

### INDIA, UAE AND FRANCE HOLD FIRST TRILATERAL MINISTERIAL MEETING IN U.S.

#### **In News:**

- India, UAE and France have held their first trilateral ministerial meeting on the sidelines of a U.N. General Assembly session.
- The 77th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) has started with the opening of the General Debate.
- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is representing India at the UNGA.

#### **In Focus: United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**

- It was established in 1945 under the Charter of the United Nations and is headquartered in New York City.
- It is one of the six principal organs of the UN and serves as the main policy-making organ of the Organization.
- It provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter of the United Nations.
- Each of the 193 Member States of the United Nations has an equal vote.

#### **News Summary**

- India, UAE and France held their first trilateral Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York on the sidelines of a UN General Assembly (UNGA) session.
- These leaders discussed a new and more contemporary way of doing diplomacy with a focus on active exchange of ideas between strategic partners and UNSC members.

#### **Background:**

- In July 2022, a trilateral meeting of the Focal Points of India, France and the United Arab Emirates was held.
- The three sides exchanged perspectives on the **Indo-Pacific region** and explored the following potential areas of trilateral cooperation.

- Maritime Security, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Blue Economy, Regional Connectivity, Cooperation in Multilateral Fora,
  - Energy and Food Security, Innovation and Startups, Supply Chain Resilience, Cultural and People-to-People Cooperation.
  - The three countries also discussed the next steps to be taken for furthering trilateral cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.
  - The current meeting, on the sidelines of UNGA, is a follow up of July 2022 meeting.
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## INDIA-EGYPT PACT TO BOOST MILITARY DRILLS, DEFENCE CO-PRODUCTION

### **In News:**

- Defence minister Rajnath Singh is on an official visit to Egypt.
- During the visit, both sides have inked a MoU to bolster defence cooperation.
- They also decided to enhance joint military exercises, training, co-production and maintenance of equipment.
- They agreed to identify proposals for expanding cooperation between their **defence industries** in a time-bound manner.

### **India – Egypt Bilateral Relation**

#### **Background:**

- India and Egypt, two of the world's oldest civilizations, have enjoyed a history of close contact from ancient times.
- Ashoka's edicts refer to his relations with Egypt under Ptolemy-II.
- In modern times, the relationship between the countries flourished under President Nasser and Prime Minister Nehru, which were close friends.
- Both countries had signed a Friendship Treaty between in 1955.

#### **Political Relations**

- Both countries have cooperated closely in multilateral fora (a **place or meeting where people can exchange and discuss ideas**) and were the founding members of Non-Aligned Movement.

- The year 2022 marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relation between India and Egypt.

## **Economic Relations**

- **Bilateral trade**

- Egypt has traditionally been one of India's most important trading partners in the African continent.
- The India-Egypt Bilateral Trade Agreement has been in operation since March 1978 and is based on the **Most Favoured Nation**
- Bilateral trade has expanded rapidly in 2021-22, amounting to 7.26 billion registering a 75% increase compared to FY 2020-21.

- **Investment**

- Around 50 Indian companies have invested in various sectors in Egypt with a combined investment exceeding US\$ 3.15 billion.
- Egyptian investments in India are to the tune of US\$ 37 million.

- **Grant-in-aid projects**

- The grants-in-aid projects include:
  - Pan Africa Tele-medicine and Tele-education project in Alexandria University,
  - Solar electrification project in Agaween village and
  - Vocational Training Centre for textile technology in Shoubra, Cairo.

## **Wheat export from India**

- Russia-Ukraine conflict has threatened Egypt with a shortage for wheat, 80% of which is imported from Russia and Ukraine.
- In April 2022, Egypt announced inclusion of India in the list of accredited countries which can supply wheat to Egypt, thus ending a long pending Non-Tariff Barrier.

## **Defence Relations**

- **Courses**

- Both sides offer courses on a regular basis, in which Egyptian officers are given training in India and Indian defense officers are trained in Egypt.

- **Exercises**

- Egypt participated in the Multinational Training Exercise for friendly African countries held at Pune in March 2019.
- The first ever IAF-EAF Joint Tactical Air Exercise, Desert Warrior, was held in October 2021.
- The first ever Special Forces exercise “Cyclone 1” between India and Egypt planned in Jodhpur in January 2022 stands postponed.
- Egypt has shown interest in acquiring arms produced by India, including the Akash missile systems capable of intercepting hostile aircraft, helicopters, drones and subsonic cruise missiles at a range of 25-km.

