held on 21st August 2023 in Semarang, Indonesia and co-chaired the meeting with Dr. Zulkifli Hasan, Minister of Trade, Indonesia. The Economic Ministers or their representatives from all the 10 ASEAN countries viz. Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam participated in the meeting. Democratic Republic of Timor-

Leste also joined the Meeting as an observer.

The Ministers reviewed the bilateral trade and investment relations between India and ASEAN and underscored their commitment to strengthen and enhance the economic partnership between India and ASEAN to ensure that the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership delivers meaningful benefits for both sides, particularly in the post-pandemic era. India and ASEAN registered a bilateral trade of USD 131.5 billion in 2022-23. The trade with ASEAN accounted for 11.3% of India's global trade in 2022-23.

The Ministers also interacted with the ASEAN-India Business Council (AIBC) and took note of the activities undertaken by AIBC in 2023, including the 5th ASEAN-India Business Summit held on 6th March 2023 in Kuala Lumpur. The Ministers noted the Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) flagged by the businesses and appreciated the growing exchanges between the stakeholders from both sides.

The Ministers exchanged views on the regional and global challenges, such as the multidimensional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, heightened volatility in the global financial market, inflationary pressures, and geopolitical tensions. Both sides identified resilient supply chains, food security, energy security, health and financial stability as priority areas of cooperation.

The main agenda of this year's meeting was the timely review of ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) which was signed in 2009. The Economic Ministers' meeting was preceded by AITIGA Joint Committee meeting, which deliberated the roadmap for the review and finalised the Term of Reference and the Work Plan of the AITIGA Review Negotiations. After constructive discussions, the Ministers endorsed the above review documents, which would pave way for the formal commencement of negotiations with defined modalities. The review of the AITIGA was a long-standing demand of Indian businesses and the early commencement of the review would help in making the FTA trade facilitative and mutually beneficial. The Ministers agreed to follow a quarterly schedule of negotiations and conclude the review in 2025. The review of AITIGA is expected to enhance and diversify trade while addressing the current asymmetry in the bilateral trade. The decision for review of AITIGA will now be placed in the forthcoming India-ASEAN Leaders' Summit scheduled in early September for further guidance.

Cracku



AD/VN

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

EXERCISE MALABAR -23 CONCLUDES

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

The 27th edition of Exercise MALABAR, concluded on the East Coast of Australia off Sydney on 21 Aug 23. The exercise saw participation of Ships, Submarines and aircraft from the Indian Navy (IN), Royal Australian Navy (RAN), Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) and the US Navy (USN). Exercise MALABAR 23 was conducted in two phases, which included a harbour phase from 11-15 August 2023 and a sea phase from 16-21 August 2023.

The Indian Navy was represented by indigenously built Destroyer **INS Kolkata**, Frigate **INS Sahyadri** and **P8I Maritime Patrol Aircraft**. Other participating units included RAN ships HMAS Choules and HMAS Brisbane, USS Raphael Peralta, JS Shiranui, along with submarines, fighter aircraft, maritime patrol aircraft and shipborne helicopters.

While the ships sailed out for the sea phase from Sydney harbour, the Air assets operated from RAAF Amberley Brisbane, where the P-8I Dets involving IN, RAAF and US P-8 crew were stationed.

The sea phase of Ex Malabar witnessed complex and high intensity exercises in air, surface and undersea domains, weapon firings and cross deck helicopter operations. The joint exercises at sea honed the war-fighting skills and enhanced interoperability between the four navies to undertake advanced maritime operations. The seamless integration of air assets also showcased the exceptional coordination and interoperability between the Indian, Australian and US maritime patrol aircraft units. The exercise not only reaffirmed the ability of the four navies to operate together as an integrated force but also highlighted their shared commitment to maritime security and regional stability through collaborative training and mutual understanding.

At the culmination of five days of multifarious exercises, Exercise MALABAR vividly showcased the strong cooperation, shared values and the collective ability of the four participating nations to ensure a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific promoting peace and security for all.

Cracku



VM/JSN

The 27th edition of Exercise MALABAR, concluded on the East Coast of Australia off Sydney on 21 Aug 23. The exercise saw participation of Ships, Submarines and aircraft from the Indian Navy (IN), Royal Australian Navy (RAN), Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) and the US Navy (USN). Exercise MALABAR 23 was conducted in two phases, which included a harbour phase from 11-15 August 2023 and a sea phase from 16-21 August 2023.

The Indian Navy was represented by indigenously built Destroyer **INS Kolkata**, Frigate **INS Sahyadri** and **P8I Maritime Patrol Aircraft**. Other participating units included RAN ships HMAS Choules and HMAS Brisbane, USS Raphael Peralta, JS Shiranui, along with submarines, fighter aircraft, maritime patrol aircraft and shipborne helicopters.

While the ships sailed out for the sea phase from Sydney harbour, the Air assets operated from RAAF Amberley Brisbane, where the P-8I Dets involving IN, RAAF and US P-8 crew were stationed.

The sea phase of Ex Malabar witnessed complex and high intensity exercises in air, surface and undersea domains, weapon firings and cross deck helicopter operations. The joint exercises at sea honed the war-fighting skills and enhanced interoperability between the four navies to undertake advanced maritime operations. The seamless integration of air assets also showcased the exceptional coordination and interoperability between the Indian, Australian and US maritime patrol aircraft units. The exercise not only reaffirmed the ability of the four navies to operate together as an integrated force but also highlighted their shared commitment to maritime security and regional stability through collaborative training and mutual understanding.

At the culmination of five days of multifarious exercises, Exercise MALABAR vividly showcased the strong cooperation, shared values and the collective ability of the four participating nations to ensure a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific promoting peace and security for all.





VM/JSN

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

Crack

NO BULWARK FOR PAKISTAN'S MINORITIES

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Pakistan

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 23, 2023 12:08 am | Updated 12:08 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

There is rising aggression against Pakistan's minorities | Photo Credit: AFP

Pakistan has again witnessed violent backlash fuelled by allegations of blasphemy. The recent incident where a mob went on the rampage in Jaranwala, Faisalabad, setting fire to churches, attacking the homes of the Christian community and vandalising the local assistant commissioner's office only underscores the country's failure in upholding its fundamental duty of safeguarding its minorities and marginalised groups. The violence followed allegations of blasphemy, sparked by the alleged desecration of pages from the Koran near a house where two Christian brothers lived.

Amid rumours, the situation worsened with the involvement of members from the Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), who shored up tensions by issuing public statements. The mob directed their aggression towards the home of the accused Christian brothers, which served as a catalyst for a series of violent occurrences.

Christian leaders condemned police inertia, asserting that officers stood inactive even as families sought assistance. Senior administrative and police officials intervened and were engaged in discussions with the protest leaders. Rangers were deployed and additional police personnel were dispatched, according to reports.

Amidst the chaos, a first information report was registered against the two Christian suspects. The incident's repercussions gained censure, with the focus on what was perceived to be discriminatory conduct by the police in managing the situation. A senior police official was reassigned to special duty — a decision made in an attempt to address the demands of the protesting individuals who had been calling for his transfer.

Obviously, in Pakistan, the requirement for evidence loses significance when the focus shifts to blasphemy, thereby setting a path for acts of vigilante justice. This incident marks the second occurrence of an event of this nature in recent times. Just earlier, an English teacher in Balochistan was murdered following allegations of blasphemy. In February 2022, the brutal murder of priest William Siraj in Peshawar spread fear and outrage among Pakistan's minority communities.

Rising aggression against Pakistan's minorities has been compounded by the revival of terrorist activities, a resurgence notably magnified by the Taliban's seizure of authority in Kabul in 2021. Terrorist attacks in Pakistan have grown more severe over time, especially after the decision by

the Pakistani Taliban's (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan-TTP) to temporarily terminate a ceasefire with Islamabad in 2021. With the TTP's confidence boosted by the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, new waves of violence against minority groups in Pakistan have emerged.

There was a period when minorities comprised approximately 15% of the population in major cities. However, their representation has dwindled to less than 4% now. Among these minorities, Christians constitute a faction in this predominantly Sunni Muslim nation. On multiple occasions, accusations of blasphemy have resulted in both court judgments and violence targeting minority groups, including Christians. In September 2020, a Lahore court handed Asif Pervaiz, a young Christian, the death penalty for supposedly sending 'text messages' that had 'blasphemous content.' Pervaiz had already spent almost seven years in custody facing charges of blasphemy. There have been numerous instances where minorities such as the Ahmadis, Shias, and Christians have been accused of blasphemy. The case of Asia Bibi, a Pakistani Christian woman, is widely known.

Numerous reports have highlighted the systematic failure of Pakistani courts to adequately safeguard and deliver justice to victims. In relation to the blasphemy regulations, a United States Commission on International Religious Freedom report, for instance, showed that the enforcement of these blasphemy laws positioned Pakistan as the foremost perpetrator of blasphemy-related prosecutions and communal aggression in the world.

The report further observed that Sections 295 and 298 of Pakistan's Penal Code classify actions and utterances that insult the religion or desecrate the Koran, the Prophet, places of worship, or religious symbols as criminal offences. These ambiguous clauses are often exploited to unjustly accuse the Ahmadis, Shia Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and individuals holding beliefs differing from the predominant Sunni interpretation of Islam.

According to Siegfried O. Wolf, Director of Research at the South Asia Democratic Forum (SADF), religious minorities, including Christians, encounter profound discrimination in various Muslim-majority nations. However, no other country subjects Christians to such systematic and institutional persecution and victimisation as Pakistan, he said.

A conspicuous silence has pervaded the corridors of power, while blasphemy laws have been flaunted as instruments to settle personal scores, seize property, and intimidate minority factions. Amidst this backdrop, can one genuinely feign surprise as occurrences akin to the Jaranwala incident surface repeatedly? Employing violence under the guise of religion stands indefensible in any realm. Yet, within Pakistan, the manipulation of blasphemy laws has evolved into a shield for vested agendas, as the Dawn has noted in its editorial.

