

IQRA IAS



CURRENT AFFAIRS

SEPTEMBER 2022

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Paper II (GS): All the Articles of this section are relevant to the following topics:

- **India and its Neighbourhood – Relations**
- **Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and / or affecting India's Interests**
- **Prelims Oriented Questions and Places in News for Maps/ Matching**

2.1 UN TREATY ON HIGH SEAS

Why in News: Delegates from 168 countries were involved in negotiating a legally binding treaty to conserve biodiversity in the high seas or the areas beyond national jurisdiction. However, no consensus was reached as the negotiations ended on August 26.

- Environmental campaigners have called it a “missed opportunity”. The UN Treaty on High Seas is being considered crucial to protect the marine biodiversity amidst rising threats due to anthropogenic activities.
- It is expected that the treaty will also help mitigate the impact of climate change on oceans. At present, only 1.2% of international waters fall under protected areas.
- In June 2022, the UN Secretary General had declared an “Ocean Emergency” at the UN Ocean Conference in the backdrop of alarming rate of extinction of marine species.

UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

- **The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** lays down a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world’s oceans and seas establishing rules governing all uses of the oceans and their resources.
- **The convention was signed in 1982 and at present it has 168 parties.** The 1982 Convention was build on the works of earlier UNCLOS I held in 1956 at Geneva.
- **It had resulted in signing of 4 treaties:**
 - Convention on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone;
 - Convention on the Continental Shelf;
 - Convention on the High Seas;
 - Convention on Fishing and Conservation of Living Resources of the High Seas.

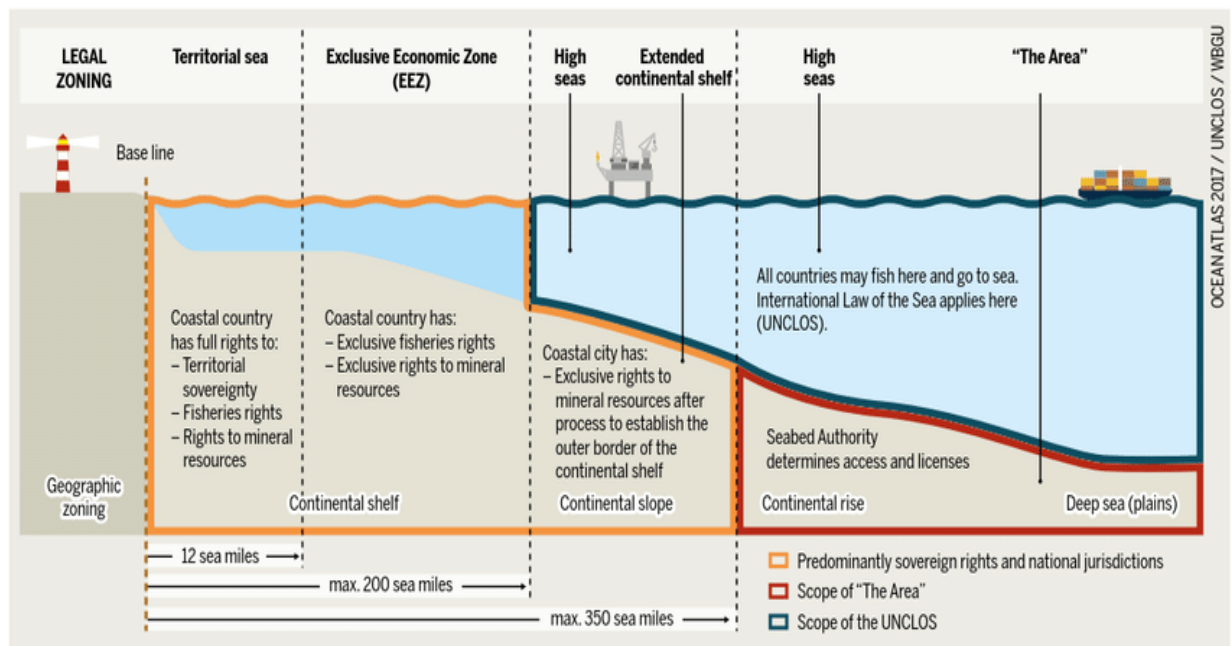
However, the 1956 Convention couldn’t decide on the issue of breadth of territorial waters, different countries had adopted different limits (3 mile to more than 12 miles).