### Indian Community

- At present, the Indian community in Egypt numbers at around 3200, most of whom are concentrated in Cairo.
- There are also a small number of families in Alexandria, Port Said and Ismailia.
- About 400 Indian students are studying in Egypt, mainly in Al Azhar University with around 275 students, and the rest in Ain Shams Medical University (around 80 students) and Cairo University.

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### NUTRITION RATING STARS SET TO APPEAR SOON ON FOOD PACK LABELS

#### In News:

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has released draft notification for **front-of-pack labelling** to discourage consumers from buying packaged food high in sugar, salt, and fat.

#### Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI):

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India is a **statutory body** under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- **Objectives:**
  - To lay down science-based standards for articles of food
  - To regulate manufacture, storage, distribution, import and sale of food

- To facilitate safety of food

### **Role/Functions of FSSAI:**

- Framing of Regulations to lay down the standards/guidelines in relation to articles of food.
- Laying down mechanisms/guidelines for accreditation of certification bodies engaged in certification of food safety management system.
- Creating an information network across the country so that public receive reliable and objective information about food safety and issues of concern.
- Contribute to the development of international technical standards for food, sanitary and phytosanitary standards.

### **Composition:**

- The FSSAI comprises of a Chairperson and twenty-two members out of which one – third are to be women.
- The Chairperson of FSSAI is appointed by the Central Government.
- The Food Authority is assisted by Scientific Committees and Panels in setting standards and the Central Advisory Committee in coordinating with enforcement agencies.
- Concerned Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

### **At State level:**

- The FSSAI appoints food safety authorities at the state level.
- The primary responsibility for enforcement is largely with the State Food Safety Commissioners.

### **About Indian Nutrition Rating (INR) System:**

- The INR system rates the overall nutritional profile for packaged food by assigning it a rating from  $\frac{1}{2}$  star (least healthy) to 5 stars (healthiest).
- More stars indicate the food product is better positioned to provide for daily human need of nutrients.

### **What is Front of Packaging Labelling (FoPL)?**

- The excessive consumption of sugars, fats and sodium is a public health problem that is associated with the non-communicable diseases that most affect the population.
- Non-communicable diseases include overweight or obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and vascular, heart and brain diseases and kidney.
- The excess intake of these nutrients has been driven largely by the widespread availability, affordability, and promotion of processed and ultra-processed food products.
- Front-of-package warning labelling is a simple, practical and effective tool to inform the public about products that can harm health and help guide purchasing decisions.
- In India, FoPL on packaged foods was recommended in 2014 by an expert committee constituted by the FSSAI.

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## AT 3-DAY EVENT, INDIA SETS GOAL: WORLD LEADER IN TOURISM BY 2047

### In News:

- For the tourism sector, the Government of India recently unveiled an ambitious plan for recovery to pre-pandemic levels by 2024, a \$250 billion contribution to GDP by 2030 and a world leader by 2047, with a long-term revenue goal of \$1 trillion by 2047, when the country turns 100.
- This plan is part of the 'Dharamshala Declaration 2022,' which was adopted at the conclusion of the three-day National Tourism Conference.

### Tourism sector in India:

- In the past 75 years, **India has become synonymous with tourism, spirituality, transformation, culture and diversity.**
- The Tourism sector generated Rs 16.91 lakh crore (USD 240 billion) or 9.2% of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018 and has supported around 42.67 million jobs or 8.1% of total employment.

### Steps taken to promote tourism in India

- The Ministry of Tourism has launched a number of initiatives and **implemented a four-pronged development strategy** that focuses on
  - Improving the connectivity - air, rail, and roads.



- Enhancing the tourism infrastructure and dependent services.
- Streamlining branding and promotion.
- Showcasing the culture and heritage.
- The new **National Tourism Policy** will be released before the next Budget session.
- Various **tourist circuits** are being promoted and a new ‘Ambedkar Circuit’ and ‘Himalayan Circuit’ will also be promoted under the action plan for development of tourist circuits.
- A number of projects have been sanctioned under the **Swadesh Darshan Scheme** for building tourist infrastructure across various themes.
- The Ministry of Tourism has recently launched the **Swadesh Darshan Scheme 2.0** with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible destinations following a tourist and destination centric approach.
- The **PRASHAD Scheme** aims to strengthen the tourist facilities around spiritual locations, under which 39 projects have been sanctioned in 24 States.
- According to the Ministry of Tourism, the financial assistance to the tourism sector, which is the biggest sufferer due to Covid 19, continues to be extended up to 31st March, 2023.