In any case, the litmus test for Pakistan as a democratic state lies in its ability to safeguard the rights of even its smallest minority. The country faces a critical moment, wherein the task at hand is to uphold its fledgling democratic structure in the face of challenges posed by the presence of a deep state, a complex civil society, and a praetorian state machinery.

K.M. Seethi, an Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) Senior Fellow, is Director, Inter University Centre for Social Science Research and Extension (IUCSSRE), Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Pakistan](#) / [minority group](#) / [religion and belief](#) / [law enforcement](#) / [murder](#) / [judiciary \(system of](#)

[justice](#) / [human rights](#) / [democracy](#) / [religious conflict](#) / [terrorism \(crime\)](#) / [Afghanistan](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

INDIAN COAST GUARD SIGNS MOU WITH PHILIPPINES COAST GUARD ON ENHANCED MARITIME COOPERATION; HOLDS THE FIRST BILATERAL MEET

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

In a significant step towards bolstering the bilateral cooperation between India and Philippines, Indian Coast Guard has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) on enhanced maritime cooperation. The MoU was signed by DG Rakesh Pal, Director General Indian Coast Guard and CG Admiral Artemio M Abu, Commandant, PCG at the Coast Guard Headquarters, New Delhi on 22 August 2023. Both the sides held their first bilateral meeting on a range of maritime issues.

The MoU inked today seeks to enhance the professional linkage between the two Coast Guards in the domain of Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE), Maritime Search & Rescue (M-SAR) and Marine Pollution Response (MPR). The implementation of this MoU will enhance bilateral maritime cooperation between the two nations for ensuring safe, secure and clean seas in the region. The first ever bilateral meeting between both the maritime agencies signifies the dedication in strengthening the professional bonds by sharing best practices, conducting joint exercises and enhancing training collaborations.

A five member delegation of PCG is on an official tour of India from 20-24 August 2023. Earlier, the delegation visited Goa on 21 August, where they witnessed the operational capabilities of the Indian Coast Guard ships and aircraft under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. During the visit, the delegation was also provided with a customer demonstration flight on the Indian Coast Guard Advance Light Helicopter MK-III. The delegates also visited Indian Coast Guard Ship Sujeet built by Goa Shipyard Limited.

SR/Anand

In a significant step towards bolstering the bilateral cooperation between India and Philippines, Indian Coast Guard has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) on enhanced maritime cooperation. The MoU was signed by DG Rakesh Pal, Director General Indian Coast Guard and CG Admiral Artemio M Abu, Commandant, PCG at the Coast Guard Headquarters, New Delhi on 22 August 2023. Both the sides held their first bilateral meeting on a range of maritime issues.

The MoU inked today seeks to enhance the professional linkage between the two Coast Guards in the domain of Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE), Maritime Search & Rescue (M-SAR) and Marine Pollution Response (MPR). The implementation of this MoU will enhance bilateral maritime cooperation between the two nations for ensuring safe, secure and clean seas in the region. The first ever bilateral meeting between both the maritime agencies signifies the dedication in strengthening the professional bonds by sharing best practices, conducting joint exercises and enhancing training collaborations.

A five member delegation of PCG is on an official tour of India from 20-24 August 2023. Earlier, the delegation visited Goa on 21 August, where they witnessed the operational capabilities of the Indian Coast Guard ships and aircraft under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. During the visit, the

delegation was also provided with a customer demonstration flight on the Indian Coast Guard Advance Light Helicopter MK-III. The delegates also visited Indian Coast Guard Ship Sujeet built by Goa Shipyard Limited.

SR/Anand

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

THE FOURTH G20 CULTURE WORKING GROUP (CWG) MEETING TO START TOMORROW IN VARANASI

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

The 4th G20 Culture Working Group (CWG) Meeting will begin tomorrow in Varanasi culminating in the Culture Ministers' Meeting (CMM) on 26th August 2023. Delegates from G20 member nations, invitee countries, and various international organizations will attend the meeting.

Building upon the success of the previous three CWG meetings in Khajuraho, Bhubaneswar and Hampi, as well as the four Global Thematic Webinars, the 4th CWG meeting in Varanasi, from 23-25th August 2023, aims to arrive at actionable outcomes while positioning culture at the heart of policy making.

The insights and recommendations from the expert-driven Global Thematic Webinars on the priority areas of the CWG have been collated in a comprehensive report titled "**G20 Culture: Shaping the Global Narrative for Inclusive Growth**". This insightful report, by India's G20 presidency's Culture Working Group, will be launched in Varanasi as a part of the Culture Ministers' Meeting.

The Culture Ministers' Meeting in Varanasi will aim to catalyze collective actions for accelerating progress on the four priority areas articulated by the Indian Presidency- Protection and Restitution of Cultural Property, Harnessing Living Heritage for a Sustainable Future, Promotion of Cultural and Creative Industries and Creative Economy, and Leveraging Digital Technologies for the Protection and Promotion of Culture.

The CWG, under India's G20 presidency, had launched the 'Culture Unites All' campaign to highlight India's unwavering belief in multilateralism based on peaceful coexistence among diverse cultures and communities. The CWG is releasing a special stamp to commemorate the campaign on 26th August 2023. The 'Culture Unites All' postage stamp has been crafted as a distinctive emblem combining the ideas of connectivity, communication, and journey representing a cultural exchange and establishing cultural context.

During the meet, the delegates will have the opportunity to experience world-renowned Ganga Aarti on the banks of the river Ganga, and explore the beautiful history of the lion capital of Sarnath. The G20 Global Orchestra performance titled "Sur Vasudha" celebrating the rich musical knowledge and heritage of G20 member nations and invitee countries will be presented in Varanasi. The delegates will also witness cultural performances including Indian classical music and dance forms during their time in Varanasi.

In 2020, under the Saudi Arabian Presidency, the Culture Ministers' met for the first time on the side-lines of the G20. In 2021, Culture was formalised as a Working Group during the Italian Presidency, leading to the inaugural G20 Culture Ministers' Meeting and the consequential 'Rome Culture Ministers' Declaration'. The 'Bali Declaration' of 2022 under the Indonesian presidency further stressed the role of culture in sustainable development. In Varanasi, this would be the fourth time that the Culture Ministers of the G20 members and invitee countries would be meeting.

NB/SK

The 4th G20 Culture Working Group (CWG) Meeting will begin tomorrow in Varanasi culminating in the Culture Ministers' Meeting (CMM) on 26th August 2023. Delegates from G20 member nations, invitee countries, and various international organizations will attend the meeting.

Building upon the success of the previous three CWG meetings in Khajuraho, Bhubaneswar and Hampi, as well as the four Global Thematic Webinars, the 4th CWG meeting in Varanasi, from 23-25th August 2023, aims to arrive at actionable outcomes while positioning culture at the heart of policy making.

The insights and recommendations from the expert-driven Global Thematic Webinars on the priority areas of the CWG have been collated in a comprehensive report titled "**G20 Culture: Shaping the Global Narrative for Inclusive Growth**". This insightful report, by India's G20 presidency's Culture Working Group, will be launched in Varanasi as a part of the Culture Ministers' Meeting.

The Culture Ministers' Meeting in Varanasi will aim to catalyze collective actions for accelerating progress on the four priority areas articulated by the Indian Presidency- Protection and Restitution of Cultural Property, Harnessing Living Heritage for a Sustainable Future, Promotion of Cultural and Creative Industries and Creative Economy, and Leveraging Digital Technologies for the Protection and Promotion of Culture.

The CWG, under India's G20 presidency, had launched the 'Culture Unites All' campaign to highlight India's unwavering belief in multilateralism based on peaceful coexistence among diverse cultures and communities. The CWG is releasing a special stamp to commemorate the campaign on 26th August 2023. The 'Culture Unites All' postage stamp has been crafted as a distinctive emblem combining the ideas of connectivity, communication, and journey representing a cultural exchange and establishing cultural context.

During the meet, the delegates will have the opportunity to experience world-renowned Ganga Aarti on the banks of the river Ganga, and explore the beautiful history of the lion capital of Sarnath. The G20 Global Orchestra performance titled "Sur Vasudha" celebrating the rich musical knowledge and heritage of G20 member nations and invitee countries will be presented in Varanasi. The delegates will also witness cultural performances including Indian classical music and dance forms during their time in Varanasi.

In 2020, under the Saudi Arabian Presidency, the Culture Ministers' met for the first time on the side-lines of the G20. In 2021, Culture was formalised as a Working Group during the Italian Presidency, leading to the inaugural G20 Culture Ministers' Meeting and the consequential 'Rome Culture Ministers' Declaration'. The 'Bali Declaration' of 2022 under the Indonesian presidency further stressed the role of culture in sustainable development. In Varanasi, this would be the fourth time that the Culture Ministers of the G20 members and invitee countries would be meeting.

NB/SK**END**

CrackIAS.com

PM ADDRESSES G20 TRADE AND INVESTMENT MINISTERS' MEETING

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the G20 Trade and Investment Ministers' Meeting held in Jaipur, Rajasthan via video link today.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister extended a warm welcome to the Pink City of Jaipur and said that the region is known for its dynamic and enterprising people. He underlined that trade has led to the exchange of ideas, cultures, and technology while also bringing people closer throughout history. "Trade and globalization have also lifted hundreds of millions out of extreme poverty", Shri Modi added.

Highlighting the global optimism and confidence in the Indian economy, the Prime Minister stated that today, India is seen as a combination of openness, opportunities and options. During the last nine years, the Prime Minister asserted that India has become the fifth-largest global economy as a result of the sustained efforts by the government. "We embarked on the journey of "Reform, Perform, and Transform" in 2014", the Prime Minister remarked as he gave examples and mentioned increased competitiveness and enhanced transparency, expanding digitization and the promotion of innovation. He further added that India has established dedicated freight corridors and built industrial zones. "We have moved away from red tape to red carpet and liberalized FDI flows", Shri Modi said. He also touched upon initiatives like Make in India and Aatma Nirbhar Bharat that have given a boost to manufacturing and also mentioned policy stability in the country. The Prime Minister underlined that the government is committed to making India the third-largest global economy in the next few years.

