

**DAILY  
CURRENT  
AFFAIRS  
ANALYSIS**

LAKSHYA ACADEMY®



**19 OCTOBER 2023**

## 1 – Annual Joint HADR Exercise:

### GS II

#### International Issues

- **Context:**

- The Indian Navy is hosting the Annual Joint HADR Exercise (AJHE) in Goa.

- **Important information:**

- The Annual Joint HADR Exercise, or CHAKRAVAT, has evolved into a multi-agency undertaking since its inception in 2015.
  - All three Services, Paramilitary Forces, several disaster response organisations, non-governmental organisations, educational institutions, and international organisations are involved.
  - The 2023 edition is expected to witness the participation of eight countries in the Indian Ocean Region and further enhance national-level coordination amongst all stakeholders.
- **IOR nations consist of:**
    - India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Thailand.
    - Since 2016, the Indian Army, Indian Navy (IN), and Indian Air Force (IAF) have rotated through the exercise.
    - The IAF carried out the exercise's most recent iteration at Agra. The exercise will take place on October 9–11, 2023.

- *Source → The Hindu*

## 2 – Details of Saudi Israeli Accord:

### GS II

#### Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**

- The US-brokered agreement to formally establish diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel may be impacted by the current hostilities between Israel and Hamas.

- **Concerning the deal:**

- For months, the US has been trying to mediate a solution that would strengthen ties between Saudi Arabia and Israel.
- The deal's main selling point is that Saudi Arabia will officially recognise Israel for the first time since its founding in 1948.
- The kingdom has been reluctant to establish diplomatic links with the Jewish state thus far, mainly due to the ongoing war between Israel and Palestine.
- The Saudis have insisted on Palestinian statehood from the start.
- Saudi Arabia seeks a mutual defence pact-style arrangement with the US, wherein Washington would interpret any assault on the kingdom as an attack on the US.
- The agreement also involves US clearance for the sale of advanced weapons to the monarchy and US support for a civilian nuclear programme in Saudi Arabia.
- Israel, which has made significant technological advancements in several areas, will assist Riyadh in diversifying its economy away from oil.

- **How will the many stakeholders benefit from the formalisation of ties?**

- **Israel:**

- **Financial gains:**

- Of all the Arab nations, Saudi Arabia is the richest and most powerful.
- Israel will gain economically from a formal partnership.

- **Appreciation:**

- It would help the State of Israel establish legitimacy in the largely Muslim area and help it grow into a major force in West Asia.

- **Political benefits:**

- The agreement will benefit Israel's prime minister politically, as he faces significant social divisions in his country due to the policies of his far-right ruling coalition.
- A partnership with Saudi Arabia would move the emphasis to a source of pride and unanimity for the country.

- **Chinese influence present:**

- The US is observing China's increasing sway over the area.
- By offering security guarantees to Saudi Arabia, the US seeks to prevent the monarchy from moving closer to China.
- Longtime adversaries Saudi Arabia and Iran were able to resume formal diplomatic relations thanks to an arrangement that Beijing successfully mediated.
- This marked the entry of China into the role of global power broker, which up until now has solely been filled by the US due to its superior financial might and influence.

- **Enhancing ties with Saudi Arabia:**

- Additionally, Washington hopes to mend its tense ties with Riyadh.
- Although they have historically been allies, there have been a number of conflicts between the two nations in recent years, notably in relation to the assassination of US writer Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi operatives.

- **Palestine:**

- Saudi Arabia has made it known that it is still completely committed to the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative<sup>®</sup>, which called for the complete Israeli departure from territory it had taken in 1967 and the normalisation of relations between Israel and the Palestinians.
- However, representatives of the monarchy have stated that a settlement is still attainable even if it does not grant the Palestinians their own sovereign state.
- The deal's negotiations do not directly involve the Palestinians.

- **Will the transaction be impacted by the Israel-Hamas conflict?**

- The timing for the deal has been pushed off course by the war and Israel's fierce assault.
- Additionally, it has made the Arab world at large sympathetic to the Palestinian cause.

- *Source → The Hindu*

### **3 – About Artificial intelligence with multiple modes:**

## **GS II**

## **Science and Technology**

- **Context:**

- If one is interested in exploring the next frontier of AI models, it appears that multimodal systems—which allow people to interact with AI in multiple ways—are the way to go.

