



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Coverage of

20-26 Nov., 2024

— ★★ *Useful for* ★★ —

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Services Exams,
SSC and Banking Exams**

20th NOVEMBER 2024

India-Italy Joint Strategic Action Plan 2025-29

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Italian counterpart unveiled the Joint Strategic Action Plan 2025-29 as they met on the sidelines of the G20 Summit.

Key Highlights

- It is a five-year strategic action plan outlining their vision for collaboration in a range of key sectors.
- **Defence:**
 - Holding Joint Defence Consultative meetings, Joint Staff Talks on a yearly basis.
 - Interactions in the framework of Italy's growing interest in Indo-Pacific region, aimed at increasing interoperability and cooperation.
 - Enhanced partnerships among public and private stakeholders on technology collaboration.
 - Negotiate a Defence Industrial Roadmap between the two Nations.
- **Economic:**
 - Leverage the work of the Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation and of the Italy-India Joint Working Group on Food Processing, to increase bilateral trade.
 - Promote industrial partnerships, technological centres and mutual investment, also in automotive, semiconductors, infrastructure and advanced manufacturing.
- **Connectivity:** Enhancing collaboration in maritime and land infrastructure also in the framework of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.
- **Science & Innovation:** Expanding cooperation on critical and emerging technologies, forging technology value chain partnerships in both countries in sectors such as telecom, artificial intelligence, and digitalization of services.

- **Space:** Expanding cooperation between the Italian Space Agency and ISRO to include projects of common interest in Earth observation, heliophysics and space exploration with emphasis on lunar science.
- **Energy Transition:** Strengthen the Global Biofuels Alliance and International Solar Alliance.

2nd India-Australia Annual Summit

- **Context:** The Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Australia Anthony Albanese held the second India-Australia Annual Summit on the sidelines of the Group of 20 (G20) Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Key Highlights

- Both Prime Ministers acknowledged significant progress in strengthening ties across sectors like climate change, renewable energy, trade, investment, defence, education, and people-to-people relations.
- **Economic Cooperation:**
 - India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) is boosting trade and market access.
 - Work toward a more comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) is underway.
 - The Australia-India Business Exchange (AIBX) programme extended for another four years to strengthen business connections.
- **Energy and Environment:** Launch of the India-Australia Renewable Energy Partnership (REP) for cooperation in solar PV, green hydrogen, energy storage, and renewable energy workforce development.
- **Space Cooperation:** Growing space partnership with joint projects, such as support for Gaganyaan missions and the launch of Australian satellites on Indian vehicles in 2026.
- **Defence and Security:** Renewal of Joint Declaration on Defence and Security in 2025, focusing on stronger collaboration.

- Increased defence exercises and interoperability under the Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement.
- Maritime security and reciprocal information-sharing agreements to ensure regional peace and stability.
- Indian and Australian defence industries to collaborate further, with participation in defense expos and industry visits.
- **Parliamentary Cooperation:** Emphasis on continued inter-parliamentary cooperation as part of the strategic partnership.
- **Education, People-to-People and Mobility:** Working Holiday Maker visa programme and MATES mobility scheme to enhance people-to-people ties and mobility of professionals.
 - Opening of new consulates in Bengaluru and Brisbane to strengthen trade and cultural links.
- **Regional and Multilateral Cooperation:** Commitment to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific, with shared interests in regional peace, stability, and sovereignty.
 - Support for QUAD initiatives in health, security, infrastructure, and climate change.
 - Reinforcement of ASEAN centrality and cooperation under regional frameworks like the East Asia Summit and Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.
 - Commitment to Indian Ocean cooperation, including Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and support for Pacific Island countries on climate, health, and education.
- **Counter-Terrorism and Global Issues:** Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to combating terrorism and explored cooperation on terrorism financing and Financial Action Task Force (FATF) initiatives.

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize, 2023

- **Context:** The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for the year 2023 was presented to Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad.

Key Facts

- Abu Awwad is an eminent Palestinian peace activist who has been working for a peaceful resolution of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.
- Barenboim, an Argentine-born distinguished classical pianist, is known for his endeavour in using music to foster harmony in West Asia.