Throwing light on the current global challenges, from the pandemic to geo-political tensions, the Prime Minister said that it has tested the world economy and stated that it is our responsibility as G20 nations to rebuild confidence in international trade and investments. The Prime Minister emphasized on building resilient and inclusive global value chains that can withstand future shocks. In this context, the Prime Minister highlighted the importance of India's proposal to create a Generic Framework for Mapping Global Value Chains to assess vulnerabilities, minimize risks and enhance resilience.

"Technology's transformative power in trade is undeniable", the Prime Minister remarked and gave the example of India's shift to an online single indirect tax - the GST which helped create a single internal market boosting inter-state trade. He also touched upon India's Unified Logistics Inter-face Platform that makes trade logistics cheaper and more transparent. He also mentioned 'Open Network for Digital Commerce' and termed it as a game-changer that will democratize the digital marketplace eco-system. "We have already done that with our Unified Payments Interface for payment systems", he added. The Prime Minister observed that digitizing processes and the use of e-commerce have the potential to enhance market access. He expressed delight that the group is working on the 'High-Level Principles for the Digitalization of Trade Documents'. These principles, the Prime Minister said, can help countries in implementing cross-border electronic trade measures and reduce compliance burdens. Highlighting the challenges of the growth in cross-border e-commerce, the Prime Minister suggested working collectively to ensure equitable competition between large and small sellers. He also emphasized the need to address the problems faced by consumers in fair price discovery and grievance handling mechanisms.

The Prime Minister underlined that India believes in a rules-based, open, inclusive and

multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core. He pointed out that India has advocated the concerns of the Global South at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference where members were able to forge consensus on safeguarding the interests of millions of farmers and small businesses. He stressed paying more attention to MSMEs given their key role in the global economy. “MSMEs account for 60 to 70 percent of employment and contribute 50 percent to the global GDP”, the Prime Minister informed as he stressed the need to support them continuously as their empowerment translates to societal empowerment. “For us, MSME means - Maximum Support to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises”, the Prime Minister remarked. He said that India has integrated MSMEs into public procurement through the online platform - Government e-marketplace and has been working with the MSME sector to adopt the ethos of ‘Zero Defect’ and ‘Zero Effect’ on the environment. He highlighted that increasing their participation in global trade and Global Value Chains has been a top priority of the Indian presidency. Speaking about the proposed ‘Jaipur Initiative to foster seamless flow of information to MSMEs’, the Prime Minister said that it will address the challenge of inadequate access to market and business-related information faced by MSMEs. Shri Modi expressed confidence that the upgrade of the Global Trade Help Desk will increase the participation of MSMEs in global trade.

Concluding the address, the Prime Minister underlined that it is the collective responsibility of G20 members as One Family to restore confidence in international trade and investment processes. He expressed confidence that the working group will move forward collectively to ensure the global trading system gradually transitions into a more representative and inclusive future.

Sharing my remarks at the G20 Trade and Investment Ministers Meeting. [@g20org](https://t.co/Y6Mub2ms4G)
<https://t.co/Y6Mub2ms4G>

DS/TS

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the G20 Trade and Investment Ministers’ Meeting held in Jaipur, Rajasthan via video link today.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister extended a warm welcome to the Pink City of Jaipur and said that the region is known for its dynamic and enterprising people. He underlined that trade has led to the exchange of ideas, cultures, and technology while also bringing people closer throughout history. “Trade and globalization have also lifted hundreds of millions out of extreme poverty”, Shri Modi added.

Highlighting the global optimism and confidence in the Indian economy, the Prime Minister stated that today, India is seen as a combination of openness, opportunities and options. During the last nine years, the Prime Minister asserted that India has become the fifth-largest global economy as a result of the sustained efforts by the government. “We embarked on the journey of “Reform, Perform, and Transform” in 2014”, the Prime Minister remarked as he gave examples and mentioned increased competitiveness and enhanced transparency, expanding digitization and the promotion of innovation. He further added that India has established dedicated freight corridors and built industrial zones. “We have moved away from red tape to red carpet and liberalized FDI flows”, Shri Modi said. He also touched upon initiatives like Make in India and Aatma Nirbhar Bharat that have given a boost to manufacturing and also mentioned

policy stability in the country. The Prime Minister underlined that the government is committed to making India the third-largest global economy in the next few years.

Throwing light on the current global challenges, from the pandemic to geo-political tensions, the Prime Minister said that it has tested the world economy and stated that it is our responsibility as G20 nations to rebuild confidence in international trade and investments. The Prime Minister emphasized on building resilient and inclusive global value chains that can withstand future shocks. In this context, the Prime Minister highlighted the importance of India's proposal to create a Generic Framework for Mapping Global Value Chains to assess vulnerabilities, minimize risks and enhance resilience.

"Technology's transformative power in trade is undeniable", the Prime Minister remarked and gave the example of India's shift to an online single indirect tax - the GST which helped create a single internal market boosting inter-state trade. He also touched upon India's Unified Logistics Inter-face Platform that makes trade logistics cheaper and more transparent. He also mentioned 'Open Network for Digital Commerce' and termed it as a game-changer that will democratize the digital marketplace eco-system. "We have already done that with our Unified Payments Interface for payment systems", he added. The Prime Minister observed that digitizing processes and the use of e-commerce have the potential to enhance market access. He expressed delight that the group is working on the 'High-Level Principles for the Digitalization of Trade Documents'. These principles, the Prime Minister said, can help countries in implementing cross-border electronic trade measures and reduce compliance burdens. Highlighting the challenges of the growth in cross-border e-commerce, the Prime Minister suggested working collectively to ensure equitable competition between large and small sellers. He also emphasized the need to address the problems faced by consumers in fair price discovery and grievance handling mechanisms.

The Prime Minister underlined that India believes in a rules-based, open, inclusive and multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core. He pointed out that India has advocated the concerns of the Global South at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference where members were able to forge consensus on safeguarding the interests of millions of farmers and small businesses. He stressed paying more attention to MSMEs given their key role in the global economy. "MSMEs account for 60 to 70 percent of employment and contribute 50 percent to the global GDP", the Prime Minister informed as he stressed the need to support them continuously as their empowerment translates to societal empowerment. "For us, MSME means - Maximum Support to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises", the Prime Minister remarked. He said that India has integrated MSMEs into public procurement through the online platform - Government e-marketplace and has been working with the MSME sector to adopt the ethos of 'Zero Defect' and 'Zero Effect' on the environment. He highlighted that increasing their participation in global trade and Global Value Chains has been a top priority of the Indian presidency. Speaking about the proposed 'Jaipur Initiative to foster seamless flow of information to MSMEs', the Prime Minister said that it will address the challenge of inadequate access to market and business-related information faced by MSMEs. Shri Modi expressed confidence that the upgrade of the Global Trade Help Desk will increase the participation of MSMEs in global trade.

Concluding the address, the Prime Minister underlined that it is the collective responsibility of G20 members as One Family to restore confidence in international trade and investment processes. He expressed confidence that the working group will move forward collectively to ensure the global trading system gradually transitions into a more representative and inclusive future.

<https://t.co/Y6Mub2ms4G>

DS/TS

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

THE U.K.-INDIA RELATIONSHIP IS ALIVE WITH OPPORTUNITY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 24, 2023 05:35 am | Updated 05:35 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'It is no secret that the U.K. and India share a thriving trading relationship' | Photo Credit: Getty Images/iStockphoto

It is fantastic to see India, the world's largest democracy, take the global stage as host of the G-20, a vital forum for fostering international cooperation. The United Kingdom has long held the belief in trade as a force for growth and prosperity. It is why we advocate for free and fair trade at the World Trade Organization and why we are taking advantage of our newly recovered powers to forge trade deals with booming economies such as India. Collaboration on issues such as global value chains resilience and digitalisation of trade documents is key to harnessing the true value of global trade.

As India's middle class grows to a quarter of a billion middle class consumers by 2050, any improvements on our current trading relationship could be a huge boost for U.K. businesses. It is no secret that the U.K. and India share a thriving trading relationship, which was worth £36 billion in 2022.

New figures from the U.K.'s Department for Business and Trade reveal that India retained its position as the U.K.'s second largest source of investment projects in the last financial year, with 118 new projects creating 8,384 new jobs across the U.K. And, importantly, our trade and investment relationship goes both ways. In fact, as India's sixth largest investor, between April 2000 and March 2023, the U.K. has invested \$34 billion in India in foreign direct investment. U.K. companies are also creating jobs and growth opportunities. There are 618 U.K. companies in India with a combined turnover of around \$50 billion employing about 466,640 people directly as of 2021.

While in India, I will be meeting with Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal to discuss progress on an ambitious Free Trade Agreement, which could boost our bilateral trading relationship even further.

The U.K. has proven we can negotiate ambitious trade deals, and I want to move at pace to secure a deal with India, but there are still complex talks ahead on areas including goods, services, and investment — all of which will take time. What we want is a deal that is fair, works for both sides, and benefits businesses. And our business relationship is going from strength to

strength. Just last month, the U.K. was chosen as the home of Tata Group's first gigafactory outside India, in a move set to create thousands of jobs and bring a huge boost to the U.K.'s automotive sector. And I am pleased to be meeting with Tata Chair Natarajan Chandrasekaran, following their £4 billion investment, while I am here.

But the U.K. and India's strong partnership extends far beyond trade and investment into culture, sport, education and tourism too. To borrow a phrase from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, there is very much a 'living bridge' between our nations — you only have to look at our shared love of Bollywood to see this in action. As one of Bollywood's largest audiences outside of India, the U.K. has featured in some of Bollywood's iconic films such as Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham, which was shot in around London's St Paul's Cathedral and Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, and remains a popular filming destination today; blockbuster Bade Miyan Chote Miyan was filming in Scotland's spectacular highlands earlier this year.

