

Current Affairs: 03.05.2021

P-8I Patrol Aircraft

In news

The U.S. State Department approved the proposed sale of six **P-8I** patrol aircraft and related equipment to India, a deal estimated to cost \$2.42 billion.

Key takeaways

In November 2019, the Defence Acquisition Council, approved the procurement of the long-range maritime surveillance aircraft manufactured by Boeing.

The possible sale comes through the Foreign Military Sale route and requires that the U.S. Congress be notified.

With India having signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) foundational agreement with the U.S., the six aircraft will come fitted with encrypted systems.

The P-8I is based on the Boeing 737 commercial aircraft and India was its first international customer.

Lag B'omer Festival

Lag B'Omer is an annual Jewish festival observed during the Hebrew month of Iyar.

It is celebrated on the 33rd day of the Omer, the 49-day period between Passover and Shavuot.

Lag B'Omer is the only day during the 49-day period when celebration is permitted.

Hence, it is common for Jews to schedule weddings on this day every year.

Young boys, who have reached the age of three, are also traditionally brought here for their first hair cut.

To mark the occasion, ultra-Orthodox Jewish pilgrims make their way to the base of Mount Meron every year, to pay their respects to Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, a second century sage and mystic, who is believed to have died on this day.

The Rabbi's tomb is a much revered holy site in Israel

TAIWAN

India on Sunday received assistance from Taiwan, including oxygen concentrators and cylinders, with more batches of medical equipment set to follow from Taipei.

About:

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Taiwan is officially known as the **Republic of China (ROC)**. It is a state in East Asia with Neighbouring states include the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the west, Japan to the north-east, and the Philippines to the south. The East China Sea lies to its north, the Philippine Sea to its east, the Luzon Strait directly to its south and the South China Sea to its southwest.



The Taiwan Strait separates the island of Taiwan from mainland China. The strait is currently part of the

South China Sea and connects to the East China Sea to the north. **Taipei** is the capital. Taiwan is no longer a member of the UN, having been replaced by the PRC in 1971. Taiwan is claimed by the PRC, which refuses diplomatic relations with countries that recognise the ROC.

Taiwan maintains official ties with 14 out of 193 UN member states and the Holy See. The bilateral relations between India and Taiwan have improved since the 1990s despite both nations not maintaining official diplomatic relations.

IOC's RULE 50

Olympic-bound athletes won't be allowed to protest on the field, on podiums, and during ceremonies.

About:



The decision, taken on the back of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC's) Rule 50, has triggered a fresh round of debate over athletes' right to expression. The IOC's Rule 50 forbids any kind of "demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda" at venues and any other Olympic area.

However, following the death of George Floyd in the USA last May, which triggered anti-racism protests and gave a boost to the Black Lives Matter movement, the Olympic body came under pressure to relax the rule so that athletes could express themselves freely during the Games.

Subsequently, the IOC's Athletes Commission started a consultation process in June last year, took views from 3,547 athletes before last week, it was recommended that the rule should be maintained.

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G7

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will embark on a four-day visit to London to participate in a meeting of foreign ministers of G7 countries. India has been invited to the meeting as a guest country.



The G-7 or 'Group of Seven' are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The G-7 nations meet at annual summits that are presided over by leaders of member countries on a rotational basis. The summit is an informal gathering that lasts two days, in which leaders of member countries discuss a wide range of global issues.

The G-7 does not have a formal constitution or a fixed headquarters. The decisions taken by leaders during annual summits are non-binding.

Timeline:

It is an intergovernmental organisation that was formed in 1975 by the top economies of the time as an informal forum to discuss pressing world issues.

Canada joined the group in 1976, and the European Union began attending in 1977.

The G-7 was known as the 'G-8' for several years after the original seven were joined by Russia in 1997. The Group returned to being called G-7 after Russia was expelled as a member in 2014 following the latter's annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine.



SpaceX

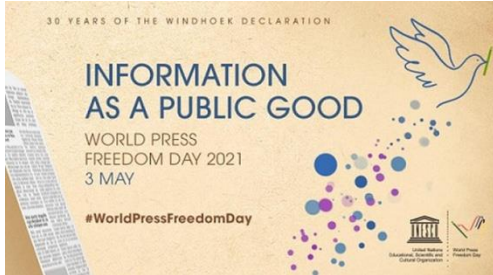
A SpaceX capsule with four astronauts returning from the International Space Station splashed down safely in the Gulf of Mexico on May 2, 2021.

About:

American Space agency NASA has said that Their return marked the end of 168 days in space for the four astronauts, and the end of SpaceX's first operational round-trip mission. This return to earth was the first nighttime splashdown for NASA astronauts since Apollo 8, which was the first mission to orbit the moon, in 1968. The mission was part of NASA's fledgling public-private partnership with SpaceX, the rocket company founded in 2002 by Elon Musk, who is also CEO of electric car maker Tesla Inc.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

World Press Freedom Day is being observed on May 3, 2021.



History: World Press Freedom Day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in December 1993, following the recommendation of UNESCO's General Conference.

Date of observance: Since then, 3 May, the anniversary of the Declaration of Windhoek is celebrated worldwide as World Press Freedom Day.

Objective of the Day: To celebrate the fundamental principles of press freedom, assess the state of press freedom throughout the world, defend the media from attacks on their independence, and pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Theme: This year's theme "Information as a Public Good" serves as a call to affirm the importance of cherishing information as a public good.