

28-10-2022

ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting

Why in Newspapers?

Recently the 7th ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry (AIMMAF) was held in virtual form.

Quick Issue?

- India reiterated its vision of placing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at the center of India's Act East policy.
- It also stressed on mutually close regional cooperation with ASEAN to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth for agriculture in the region.

Historical Background?

- Recognizing the importance of millet (nutritional-cereal) as a nutritious food, and the International Nutrition-Cereal Year 2023, India has asked ASEAN member countries to support India's efforts in increasing the production, processing, value addition and consumption of millet.
- India will promote nutritious cereal products for the health and nutrition of the people. Nutritious cereals help in the manufacture of nutrients with less resource requirements and more efficient agri-food systems.
- Reviewed the progress in implementation of various programs and activities under the Medium Term Action Plan of ASEAN-India Cooperation (Years 2021-2025).
- The commitment to ASEAN-India cooperation in agriculture and forestry was reaffirmed.
- Continuing measures under ASEAN-India cooperation for the implementation of post-pandemic recovery are necessary to mitigate the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19

Other Key Facts?

Association of Southeast Asian Nations

- It is a regional grouping that promotes economic, political and security cooperation.
- It was established in August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the founders of ASEAN namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- Its presidency is conferred annually on the basis of alphabetical order of English names of its member states.
- The ASEAN countries have a total population of 650 million and a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$8 trillion. It is the fourth largest trading partner of India with a trade of about US\$ 86.9 billion.
- Commodity trade between India and ASEAN region has reached US\$ 98.39 billion in the period April 2021- February 2022. India's trade relations are mainly with Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand.
- **Members:-** ASEAN brings together ten Southeast Asian countries- Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.



pandemic by ensuring a smooth flow of safe and nutritious agricultural products to ASEAN and India.

- India reaffirmed India's commitment to enhance India's cooperation with ASEAN in food security, nutrition, climate change adaptation, digital farming, nature-friendly agriculture, food processing, value chain, agricultural marketing and capacity building.

Likely Question Asked In Preliminary Exam

Que. With reference to which groups of countries the term Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is often in the headlines?

- (a) G-20 (b) ASEAN
(c) SCO (d) SAARC

Answer: (b) ASEAN

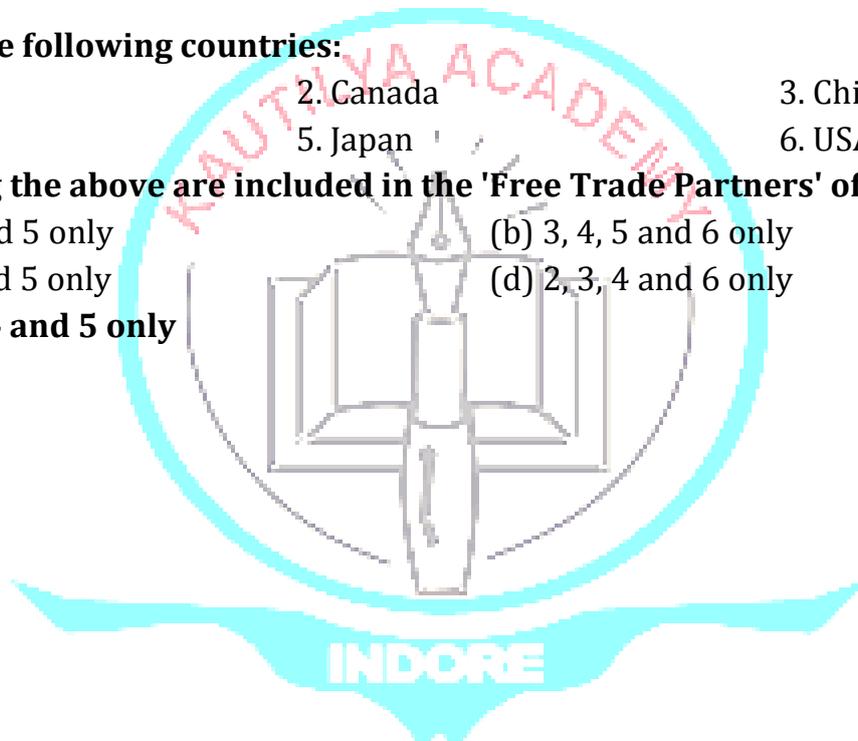
Que. Consider the following countries:

1. Australia 2. Canada 3. China
4. India 5. Japan 6. USA

Who among the above are included in the 'Free Trade Partners' of ASEAN?