The 1982 Convention settled the issue with comprehensive coverage of number of associated aspects like setting limits, navigation, archipelagic status and transit regimes, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), continental shelf jurisdiction, deep seabed mining, the exploitation regime, protection of the marine environment, scientific research, and settlement of disputes.

The convention set the limit of various areas which include:

- **Internal Waters:** Covers all water and waterways on the landward side of the baseline. The State is free to set laws, regulate use, and use any resource. Foreign vessels have no right of passage within internal waters.

- **Territorial Waters:** Extend up to 12 nautical miles (22 kilometers; 14 miles) from the baseline, the coastal state is free to set laws, regulate use, and use any resource. Vessels have the right of innocent passage through any territorial waters (Passage is not prejudicial to the peace or security of the coastal State, Fishing, polluting, weapons practice, and spying are not innocent).
- **Contiguous Zone:** Extends further 12 nautical miles beyond the territorial waters. The state can enforce laws in four specific areas – customs, taxation, immigration, and pollution. Exclusive
- **Economic Zones (EEZs):** EEZs extent up to 200 nautical miles (370 km; 230 mi) from the baseline. Within this area, the coastal nation has sole exploitation rights over all natural resources. There is no formal definition of International Waters or High Seas in international law, but seas beyond EEZ are called as High Seas.



The UCNLOS helped in creation of regulating authorities;

- (a) The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea;
- (b) The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf;
- (c) The International Seabed Authority.

It has also outlined general responsibilities towards limiting marine pollution and preserving marine resources.

UN Treaty on the High Seas-Paris Agreement for the Ocean

- **The treaty is being referred to as the 'Paris Agreement for the Ocean'. It is being negotiated under the UNCLOS.**
- In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) had passed a resolution to develop an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.
- In 2017, the UNGA, decided to convene an intergovernmental conference (IGC), with a view to develop the instrument as soon as possible. The negotiations have been going on since 2018 through a series of intergovernmental conferences.
- **The new treaty will establish a global framework to conserve and manage biodiversity of the High Seas.** High seas constitute 65% of surface and 95% of volume of oceans.
- The treaty is focused on key areas:
 - The conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ)
 - Marine Genetic Resources (MGRs: biological material from plants and animals in the ocean that can have benefits for society, such as pharmaceuticals, industrial processes and food), including questions on benefit-sharing
 - Area Based Management Tools (ABMT), including Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
 - Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)
 - Capacity-building and the Transfer of Marine Technology (CB&TMT) (ensuring less-industrialized countries can meet treaty objectives through a mechanism for sharing marine technology and knowledge)

Need for the Treaty on High Seas

- Part XII of UNCLOS (1982) contains special provisions for the protection of the marine environment. However, there are many governance gaps and shortcomings that do not address contemporary challenges e.g., there is no comprehensive, agreed-upon framework governing resource extraction or conservation in the international waters (high seas).
- The oceans are facing several challenges:
 - Technological advances enabling greater access to high seas resources are exposing marine ecosystems to severe impacts from fisheries and other extractive industries;
 - Marine life living outside of the 1.2% of protected areas are at risk of exploitation from the increasing threats of climate change, acidification, overfishing and shipping traffic;
 - Chemical, noise and plastic pollution is rising unabated in the seas;
 - According to NASA, 90% of global warming is occurring in the oceans.
- The greatest threat is to the marine biodiversity. According to a study commissioned by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, between 10% and 15% of marine species are already at risk of extinction. Sharks and rays are among the species set to lose out from the failure to pass the treaty.

- According to the IUCN they are facing a global extinction crisis – and are one of the most threatened species groups in the world. Many migratory species such as turtles and whales move through the world's oceans interacting with human activities like shipping which can cause them severe injuries and death.

2.2 INDIA-JAPAN

Why in News: 2+2 Ministerial meeting between the Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs of India and Japan was recently held in Tokyo, Japan.