A vibrant Indian diaspora of over 1.6 million people makes a significant contribution across all walks of life in the U.K., from education through to the workforce, with Indian students making up one of the U.K.'s largest groups of international students.

That is why I am proud to announce that the U.K. is launching 'Alive with Opportunity', a £1.5 million marketing campaign designed to showcase the tremendous bond between our countries and build on the continuous exchange of people, ideas and culture. As part of the U.K.'s ambitions to double trade with India by 2030, the campaign aims to stimulate interest and demand for U.K. goods and services, increase the U.K.'s ability to grow their business through trade with India, and attract new Indian inward investment. Over the course of the next year you can expect to see a celebration of the business, trade, cultural, and sporting links between the U.K. and India across billboards shining a light on this relationship which is very much alive with opportunity.

Kemi Badenoch is the United Kingdom's Business and Trade Secretary

COMMENTS

SHARE

[United Kingdom](#) / [India](#) / [trade policy](#) / [G20](#) / [investments](#) / [culture \(general\)](#) / [sport](#) / [education](#) / [tourism](#) / [trade agreements](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© [Zuccess App](#) by [crackIAS.com](#)

PRIME MINISTER'S PARTICIPATION IN THE 15TH BRICS SUMMIT

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: BRICS, IBSA and India

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the 15th BRICS Summit held under South Africa's chairship, in Johannesburg on 23 August 2023.

The leaders held productive discussions including on global economic recovery, partnership with Africa and the Global South and reviewed the progress made on the BRICS agenda so far.

During his address, Prime Minister called for a strengthened BRICS that will be:

- B - Breaking barriers
- R - Revitalising economies
- I - Inspiring Innovation
- C - Creating opportunities
- S - Shaping the future

In his various interventions, Prime Minister highlighted the following:

- Called for setting defined timelines for UNSC reforms
- Called for reform of Multilateral Financial Institutions
- Called for reform of WTO
- Exhorted BRICS to build consensus on its expansion
- Urged BRICS to send a global message of unity and not polarisation
- Proposed creation of a BRICS Space Exploration Consortium
- Offered Indian Digital Public Infrastructure - the Indian stack to BRICS partners
- Proposed undertaking skill mapping, skilling and promoting mobility among BRICS countries
- Proposed joint efforts of BRICS countries for protection of Big Cats under International Big Cat Alliance
- Proposed establishing a repository of traditional medicine among BRICS countries
- Called upon BRICS partners to support AU's permanent membership of the G20

DS

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the 15th BRICS Summit held under South Africa's chairship, in Johannesburg on 23 August 2023.

The leaders held productive discussions including on global economic recovery, partnership with Africa and the Global South and reviewed the progress made on the BRICS agenda so far.

During his address, Prime Minister called for a strengthened BRICS that will be:

- B - Breaking barriers
- R - Revitalising economies
- I - Inspiring Innovation
- C - Creating opportunities

S - Shaping the future

In his various interventions, Prime Minister highlighted the following:

- Called for setting defined timelines for UNSC reforms
- Called for reform of Multilateral Financial Institutions
- Called for reform of WTO
- Exhorted BRICS to build consensus on its expansion
- Urged BRICS to send a global message of unity and not polarisation
- Proposed creation of a BRICS Space Exploration Consortium
- Offered Indian Digital Public Infrastructure - the Indian stack to BRICS partners
- Proposed undertaking skill mapping, skilling and promoting mobility among BRICS countries
- Proposed joint efforts of BRICS countries for protection of Big Cats under International Big Cat Alliance
- Proposed establishing a repository of traditional medicine among BRICS countries
- Called upon BRICS partners to support AU's permanent membership of the G20

DS

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](https://crackias.com)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS

BACKSEAT DRIVING: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON THAI CIVILIAN GOVERNANCE AND THE THAI MILITARY'S HOLD

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 25, 2023 12:10 am | Updated 12:10 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

On the face of it, the [election of Srettha Thavisin](#), a property tycoon from the Pheu Thai party, as [Thailand's Prime Minister](#) marks a shift towards civilian governance from almost a decade of military rule. But that is not the full story. Move Forward, the party that won the May parliamentary election, was prevented from forming the government by the military-royalist nexus because of its progressive and anti-establishment views, while Pheu Thai, the second largest party, was given a chance after it agreed to form a coalition with military-aligned parties. Pita Limjaroenrat, leader of Move Forward, had led a spirited campaign, offering a deal to voters that included ensuring economic justice, keeping the military in check and amending the controversial lèse-majesté law that shields the monarchy from public criticism. Mr. Pita, whose coalition had a clear majority in the elected lower House of Parliament, had tried to form the government twice, but [was blocked by the military-appointed Senators](#). He was later [barred from Parliament](#) over allegations of hiding details of his shares in a now defunct media company. The constitutional court is hearing a petition against Move Forward's promise to amend the lèse-majesté law, which could lead to its dissolution.

Thailand has had phases of democratic experiments but the military has always maintained an outsized influence. Over the past century, the Thai military has carried out over a dozen coups, with all being endorsed by the monarchy. The military's stranglehold has also produced populist resistance off and on. The Pheu Thai party itself is the third incarnation of the pro-democracy movement founded by Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted from power in 2006. Prior to the May elections, Pheu Thai had vowed to keep the military out of politics, only to walk back on its promises. It now says that it will not support amending the lèse-majesté law, citing a lack of consensus. Incidentally, Mr. Thaksin, who was sentenced in absentia to eight years in prison for "corruption" and "misuse of power", returned after 15 years of exile on the day Parliament elected Mr. Srettha as Prime Minister. Mr. Thaksin was arrested on arrival, but his return raises questions on whether the Pheu Thai might cut a deal with the military to ensure his safety (and a probable royal pardon) in exchange for not harming the interests of the establishment. Whatever Thai politicians might call it, this is not a democratic transition. The military has moved to backseat driving, keeping its interests intact and flouting the spirit of the election results. Mr. Srettha could find it hard to tackle Thailand's myriad challenges, that include reviving a sluggish economy and advancing democratic rights, when his government is remote-controlled by the establishment.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Thailand](#) / [election](#) / [politics](#) / [democracy](#) / [corruption & bribery](#) / [parliament](#) / [economy \(general\)](#) / [government](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by [crackIAS.com](#)

CrackIAS

INDIA'S G-20 OPPORTUNITY FOR AN AFRICAN RENAISSANCE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 25, 2023 12:16 am | Updated 01:50 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'India is well placed to leverage its comprehensive profile with Africa to help the continent either bilaterally or through multilateral forums' | Photo Credit: Getty Images/iStockphoto

Like an absentee landlord, Africa is flagging its demands nowadays on multilateral fora such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), the G-20 and the United Nations General Assembly. For a continent with 54 countries, over a quarter of the "Global South", it is populated at BRICS and the G-20 by South Africa, an atypical representative of the Black continent.

Africa, in general, and the Sahel region in particular, are passing through several existential challenges such as misgovernance, unplanned development, the dominance of ruling tribes and corruption. Recently, new disruptors such as the Islamic terror, inter-tribal scrimmage, changing climate, runaway food inflation, urbanisation and youth unemployment have further strained the traditional socio-political fabric. As the past military interventions by France, the United States and Russia's Wagner Group to curb the militancy have shown, they frequently become part of the problem. These interventions have costs: keeping dictatorships in power to protect their economic interests, such as uranium in Niger, gold in the Central African Republic and oil in Libya.

Until recently, African nationalists took pride in the continent having seen the last of generals in power. But thanks to the socio-political disorder highlighted, the past decade has seen the generals coming back in Egypt, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. The armed forces in Libya and Sudan have split and are vying for supremacy. While most military establishments in these countries are relatively weak and incapable of defeating the Islamists and tribalists, their top brass do not lack political ambitions. The reasons for the return of generals are complex and often specific to the national situation.

The African political elite is at its wits' end to put the genie of Bonapartism back in the bottle. Their earlier regional and continental prescription of delegitimisation and containment of the putschists is becoming increasingly less effective as such regimes have proliferated. Thus, when the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) recently threatened to act militarily against Niger's junta, two member-States, Mali and Burkina Faso — both run by military governments — opposed the idea. Similarly, Sudan's warring generals have defied calls for a ceasefire.

Africa's problems are further compounded by an erosion in its international support base. China has been Africa's largest trading partner and investor, but a slowing economy and trade have reduced its appetite for Africa's commodities. Its Belt and Roads Initiative has raised the debts of some African countries to unsustainable levels, in turn causing them to cede control of some of their assets to China.

Russia previously promoted the Wagner Group in Africa as a shortcut for security, but after the militia's mutiny against the Kremlin and the death of its chief in an air crash on Wednesday, the situation is unclear. Russia, which is under western economic sanctions, hosted an African summit in July, that saw tepid participation. France, the United Kingdom and other colonial powers as well as the United States have continued to exploit mineral wealth in Africa, but their economic downturn has limited their outreach. Moreover, Europe's main concern is limited to stopping illegal migration from African shores.

Against this worrying backdrop, the 15th BRICS summit took place in South Africa on August 23-24 with the theme "BRICS and Africa". It would be followed up early in September in the 18th G-20 Summit hosted by India where several issues of the "global south" with Africa as a focus would come up. The annual session of the United Nations General Assembly would also get underway — once again the Black continent's travails would prick the world's conscience.

India's ties with Africa are deep, diverse and harmonious that range from Mahatma Gandhi's satyagraha against the apartheid to the UN peacekeeping role. Although we now import less oil from Africa and sell fewer agricultural products, India-Africa trade reached \$98 billion in 2022-23. India's investment and other socio-economic engagements with Africa remain robust, especially in such sectors as education, health care, telecom, IT, appropriate technology and agriculture. India was the fifth largest investor in Africa and has extended over \$12.37 billion in concessional loans. India has completed 197 projects and has provided 42,000 scholarships since 2015. Approximately three million people of Indian origin live in Africa, many for centuries. They are Africa's largest non-native ethnicity.

