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19TH EAST ASIA SUMMIT

PM Modi attended the **19th East Asia Summit (EAS)** on 11 October 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. In his address, PM stressed on ASEAN's central role in the Indo-Pacific regional architecture, in India's Indo-Pacific Vision and in Quad cooperation

East Asia Summit (EAS)

- It is a forum for leaders of countries in the Indo-Pacific region to discuss political, security, and economic challenges.
- The EAS was established in 2005 by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and is held annually.
 - The EAS was launched in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2005.
- **Members**
 - The EAS was originally attended by 16 countries from East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Oceania.
 - In 2011, membership expanded to 18 countries, including Russia and the United States.
 - Currently, EAS is a forum of 18 countries that represent 54% of the world's population and 58% of global GDP. The 18 countries are:
 - **Ten member states of the ASEAN** – Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam;
 - along with Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.
 - The EAS is the **only leaders-led forum that brings together** the US, China, Russia, India, RoK, and Australia.
- **To become a member of the EAS, countries must:**
 - Sign the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC)
 - Be a formal dialogue partner of ASEAN
 - Have substantive cooperative relations with ASEAN



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- **Six priority areas of regional cooperation within the framework of the EAS**
 - Environment and Energy,
 - Education,
 - Finance,
 - Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases,
 - Natural Disaster Management, and
 - ASEAN Connectivity
 - **India and EAS**
 - India is member of EAS since 2005.
 - At the 4th EAS in Thailand in 2009, leaders endorsed the proposal to revive **Nalanda University**.
 - The idea was first proposed by former President APJ Abdul Kalam in 2006.
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ASTROSAT



- It is India's first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory aimed at studying celestial sources in X-ray, optical, and UV spectral bands simultaneously.
- It was launched by the Indian launch vehicle PSLV from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, on September 28, 2015.
- The spacecraft control center at Mission Operations Complex (MOX) of ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC), Bengaluru, manages the satellite during its entire mission life.
- The minimum useful life of the AstroSat mission is around 5 years.
- It carries a total of five scientific payloads enabling imaging and studying the temporal and spectral properties of galactic and extra-galactic cosmic sources in a wide range of wavelengths on a common platform.

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Objectives:

- To understand high energy processes in binary star systems containing neutron stars and black holes.
 - Estimate magnetic fields of neutron stars.
 - Study star birth regions and high energy processes in star systems lying beyond our galaxy.
 - Detect new briefly bright X-ray sources in the sky.
 - Perform a limited deep-field survey of the Universe in the Ultraviolet region.
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BRAHMI INSCRIPTION



Recently, a Brahmi inscription was found in Dharanikota village at Amaravathi mandal in Palnadu district. The script on the inscription is written in Prakrit language and Brahmi characters of the 2nd century C.E.

- The Brahmi script is the earliest writing system developed in India after the Indus script.
- It is one of the most influential writing systems; all modern Indian scripts and several hundred scripts found in Southeast and East Asia are derived from Brahmi.
- Most examples of Brahmi found in North and Central India represent the Prakrit language.
- The earliest known Brahmi inscriptions are from the edicts of Ashoka, the third Mauryan emperor of Magadha who ruled most of the sub-continent between 268 and 232 BCE.
- Traces of the script have been discovered not just in the Gangetic plains but also in excavated sites in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Sri Lanka, mostly on pottery shards.
- Among the many descendant scripts of Brahmi are those of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, such as Devanagari and the Bengali and Gujarati scripts; those of the Deccan region, including the scripts for Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada.



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MLA-LAD FUND

MLALAD Fund is modelled on a similar programme for MPs and provides funding for each constituency directly from the government.

- While MLAs and MPs do not directly receive the funds, they can recommend projects for the scheme.
 - Both MLALAD and MPLAD have their own sets of guidelines but the projects funded by them are usually restricted to “durable infrastructure work”, from repairing roads to building community centres.
 - Under the scheme, each MLA has the choice to suggest to the Deputy Commissioner of his/her district, the extent of allocations given from year to year, to be taken up his/her constituency.
 - MLALAD funds are issued every year to MLAs for local development such as repairing roads, and streetlights, developing parks, and laying sewer lines in colonies.
 - The type of work under this scheme should be developmental in nature based on local felt.
 - The work should be such that it can be completed within one financial year and lead to the creation of durable assets.
 - The amount provided under the MLALAD Scheme is released in the form of a Grant-in-aid for utilisation by the districts.
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WHAT IS ARTHRITIS?



World Arthritis Day is observed annually on October 12th to raise awareness about arthritis, a condition affecting millions worldwide.

- Arthritis is inflammation or degeneration of one or more joints.



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- A joint is the area where 2 bones meet.
- There are more than 100 different types of arthritis.

Causes:

- Arthritis involves the breakdown of structures of the joint, particularly cartilage.
 - Normal cartilage protects a joint and allows it to move smoothly.
 - Cartilage also absorbs shock when pressure is placed on the joint, such as when you walk.
 - Without the normal amount of cartilage, the bones under the cartilage become damaged and rub together.
 - This causes swelling (inflammation), and stiffness.
 - The most common types of arthritis are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.
 - Osteoarthritis causes cartilage — the hard, slippery tissue that covers the ends of bones where they form a joint — to break down.
 - Rheumatoid arthritis is a disease in which the immune system attacks the joints, beginning with the lining of joints.
 - Treatment: Treatments vary depending on the type of arthritis. The main goals of arthritis treatments are to reduce symptoms and improve quality of life.
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TADoba-ANDHARI TIGER RESERVE



- Location: It is located in the Chandrapur district in Maharashtra.
- It is the largest and oldest Tiger Reserve of Maharashtra.
- The origin of the name "Tadoba" lies with the name of the god "Tadoba" or "Taru", worshipped by the tribes that live in the dense forests of the Tadoba and Andhari regions. "Andhari" refers to the Andhari River that meanders through the forest.
- The total area of the reserve is 625.4 sq. km. This includes Tadoba National Park, covering 116.55 sq. km, and Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary, covering 508.85 sq. km.



