

Indian Ocean Rim Association's (IORA) Council of Foreign Ministers (COM) meeting held in Colombo (Sri Lanka)

Key highlights

- ⊕ 'Strengthening Regional Architecture: Reinforcing Indian Ocean Identity' was theme of meeting.
- ⊕ 'Colombo Communique and 'IORA Vision 2030 and Beyond' was adopted.
- ⊕ Saudi Arabia was formally welcomed as 11th Dialogue Partner.
- ⊕ IORA Chairship was transferred from Bangladesh to Sri Lanka for 2023-2025.
 - ◆ India will take chairship during 2025-2027.

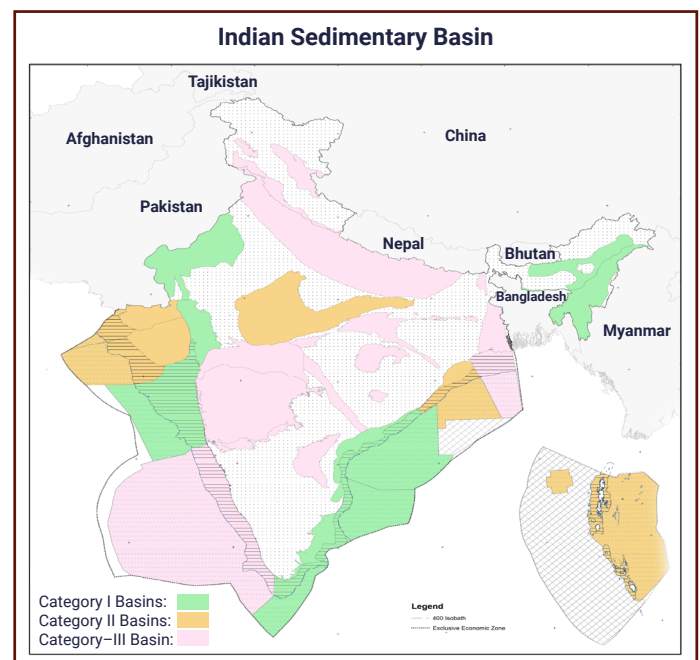
About IORA

- ⊕ It is an Inter-governmental organisation established in 1997, based on vision of Nelson Mandela.
- ⊕ It aims to strengthen regional cooperation and sustainable development within Indian Ocean region (IOR).
- ⊕ It has 23 members (within IOR).
- ⊕ CoM which meets annually is apex body.
- ⊕ 6 Priority areas with 2 cross cutting issues including maritime safety and security; fisheries management; disaster risk management; etc.
- ⊕ 'Special fund' supports projects and programs.
- ⊕ 'IORA's outlook on Indo pacific' calls for adherence 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant UN treaties.
- ⊕ Comprises
 - ◆ 1/3rd of world's population
 - ◆ 80% of global oil trade
 - ◆ Produces ~\$1 trillion in goods and services.
 - ◆ Intra-IORA trade is around \$800 billion.
- ⊕ Importance for India:
 - ◆ Avenue to keep out big-power rivalries including China from IOR.
 - ◆ Less contentious space for regional cooperation for India since Pakistan is not a member.



Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG) offered 8 blocks for production of hydrocarbons under Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) bid

- ⊕ Government has reduced 'No Go' areas in the Indian off shore by 99%.
- ⊕ 'No Go' areas are geographical locations where exploration activities are prohibited due to strategic reasons.
- ⊕ Of the eight blocks, 6 blocks are spread over Category-I basins, and other two are in Category-II (refer image).
 - ⊕ Category-I have proven hydrocarbon resources with established commercial production.
 - ⊕ Category-II have contingent resources that are yet to be converted to recoverable reserves and commercial production.
 - ⊕ Category-III have prospective resources awaiting discovery.
- ⊕ OALP was launched under Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP).
- ⊕ OALP allows investors to carve out blocks of their choice by assessing Exploration & Production (E&P) data available at National Data Repository.
- ⊕ These blocks would be offered through biannual formal bidding process.
- ⊕ HELP was launched to boost the production of oil & gas in Indian sedimentary basin.
 - ⊕ It is based on Revenue Sharing Contract model.
 - ⊕ It provides single license for E&P of all types of hydrocarbon, like conventional oil and gas, coal-bed methane, shale oil, etc.



