

Current Affairs : 15 July 2022

I2U2 HAS SET POSITIVE AGENDA, GOOD MODEL FOR PRACTICAL COOPERATION: PM MODI

In News:

- The first Leaders' Summit of I2U2 (India-Israel-UAE-USA) was held virtually on 14 July 2022.
- PM Modi represented India at the summit.

In Focus: I2-U2 Group

- I2U2 is a diplomatic group of the India, Israel, the UAE and the United States.
- It stands for India-Israel-UAE-USA.
- US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has used the I2-U2 moniker for the four-member grouping.
- The grouping was launched in October 2021 when the first virtual meeting of the foreign ministers of India, Israel, the US and the UAE took place.
- The new grouping is described as an international forum for economic cooperation.
- This grouping is already being termed as a **New Quad** or the **'Middle-Eastern Quad'**.
- **Objective** – To generate synergies that go beyond government level cooperation.

Areas of cooperation

- The grouping will focus on expanding economic and political cooperation in Asia and Middle East through energy cooperation, trade, coordination on vital shared interests and combating climate change.
- The first quadrilateral meeting between the foreign ministers of India, Israel, the UAE and the US decided to ensure
 - closer cooperation on increasing trade,
 - enhancing cooperation in maritime security and global public health,
 - joint infrastructure projects in transportation and technology.
- The first Leaders' summit of I2U2 agreed to increase **joint investment in six key areas** of water, energy, transport, space, health and food security.

- The group does not have a military angle to it and it only features cooperation in maritime security.

Factors Responsible for New Grouping

- **Abraham Accord:**

- The new grouping was possible only after the resumption of formal diplomatic relations between Israel and the UAE, through the Abraham Accord.

- Under the Abrahamic accords promoted by the Trump Administration, the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco set up formal ties with Israel in 2020.

- **Tackling Turkey's Regional Dominance:**

- The new Quad can be termed as a result of converging interests between India, the UAE, and Israel amidst Turkey's assertive claims for the leadership of the Islamic world.

- **US Pivot to Asia:**

- The summit comes at a time when US is seeking to lessen its footprint in the Middle East as part of its **pivot to East Asia to tackle China's rise.**

Benefits for India

- **More flexibility to India in the region**

- India has always supported peace and stability in West Asia which is considered as India's extended neighbourhood.

- The new "Quad" will give India the flexibility to engage more freely with Israel and India's partners in the Gulf region.

- This grouping is also a strong manifestation of the changes in West Asian geopolitics.

- **Diplomacy shifts from bilateral to regional mechanism**

- This platform strengthens India's strategic desire to adopt a regional foreign policy strategy towards West Asia, transcending its bilateralism.

- Earlier, there were three pillars to India's West Asia policy — the Sunni Gulf monarchies, Israel and Iran.

- However, with the Abraham Accord, the gulf between the Sunni kingdoms and Israel is being narrowed.

- As a result, India faces fewer challenges to a regionalist approach.

- **Strategic interests:**

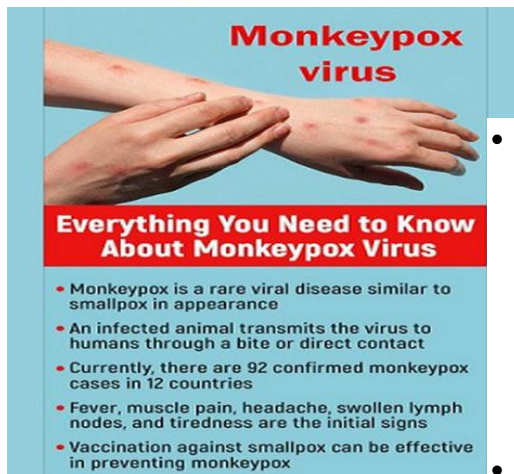
- While Israel is a trusted defence partner of India, the UAE is amongst the top oil exporters to India.
- With India undertaking an overhaul in its defence infrastructure and the critical energy scenario prevailing in the world, this engagement is quite significant

News Summary

- PM Modi, along with PM of Israel, President of the UAE and President of the USA, participated in an I2U2 Summit.

MONKEYPOX

The first known lab-confirmed case of monkeypox in India has been reported in a 35-year-old man in Kerala, who reached the State capital three days ago from the UAE.



About:

- Monkeypox initially presents like any tropical disease with fever, headache, joint ache and possible swelling of the lymph glands. The incubation period for the disease — the time from exposure to the virus to the manifestation of symptoms — ranges from five to 21 days.
- Rashes appear on the face, inside palms and the body one to four days after fever.
- The course of the disease could last two to four weeks, during which time the rashes progress into pustules, vesicular lesions and scabs.
- Transmission happens only through close contact and by touching or sharing the clothes or bedding used by the patient, because the lesions usually have a high viral load. Transmission also extends throughout the course of the illness, till the lesions heal.