India is well placed to leverage its comprehensive profile with Africa to help the continent either bilaterally or through these multilateral forums. Its hosting of the G-20 Summit will present it with a historic opportunity to up the ante. It could consult like-minded G-20 partners and multilateral institutions for a comprehensive semi-permanent platform to resolve the stalemated security and socio-economic situations in several parts of Africa. It should deliver political stability and economic development by combining peacekeeping with socio-political institution building. We can offer force multipliers such as targeted investments and transfer of relevant and appropriate Indian innovations, such as the JAM trinity (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile), DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer), UPI (Unified Payments Interface), and Aspirational Districts Programme. By offering a more participative and less exploitative alternative, New Delhi can make the India-Africa ecosystem an exemplary win-win paradigm for the 21st century.

Mahesh Sachdev is a retired Indian Foreign Service officer who served as Ambassador to Algeria and High Commissioner to Nigeria. He has authored a book, Nigeria: A Business Manual

COMMENTS

SHARE

[India](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [African Union](#) / [G20](#) / [South Africa](#) / [Brazil](#) / [Russia](#) / [China](#) / [terrorism \(crime\)](#) / [tribals](#) / [climate change](#) / [food](#) / [unemployment](#) / [minerals](#) / [France](#) / [USA](#) / [war](#) / [Libya](#) / [oil and gas - upstream activities](#) / [Egypt](#) / [Burkina Faso](#) / [Sudan](#) / [trade policy](#) / [United Kingdom](#) / [illegal](#)

[immigrants](#) / [United Nations](#) / [health](#) / [telecommunication service](#) / [computing and information technology](#) / [agriculture](#) / [education](#) / [investments](#) / [Aadhaar](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

PRIME MINISTER'S PARTICIPATION IN THE BRICS- AFRICA OUTREACH AND BRICS PLUS DIALOGUE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: BRICS, IBSA and India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the BRICS-Africa Outreach and BRICS Plus Dialogue, on 24 August, 2023 in Johannesburg.

The meeting saw participation from the guest countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, along with the leaders of the BRICS countries.

During his intervention, Prime Minister called for the BRICS to be the voice of the Global South. He underlined India's close partnership with Africa and reaffirmed India's commitment to support Africa in its development journey under Agenda 2063.

Prime Minister called for further cooperation to strengthen multi-polar world and emphasised the need to reform the global institutions to keep them representative and relevant. He urged the leaders for cooperation in the domains of counter-terrorism, environment conservation, climate action, cybersecurity, food & health security and resilient supply chains. Prime Minister also extended invitation to countries to be a part of international initiatives such as International Solar Alliance, One Sun One World One Grid, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, One Earth One Health, Big Cat Alliance and Global Centre for Traditional Medicine. He also offered to share India's Digital Public Infrastructure Stack.

DS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the BRICS-Africa Outreach and BRICS Plus Dialogue, on 24 August, 2023 in Johannesburg.

The meeting saw participation from the guest countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, along with the leaders of the BRICS countries.

During his intervention, Prime Minister called for the BRICS to be the voice of the Global South. He underlined India's close partnership with Africa and reaffirmed India's commitment to support Africa in its development journey under Agenda 2063.

Prime Minister called for further cooperation to strengthen multi-polar world and emphasised the need to reform the global institutions to keep them representative and relevant. He urged the leaders for cooperation in the domains of counter-terrorism, environment conservation, climate action, cybersecurity, food & health security and resilient supply chains. Prime Minister also extended invitation to countries to be a part of international initiatives such as International Solar Alliance, One Sun One World One Grid, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, One Earth One Health, Big Cat Alliance and Global Centre for Traditional Medicine. He also offered to share India's Digital Public Infrastructure Stack.

DS

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

CONCRETE ALLIANCE: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON THE BRICS GROUPING AND ITS EXPANSION

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: BRICS, IBSA and India

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 26, 2023 12:20 am | Updated 12:20 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

If there was any doubt about the relevance of the BRICS grouping (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa), which held its 15th Summit in Johannesburg this week, the massive global interest in its outcomes should have put those to rest. Ever since the grouping, set up as a coalition of emerging economies, said last year that it was open to new members, as many as 40 countries from the global south have evinced interest in joining, with at least 22 formal applications. The [decision to more than double its membership](#) overnight, from 5 to 11, by inducting four major middle eastern players, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, as well as Ethiopia and Argentina, from Africa and South America, respectively, is significant. The enthusiasm is obvious. BRICS has weathered several storms and is today seen, if not as any alternative, as a counter-narrative creator to the western-led G-7 club on diverse issues: from climate change commitments and UN reform to its rejection of unilateral western sanctions against Iran, Russia and Venezuela. By also creating the New Development Bank, which has funded nearly 100 projects so far, instituting a Contingent Reserve Arrangement, and other institutional mechanisms, the BRICS countries have also shown their ability to work on practical initiatives. While the grouping may not yet rival the wealth of the G-7, it does now rival its share of the global GDP (approximately 30% each), and represents a more equitable representation across 40% of the world's population to the G-7 countries that make up just 10%. Once the new members join, six of 10 of the biggest global oil suppliers will be BRICS countries, giving BRICS new heft in the field of energy.

While the battle of proving its *raison d'être* may have been substantially won, the BRICS countries still fall short in showing a coherence of purpose, and are still mired by inner contradictions. The rivalry between India and China has no doubt slowed the grouping down and the induction of arch rivals Iran and Saudi Arabia-UAE, despite their recent *détente*, could well create similar issues for the group in the future. In addition, any overtly political, anti-western stance by BRICS will make India, and other countries in the grouping who walk a tightrope between the global powers, including Egypt, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Brazil, uncomfortable. Russia's invasion of Ukraine too has caused uneasiness, and BRICS members did not vote as a bloc on any of the UN votes; nor did any of the other members support Russia's actions. Above all, any attempts by China to overpower the group with its strategic or economic vision will require a firm pushback if the foundational idea of BRICS, to assert the strategic autonomy of its members, is to be followed. Eventually it is the promise of shared prosperity and a more democratic model of global governance that attracts so many in the global south to the grouping, and will provide the mortar for an expanded line-up of BRICS countries.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Brazil](#) / [Russia](#) / [India](#) / [China](#) / [South Africa](#) / [Egypt](#) / [Iran](#) / [Saudi Arabia](#) / [United Arab Emirates](#) / [Ethiopia](#) / [economic sanction](#) / [banking](#) / [oil and gas - upstream activities](#) / [diplomacy](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by [crackIAS.com](#)

CrackIAS

INDIA-GREECE JOINT STATEMENT

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

At the invitation of Prime Minister H.E. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid an official visit to the Hellenic Republic on 25th August 2023.

Prime Minister Mitsotakis and Prime Minister Modi acknowledged that both India and Greece share historical linkages and agreed that at a time when the global order is undergoing unprecedented changes, a reenergised approach to enhancing our bilateral relationship is required.

Both leaders held high level talks in a warm and friendly atmosphere. They noted the ongoing cooperation between the two sides and exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

As leaders of two ancient sea faring nations with a long-standing maritime outlook, they shared their vision of a free, open and rules-based Mediterranean Sea and Indo-Pacific, in accordance with the law of the sea, in particular the provisions of the UNCLOS, and with full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and freedom of navigation to the benefit of international peace, stability and security.

Both Leaders noted that the EU and India have largest democratic and free market space in the world, and agreed that deepening EU-India relations would be mutually beneficial and have a positive regional and global impact. The Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction that both Greece and India have shown extraordinary economic resilience, despite the challenges in their respective regions, and have restored domestic economic growth. The two Prime Ministers expressed their strong support for the ongoing India-EU trade and investment negotiations and the early implementation of the India-EU Connectivity Partnership.

Building on the foundation of the long-standing warm and close relationship between their countries and peoples, the two leaders decided to upgrade Greek-Indian bilateral ties to the level of a "Strategic Partnership" and agreed to work to further expand bilateral cooperation in political, security and economic spheres. The two Prime Ministers also decided to take steps to further strengthen people-to-people ties between the two countries. Appreciating the increase in bilateral trade and economic engagement in recent years, the leaders also directed that both sides shall work to double bilateral trade by 2030.

Both leaders reiterated the need for further broadening and deepening bilateral engagements, in the field of defence, shipping, science and technology, cyber space, education, culture, tourism and agriculture. They took note of the signing of the MOU on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture, including the establishment of a Hellenic-Indian Joint Sub-committee on Agriculture for facilitating sectoral cooperation for mutual benefit. Both leaders directed their senior officials to ensure regular dialogue in the areas including political, economic, defence, security and public diplomacy. They also agreed to encourage direct flights between Greece and India.

Taking into account the long-standing cultural exchanges between India and Greece, both leaders welcomed efforts to promote exchanges in all forms of art. They also agreed to encourage joint efforts in preserving and protecting ancient sites, and strengthen cooperation within UNESCO.

Both leaders agreed that an early finalization of a Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement (MMPA) would be mutually beneficial, facilitating in particular the free movement of workforce between the two countries.

The two leaders strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whenever, wherever, and by whom-so-ever committed and the use of terrorist proxies for cross-border terrorism.

Prime Minister Modi welcomed Greece into the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and looked forward to Greece's membership of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

Welcoming India's Presidency of the G20 Forum, Prime Minister Mitsotakis expressed confidence that under India's leadership, the G20 will successfully advance its goals.

Prime Minister Modi thanked Prime Minister Mitsotakis for the gracious hospitality extended by the Government and the people of Greece during the visit. Prime Minister Modi extended an invitation to Prime Minister Mitsotakis to visit India.

DS

At the invitation of Prime Minister H.E. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid an official visit to the Hellenic Republic on 25th August 2023.

Prime Minister Mitsotakis and Prime Minister Modi acknowledged that both India and Greece share historical linkages and agreed that at a time when the global order is undergoing unprecedented changes, a reenergised approach to enhancing our bilateral relationship is required.