- (a) 1, 2, 4 and 5 only (b) 3, 4, 5 and 6 only
(c) 1, 3, 4 and 5 only (d) 2, 3, 4 and 6 only

Answer: (c) 1, 3, 4 and 5 only



Dirty Bomb

Why in Newspapers?

Russia recently accused the United Nations Security Council of planning a "dirty bomb" attack.

Quick Issue?

- Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu in a phone call to his counterparts from the United States, Britain, France and Turkey has accused Ukraine of nearly completing a 'dirty bomb'. However, Ukraine, France, the United States and the United Kingdom have rejected the Russian allegations.
- The Russians claim that "two organizations in Ukraine have specific instructions to make so called 'Dirty Bombs'. Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and it's been almost 9 months since the conflict."

Other Key Facts?

Examples of use of dirty bombs

- According to the BBC, there are three known examples of the use of dirty bombs, but in all three cases they were defused before detonation.
- In 1996, Chechnya rebels planted a bomb containing dynamite and cesium-137 in Moscow's Izmailovo Park. Cesium was extracted from a cancer-treatment device.
- In 1998, Chechnya's intelligence service defused a dirty bomb placed near a railway line in Chechnya.
- In 2002, Jose Padilla, a US citizen who had links with al-Qaeda, was arrested on suspicion of planning the Dirty Bomb attack in Chicago.

Historical Background?

- A "dirty bomb" in technical parlance is a dispersion device in which the radioactive material is probably uranium, but in general use a lower-grade material such as cesium-137 or other radioactive material is more likely to be used.
- It does not require the addition of highly sophisticated radioactive material, as used in the atomic bomb. Instead it can use radioactive material from hospitals, nuclear power stations or research laboratories which is much cheaper and faster than nuclear weapons.
- For example, they can also be carried by keeping them in the rear of a vehicle.
- This would have limited immediate health implications, as most people in the affected area would be able to escape before experiencing the lethal effects of radiation.
- However, inhalation of radioactive dust and fumes spread far and wide can be injurious to health as the radiation cannot be seen, smelled, felt or tasted by humans.
- Distant radioactive dust and fumes are very dangerous to health. Evacuation of urban areas or even leaving the city altogether can cause huge economic losses.
- This type of bomb consists of a conventional explosive as well as radioactive material such as uranium. When detonated, the explosives scatter radioactive material into the air, contaminating a wide area.



- The radioactive material used to make dirty bombs is not the highly enriched uranium that is used to make nuclear weapons.
- Radioactive materials used in hospitals, nuclear power stations or research laboratories are sufficient to make such a bomb. It is cheaper and easier to make than nuclear weapons.
- Dirty bombs in themselves do not cause mass casualties, but due to the fall of radioactive material, it can cause serious disease like cancer in the affected area. This can create massive panic in the target area as well as a wide area around the blast zone will have to be either evacuated for decontamination, or abandoned altogether.
- ^ According to the BBC "The Union of American Scientists has calculated that if a bomb containing 9g (0.3oz) of cobalt-60 and 5kg of TNT were detonated at the tip of Manhattan in New York, it would make the entire region a city uninhabited for decades."
- For this reason, dirty bombs are known as weapons of mass disruption.

Likely Question Asked In Preliminary Exam

Que. Consider the following statements?

1. A dirty bomb is a weapon that is made from conventional explosives such as dynamite and radioactive materials such as uranium.
2. Dirty bombs have not exploded anywhere in the world so far. In 1995, Chechen rebels planted such a bomb in a Moscow park, but it did not detonate.
3. Despite the radioactive material in this bomb, it cannot be classified as a nuclear weapon.

Which of the above statement is true?

(a) 1 and 2

(b) 2 and 3

(c) all of the above

(d) none of the above

Answer: (c) All of the above

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