- In a joint statement issued after the meeting, both India and Japan recognized the need for global cooperation in addressing acute security issues and reaffirmed their commitment to a rules-based global order that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations. In recent years, the relationship between India and Japan has been steadily expanding and deepened.
- Both India and Japan share a global vision of peace, stability and prosperity, based on sustainable development. They also share democratic values and commitment human rights, pluralism, open society and the rule of law are the basis of global partnership between the two countries

Background

- India and Japan have had a close historical relationship since ancient times. **It is said that exchanges began in the 6th century when Buddhism was introduced to Japan.**
- Indian culture has had a significant impact on Japanese culture through the influence of Buddhism. At various stages of history, the two countries have never been hostile since contact began.
- After World War II, India and Japan signed her April 1952 peace treaty and established diplomatic relations. This treaty was one of the first peace treaties signed by Japan after World War II.
- **Relations between India and Japan have traditionally been strong, especially since India launched its "Look East" policy in her 1990s.** Japan was one of the few countries that rescued India from its balance of payments crisis.
- **In 2006, India-Japan relations were upgraded to a 'Global and Strategic Partnership'.** Our strong bilateral trade and aid ties extend to security-based ties. Since the visits of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan in 2013 and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in January 2014, bilateral relations have continued with renewed vigor. This relationship was further upgraded to a 'Special Strategic Global Partnership' in September 2014.
- Both India and Japan want to increase their presence in the Asia-Pacific region with the United States. Concerns about China's intentions in the region have prompted

increased trilateral cooperation, but neither country wants to threaten China with an evolving partnership adjustments could benefit the entire Asia-Pacific region.

Areas of Cooperation

Strategic and Defence Cooperation

- The Joint declaration on security Cooperation among India and Japan become issued in October 2008. There also are various frameworks of protection and protection communicate between Japan and India inclusive of foreign and protection Ministerial meeting ('2+2' assembly), annual defense Ministerial talk and Coast defend-to-Coast protect speak the first '2+2' meeting changed into held in November 2019.
- In September 2020, the settlement concerning Reciprocal Provision of elements and services (RPSS) among the Self-protection Forces of Japan and the Indian defense force turned into signed ('Acquisition and pass-Servicing settlement' or ACSA).
- ACSA allows mutual logistics aid, along with lodging and food, at some stage in joint physical games and schooling. India is one in every of five international locations with which Japan has an ACSA, in conjunction with Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the USA. ACSA has enabled extended maritime security cooperation within the Indo-Pacific place.
- Indian and Japanese forces regularly preserve joint sporting activities like Shinyuu Maitri (Air force), Dharma father or mother (military), JIMEX (military), Sahyog-Kaijin (Coast shield) and Malabar (military, multilateral).
- Both India and Japan aid every different's candidature for everlasting club in UN protection Council's growth. Japan supported India's inclusion to Missile era control Regime and India joined the group in 2016. Strategic and Defence cooperation is a key measurement of India Japan Relationship.

Trade

- India and Japan signed complete economic Partnership agreement in 2011. The economic cooperation has made a rapid development on account that 2014.
- Japan is regarded as a key companion in India's monetary transformation. Japan's hobby in India is growing due to reasons like India's big and growing marketplace and its assets.
- India Japan bilateral alternate stood at US\$ 13.7 billion in 2020, with Indian exports well worth US\$ 4.3 billion and imports worth US\$ 9.4 billion.
- India's primary exports to Japan were petroleum merchandise, chemical substances, non-steel mineral ware, fish & fish preparations, metalliferous ores & scrap, apparel & add-ons, iron & metal products, and equipment and many others.

- India's number one imports from Japan are equipment, electric equipment, iron and metal merchandise, plastic substances, non-ferrous metals, components of motor cars, organic chemical compounds, manufactures of metals, and so forth.

Investments and improvement assistance

- Between 2000-2019, Japan has invested ~US\$ 32 billion. It now ranks 3rd amongst most important traders in India. Eastern FDI into India has specially been in automobile, electric device, telecommunications, chemical, monetary (insurance) and pharmaceutical sectors.
- Japan is the largest bilateral donor for India. Japan ODA (overseas development assistance) supports India's efforts for multiplied economic development specifically in priority areas like energy, transportation, environmental tasks and tasks related to simple human desires. several excessive-profile infrastructure initiatives vital for India's economic transformation just like the Mumbai-Ahmedabad excessive speed Rail, the Western devoted Freight corridor (DFC), the Delhi-Mumbai commercial corridor with 12 business townships, the Chennai-Bengaluru business hall (CBIC) are being supported via Japanese help.