HORTICULTURE PRODUCTION

The total horticulture production in 2021-22 is estimated to be 341.63 million tonnes (MT), an increase of about 7.03 MT or 21% over the 2020-21 figure, according to the second advanced estimates of area and production of various horticultural crops released by the Union Agriculture Ministry.



About:

- Last year, the total horticulture cultivation was on 27.48 million hectares and according to the second advanced estimates, in 2021-22, it could be 27.74 million hectares.
- The Centre said that while there could be an increase in the production of fruits, vegetables and honey, the cultivation of spices, flowers, medicinal plants and plantation crops could decrease over previous year.
- The fruit production is estimated at 107.1 MT compared to 102.48 MT in 2020-21. The production of vegetables is estimated to be 204.61 MT, compared to 200.45 MT in 2020-21.
- In the case of onion, the production is estimated to be 31.7 MT against 26.64 MT in 2020-21. Potato production is likely to be 53.58 MT, from 56.17 MT in 2020-21. Tomato yield is expected to be 20.34 MT, from 21.18 MT in 2020-21. Farmers of the three crops had agitated against the drop in prices last year.

I2U2-BACKED FOOD PARKS

India will provide “appropriate land” for “food parks” across the country that will be built in collaboration with Israel, the United States and the United Arab Emirates.

About:

- The plan for the “integrated food parks” was announced in a joint statement after the leaders of the I2U2 grouping —



India, Israel, the UAE and the U.S. — held a summit recently.

- The leaders said they would bring in private capital for specific projects in the fields of water, energy, transportation, health, space and food security.
- S. and Israeli private sectors will be invited to lend their expertise and offer innovative solutions that contribute to the overall sustainability of the project. These investments will help maximise crop yields which, in turn, will help tackle food insecurity in South Asia and the Middle East. India will “facilitate farmers’ integration into the food parks.
- The food parks aimed at cutting down “food waste and spoilage” are a few of the collaborations that the four countries declared after the summit.
- The UAE will invest \$2 billion in India to create the food parks.

ADVISORY TO E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS ON SALE OF AYURVEDIC, SIDDHA AND UNANI DRUGS

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued an Advisory to e-commerce entities concerning the sale of Ayurvedic, Siddha and Unani drugs containing ingredients listed in Schedule E (1) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945.



About:

- E-commerce platforms have been advised that the sale or facilitating the sale of such drugs shall be done only after a valid prescription of a registered Ayurveda, Siddha or Unani practitioner respectively is uploaded by the user on the platform.
- Consuming such drugs without medical supervision can lead to severe health complications.
- As per Rule 161(2) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, the container of a medicine for internal use for the treatment of human ailments shall, if it is made up of a substance specified in Schedule E (1), be labelled conspicuously with the words “Caution: To be taken under medical supervision” both in English and Hindi language.

- Under Section 18 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, CCPA is empowered to protect, promote and enforce the rights of consumers as a class, and prevent violation of consumers' rights. Further, CCPA is empowered to prevent unfair trade practices and ensure that no person engages himself in unfair trade practices.
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RIGHT TO REPAIR

In a bid to develop an overall framework for the Right to Repair, the Department of Consumer Affairs has set up a committee chaired by Additional Secretary Nidhi Khatri.



About:

- The committee includes Anupam Mishra, Joint Secretary DoCA; Justice Paramjeet Singh Dhaliwal; G.S. Bajpai, Chancellor, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Patiala; Ashok Patil, Chair of Consumer Law and Practice; and representatives from stakeholders including ICEA, SIAM, consumer activists and consumer organisations as members.
 - The key sectors identified for this framework include Farming Equipment, Mobile Phones/ Tablets, Consumer Durables and Automobiles & Automobile Equipment.
 - The committee also believes that manufacturers encourage a culture of 'planned obsolescence'. "This is a system whereby the design of any gadget is such that it lasts a particular time only and after that particular period it has to be mandatorily replaced.
 - The right to repair has been recognised in many countries, including the US, the UK and the European Union.
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WORLD'S 50 GREATEST PLACES OF 2022

Ahmedabad and Kerala have been named by TIME magazine among the 50 extraordinary destinations to explore in its list of the World's Greatest Places of 2022.



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About:

- These are two major tourist destinations in India. Besides Ahmedabad and Kerala, other cities which made to the list of top 50 include Seoul, Buahan in Bali, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, and many more.
 - TIME described Kerala as ‘one of India’s most beautiful states.
 - It described Ahmedabad as India’s first UNESCO World Heritage City, and a city which “boasts both ancient landmarks and contemporary innovations.
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