- **Regarding multimodal AI:**

- Artificial intelligence that mixes many data kinds, or modes, to produce more precise forecasts, insightful conclusions, or more accurate judgements regarding real-world issues is known as multimodal AI.
- In addition to a variety of conventional numerical data sets, multimodal AI systems are trained on video, audio, speech, pictures, and text.
- Fundamentally, multimodal AI adheres to the well-known AI methodology based on machine learning and AI models.
- The algorithms that specify how data is acquired, analysed, and responded to are known as artificial intelligence (AI) models.

- **How is multimodality implemented?**

- **A steady stream of multimodal AI systems, such as the following, have been released in recent years:**

- The multimodal AI text-to-image model DALL.E from OpenAI, which was released in 2021, provides the foundation for ChatGPT's vision capabilities.
- The DALL.E system searches for patterns in visual data that relate to the description data of the images.
- This makes it possible for these systems to produce visuals based on the text instructions that users input.
- GPT uses its proprietary, open-source Whisper speech-to-text translation model as the foundation for its voice processing capabilities in multimodal audio systems.
- Whisper is able to recognise audio speech and convert it into text in plain English.

- **Multimodal AI applications:**

- **Automated identification of offensive memes:**

- In 2020, Meta was developing a multimodal system to identify offensive memes on Facebook automatically.

- **Forecasting conversations:**

- In 2021, a study detailing a multimodal system developed by Google researchers to anticipate the discourse in a film was published.

- **Data from multimodal sensors:**

- Meta unveiled ImageBind, an open-source AI multimodal system with numerous modes, including text, audio, visual data, temperature, and movement readings.
- Future multimodal models may incorporate additional sensory information such as speech, touch, smell, and brain fMRI signals.

- **Pharma sector:**

- Medical and related industries are multimodal by nature.
- AI systems that can assess large, complicated image datasets and then provide a clear response are necessary for tasks like processing CT scans and discovering uncommon genetic variants.

- **Speech interpreting:**

- Speech translation AI models are another clear application for multimodality.
- Many models are used by Google Translate and other services, such as Meta's SeamlessM4T model.
- For almost 100 languages, the model can translate text to speech, speech to text, text to speech, and text to text.

- *Source → The Hindu*

## **4 – About Electoral Bonds Scheme:**

### **GS II**

## **Government Policies and Interventions**

- **Context:**

- Petitioners opposing the electoral bonds programme will be heard by the Supreme Court, it has said.

- **What is the plan for electoral bonds?**

- Electoral bonds are interest-free bearer securities that can be used to make anonymous donations to political parties. They were introduced in the 2017 Union Budget. In other words, anyone can use them to make financial donations to political parties.
- Multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1 lakh, Rs 10 lakh, and Rs 1 crore are offered for sale for these bonds.
- These are available for purchase in State Bank of India (SBI) branches that have been licenced.
- As a result, the donor must pay the authorised SBI branch with a cheque or another digital method—cash is not accepted.
- After acquiring such bonds, the political parties have 15 days to decide whether to cash them in order to cover their election-related costs.
- The quantity of bonds that a person or business may buy is unlimited.
- Within fifteen days, if a party hasn't encashed any bonds, SBI deposits them into the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

- **Why is there a legal challenge to the scheme?**

- **Lack of transparency:**

- The plan has been criticised for having a mysterious funding mechanism that is unregulated by any body.
- The program's anonymity for donations serves to increase the process's opacity rather than achieve its goal of promoting transparency.

- **No limit on funding:**

- A corporation could only donate a maximum of 7.5% of its average net income over the previous three years to a political party prior to the announcement of the electoral bonds programme.
- But the government changed the Companies Act to do away with this cap, allowing corporate India to raise as much money as it wants.
- The Companies Act 2013 revisions will result in the prioritisation of private business interests over the rights and requirements of the State's citizens when formulating legislation.
- According to others, the fact that these bonds are offered through a government-owned bank (SBI) makes it easier for the government to identify the precise donors supporting its rivals.
- This gives the current administration the opportunity to either victimise large corporations for not supporting the ruling party or extort money, particularly from them. In any case, this gives the ruling party an unfair edge.