Virtual Partnerships and start-ups

- 'India-Japan virtual Partnership'(I-JDP) changed into released in October 2018. In can also 2018, each nations signed the Joint statement on Japan-India Startup Initiative putting in place the first Startup Hub in Bangalore.
- Collaboration in start-America has emerged as a colorful component below this Partnership till date Indian begin-USA have raised greater than US\$ 10 billion from eastern project Capitalists (Softbank being the largest investor).

Science and generation

- The bilateral science & era Cooperation settlement changed into signed in 1985 and it underpins the bilateral S&T cooperation.
- **The India-Japan technology Council (IJSC) was set up in 1993.** It has so far supported 250 joint initiatives. several Institutional Agreements/ MoUs in the areas of existence sciences, material sciences, high power physics, ICT, biotechnology, healthcare, methane hydrate, robotics, alternative assets of energy, earth sciences, outer space and so forth were signed between the technology businesses of both countries.
- The India-Japan agreement for Cooperation within the nonviolent uses of Nuclear power got here into pressure in 2017.
- Both international locations additionally have cooperation in the discipline of ICT, in regions which include 5G, telecom protection, submarine fiber optic cables, clever-metropolis technology and many others.

- Era cooperation has additionally elevated thru the Quad and supplied a brand new measurement to India Japan courting. Quad has hooked up a vital and emerging generation running organization, focused on era concepts, requirements improvement, telecommunications, monitoring of generation trends, and essential era deliver chains.

Issues and Challenges

- **Japan has a strained relationship with Russia.** India continues to pursue its strategy of ‘multi-alignment’ and ‘strategic autonomy’, balancing relations between the West and Russia. India remains heavily reliant on Moscow for the support of key capabilities in its armed forces. By contrast, Japan’s interest lies in taking a united position against Russia to defend the rules-based order.
- The response of India and Japan to Russia’s invasion in Ukraine is also in stark contrast. **Japan also objected to Russia’s holding of maritime component of Vostok-2022 exercises near Kuril Islands. India has participated in Vostok exercises.**
- Despite expansion in economic ties, the trade between India and Japan is limited and far below potential. Japan barely makes to India’s top 15 trading partners. India-Japan bilateral trade is less than one-fifth of India-China trade.
- On multiple global issues (especially issues related to developing v/s developed nations gap) India and Japan end up on opposite sides. These include trade related aspects at the WTO like India’s tariff structure on imports.
- **The Asia Africa Growth corridor has not achieved much so far.** The joint infrastructure projects in Africa has remained limited in outcomes. Similarly, Japanese companies face considerable logistics challenges in their projects in India.

Conclusion

India and Japan are great democracies and aim at the ideals of a value-based order. The need to form the rules-based order was needed to tackle Chinese assertiveness and expansionism in the Indo-Pacific region. Further, India and Japan aim to form a new security architecture which mainly covers maritime security and cooperation. Therefore the deepening of India Japan relationship is not only important for the two countries, but also for the Indo-Pacific region and will encourage peace, prosperity and stability for the world. It is time to consolidate this shared heritage and to cooperate for a better and more prosperous tomorrow.

2.3 SCO

Why in News: The 22nd summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) concluded recently in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

- At the end of the summit, member nations signed the Samarkand Declaration, which identified the areas of cooperation to strengthen security and development. In the last 2 decades, the SCO has emerged as a key organization in the Eurasian region.
- The Organization assumes more importance for India as it gears up for Presidency next year and hosting the summit in 2023. India's presidency of the SCO shows its new multi-alignment policy; wherein it is delicately balancing membership of SCO (China-Russia led group) with Quad (US-led group). However, as the Russia-Ukraine war prolongs, it presents a new challenge to India's diplomacy to balance its relationship with both the West and China/Russia led groups.

SCO

- **The Shanghai Cooperation organization (SCO) was formed in June 2001. It had its origins in Shanghai 5 that became set up in 1996. Shanghai five, having China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan as members, had emerged from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks which the 4 former Soviet republics held with China to ensure balance along the borders. In 2001, Uzbekistan also joined and the organization was rechristened because the Shanghai Cooperation enterprise (SCO).**
- **Members:** The SCO has eight members as of September 2022 these are, India, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. India and Pakistan had joined in 2017. Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia have the popularity of Observers.
- Iran will be part of as complete member in 2023. Similarly, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Egypt, Nepal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and Turkey are speak partners. Individuals of the SCO account for ~40% of the arena's populace and ~30% of global Gross home Product (GDP).
- **Water Disputes South Asian water problems** may become a source of future intra and inter-state conflict unless an effective and supportive mechanism is developed soon.