About Indira Gandhi Peace Prize

- Instituted in 1986, the award is given annually by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust and consists of a monetary award of Rs 25 lakh along with a citation.
- The award is named after Indira Gandhi, the first and only woman Prime Minister of independent India.
- It aims to honor women, men and institutions that have done exemplary work in the service of humanity and the planet Earth.

SANYUKT VIMOCHAN 2024

- **Context:** The Indian Army successfully conducted the Sanyukt Vimochan 2024 in Gujarat.

About SANYUKT VIMOCHAN 2024

- It is a Multilateral Annual Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise
- It showcased India's disaster response readiness and involved various Indian armed forces, disaster management agencies, and foreign delegations.
- The exercise began with a Table Top Exercise (TTX), simulating a cyclone scenario in Gujarat's coastal region.
- The second day featured a Multi-Agency Capability Demonstration at Porbandar's Chowpatty Beach, where coordinated logistics, rapid response, and disaster management operations were practiced by the Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and other agencies.
- The demonstration included rescue operations, casualty evacuation, and the rehabilitation of affected citizens.

21st NOVEMBER 2024

Russia's new Nuclear Doctrine

- **Context:** Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a revised nuclear doctrine, setting out new conditions under which the country would consider using its arsenal.

Key Highlights

- The new nuclear deterrent policy comes on the 1,000th day of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and follows the US President Joe Biden's decision to let Ukraine strike targets inside Russia with US-supplied longer-range missiles.
- The doctrine states that a massive aerial attack on Russia could trigger a nuclear response, signaling Russia's readiness to use its nuclear arsenal to deter the West.
- The doctrine now states that an attack by a nonnuclear power, supported by a nuclear power, will be considered a joint attack. It also allows for nuclear retaliation in response to a conventional attack threatening Russia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- The doctrine declares that aggression against Russia by a military bloc or coalition, such as NATO, is seen as aggression by the entire bloc.
- The updated doctrine specifies conditions for nuclear use, including massive air attacks involving missiles, aircraft, drones, or other flying vehicles.
- Compared to previous versions, this doctrine significantly broadens the conditions under which nuclear weapons might be used, including a wide range of potential conventional attacks.

State of the World's Children 2024 (SOWC-2024) Report

- **Context:** UNICEF recently released The State of the World's Children (SOWC) report.

Key Highlights

- It was first published in 1980, has significantly contributed to global child welfare.

- Each SOWC report examines critical issues impacting children, such as disabilities, conflict, child labour, urbanization, and early childhood development.
- It provides a comprehensive analysis of global trends affecting children.
- The latest flagship report examines three major global forces impacting children's lives — population shifts, the climate crisis and disruptive technologies.

Key findings

- Nearly 1 billion children live in countries facing high climate and environmental risks. Children are particularly vulnerable to pollution, extreme weather, rising temperatures, and diseases (e.g., malaria, dengue, and Zika).
- Global newborn survival rates expected to rise to over 98% in 2050. The probability of surviving to age 5 increases to 99.5%. Life expectancy increases, with girls expected to live to 81 years and boys to 76 years.
- 400 million students have faced school closures due to extreme weather since 2022, disrupting learning and economic growth.
- By the 2050s, the global child population is projected to stabilize at around 2.3 billion.
- Artificial intelligence, neurotechnology, renewable energy, and vaccine breakthroughs could improve childhoods.
- 23% of the world's children will live in low-income countries by the 2050s, more than double the proportion in the 2000s.
- By the 2050s, nearly 60% of children will live in urban settings, up from 44% in the 2000s.
- Over 95% of people in high-income countries have internet access, compared to only 26% in low-income countries.

India – CARICOM Summit

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed seven key pillars to strengthen ties between India and 'CARICOM' (Caribbean Community).

Key Highlights

- The PM joined the Caribbean partner countries for the second India-CARICOM Summit in Guyana.
- PM visit to Guyana is the first visit by an Indian head of State in more than 50 years.
- He held talks with the Caribbean partner countries, focusing on areas such as trade, technology, and tourism, among others.

