

DAILY PT POINTERS

23th May, 2024



The Hindu-IR(GSII)Page 1

Ireland, Norway and Spain set to formally recognise Palestine

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

Ireland, Norway and Spain announced on Wednesday that they will formally recognise the state of Palestine, even as reports emerged of Israel pushing its way further into Rafah in southern Gaza.

Israel reacted furiously to the announcements by recalling its Ambassadors to the three countries. The recognition of Palestine is expected to take place on May 28.

Speaking at a press conference in Dublin, Ireland's Prime Minister Simon Harris linked the recognition to Ireland's own freedom struggle from Britain.

"Today, we use the same language to support the recognition of Palestine as a state," he said.

In a separate message released online, Mr. Harris said Ireland believed that recognising a Palestinian



A boy waving a Palestinian flag during a march in Spain. AP

state would lead to peace and reconciliation in West Asia. Ireland also recognised Israel's right to "exist securely and at peace" with its neighbours. There should be no further military incursion into Rafah (i.e., by Israel), and no further rockets fired at Israel by Hamas and Hezbollah, Mr. Harris said.

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ISRAEL FURIOUS
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The announcements by the European countries come weeks after 143 of 193 countries in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly voted for full membership to the UN for the state of Palestine.

- Located in Western Asia, the Palestinian territories are made up of the areas known as **Gaza** and the **West Ban**
- In 1988, India became one of the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine.

Countries that recognise Palestine

As of May 22, 2024



Source: [World Population Review](#)

THE HINDU

A Flourish map

The Hindu-Polity and Governance (GSII)-Page 8

On concerns over voter turnout data

Why are Opposition leaders and civil society members demanding that Form 17C data, which contains the absolute number of votes polled in a booth by a presiding officer, flow to the Election Commission of India (ECI)? Why has the Supreme Court's intervention been sought?



EXPLAINS

What the Supreme Court is asked to do

The Supreme Court is asked to do three things: 1. To direct the ECI to publish the absolute number of votes polled in each booth. 2. To direct the ECI to publish the percentage of voters who voted in each booth. 3. To direct the ECI to publish the percentage of voters who did not vote in each booth.

What happened?

The ECI has a long history of not publishing the absolute number of votes polled in each booth. This has led to widespread speculation and mistrust among voters and candidates alike. The Supreme Court has been asked to intervene to ensure transparency and fairness in the electoral process.

What is Form 17C?

Form 17C is a document that contains the absolute number of votes polled in each booth. It is one of the most important documents in the electoral process, as it provides a clear and accurate record of the votes cast by voters.

What do experts have to say?

Experts believe that the publication of Form 17C data will help to build trust in the electoral process and ensure that voters feel that their votes are being counted accurately. They also believe that it will help to reduce the number of disputes and challenges that are filed with the courts.

- **Supreme Court seeks ECI's response on plea for release of voter turnout data within 48 hours of Lok Sabha elections**
the Election Commission of India (ECI) informed the Supreme Court that uploading Form 17C (record of votes polled) on its website could lead to mischief. The ECI expressed concerns about the possibility of images being morphed, which could create "widespread discomfort and mistrust"
- As per the 1961 Rules, the ECI has to maintain two forms that have data on the number of electors and the votes polled — Forms 17A and 17C. While the former is used to record the details of every voter who comes into a polling booth and casts his or her vote, the latter is an account of all the votes recorded. Under Rule 49S(2), a presiding officer is mandated to furnish a copy of the entries made in Form 17C to the polling agents of the candidates at the close of polling.

The Hindu- Cyber Crime(GSIII)-Page 10

'Cambodia, Myanmar and Laos emerge as hub of organised financial crimes'

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Nearly half of financial frauds targeting Indians originate from the three south-east Asian countries of Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, and many web applications used to commit the frauds are written in Chinese language, thereby not ruling out the Chinese connection, Rajesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre, said on Wednesday.



A total of 3.25 lakh mule bank accounts and 595 apps had been blocked. REUTERS

ised crime from south-east Asia." These complaints were received on the national cybercrime portal and not all of them were converted into First Information Reports.

groups had been taken down in the past two months.

The officer added that on May 20, many Indians working in a suspected scam compound in Siem Reap city, Cambodia protested against their employers. "Some of them join willingly and some are duped into joining these centres with the fake promise of data entry operator. They arrive on tourist visas in Thailand and due to ungoverned border and human traffickers, they end up in these com

- Southeast Asian countries including Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos have emerged as the major hotspots of cybercrimes, with around 48 per cent of financial frauds in India originating from these countries, according to The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).
- I4C is a body established by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to provide a framework and eco-system for law-enforcement agencies for dealing with cybercrimes in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

The Hindu-IR(GSII) –Page 14

BIMSTEC gets 'legal personality' after charter comes into force

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) will now be open to new members and observers after a historic first charter of the grouping came into force on May 20, the Ministry of External Affairs has announced.