Both leaders held high level talks in a warm and friendly atmosphere. They noted the ongoing cooperation between the two sides and exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

As leaders of two ancient sea faring nations with a long-standing maritime outlook, they shared their vision of a free, open and rules-based Mediterranean Sea and Indo-Pacific, in accordance with the law of the sea, in particular the provisions of the UNCLOS, and with full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and freedom of navigation to the benefit of international peace, stability and security.

Both Leaders noted that the EU and India have largest democratic and free market space in the world, and agreed that deepening EU-India relations would be mutually beneficial and have a positive regional and global impact. The Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction that both Greece and India have shown extraordinary economic resilience, despite the challenges in their respective regions, and have restored domestic economic growth. The two Prime Ministers expressed their strong support for the ongoing India-EU trade and investment negotiations and the early implementation of the India-EU Connectivity Partnership.

Building on the foundation of the long-standing warm and close relationship between their countries and peoples, the two leaders decided to upgrade Greek-Indian bilateral ties to the level of a "Strategic Partnership" and agreed to work to further expand bilateral cooperation in

political, security and economic spheres. The two Prime Ministers also decided to take steps to further strengthen people-to-people ties between the two countries. Appreciating the increase in bilateral trade and economic engagement in recent years, the leaders also directed that both sides shall work to double bilateral trade by 2030.

Both leaders reiterated the need for further broadening and deepening bilateral engagements, in the field of defence, shipping, science and technology, cyber space, education, culture, tourism and agriculture. They took note of the signing of the MOU on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture, including the establishment of a Hellenic-Indian Joint Sub-committee on Agriculture for facilitating sectoral cooperation for mutual benefit. Both leaders directed their senior officials to ensure regular dialogue in the areas including political, economic, defence, security and public diplomacy. They also agreed to encourage direct flights between Greece and India.

Taking into account the long-standing cultural exchanges between India and Greece, both leaders welcomed efforts to promote exchanges in all forms of art. They also agreed to encourage joint efforts in preserving and protecting ancient sites, and strengthen cooperation within UNESCO.

Both leaders agreed that an early finalization of a Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement (MMPA) would be mutually beneficial, facilitating in particular the free movement of workforce between the two countries.

The two leaders strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whenever, wherever, and by whom-so-ever committed and the use of terrorist proxies for cross-border terrorism.

Prime Minister Modi welcomed Greece into the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and looked forward to Greece's membership of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

Welcoming India's Presidency of the G20 Forum, Prime Minister Mitsotakis expressed confidence that under India's leadership, the G20 will successfully advance its goals.

Prime Minister Modi thanked Prime Minister Mitsotakis for the gracious hospitality extended by the Government and the people of Greece during the visit. Prime Minister Modi extended an invitation to Prime Minister Mitsotakis to visit India.

DS

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

3RD INDIA-EU HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE ON TRADE AND INVESTMENT HELD

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Europe, European Union (EU) and India

The 3rd High Level Dialogue (HLD), co-chaired by the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles Shri Piyush Goyal and the European Commission Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People & Trade Commissioner Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis, was held on 26th August, 2023.

The HLD is an outcome of the decision taken at the 15th India-EU Leader's Summit held in July 2020, with an objective for a Ministerial level guidance towards the bilateral trade and investment relations.

During the discussion, in the HLD, the Ministers took stock of ongoing three negotiations between India and EU i.e. India-EU Free Trade Agreement; a standalone Investment Protection Agreement; and a Geographical Indications Agreement. The Ministers acknowledged that both sides have made good progress in the ongoing three negotiations.

The Ministers broadly discussed about the market access issue of both sides and review the progress made so far under the India-EU Trade and Technology Council. The upcoming MC-13 matters were also briefly discussed during the meeting.

Shri Piyush Goyal appreciated the visit of the European Commission EVP Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis and extending his support for recent G20 Trade and Investment Minister's Meeting held in Jaipur on 24th -25th August, 2023.

The meeting concluded with both the Ministers expressing confidence on the ongoing three negotiations and committed themselves towards deepening of the India-EU commercial and economic partnership.

AD/VN

The 3rd High Level Dialogue (HLD), co-chaired by the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles Shri Piyush Goyal and the European Commission Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People & Trade Commissioner Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis, was held on 26th August, 2023.

The HLD is an outcome of the decision taken at the 15th India-EU Leader's Summit held in July 2020, with an objective for a Ministerial level guidance towards the bilateral trade and investment relations.

During the discussion, in the HLD, the Ministers took stock of ongoing three negotiations between India and EU i.e. India-EU Free Trade Agreement; a standalone Investment Protection Agreement; and a Geographical Indications Agreement. The Ministers acknowledged that both sides have made good progress in the ongoing three negotiations.

The Ministers broadly discussed about the market access issue of both sides and review the progress made so far under the India-EU Trade and Technology Council. The upcoming MC-13

matters were also briefly discussed during the meeting.

Shri Piyush Goyal appreciated the visit of the European Commission EVP Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis and extending his support for recent G20 Trade and Investment Minister's Meeting held in Jaipur on 24th -25th August, 2023.

The meeting concluded with both the Ministers expressing confidence on the ongoing three negotiations and committed themselves towards deepening of the India-EU commercial and economic partnership.

AD/VN

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](https://crackias.com)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com

5TH EDITION OF AUSINDEX-23 AT SYDNEY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Australia

5th edition of biennial AUSINDEX maritime exercise between Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) was conducted from 22-25 August 23 at Sydney, Australia. INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata participated in the exercise along with HMAS Choules and HMAS Brisbane from RAN. Besides ships and their integral helicopters, the exercise also witnessed participation of fighter aircraft and maritime patrol aircraft.



Conducted over 4 days, AUSINDEX included a series of complex exercises in all three domains of maritime operations. The exercise ended on a high note revalidating the common procedures and reaffirming the close linkages and interoperability between Indian Navy and RAN.



VM/JSN

5th edition of biennial AUSINDEX maritime exercise between Indian Navy and Royal Australian

Navy (RAN) was conducted from 22-25 August 23 at Sydney, Australia. INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata participated in the exercise along with HMAS Choules and HMAS Brisbane from RAN. Besides ships and their integral helicopters, the exercise also witnessed participation of fighter aircraft and maritime patrol aircraft.



Conducted over 4 days, AUSINDEX included a series of complex exercises in all three domains of maritime operations. The exercise ended on a high note revalidating the common procedures and reaffirming the close linkages and interoperability between Indian Navy and RAN.



VM/JSN

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

TALKING ABOUT TALKING: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON AN INDIA-CHINA DIALOGUE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - China

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 28, 2023 12:20 am | Updated 12:20 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

[India and China](#) have once again come away from their talks with starkly different views of their ties. The only talking point from last week's [brief conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping](#) on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit revolved around not what was said between them — which remains largely a mystery as is the way of “informal” conversations — but how it was said. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) released no statement on the talks, although Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra told reporters on August 24 that both had “underlined that the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the border areas and observing and respecting the LAC are essential for the normalisation of the India-China relationship”. He added that they had decided to “direct their relevant officials to intensify efforts at expeditious disengagement and de-escalation”. A [Chinese Foreign Ministry statement](#) made no such mention, saying that Mr. Xi had said both sides “should bear in mind the overall interests” of ties and “handle properly” the border issue. The Chinese statement also said they had spoken at India's request, prompting “official sources” in New Delhi to tell reporters that it was China that had requested a more structured bilateral meeting, which India had turned down.

The exchange in South Africa was only the second known interaction between the leaders since the start of the LAC crisis in 2020. It took the MEA as long as eight months to acknowledge they had discussed the border in a conversation initially described as “pleasantries” exchanged at the G-20 in Bali in November 2022. India had, at the G-20 as well, reportedly made clear it was not willing for a more structured sit down exchange, although as videos showed, it was Mr. Modi who finally initiated the conversation with Mr. Xi. If the Modi government is concerned that speaking formally with Mr. Xi would expose it to Opposition criticism over China or dilute its messaging on “abnormal” ties, the argument that a dialogue is some sort of concession or a victory for Beijing is not a serious one. What matters more is what is said in the dialogue. In fact, a structured dialogue at the upcoming G-20 in New Delhi, which Mr. Xi is expected to attend, would give the Prime Minister the opportunity to firmly underline India's stand, in the clearest terms and at the highest level, that relations are predicated on peace and the future of the relationship hinges on China restoring the status quo and India's patrolling rights along the borders. The only ostensible reason for India's reluctance appears to be the government's unfortunate prioritisation of political optics over public interest in its dealing with China, which has also led to continuing opacity over what is currently unfolding along the border.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#) / [India-China](#) / [Brazil](#) / [Russia](#) / [India](#) / [China](#) / [South Africa](#) / [summit](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [unrest, conflicts and war](#) / [G20](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS

AT DELHI SUMMIT, DEMONSTRATE CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 29, 2023 12:08 am | Updated 12:08 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

'The G-20 should take a lead in streamlining international efforts to achieve just energy transitions' | Photo Credit: ANI

The G-20 members emit most of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and produce the bulk of its fossil fuels. But, most of them have also pledged to be "net-zero", cutting back on emissions and fossil fuel use. It is time for the G-20 to act as a united group that drives its own collective climate ambition through collaboration, coordination and competition. The G-20 summit in New Delhi (September 9-10) is a crucial moment to show leadership ahead of the UN Secretary General's Climate Ambition Summit and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP28.

Recently, G-20 members have shown a degree of commitment to shift towards clean energy: renewable energy sources provided 29% of their energy mix in 2021, an increase from 19% in 2010.

India has made significant steps in the last decade to become the world's third largest producer of renewable energy and setting targets to continue the expansion of installed renewables to account for 50% of energy production by 2030. But, governments need to create a bigger shift as demand increases and the world's carbon budget is shrinking faster than previously thought.