7 Key Pillars

The seven pillars listed by PM Modi also form the acronym C-A-R-I-C-O-M.

- 1. Capacity Building:** Announced 1,000 information technology scholarships and proposed expanding the technology centre India is establishing in Belize to CARICOM members.
- 2. Agriculture and Food Security:** India can share its advancements in agricultural technology, such as deploying drones, and promote millet cultivation to enhance nutrition.
- 3. Renewable Energy and Climate Change:** Invited CARICOM nations to join initiatives such as International Solar Alliance, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Mission Life for Sustainable Lifestyles, and the Global Biofuel Alliance.
- 4. Innovation and Technology:** India's technological advancements, such as the "Stack" infrastructure and the Universal Payment Interface (UPI) for digital payments, can be extended to CARICOM countries.
- 5. Cricket and Culture:** Proposed using cricket as a tool for women's empowerment by offering 11 scholarships to each CARICOM nation for women's cricket coaching.
- 6. Ocean Economy:** India can assist in developing untapped marine resources, enhancing regional connectivity, and supporting security initiatives.
- 7. Medicine and Healthcare:** Offers affordable solutions through its Janaushadi scheme.

About CARICOM

- It was formed in 1973 with the signing of the Treaty of Chaguaramas. It is the oldest surviving integration movement in the developing world.

- Caricom is a grouping of 21 countries including 15 member states and six associate members. From the Bahamas in the north to Suriname and Guyana in South America, CARICOM comprises states that are considered developing countries.

22nd NOVEMBER 2024

Nafithromycin: India's First Indigenous Antibiotic

- **Context:** India has launched Nafithromycin, the country's first indigenously developed antibiotic targeting antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

About Nafithromycin

- It is Developed with support from the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) and brought to market by Wockhardt under the name Miquaf.
- The development of Nafithromycin took 14 years of research and an investment of 500 crore, with clinical trials conducted in the U.S., Europe, and India.
- It is designed to treat Community-Acquired Bacterial Pneumonia (CABP) caused by drug-resistant bacteria, particularly affecting vulnerable groups like children, the elderly, and immune-compromised patients.
- The antibiotic is ten times more effective than azithromycin, with a three-day treatment regimen that is safer, faster, and better tolerated by patients.
- Nafithromycin is the first new antibiotic in its class to be developed globally in over 30 years and is poised to tackle the global AMR crisis.

Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty

- **Context:** Recently, the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty was launched at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Key Highlights

- Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty aims to accelerate efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty while promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The goal is to eliminate all nations from the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) hunger map by 2030.
- It consists of 148 members. This includes 82 countries, the African Union, the European Union, some international organizations, and non-governmental organizations.
- The Alliance has been open to membership even for countries that are not part of the G20.

Cloud Seeding

- **Context:** The Delhi government has proposed cloud-seeding or artificial rainfall as an emergency measure to combat record pollution levels.

About Cloud Seeding

- It is a weather modification technique used to induce artificial rainfall by introducing chemical "nuclei" like silver iodide, potassium iodide, dry ice, or liquid propane into pre-existing clouds.
- These chemicals help moisture in the air condense, accelerating rainfall.
- **Types of Cloud-Seeding:**
 - **Hygroscopic:** Uses salt particles to accelerate droplet formation in liquid clouds.
 - **Glaciogenic:** Uses silver iodide or dry ice to induce ice formation in supercooled clouds.
- In India, it has been attempted in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra for drought relief.
- Pune-based Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology reported a 60-70% success rate in inducing rain. But there are concerns about the environmental impact of silver iodide.

23rd NOVEMBER 2024

International Solar Alliance

- **Context:** Armenia has become the 104th member of the International Solar Alliance.

Key Highlights

- India and France jointly launched the International Solar Alliance (ISA) during 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Paris in 2015.
- The ISA aims to contribute to the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement through the rapid and massive deployment of solar energy.
- Member Countries of ISA are countries which have signed and ratified the Framework Agreement of the ISA.
- At present, 120 countries are signatories to the ISA Framework Agreement.
- **Secretariat:** Gurugram

Telecommunications (Telecom Cyber Security) Rules, 2024

- **Context:** The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has notified the Telecommunications (Telecom Cyber Security) Rules, 2024.