### **The National Tourism Conference 2022:**

- The National Conference of State Tourism Ministers was organised by the Ministry of Tourism (at Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh) to discuss issues related to development of tourism in the country.
- It aims -
  - To create a direct dialogue with the States on schemes, policies and steps being taken at a national level for overall tourism improvement in India.
  - To be a platform for sharing best practices, successful projects, and tourism product opportunities.
  - To build a common vision for tourism and its growth as we move towards India @ 2047.
- The Conference holds significance in the current context of India’s G20 presidency (in 2023). G-20 will be used as a platform to showcase India’s tourism potential to the world.

## The Dharamshala Declaration 2022:

- The Conference ended with the adoption of the “Dharamshala Declaration” which affirms commitment toward developing “sustainable and responsible tourism” and positions India as a “**global leader in the tourism sector by 2047**”.
- It also says that the National Tourism Policy has been drafted with following objectives:
  - **In the short term**, to recover to pre-pandemic levels by mid-2024.
  - The country is estimated to achieve USD 150 billion GDP contribution and 15 million foreign tourist arrivals by that period.
  - **In the medium term** (that is 2030), tourism-related goals are USD 250 billion GDP contribution; 137 million jobs and 56 million foreign tourist arrivals.
  - **In the long term**, to revive India’s tourism and targets to achieve USD 1 Trillion by the sector in 2047.
- It says that the government will continue to support MSMEs in the tourism sector and capitalise on the employment generating potential of the industry.
- The Dharamshala Declaration also affirms the plan to position India as a major tourism destination during its presidency of G-20 next year.
- It announces necessary interventions including visa reforms, ease of travel, travel-friendly immigration facilities at airports and openness to international travel.

## ELECTORAL REFORMS

**The Election Commission of India (ECI) has sought limits on cash donations to political parties.**



### About:

- In a letter to Law Minister Kiren Rijiju, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar has suggested some amendments in the Representation of the People Act to increase transparency and accountability.



- The poll body has proposed to decrease the limit of anonymous political donations from 20 thousand rupees to two thousand rupees and sought to restrict cash donations at 20 percent or at maximum of 20 crore rupees out of the total funds received by a party.
- The Commission has also suggested that every candidate should open a separate bank account for election purposes, route all expenses and receipts through this account and furnish these details in their account of election expenditure.
- Currently, maintaining a separate bank account for poll expenditure is part of instructions, but the poll panel wants it to become part of Conduct of Election Rules.
- The proposals are aimed at bringing reforms and transparency in donations received by political parties and also the expenditure incurred by candidates.

## ASIA-PACIFIC INSTITUTE OF BROADCASTING DEVELOPMENT (AIBD)

India's Presidency of the prestigious Asia-pacific Institute of Broadcasting Development, AIBD has been extended for one more year.



### **About:**

- This was unanimously decided by the AIBD member countries at the two-day General Conference held in New Delhi. Currently, Chief Executive Officer of Prasar Bharati and Director General of Doordarshan Mayank Kumar Agrawal is the President of AIBD.
- The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) was established in 1977.
- It is a unique regional inter-governmental organisation of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) in the field of electronic media development. AIBD currently has 26 countries as full members represented by 43 organizations and 52 affiliate members.

## DIRECTORATE OF ENFORCEMENT (ED)

In the eight years from 2014, the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has investigated 121 prominent politicians and has arrested, questioned, raided, or filed FIRs against 115 major Opposition leaders.



## About:

- The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) is a law enforcement agency and economic intelligence agency responsible for enforcing economic laws and fighting economic crime in India.

It is part of the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.

- The ED's aggression has been largely on account of its current Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra (since 2018) and his predecessor Karnal Singh (2015-18) leveraging the massive powers bestowed on the agency by the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.
- Unlike laws governing other agencies, particularly the CBI, the PMLA allows the ED to take cognizance of any offence under its wide-ranging schedule across the country, with or without the consent of state governments.
- While the National Investigation Agency (NIA) too has powers to take suo motu cognizance of offences across the country, the schedule of the NIA Act — that is, the types of offences that it can investigate — is limited to about a dozen offences.
- The schedule of the PMLA on the other hand, has increased from just six offences in 2002 — when the law was enacted — to 30 groups of offences encompassing over 147 provisions now.
- The ED's sweeping ambit extends from serious crimes such as terrorism to the hunting of wild animals, and from the infringement of copyright to false trademarks.

## SOLAR ENERGY CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED (SECI)

The 11th Foundation Day Celebration of Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) was held.



## About:



# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



- Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd. (SECI) is a company of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India, established to facilitate the implementation of the National Solar Mission (NSM).
  - It is the only Central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) dedicated to the solar energy sector.
  - The company's mandate has been broadened to cover the entire renewable energy domain and the company will be renamed to Renewable Energy Corporation of India (RECI).
  - The SECI was registered as Section 25 under the Companies Act, 1956 (now Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013) in 2011.
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