- **Not to the common man's benefit:**
- One of the justifications for the introduction of electoral bonds was to make it easier for regular people to support the political parties of their choice; yet, as of 2022, over 90% of the bonds were of the highest denomination—Rs 1 crore.
- *Source → The Hindu*

## 5 – About India Maldives Relations:

### GS II

#### International Issues

- **Context:**
- The implications of Muizzu's victory for the Maldives' foreign policy and relations with India have been the subject of much discussion since the outcome of the presidential election.
- **Concerning the relations between the two nations:**
- **Bilateral support:**
- India is one of the Maldives' top development partners and the country that founded numerous of the country's top institutions, such as:
  - the Hospital Indira Gandhi Memorial (IGMH)
  - Engineering Technology Faculty (FET)
  - IMFHTS, the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies
  - Technology Adoption Programme in the Maldives Composite Training Centre for MNDF Education Sector.
- **System of coastal radar:**
- Construction of the new Ministry of Defence Headquarters and the National Police Academy (ISLES)



- **Trade and Business Relations:**

- A trade agreement between India and the Maldives was concluded in 1981 and allows for the export of necessities.
- Bilateral trade between Maldives and India now amounts at Rs. 700 crores.

- **India sends the following goods to the Maldives:**

- poultry and agricultural products
- sweets
- produce and fruits
- herbs
- rice
- atta (wheat flour),
- fabrics
- medications and drugs
- wide assortment of industrial and engineering goods
- gravel and sand
- cement for construction, etc
- Maldivian scrap metal is the main import for India.

- **Cultural interactions.**

- Established in July 2011, the India Cultural Centre (ICC) in Male offers monthly yoga, classical music, and dance sessions.

- **Indian Society:**

- There are about 22,000 Indian expatriates in the Maldives, making them the second largest expat group.
- The community of Indian expatriates include both labourers and professionals, including physicians, educators, accountants, managers, engineers, nurses, and technicians.
- Approximately 125 Indian doctors make up the 400 total doctors in the nation.
- Comparably, about 25% of educators in the Maldives are Indian, primarily middle and upper level teachers.

- **Concerns about the Maldives-Indian relationship include:**

- Indian helicopters in the Maldives are causing concern.
- The first is the long-running dispute over the two Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters (ALF), which are based in Hanimaadhoo and Addu Atoll and were gifted to the Maldives by India in 2010 and 2015.

- They have been employed for airlifting patients between islands, marine weather surveillance, and ocean search and rescue missions.
- The Maldives National Defence Force, which is in charge of these helicopters, was trained by Indian personnel who had been dispatched there in accordance with the conditions of the bilateral agreements between the two nations.
- Even though these helicopters were donated for humanitarian causes, proponents of the anti-India movement have maintained that India was trying to establish a military presence in the nation by donating the aircraft.
- The controversy surrounding the ALF choppers and India's alleged refusal to return them served as the impetus for the "India Out" campaign.
- **Insufficient transparency:**
  - Supporters of the "India Out" movement have also frequently lamented the "lack of transparency" in the agreements struck between the administration of Solih and India, arguing that the Maldives Parliament has not revealed or addressed them due to concerns about national security.
- **Issues with India:**
  - **Termination of Contracts:**
    - The Maldives might not have the financial wherewithal to fork over millions of dollars in compensation in the event that bilateral agreements with India were cancelled.
    - The World Bank stated in a study from 2022 that while the Maldives was not in imminent danger of a crisis, the nation nevertheless needed to increase taxes and carry out a number of debt and spending reforms in order to prevent another economic downturn in the future.
    - The incoming government will have to go to other allies for help to cover the void left by the prior agreements, even if it examines them.
  - **China-friendly policy:**
    - India has also been concerned about Muizzu's pronounced pro-Chinese stance.
- **Path ahead:**
  - From the Maldives' point of view, having open lines of communication between the two nations to resolve any misunderstandings would be one method to foster positive relations with India.
  - They must make sure that real acts, not just conjectured ones, determine the true influence on relations between India and the Maldives.
  - Although the "India Out" campaign claims to be against the presence of Indian soldiers, the term has been seen as singling out and criticising India.

- This had a knock-on effect that affected every facet of bilateral relations.
- *Source* → *The Hindu*



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