World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Approves India's Self Declaration of Freedom From Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

- **Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying** has submitted a self-declaration of freedom from HPAI in 26 poultry compartments to WOA.
- ⊕ India experienced **first outbreak of Bird Flu in Maharashtra (2006)**.
- **Approval of Self-Declaration by WOA signifies**
 - ⊕ India's commitment to international biosecurity standards.
 - ⊕ **Open up new opportunities for Indian poultry** and poultry products, including meat and eggs in global market, contributing to **country's economic growth**.
 - ◆ During 2022-23, India exported poultry products to 64 countries, generating revenue of \$134 million.
- **Avian influenza** refers to **disease in birds** caused by infection with **avian (bird) influenza (flu) Type A viruses**.
 - ⊕ **Person-to-person spread of bird flu is not common**. Those who work in close contact with infected live or dead poultry or contaminated environments (live bird markets) are at risk.
 - ⊕ **4 strains** have caused concern i.e., **H5N1, H7N9, H5N6, and H5N8**.
 - ⊕ **H1N1 flu**, sometimes called **swine flu**, is a **type of influenza A virus**.
- **India's approach to controlling HPAI**: Detect and cull policy as outlined in **National Action Plan for Prevention, Control, and Containment of Avian Influenza** (revised - 2021).

Compartmentalisation

- It involves **defining a sub-population of animals with a specified health status** within national territory.
- It **enhances animal health, reduces the risk of disease outbreaks** within and outside compartment, and **facilitates trade of poultry and related products**.

World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)

- **WOAH (HQ-Paris)** is an intergovernmental organization (since 1924) to ensure transparency on global animal diseases.

Centre seeks inclusion of traditional medicine on World Health Organisation's list

- **Ministry of Ayush** has sought for Ayurveda and related systems to be included in 11th revision of **International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11)** as **Module-2** of a supplementary chapter on traditional medicine conditions.
 - ⊕ Development of Module-2 relies on implementation knowledge obtained from **National Ayush Morbidity and Standardized Terminologies Electronic (NAMASTE)** portal and **Ayush Health Information Management System (AHIMS)**.
- ICD is the **international standard** for systematic recording, reporting, analysis, interpretation, and comparison of mortality and morbidity data.
 - ⊕ Previously, **ICD-11 included Module-1** that covers **traditional medicine conditions originating in ancient China**, which is now commonly used in Japan, Korea etc.
 - ⊕ **ICD-11** came into effect from **January 2022**.
- **Significance of ICD-11**
 - ⊕ **Provides a list of diagnostics categories to collect and report on traditional medicine conditions** in an internationally comparable manner.
 - ⊕ **Link traditional medicine practices with global conventional medicine's norms** and standard development.
 - ⊕ **Enable integration of traditional medicine into insurance coverage and reimbursement systems**, in line with WHO objectives relating to universal health coverage.

Traditional Medicine

- Refers to **sum of knowledge, skills and practices indigenous and different cultures** have used over time to maintain health and diagnose and treat physical and mental illness.

National Ayush Morbidity and Standardized Terminologies Electronic (NAMASTE) portal

- It provides standardized terminologies & morbidity codes for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems of medicine.

Ayush Health Information Management System (A-HIMS)

- It is a comprehensive IT platform to effectively **manage all functions of health care delivery systems** and patient care in Ayush facilities.

Hamas-Israel War: International law on war

- There are **two independent international laws to related to wars**.
 - ⊕ These laws emanate from **Just war theory** as per which 'taking human life is **wrong** but states have a **duty to defend** citizens and justice which may **require willingness to use violence**.

Law	Description
Jus ad bellum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Defines the legitimate reasons a state may engage in war. ➤ It finds its source in United Nations Charter of 1945. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ Article 2 prohibits members from use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of any State. ⊕ Article 51 of provides inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs.
Jus in bello	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Known as international humanitarian law (IHL) and provides rules to be followed during armed conflict. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ Finds its sources in Hague Conventions (1899 and 1907) and 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols (1977). ➤ Its purpose is to save lives and reduce suffering. ➤ Both governmental forces and non-state armed groups need to respect IHL. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ Breach of law may lead to prosecution for War crime. ⊕ In 1998 under Rome Statute an international criminal court, was established for repressing inter alia war crimes.