Key highlights of the meeting

- Samarkand declaration was adopted:
 - **The Samarkand declaration advocated "commitment to peaceful settlement of differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation".**
 - They stress that the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity of States, equality, mutual benefit, non- interference in internal affairs, and non-use or threat of use of force are the basis for sustainable development of international relations.
 - The member countries are planning to develop common principles and approaches to form a unified list of terrorists, separatist and extremist organizations whose activities are prohibited on the territories of the SCO member states.

- SCO Presidency was handed over to India and India will host the SCO 2023 summit.
- **Varanasi, was declared as the SCO Tourism and Cultural Capital for 2022- 2023 to promote the rich heritage and the tourism potential of SCO member states.**
- Iran was accepted as a permanent member of the SCO.
- India's take in the Summit:
 - **Food Security:** India emphasized the initiative to promote millets and address issues related to food security.
 - **Traditional Medicine:** India to take initiative for new SCO working group on traditional medicines.

India' Importance for SCO:

- **Calling for effective action to address cross-border security issues:** SCO will launch multilateral and regional counter-terrorism initiatives to provide India with an opportunity to combat illicit drug trafficking.
- **The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) is the SCO's** permanent body, designed to facilitate coordination and interaction among SCO Member States in the fight against terrorism, extremism and separatism.
- **Cross-Border Connectivity:** SCO is a potential platform for advancing India's Connect Central Asia policy and formulating an appropriate Eurasian strategy.
- India may pursue the Chabahar Port project and the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).
- **Leverage other bilateral ties:** India could also leverage its established bilateral ties with Russia, Iran and the Central Asian Republic (CAR) to strengthen its role within the forum increase.
- It also provides a platform to manage relations with China.
- **Stabilizing Afghanistan:** SCO member States expressed their support for Afghanistan as an independent State, free of terrorism, war and drugs which will benefit India.
- **Increase India's share in regional trade:** Central Asian Region is rich in iron-ore, coal, oil, gas, uranium etc. Frequent meeting of leaders and the India-Central Asia Business Council under the SCO would give fillip to the economic cooperation.
- **Energy Cooperation:** SCO can unblock India's access to Eurasia and provide a fillip to projects like Turkmenistan Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline.

Challenges with SCO

- **Internal Struggles:** Bilateral Relationships of many SCO members are strained. Recent clashes on Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan border has led to deaths of more than 100 people. Kyrgyzstan also has a border dispute with Uzbekistan although it is closer to resolution.

The relationship of India and China is also at a historic low due to the border dispute and increasing Chinese presence in India's neighborhood.

- Although Russia and China seem to be united against the West, Russia is wary of growing Chinese presence in Central Asia. Russia considers Central Asia as its own backyard (former Soviet Republics). Russia still retains the military lead in the region through the CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organisation), but China might soon displace Russia as security provider subsequent to the greater economic integration with the region.
- **Connectivity:** The connectivity has remained poor, especially between India and the other SCO members. Pakistan has blocked all efforts to enhance connectivity with India. China has benefited the most, as all Central Asian nations have joined the Belt Road Initiative.
- **Terrorism:** India has long held Pakistan as a State sponsor of terrorism. The presence of Pakistan, which is under grey list of FATF, severely limits the ability of the SCO to cooperate on the counter-terrorism front. The role of China is also dubious have repeatedly blocked the resolutions of India/US to blacklist Pakistan-based terrorists.
- **Dominant position of China:** Barring India, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China has been endorsed by all the members.
- China's belligerent approach and border disputes with India further complicate India's position in the SCO. India-Pakistan Rivalry and the growing China-Pakistan relations: China is Pakistan's 'all weather friend' and supports Pakistan to maintain the balance of power in South Asia.
- **Growing strategic proximity between Russia and China:** Amid Ukraine conflict, Russia may continue to seek a closer partnership with China in the face of increasing hostilities between Russia and the West.
- **Weak decision making:** The rich diversity in members' history, backgrounds, language, national interests and forms of government, wealth and culture make the SCO decision making process challenging. SCO has not taken any visible counterterrorism measures against threats emanating from Afg-Pak region.
- **Differences over definition of terrorism:** India's definition of terrorism is different to the definition of SCO under RATS. For SCO, terrorism coincides with regime destabilization; whereas for India it is related to state sponsored cross border terrorism.