Key Provisions

- It aims to safeguard India's communication networks and services, through measures including specified timelines for telcos to report security incidents and make disclosures.
- A telecommunication entity will include any person providing telecom services, or establishing, operating, maintaining, or expanding telecom network, including an authorised entity holding an authorisation.
- The rules also empower the central government/ its authorised agency to seek traffic data and any other data (other than the content of messages) from a telecom entity for the purpose of ensuring cyber security.
- It has mandated telecom companies to report cybersecurity incidents to the government within six hours of becoming aware and additional details within 24 hours.

- Telecom companies have been asked to appoint a chief telecommunications security officer, who is a citizen and resident of India.
- The telecom operators are also required to adopt a telecom cybersecurity policy, which includes security safeguards, risk management approaches, actions, training, best practices and technologies.
- A manufacturer of equipment that has an International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number is required to register the number of such equipment manufactured in India with the government before the sale of first such equipment.

Project Veer Gatha

- **Context:** More than 1.76 crore school students from all 36 States and UTs have participated enthusiastically in Project Veer Gatha 4.0.

About Project Veer Gatha

- The Government had launched Project 'Veer Gatha' as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' to celebrate 75th year of Independence.
- It was launched under the Gallantry Awards Portal (GAP) in 2021, aims to share the courageous acts and life stories of Gallantry Awardees with students to foster patriotism and civic values.
- Through this initiative, students have created projects in various formats, including poems, essays, paintings, and videos, to honor these gallantry award winners.
- Aligned with the Republic Day celebrations each year, Project Veer Gatha has seen great success with its first three editions.
- Under Project Veer Gatha 4.0, 100 winners will be selected and their felicitation will be done jointly by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Defence during the upcoming Republic Day. Each winner will be awarded a cash prize of Rs. 10,000.

24th NOVEMBER 2024

International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)

- **Context:** PM Modi inaugurated the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Global Cooperative Conference 2024 in New Delhi.

About International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)

- It was founded in London, England in 1895 during the 1st Cooperative Congress.
- The ICA provides a platform for cooperatives to collaborate, exchange ideas, and foster global trade while safeguarding cooperative principles.
- It unites over 1 billion cooperative members through 3 million cooperatives in various sectors, including agriculture, banking, health, and housing.
- With 306 member organizations across 105 countries, ICA serves as the leading voice for cooperatives, advocating for their interests and facilitating global collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- The ICA expanded into the Asia-Pacific region in 1960 with the establishment of a Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia, aiming to connect developing countries to the global cooperative network.

About Global Cooperative Conference 2024

- It is a historic event as India hosts the ICA General Assembly for the first time.
- The Conference will also mark the official launch of the UN International Year of Cooperatives – 2025.
- **Theme:** "Cooperatives Build Prosperity for All."

Proba-3 Mission

- **Context:** India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) is set to launch world's first parallel satellite to study the solar corona under the Proba-3 mission.

Key Highlights

- Proba-3 is the European Space Agency's (ESA) mission to study the Sun's corona – the outer layer of the Sun's atmosphere.
- It will see two satellites in a formation parallel to each other for long durations creating an artificial eclipse in space.
- The mission's success could pave the way for future multi-satellite missions, enhancing understanding of space weather and its impact on Earth.

- The mission exemplifies international cooperation, with contributions from ESA member states including France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, alongside ISRO.
- The data collected will enhance solar research and improve forecasting models for space weather events, crucial for protecting both civilian and military satellite operations.

25th NOVEMBER 2024

Global Plastics Treaty

- **Context:** Global Plastics Treaty is being held in Busan, South Korea, starting from November 25 to December 1.