'IndiaAI' Report Submitted by Seven Working Groups (WGs) of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)

- Report will serve as India's guiding roadmap for the development of its Artificial Intelligence (AI) ecosystem.
- **Key recommendations**
 - ⊕ **IndiaAI Centres of Excellence (CoEs):** Its functions may include conducting foundational research, supporting an industry-academia-government collaboration, etc.
 - ⊕ **India Dataset Platform (IDP):** Define roles, responsibilities, etc. for data exchange platform; build technical infrastructure.
 - ◆ IDP is being developed as a **federal structure** to accommodate **data providers** from various ministries and departments.
 - ⊕ **Institutional Capacity and Design of National Data Management Office (NDMO):** Establish **NDMO as a non-statutory independent agency**.
 - ◆ **Establish Data Management Units** within each Ministry/Department.
 - ⊕ **IndiaAI Future Design:** Establish a **funding mechanism for promising AI Startups**; enable access to the **state-of-art AI infrastructure through CoEs**; etc.
 - ⊕ **IndiaAI Future Skills:**
 - ◆ **Develop a comprehensive AI curriculum** that covers the fundamentals of AI, mathematics and statistics, etc.
 - ◆ **Research fellowships and grants** for building research capability in tier 2-3-4 institutions.
 - ⊕ **IndiaAI Future Labs Compute:** Establish best-in-class **AI compute infrastructure at five locations**, with a capacity of 3000 AI Petaflops.
 - ⊕ **Semicon IndiaAI Chipsets:** Design of **AI chipsets** that could be relevant for **High-Performance Computing** may be supported under **Semicon India future Design Linked Incentive Scheme**.

India's AI ecosystem.

- AI is expected to add **\$ 967 Bn to the Indian economy by 2035** and \$450–500 billion by 2025, accounting for **10% of the country's 5 trillion GDP target**.
- India has been nominated as the Council Chair of the **Global Partnership on AI (GPAI)**.
- India ranked **1st in AI Skill Penetration and in the Number of GitHub AI Projects** in Stanford AI Index report 2023.

Also in News



Multinational Security Support (MSS)

- **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** has approved **Kenya-led multinational security mission to Haiti**.
- **MSS** will help to **secure critical infrastructure and transit hubs** such as the airport, ports, schools, hospitals etc.
 - ⊕ The resolution, adopted under UN Charter was **penned by US and Ecuador**.
 - ⊕ UN Charter sets out the **UNSC's responsibilities to maintain international peace and security**.
- **MSS will not be operated by the United Nations**.
 - ⊕ Countries like the **Bahamas, Jamaica and Antigua and Barbuda** have also offered support to implement it.



David sling Air Defence system

- **Israel** used **David's Sling** air-defense system to intercept Hamas rockets.
- David's Sling system includes a **missile firing unit, a fire control radar, a battle management station, and the interceptor**.
 - ⊕ It is a **long range air and missile defense system**.
- **Benefits:**
 - ⊕ Designed for **"plug and play" insertion into fielded air and missile defense systems** – open architecture.
 - ⊕ Next-generation **multi-sensor seeker**.
 - ⊕ **Cost effective**.



Jageshwar Temple and Parvati Kund

- Prime Minister visited **Jageshwar temple** and Parvati Kund in Uttarakhand.
- Jageshwar temple is located near **river Jata Ganga**. **Main temple of Shiva** is covered by more than 100 small **ancient temples of different gods**.
 - ⊕ Temples belong to **post-Gupta and pre-medieval eras** (mostly built and renovated by **Katyuri dynasty kings**).
 - ⊕ According to **Skandha Purana and Linga Purana** worship of **lord Shiva** was started from **Jageshwar**.
 - ⊕ This area was **also centre of Lakulisha Shaivism**, a revivalist sect worshipping **Lord Shiva**.
- **Parvati Kund** at an elevation of about 5,338 feet is believed to be the site where **Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati meditated**.