They will need to focus on three action areas:

First, at the national and local levels, G-20 countries need to improve their governance processes for just energy transitions. Governments should establish clear governance structures to ensure that the transition process is inclusive and the results equitable, and avoid siloed working. This includes clarifying responsibilities and mandates between ministries and across government levels with the goal of having coherent delivery plans that can attract investment. Progress indicators should go beyond the traditional ones such as net job creation, diversity of manufacturing and regional economic growth to include metrics on the kinds of jobs created, who has access to them, and levels of broader community resilience and innovation. Depending on the country context, G-20 countries could establish a multi-ministerial task force or joint working groups between government and non-government actors to coordinate just energy transition efforts. For example, South Africa has developed a just transition framework that was led by the Presidential Climate Commission (PCC). Other G-20 members can learn from this

approach, to accelerate their own just energy transitions by developing concrete frameworks, road maps, or action plans.

Second, as the Indian G-20 presidency has acknowledged, the G-20 should see this transition as a way to diversify G-20 member economies to ensure long-term economic stability, livelihoods and public revenue streams. International financial institutions have a critical role to play by aligning their investments and risk-taking to rapidly deploy vast amounts of renewable energy and grid infrastructure, and to target support to energy efficiency and very low-carbon industrial technologies.

For example, the global increase in demand for and production of green steel necessitates the immediate transition to low carbon steel production pathways.

The G-20 countries, representing 90% of global steel production and 80% of consumption, have a pivotal role in advancing global low-carbon steel production. By setting clear mandates for international financial institutions, such as multilateral development banks and international climate finance, they can drive investments in green steel transitions within developing and emerging economies.

A collective commitment by the G-20 to Green Public Procurement would also accelerate the decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors such as steel and cement. However, collaboration within and among G-20 nations is necessary for effective and ambitious reform in public purchasing. Governments must implement effective monitoring, create clear mandates for low-carbon procurement, “upskill” procurement officers, and set time-bound targets to harness the full potential of Green Public Procurement.

Third, the G-20 should take a lead in streamlining international efforts to achieve just energy transitions. These efforts will be aided by radically improved transparency and accountability, for example by setting up disclosure mechanisms on energy transitions-related data through existing mechanisms, such as the G-20 Energy Transitions and Sustainable Finance Working Groups, and the Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JET-Ps). The G-20 should also encourage fossil-fuel producing countries to provide current, comparable and reliable information about their plans and projects for oil, gas and coal production, and how these align with international as well as national climate goals.

The race to deploy clean energy for all, to decarbonise industry and to achieve a just and inclusive transition cannot be run alone. By taking a lead in these three action areas, the G-20 can ensure this is a relay race that is won together — not at the expense of some countries and communities.

The outcome document of July’s G-20 Energy Transition Ministers’ meeting called for “Just, Affordable, and Inclusive Energy Transition Pathways”. But for countries to get onto such pathways, the G-20 must act together, collaborating and coordinating steps to achieve net-zero ambitions, while competing to achieve them.

The G-20 summit in New Delhi is a crucial moment for the Heads of State and Government present at the meeting to adopt a strong leader’s declaration, committing to collective ambition to combat climate change. In the past few months, the devastating effects of climate change have been clearly shown. There is simply no more time to waste.

Aaron Maltais is Senior Research Fellow at the Stockholm Environment Institute. Claudia Strambo is Research Fellow at the Stockholm Environment Institute. Eileen Torres-Morales is Research Associate at the Stockholm Environment Institute

COMMENTS

SHARE

[G20](#) / [climate change](#) / [India](#) / [greenhouse gases](#) / [carbon emissions](#) / [United Nations](#) / [renewable energy](#) / [alternative energy](#) / [energy resources](#) / [South Africa](#) / [iron and steel](#) / [banking](#) / [economy \(general\)](#) / [oil and gas - upstream activities](#) / [coal](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS

OLD TIES: ON THE INDIA AND GREECE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

August 29, 2023 12:10 am | Updated 07:58 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

Speaking [after a bilateral meeting with Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis last week](#), Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted that India-Greece bilateral relations have neither been "diminished" nor has the warmth decreased despite no [Indian Prime Minister having visited Greece since 1983](#). However, the absence of high-level contact has meant a lack of close strategic ties in the way India has with other nearby countries in Europe such as France, Spain, Italy and Cyprus. To that end, Mr. Modi's visit, which came shortly after Mr. Mitsotakis's re-election in June, sought to leap-frog ties. India and Greece agreed to establish a "Strategic Partnership" and announced plans for a dialogue mechanism between their National Security Advisers apart from plans for a skilled migration and mobility partnership, as well as cooperation to complete negotiations for the India-European Union (EU) Free Trade Negotiation on Connectivity partnership. While connectivity between the two countries was forged by Alexander's invasion in 326 BCE, exchanges now have been mainly predicated on tourism, trade (about \$2 billion) and migration of labour, without a more comprehensive bilateral strategy at play. Speaking to the Greek newspaper, Kathimerini, Mr. Modi hoped that India's ambition to become a global manufacturing hub could now be melded with Greece's aspirations to become an "economic gateway" to the EU. In addition, India and Greece, once plundered by colonial powers, have also held discussions on the restoration of artefacts. They may find common cause in pushing legislation through UNESCO to help restore some of their historical property.

Their strategic ties have a strong geopolitical impetus as well. Mr. Modi's outreach comes as Greece, which has overcome several years as an "economic trouble-spot" and once over-indebted to Chinese investment, seeks to diversify its options. In Greece's strengthened ties with Israel and Cyprus — in what is seen as a coalition to counter Turkey — India might find some common ground, given Delhi-Ankara tensions over Turkey's role in the OIC and over Kashmir. In addition, India and Greece, once ancient maritime powers, face concerns over the maintenance of maritime security in keeping with international laws. Mr. Mitsotakis referred to the "common" interests that bind the Eastern Mediterranean and the Indo-Pacific regions. Lauding the landing of Chandrayaan-3, he said it showed "favourable omens" for the relationship between the most populous democracy and the first democracy, suggesting that both countries use the favourable winds to set the course for more cooperation, without allowing another four decades to lapse.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[India](#) / [diplomacy](#) / [European Union](#) / [history](#) / [United Nations](#) / [China](#) / [foreign investment](#) / [Turkey](#) / [Jammu and Kashmir](#) / [space programme](#) / [Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#) / [France](#) / [Spain](#) / [tourism](#) / [trade policy](#) / [migration](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS

2ND MEETING OF G20-CHIEF SCIENCE ADVISERS' ROUNDTABLE UNDER INDIAN PRESIDENCY CONCLUDES, RELEASES OUTCOME DOCUMENT AND CHAIR'S SUMMARY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: G20

The second meeting of the G20-Chief Science Adviser's Roundtable (G20-CSAR), held under the Sherpa Track of the Indian G20 Presidency, successfully concluded today in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The summit culminated into mutual consensus for an Outcome Document and a Chair's Summary by all G20 countries and invitee countries.



G20-CSAR is an attempt towards synergizing global science advice mechanism in an inclusive and action-oriented manner to enable evidence-informed policymaking, as well as strengthening science advice at national and international levels.

The key priorities areas that were discussed during the day-long deliberations were (a) leveraging opportunities in One Health, for better disease prevention, control, and pandemic preparedness; (b) synergizing global efforts to expand access to scholarly scientific knowledge; (c) ensuring equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in Science and Technology Ecosystem, as well as known and unknown emerging priorities; (d) and creating an Inclusive, Continuous and Action-Oriented Global Science Advice Mechanism.

The G20-CSAR meeting witnessed proactive engagements from representatives belonging to G20 member countries, invitee countries, and two international organisations; namely WHO and UNESCO. The meeting was led by Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India Professor Ajay Kumar Sood who appreciated the commitment fostered by the G20 nations and

invitee countries to deliberate on the ways to shape the G20-CSAR initiative as a sustained mechanism.

Addressing the G20-CSAR meeting, Prof. Sood said, “This initiative is based on the core principles of creating an inclusive and robust global science advice mechanism that would collectively benefit everyone equitably and reflect our shared vision. It is heartening to note the overwhelming support from national and international stakeholders for this initiative.”



Under the theme ‘**Leveraging opportunities in One Health, for better disease prevention, control, and pandemic preparedness**’, the G20 countries established the importance of addressing the interdependent health threats to human, animal, plant, and environment collectively through the One Health approach. The countries also emphasised the need for exploring virtual spaces for collaborations and capacity development for knowledge and technologies related to disease control. Connections and continued engagements between ‘One Health Institutes’ for facilitating collaboration in this space were also recommended.

Under the theme ‘**Synergising global efforts to expand access to scholarly scientific knowledge**’, the G20 countries deliberated on the need to enable immediate and universal access to appropriate publicly funded scholarly scientific knowledge to communities within and beyond G20 members. The importance of evolving approaches to offer immediate and free access to publicly funded research publications was acknowledged.

Under the theme ‘**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEI&A) in Science and Technology Ecosystem**’, the G20 nations acknowledged the contribution of traditional and indigenous knowledge systems and recommended that these systems be considered with contemporary science to foster evidence-based innovations that are culturally inspired and locally relevant. The importance of recognizing the plurality of languages and knowledge systems in inclusion-related policy discourse was emphasised.

Discussing the way forward in the fourth theme ‘**Creating an inclusive, continuous, and**

action-oriented Global Science Advice mechanism', the G20 countries unanimously decided to work towards creating a robust, relevant, and effective mechanism for sustained engagement, bringing together the chief science advisers and their nominated equivalents to deliberate on contemporary issues demanding effective global science advice, and aiming to address existing knowledge asymmetries for equitable global societal benefit.

The G20 countries aim to use the G20-CSAR platform to pave the way for further discussions and deliberations wherein members and international organisations could converge on multidisciplinary issues, impart synergistic science advice and use Science Diplomacy to enhance synergies between various stakeholders.