Conclusion

SCO is a platform which serve India's regional interests to ensure nation-building through development partnerships, maintaining sovereignty, preventing the region from terrorism and extremism. The organization has great potential to create a multi-polar, multi-aligned global order. India should enhance its active engagement with the Central Asian Nations to secure its geopolitical interests as well as counter Chinese influence in the region.

Member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation



2.4 INDIA-SAUDI ARABIA

Why in News: The Foreign Minister recently visited Saudi Arabia for the first time.

Highlights

- India started talks with Saudi Arabia on rupee riyal trade.
- The two countries agreed to cooperate on joint projects, including West Coast refineries, LNG infrastructure and strategic petroleum deposits.
- A Memorandum of Understanding on Consultation Mechanism between India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was signed to institutionalize an annual dialogue between India and the GCC.

Importance of India-Saudi Arabia Relations

- **Geopolitical Allies:** Saudi Arabia's strategic position in West Asia and political and economic power it leverages along with the world's oil reserves Critical to policy priorities.
- **Major Trade and Investment Partners:** Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trading partner \$42.86 billion in bilateral trade in FY22 important to India

- **Securing India's energy needs:** Saudi Arabia is India's major hydrocarbon supplier, supplying 18% and 30% of India's crude and LPG requirements respectively. For India's traditional oil suppliers like it is essential for India to have alternative suppliers.
- **Home of the Overseas Indian Community:** The Kingdom has over 2.8 million Indian expatriates, making valuable overseas remittances.
- **Working together in difficult times:** During the COVID pandemic, the two countries have shared their domestic experiences and helped each other to ensure the continued flow of food, medicine and other essential goods.
- **A fusion of cultures:** Saudi Arabia has the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and thousands of Indians visit her for pilgrimage and Umrah pilgrimage every year.
- **Counter-terrorism cooperation:** The Saudi government has regularly assisted India in arresting her key terrorist suspects. In 2012, Saudi Arabia helped India arrest an alleged 2008 attack in Mumbai.

Challenges

Relationship Challenges

Regional instability: Complex and multidimensional politics of the Middle East a region involving the rivalry of Saudi Arabia and Iran, US-Iran enmity and the Palestinian issue make this possible. It is difficult for India to balance relations with Iran.

Inordinate Delays in Saudi Investments in India: Aramco's plans to purchase a 20-percent stake in Reliance Industries was called off and its involvement in the Ratnagiri integrated refinery and petrochemicals complex project was stalled

- **Oil-related issues:** OPEC countries, where Saudi Arabia is the de facto leader, charge Asian premiums (extra fee) from Asian countries when selling oil compared to Western countries.

Prelims Highlights

Why in News: Recently, Russia hosted the 7th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) at Vladivostok. The forum is a platform for entrepreneurs to expand their businesses into Russia's Far East (RFE).

Eastern Economic Forum

- The EEF was established in 2015 to encourage foreign investments in the RFE.
- The EEF displays the economic potential, suitable business conditions and investment opportunities in the region.
- Agreements signed at the EEF increased from 217 in 2017 to 380 agreements in 2021, worth 3.6 trillion roubles.

- The agreements focus on infrastructure, transportation projects, mineral excavations, construction, industry and agriculture.

Key Players:

- China, South Korea, Japan and India are the Key Players in the region, where China is the biggest investor.
- China who sees potential in promoting the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Polar Sea Route in the RFE.
- China's investments in the region account for 90% of the total investments.

Objectives:

- (a) Russia has strategically developed the region with the aim of connecting Russia to the Asian trading routes.
- (b) With the fast modernisation of cities like Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, Ulan-Ude, Chita and more, Russia aims to attract more investments in the region.
- (c) To survive the economic crisis and the sanctions with the help of China and other Asian powers.

➤ Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF)

Why in News: A new FIF for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR) has been established internationally, with financial commitments from multiple countries including India.

Hosted by World Bank and with technical support from WHO, FIF will:

- Provide long-term financing to strengthen PPR capabilities in low- and middle-income countries.
- Address critical gaps at national, regional, and global levels.
- FIF will help in strengthening PPR capacity in areas such as zoonotic disease surveillance, laboratories, emergency communication, critical health workforce capacities etc.