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- Corridor: The reserve has corridor linkages with Nagzira-Navegaon and Pench Tiger Reserves within the State.

Habitat:

- Biogeographically, the reserve falls in the Central Plateau province of the Deccan Peninsula.
- The habitat has undulating topography in the north and is rich in biodiversity.

Vegetation: Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous

- There are two lakes and one waterway in the reserve, Tadoba Lake, Kolsa Lake, and the Tadoba River.

Flora:

- It is blessed with thick forests covered with teak trees and other vegetation such as crocodile bark, salai, tendu, karaya gum, and mahua madhuca.
- The reserve is adorned with patches of grass and bamboo shrubberies.

Fauna:

- The notable faunal species include the tiger, leopard, sloth bear, wild dog, gaur, chital, and sambar.
- As many as 280 species of birds are found, apart from reptiles (54 species), amphibians (11 species), and fishes (84 species).

KEY FACTS ABOUT SARYU RIVER



- It is a river that flows through the Indian states of Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.
- It is also known as the Sarayu or Sarju River.
- This river is of ancient significance, finding mentions in the Vedas and the Ramayana.

Course:



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- It originates primarily from the foothills of the Himalayas and becomes an auxiliary river to the Sharada.
- It flows through Kapkot, Bageshwar and Seraghat towns before discharging into the Sharada River at Pancheshwar at the India-Nepal border.
- Sharada River (also known as Kali River) then flows into the Ghaghara River in Sitapur District, Uttar Pradesh.
- Lower Ghaghara is popularly known as Sarayu in India, especially while it flows through the city of Ayodhya.
- Ayodhya, the birthplace of Lord Rama, is situated on the banks of the river Sarayu.

The banks of Sarayu in Ayodhya are a common site for various religious rituals.

ANACONDA STRATEGY



Taiwan's navy commander recently claimed that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is using an 'anaconda strategy' to squeeze the island nation.

Anaconda strategy refers to a military strategy with the primary objective of suffocating the Confederacy economically and militarily, similar to how an anaconda snake coils around and asphyxiates its prey.

- It was proposed by Union General Winfield Scott during the early stages of the American Civil War.
 - China's 'anaconda strategy' against Taiwan reportedly involves a mix of military maneuvers, psychological tactics, and cyber warfare to eventually weaken Taiwan's defenses. The ultimate goal appears to be to force Taiwan into submission without engaging in a full-scale invasion.
 - China is encircling Taiwan by both sea and air, increasing the number of air incursions to the Taiwan Strait, and employing its ships to operate around the country in what appears to be an effort to tire out Taiwan's navy and air force.
 - It could be the prelude to a more violent showdown in the future.
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INDIA CALLS FOR SAFETY OF UN PEACEKEEPERS IN LEBANON

India expressed concern over the worsening security situation in West Asia after two UN peacekeepers were injured near Lebanon's border with Israel.

The incident occurred when an Israeli tank fired on a UN observation tower. This marks the most serious escalation since Israel asked the UN peacekeeping force, UNIFIL, to relocate from positions near Hezbollah rocket launch sites in Lebanon. The request was declined by the UN.

UN Peacekeeping

- The UN Charter gives the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- In fulfilling this responsibility, the Council can establish a UN peace operation.
- **Peacekeeping mandates**
 - UN peace operations are deployed on the basis of mandates from the United Nations Security Council.
 - These mandates differ from situation to situation, depending on the nature of the conflict and the specific challenges it presents.
 - Depending on their mandate, peace operations may be required to:
 - Deploy to prevent the outbreak of conflict or the spill-over of conflict across borders;
 - Stabilize conflict situations after a ceasefire;
 - Assist in implementing comprehensive peace agreements;
 - Lead states or territories through a transition to stable government, based on democratic principles, good governance and economic development.

India's contribution in peacekeeping missions

- India is one of the largest troop contributing nation to UNPK.
- Currently, India has around 5,900 troops deployed in 12 U.N. Missions.

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- India's contribution to the peacekeeping budget stands at 0.16%.
- **Contribution so far**
 - India has been actively participating in peacekeeping right from 1950 when it supplied medical personnel and troops to the UN Repatriation Commission in Korea.
 - India has contributed approximately 2,75,000 troops to peacekeeping missions so far and 159 Indian Army soldiers have lost their lives across the globe.

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

- The UNIFIL is an international peacekeeping mission with over 10,000 civilian and military personnel from 50 countries, tasked with preventing violations along the 121-km "Blue Line" border between Lebanon and Israel.
 - Established under a 2006 UN resolution, the force is responsible for ensuring the area is free of hostile activities, including the presence of weapons or fighters.
 - However, the U.S. and Israel have criticized UNIFIL for being ineffective in preventing Hezbollah from stockpiling and firing rockets.
 - Though armed, the peacekeepers can only use force when their safety or civilians are in immediate danger, and they report violations to the UN Security Council.
 - **Issue – attack on UNIFIL**
 - During its invasion of southern Lebanon, the Israeli military set up new positions near a UNIFIL base, using these sites to fire at Hezbollah targets, which increased the risk to UN peacekeepers. Despite requests from Israel to relocate, UNIFIL declined to move.
 - Attacks on UN personnel are illegal under international law, but Hezbollah has been launching rockets from areas close to UN positions for a year, complicating the situation.
 - Recently, Israeli tank fire hit a UN observation tower and the entrance of a bunker where peacekeepers were sheltering at a UNIFIL base in Naqoura, Lebanon.
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