The G20-CSAR initiative, newly launched under the Indian Presidency, aims to create a space for voluntary knowledge and resource sharing. The goal is to exchange best practices in the science advice process based upon inclusivity, heterogeneity, interdependency, transparency, plurality of expertise, and collective interest.

The inaugural G20-CSAR meeting was held from 28th-30th March, 2023 in Ramnagar, Uttarakhand. Since then, four intersessional meetings, six side events and several bilateral meetings have been organised to arrive at the agreement on the Outcome Document and Chair's Summary.

The baton was passed on to Brazil to take the G20-CSAR initiative forward.



Here is the link to the Outcome Document and Chair's Summary:
<https://www.g20.org/content/dam/>

Here is the link to the Post-Event Press Conference:
<https://youtube.com/live/x0DJJ53iuHs?feature=share>

DS/ST

The second meeting of the G20-Chief Science Adviser's Roundtable (G20-CSAR), held under the Sherpa Track of the Indian G20 Presidency, successfully concluded today in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The summit culminated into mutual consensus for an Outcome Document and a Chair's Summary by all G20 countries and invitee countries.



G20-CSAR is an attempt towards synergizing global science advice mechanism in an inclusive and action-oriented manner to enable evidence-informed policymaking, as well as strengthening science advice at national and international levels.

The key priorities areas that were discussed during the day-long deliberations were (a) leveraging opportunities in One Health, for better disease prevention, control, and pandemic preparedness; (b) synergizing global efforts to expand access to scholarly scientific knowledge; (c) ensuring equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in Science and Technology Ecosystem, as well as known and unknown emerging priorities; (d) and creating an Inclusive, Continuous and Action-Oriented Global Science Advice Mechanism.

The G20-CSAR meeting witnessed proactive engagements from representatives belonging to G20 member countries, invitee countries, and two international organisations; namely WHO and UNESCO. The meeting was led by Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India Professor Ajay Kumar Sood who appreciated the commitment fostered by the G20 nations and invitee countries to deliberate on the ways to shape the G20-CSAR initiative as a sustained mechanism.

Addressing the G20-CSAR meeting, Prof. Sood said, "This initiative is based on the core principles of creating an inclusive and robust global science advice mechanism that would collectively benefit everyone equitably and reflect our shared vision. It is heartening to note the overwhelming support from national and international stakeholders for this initiative."



Under the theme **‘Leveraging opportunities in One Health, for better disease prevention, control, and pandemic preparedness’**, the G20 countries established the importance of addressing the interdependent health threats to human, animal, plant, and environment collectively through the One Health approach. The countries also emphasised the need for exploring virtual spaces for collaborations and capacity development for knowledge and technologies related to disease control. Connections and continued engagements between ‘One Health Institutes’ for facilitating collaboration in this space were also recommended.

Under the theme **‘Synergising global efforts to expand access to scholarly scientific knowledge’**, the G20 countries deliberated on the need to enable immediate and universal access to appropriate publicly funded scholarly scientific knowledge to communities within and beyond G20 members. The importance of evolving approaches to offer immediate and free access to publicly funded research publications was acknowledged.

Under the theme **‘Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEI&A) in Science and Technology Ecosystem’**, the G20 nations acknowledged the contribution of traditional and indigenous knowledge systems and recommended that these systems be considered with contemporary science to foster evidence-based innovations that are culturally inspired and locally relevant. The importance of recognizing the plurality of languages and knowledge systems in inclusion-related policy discourse was emphasised.

Discussing the way forward in the fourth theme **‘Creating an inclusive, continuous, and action-oriented Global Science Advice mechanism’**, the G20 countries unanimously decided to work towards creating a robust, relevant, and effective mechanism for sustained engagement, bringing together the chief science advisers and their nominated equivalents to deliberate on contemporary issues demanding effective global science advice, and aiming to address existing knowledge asymmetries for equitable global societal benefit.

The G20 countries aim to use the G20-CSAR platform to pave the way for further discussions and deliberations wherein members and international organisations could converge on

multidisciplinary issues, impart synergistic science advice and use Science Diplomacy to enhance synergies between various stakeholders.

The G20-CSAR initiative, newly launched under the Indian Presidency, aims to create a space for voluntary knowledge and resource sharing. The goal is to exchange best practices in the science advice process based upon inclusivity, heterogeneity, interdependency, transparency, plurality of expertise, and collective interest.

The inaugural G20-CSAR meeting was held from 28th-30th March, 2023 in Ramnagar, Uttarakhand. Since then, four intersessional meetings, six side events and several bilateral meetings have been organised to arrive at the agreement on the Outcome Document and Chair's Summary.

The baton was passed on to Brazil to take the G20-CSAR initiative forward.



Here is the link to the Outcome Document and Chair's Summary:
<https://www.g20.org/content/dam/>

Here is the link to the Post-Event Press Conference:
<https://youtube.com/live/x0DJJ53iuHs?feature=share>

DS/ST

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](https://www.crackIAS.com)

© Zuccess App by crackIAS.com

SWEDEN'S PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

[More from the author](#)

The Council of the European Union (EU) negotiates and shapes legislation proposed by the European Commission. The Council comprises ministers from all EU Member States and its presidency rotates among the member states every six months. The Council President leads the Council's work and represents all member states in dealings with other EU institutions.

From 1 January 2023, Sweden assumed the presidency of the Council of the European Union for six months until 30 June 2023, taking over from The Czech Republic.¹ This marked the third time that Sweden held the Council Presidency, with previous presidencies being in 2001 and 2009.

During the first tenure in 2001, the focus was on EU enlargement, employment and environment, while in 2009, the key issues included the financial crisis, economic recovery and climate change. Additionally, the Swedish Presidency played a significant role in implementing the Treaty of Lisbon, which brought about substantial changes across EU institutions. Sweden's then Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt was the last national representative to lead the European Council. Post that, the introduction of a permanent President aimed to ensure greater continuity in the Council's work.²

However, the world, including Europe, has faced paradigm shifts in recent years such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. These inevitably have expanded the function of the Council. This was evident in the more than 2,300 formal meetings as part of Sweden's presidency.

Notably, Sweden, along with France and the Czech Republic, had jointly prepared a general programme called the Trio Programme. This endeavour spanned 18 months and set out the EU's shared priorities and goals.³ Following Sweden, a new trio comprising Spain, Belgium and Hungary will take over and develop a new programme for the subsequent period.

The Swedish Presidency focused on four key areas:

In addition to the above, the Swedish presidency also focussed on security, competitiveness, green and energy transitions and rule of law.⁴ Unsurprisingly, it prioritised the continuation of economic and military support to Ukraine, including Kiev's path towards EU integration. Notably, Ukraine's membership would require a concerted effort at both the national and EU levels, including dealing with tricky issues such as reconstruction and reforms.

Amidst the EU's hostile security environment, the Swedish presidency sought to build consensus and a plan of action to secure the Union's interests. Measures were taken to implement the Strategic Compass⁵ and other related initiatives. The European Peace Facility (EPF) was effectively utilised to provide military assistance to Ukraine. .

Meanwhile, given the setback suffered by the continent on account of weaponisation of energy during the war,⁶ Sweden had to channelise its presidency towards tackling high energy prices and implementing long-term energy market reforms.

The Swedish presidency concluded with a focus on achieving a “greener, safer and freer Europe”.[7](#)

Under the Swedish presidency, attempts were made at fast-tracking Europe’s green energy transition. This involved the climate package called ‘Fit for 55’, first agreed upon in July 2021, with the aim to make Europe the world’s first climate-neutral continent by 2050.[8](#) This package targeted sectors such as climate, environment, energy and transportation.

As part of implementing the ‘Fit for 55’, attempts were made to enhance and expand the EU’s emission trading system (ETS), emission caps for each sector were introduced, strict conditions were set for members to reduce emissions under the Effort-Sharing Regulation (ESR), and targets to increase carbon sinks through forests and soils/land were given.[9](#) The utilisation of renewable energy sources were sought to be expanded, while providing support for innovative green initiatives and robust energy policy was formulated. Together, these efforts were aimed at achieving sustainable and environmentally responsible transformation towards a greener future.

Unsurprisingly, amidst Europe’s energy boycott of Russia, the focus of the Swedish presidency was also on preparing for the upcoming winter in 2023 and addressing the high and fluctuating energy prices, as well as expediting investments in clean and renewable electricity generation. The Council, therefore, sought to prolong its own regulation on coordinated measures to reduce gas demand during the upcoming winter period. Additionally, it also chose to continue with the plan chartered for implementation of the Regulation on Energy Market Integrity and Transparency (REMIT),[10](#) which is a crucial element of the proposed EU electricity market redesign.

Supporting Ukraine was a priority for the Swedish presidency. Efforts were made to coordinate actions of member states as part of the need to put up a united European front, including imposing far-reaching sanctions on the Russian government.[11](#) Additionally, significant progress was made in agreeing on a new migration policy,[12](#) which aims to reduce immigration into Europe and combat cross-border crime through enhanced cross-border cooperation among judicial and law enforcement authorities.[13](#)

Sweden emphasised the importance of promoting freedom in Europe and strengthening the EU’s competitiveness.[14](#) Efforts were made to lay the foundation for a more ambitious EU, focusing on long-term competitiveness, growth and productivity until 2030 and beyond.

The war in Ukraine has threatened the democratic values on which the EU was founded, highlighting the need for the organisation to adapt to new geopolitical realities. Additionally, it has resulted in several economic challenges, such as rising energy prices and inflation amidst an economic slowdown. Sweden’s presidency contributed significantly to addressing these issues.

With the next trio having set up their 18-month agenda, the Council has its task cut out.[15](#) Delays in implementing judicial reforms and issues concerning transparency, values and justice remain a challenge, particularly *vis-à-vis* Poland and Hungary.[16](#) As such, only time will tell how these challenges are handled by the Council. It would continue to require unity and concerted efforts to meet emerging challenges while continuing the pursuit of a stronger and more prosperous European Union.

Views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Manohar Parrikar IDSA or of the Government of India.

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com