With the charter having been adopted in the 5th summit of the BIMSTEC

leaders, the grouping has acquired a 'legal personality' and will be able to enter into structured diplomatic dialogue with other groupings and countries.

"The entry into force of the BIMSTEC Charter reaffirms India's commitment to a prosperous, peaceful and sustainable neighbourhood. BIMSTEC reflects the synthesis of our Neighbourhood First and Act East policies," said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. Official Spokesper-

son Randhir Jaiswal said the charter will provide "legal and institutional framework for meaningful cooperation and deeper integration of the Bay of Bengal region." BIMSTEC was formed in 1997 but for a long time, the organisation could not form consensus among its seven member states – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Myanmar and India – about a common charter that could sum up the vision of the grouping.

The BIMSTEC charter, which entered into force on May 20, articulates the long-term vision and priorities of the member states – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand – and establishes the legal and institutional framework for cooperation in the region. The charter also confers legal personality on the grouping, enables the admission of new members and observers, and enables the conclusion of agreements with countries or sub-regional, regional and international organisations and institutions.

Do you know ?

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization that was established on 06 June 1997 with the signing of the Bangkok Declaration. Initially known as BIST-EC (Bangladesh-India-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation), the organisation is now known as BIMSTEC and comprises seven Member States with the admission of Myanmar on 22 December 1997, and Bhutan and Nepal in February 2004.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



The Hindu-GS3(Environment)Page 18



Burning vegetation in a rainforest in Yanomami indigenous land, Roraima state, Brazil. REUTERS

Amazon fires off to record start in 2024

Reuters

Brazil's Amazon rainforest has experienced its largest blazes on record in the first four months of the year, with the environmental workers union on Monday placing partial blame on lower government spending on firefighting.

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has staked his international reputation on protecting the Amazon rainforest and restoring Brazil as a leader on climate policy.

The Amazon, the world's largest rainforest, is vital to curbing catastrophic global warming because of the vast amount of greenhouse gas it absorbs.

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A record drought in the Amazon rainforest region, driven by the El Nino climate phenomenon and global warming, has helped contribute to dry conditions fueling fires this year.

Indian Express-Defense(GSIII)-Page 1

TWO YEARS AFTER AGNIPATH ROLLOUT

Army conducts own survey on scheme for Agniveers, may recommend tweaks

Seeks responses from Agniveers, staff at regimental centres, unit commanders

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, MAY 22

THE ARMY is conducting an internal survey on the Agnipath scheme to assess its impact on its recruitment process so far, based on which it is likely to draw up recommendations for the incoming government on possible changes to the scheme, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

Rolled out in June 2022, the Agnipath scheme is recruiting Agniveers — soldiers, airmen and sailors — in the Armed Forces for a period of four years. At the end of the four-year tenure, up to 25% of them can apply voluntarily to join the services on a regular basis, subject to merit and organisational requirements.

Ever since its launch, it has

EXPLAINED **E** Agniveer status update

In the Army, two batches of 40,000 Agniveers have completed training and are under posting. The third batch of 20,000 began training in November 2023. In the Navy, three batches of 7,385 Agniveers have completed training. In the IAF, 4,955 Agniveer Vayu trainees have completed training.

cially in political circles. The Opposition Congress has pledged to end the scheme and return to the earlier military

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Indian Express-IR(GSII)-Page 12

Russia deletes draft of plan to redraw border in Baltic Sea which alarmed NATO countries

REUTERS

MOSCOW, COPENHAGEN,
MAY 22

A RUSSIAN defence ministry proposal to revise Russia's maritime border in the eastern Baltic Sea was deleted on Wednesday from an official portal after creating confusion and concern among NATO members such as Finland, Sweden, Lithuania and Estonia.

In its official submission, the defence ministry said that a Soviet measurement of the border from



Draft didn't say how the border might be changed. File

1985 had used mid-20th century nautical charts, and so did not fully correspond to more modern cartographical coordinates. But that

proposal was deleted on Wednesday from the official portal where it had been posted. A message said simply: "The draft is deleted." It gave no explanation. The defence ministry did not comment.

It was not immediately clear from the draft exactly how the border might be adjusted and whether there had been any consultation with others. Swedish PM Ulf Kristersson told the TT news agency: "Russia can't unilaterally decide on new borders."

Finnish President Alexander

Stubb said Russia had not been in touch, adding: "Finland acts as always: calmly and based on facts."

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis called the proposal an "obvious escalation" against NATO and the EU. He said it "must be met with an appropriately firm response".

Estonian Foreign Minister Margus Tsahkna said: "At first glance, it seems to be an absurd notion." In an email to Reuters, he added: "It cannot be ruled out that the report is an attempt to sow confusion."