Key Facts

- United Nations experts stress the necessity of accountability in the plastic lifecycle. They advocate for a "polluter-pays" principle to fund waste management.
- The treaty must integrate human rights principles. Transparency, prevention, and accountability are essential elements.
- Experts warn against shifting the burden to developing nations. These countries often lack the resources to manage plastic waste effectively.
- The treaty should address production, usage, and disposal. Effective solutions require a comprehensive approach to plastic management. This includes designing products for recycling and reducing unnecessary plastic use.
- Developing nations face unique challenges in managing plastic waste. Many rely on imported plastics and lack recycling infrastructure.
- The treaty should provide support for building local recycling systems.
- Experts call for remedies for communities impacted by plastic pollution. A human rights-based approach is crucial for effective solutions.
- The treaty must prioritise the needs of those most

affected. This includes addressing health and environmental impacts.

India's First Constitution Museum

- **Context:** India's first Constitution Museum to be inaugurated in Sonipat, Haryana.

Key Highlights

- The museum will be located at O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) and aims to tell the significance of the Constitution of India.
- The museum will feature interactive displays and advanced technology. Visitors will experience AI-driven installations and 3D exhibits. It will showcase the Constitution's history over 75 years. Each section of the Constitution will be represented. Various formats will be used, including text, audio-visuals, and experiential exhibits.
- The museum will highlight profiles of the Constituent Assembly members. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar will be prominently featured. He is recognized as the principal architect of the Constitution.

About S.A.M.V.I.D. Project

- The museum is part of the S.A.M.V.I.D. project, which is a collaboration between JGU and IIT Madras.
- It seeks to make learning engaging and interactive. The project focuses on innovative storytelling techniques.

26th NOVEMBER 2024

Constitution Day

- **Context:** Constitution Day, also known as "National Law Day", is celebrated in India on 26 November every year to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India.

Key Facts

- On 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India, and it came into effect on 26 January 1950.

- President Droupadi Murmu began a joint session of both Houses of Parliament in honour of the Indian Constitution's 75th anniversary. A memorial coin, a stamp, and three books on the Constitution of India were also unveiled by the President as part of the celebrations.
- In 2015, under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the government designated November 26 as Constitution Day to promote constitutional values and coincide with Ambedkar's 125th birth anniversary. Before this, the day was celebrated as National Law Day.
- Indian Constitution Day raises awareness of constitutional ideals, rights, and commitments while emphasising justice, liberty, equality, and brotherhood, and fostering national solidarity.
- Reflecting India's transformative journey, and reaffirming its commitment to democratic ideals, this day also honours the vision and endeavours of the Constituent Assembly in laying the foundation of a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic.
- The 21st ASEAN-India Economic Ministers Meeting occurred in September and the 21st ASEAN-India Summit took place in October. Both events were hosted in Vientiane, Laos. Leaders urged the AITIGA Joint Committee to expedite negotiations. The goal is to complete the review process by 2025.
- India has been advocating for a review of the AITIGA, which has been in effect since 2010. The agreement has disproportionately benefited ASEAN countries. India's exports to ASEAN rose from \$25.62 billion in 2010-11 to \$41.2 billion in 2023-24. In contrast, imports surged from \$30.6 billion to \$79.66 billion during the same period.
- India aims to reduce tariffs on 76.4% of traded goods. India seeks to encourage countries like Vietnam to increase their commitments.
- Stricter rules on product origin are also a priority. This is to prevent Chinese goods from entering India through ASEAN at lower tariffs.

ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA)

- **Context:** The ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) joint committee convened in New Delhi to review the bilateral pact, which indicates a step forward in tariff negotiations.

Key Highlights

- Eight subcommittees were established to address various aspects of the trade agreement. Their discussions included market access, rules of origin, and standards and technical regulations.
- They also covered customs procedures, economic cooperation, trade remedies, and legal issues. Progress was reported across all these areas.
- This round of negotiations followed two important meetings earlier in 2024.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 'Global Peace Award

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi was honored with the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Key Facts

- Global Peace Award, which recognizes his efforts toward inclusive development. It was presented jointly by Washington Adventist University and AIAM.
- The award specifically acknowledges his work for minority upliftment.
- The Association of Indian American Minorities (AIAM) was launched recently, which aims to unite and support minority communities within the Indian American diaspora.
- The event took place at the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Maryland.