Hepatitis C

- According to WHO, **Egypt** became the **first country to achieve "gold tier" status** on path to **elimination of hepatitis C**.
- **Hepatitis C** is a **viral infection that affects the liver**. It can cause **both acute (short term) and chronic (long term) illness**.
 - ⊕ **Transmission:** Reuse or inadequate sterilization of medical equipment, especially syringes and needles in healthcare settings.
 - ⊕ There is **no vaccine for hepatitis C**, but it can be **treated with antiviral medications**.
- Whereas, effective vaccine available for **Hepatitis A and B**.



Central Electricity Authority (CEA)

- Ministry of Power celebrated 50th Foundation Day of Central Electricity Authority.



Central Electricity Authority (CEA)



Genesis: Statutory Body constituted under erstwhile Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 (replaced by Electricity Act, 2003).

Ministry: Ministry of Power.

Composition: Not more than fourteen Members (including its Chairperson) of whom not more than eight shall be full-time Members to be appointed by Central Government.

Functions:

- Overall planning & development of power sector in country.
- Specify technical standards for construction of electrical plants, electric lines and connectivity to grid.
- Promote research in matters affecting the generation, transmission, distribution and trading of electricity.



India-Sri Lanka ferry service

- India- Sri Lanka launched ferry service across Palk Strait nearly four decades after the link between Nagapattinam (Tamil Nadu) and Kankesanthurai (Jaffna) was disrupted by civil war.
 - ⊖ Ferry service aims to bolster trade and tourism, especially given Nagapattinam's proximity to religious landmarks like Thirunallar, Nagore, etc.
- Kankesanthurai (Sri Lankan port): Located closest to ports on India's west coast.
- Nagapattinam port: Located on shores of Bay of Bengal (BoB) at estuary of River Kaduvaiyar.
- Palk Strait: Inlet of BoB between southeastern India and northern Sri Lanka.
 - ⊖ Bounded by Pamban Island (India), Adam's (Rama's) Bridge (chain of shoals), Gulf of Mannar, and Mannar Island (Sri Lanka).



FIDE (International Chess Federation)

- Prime Minister congratulated Raunak Sadhwani for winning FIDE World Junior Rapid Chess Championship.
- Headquartered in Lausanne (Switzerland), FIDE was constituted as a non-governmental institution.
- It is the governing body of the sport of chess and regulates all international chess competitions.
- It was recognized by the International Olympic Committee as a Global Sporting Organization in 1999.
- It has 199 countries as affiliate members (including India), in the form of National Chess Federations.



Estivations and Hibernation

- Estivation (or aestivation) is a biological phenomenon whereby the animal enters a long period of dormancy, or inactivity, in response to high temperature or drought-like conditions.
 - ⊖ They enter a cool underground burrow, crevice or cocoon and remain in a state of reduced metabolic activity to reduce the rate at which body consumes energy.
 - ⊖ Example, the West African Lungfish; Desert tortoises; land snails seal, etc.
- Hibernation is when an animal slows its heart rate to save energy and survive the winter without eating much.
 - ⊖ Example: Bears, Bats, Hedgehog, etc.

Personality in News



Banda Singh Bahadur (1670-1716)

- Baba Banda Singh Bahadur was a Sikh warrior and a commander of the Khalsa army.
- Originally named Lachman Dev, he was born in a Hindu family.
- Guru Gobind Singh conferred the title of Banda Singh Bahadur to him.
- He defeated the Mughals and established the Khalsa rule in Punjab.
- He abolished Zamindari system and introduced the Nanak Shahi coins.
- He was captured by Mughal ruler Farrukhsiyar and his martyrdom took place in Mehrauli.
- Ethical values: Sense of justice, courage, sacrifice.



Banda Singh Bahadur (1670-1716)

Errata: In News Today Dated 14th October 2023, the statement 'UNDRR (HQ: Geneva, Switzerland) was established in 1999 to support the implementation of Sendai Framework' was not correctly explained. The correct explanation is

UNDRR (originally UNISDR) was established in 1999 to facilitate the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

UNDRR (HQ: Geneva, Switzerland) has been tasked to support the implementation, follow-up and review of the Sendai Framework (2015-2030) and coordinates action within the UN system around disaster risk reduction.



AHMEDABAD



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI



SIKAR