Baltic Sea

The Baltic Sea is an **arm of the North Atlantic Ocean**. It is bound by the **Scandinavian Peninsula**, the mainland of Northern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Europe, and the Danish islands.

Surrounded by countries: Denmark, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Finland and Sweden. It is connected to St. Petersburg by the Gulf of Finland.

The Gulf of Riga is located between Estonia and Latvia.



HEADLINES OF THE DAY



PIB:Defense (GSIII)

Ministry of Defence

CDS Gen Anil Chauhan attends Exercise Cyber Suraksha – 2024

Ex Cyber Suraksha to further enhance collaboration & integration among military and national agencies

Posted On: 22 MAY 2024 6:26PM by PIB Delhi

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan attended 'Exercise Cyber Suraksha – 2024', on May 22, 2024, and underscored the importance of strengthening India's cyber defence capabilities.

The comprehensive cyber defence exercise is being conducted by Defence Cyber Agency from 20 - 24 May 2024. It aims to further develop Cyber Defence Capability of all Cyber security organisations and promote synergy amongst all stakeholders. It focusses on enhancing collaboration and integration among participants from various military and prominent national organizations.

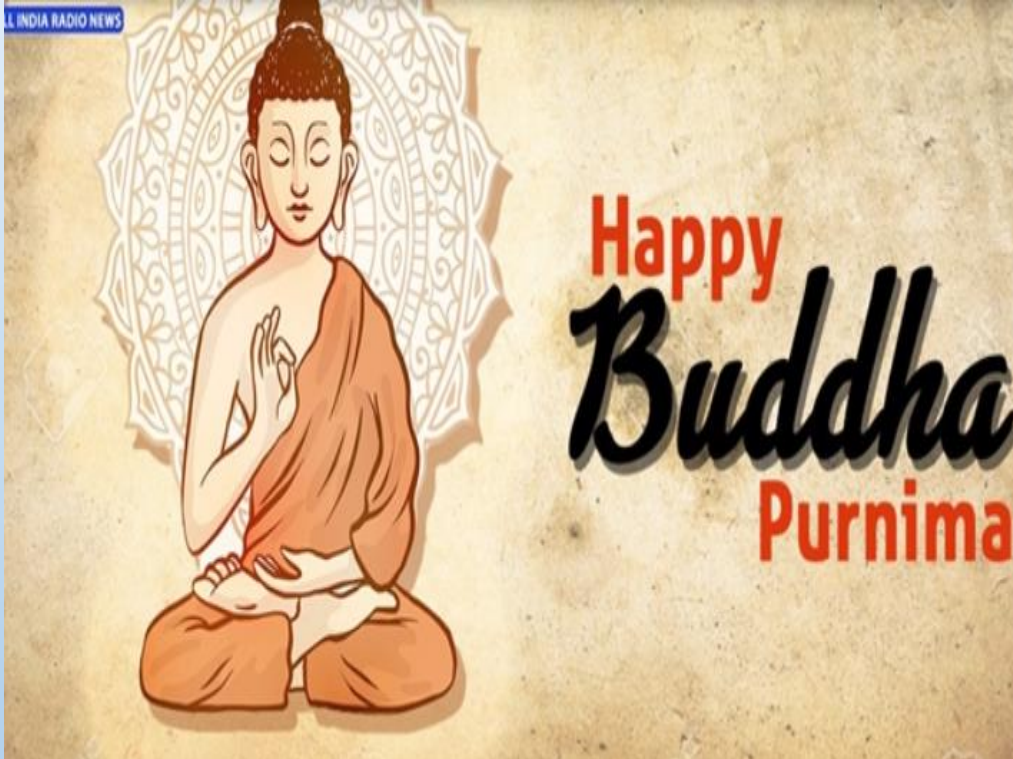
The CDS highlighted the critical need for jointness among all stakeholders in the cyber domain and praised the initiative for fostering a collaborative environment to tackle emerging cyber threats. He commended the participants and staff for their dedication and efforts in organizing the Exercise.

Exercise Cyber Suraksha – 2024 aims to empower participants by enhancing their cyber defence skills, techniques and capabilities; share best practices, and work towards a unified and robust cyber defence posture. It will promote jointmanship and synergy in planning and preparation of a Cyber Defence Framework. The event reaffirms the commitment of the Indian Armed Forces to safeguarding national security in the increasingly important cyber domain.

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HEADLINES OF THE DAY

News on air: Culture (GSI)



- Buddha Purnima, marking the birth anniversary of Lord Buddha, is being celebrated in different parts of the country today.
- This day is commemorated by Buddhists all over the world, and is a major festival in countries like India, Nepal, Bhutan, Burma, Thailand, Tibet, Korea, Laos, Vietnam, Mongolia, Cambodia, Singapore, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

News on air:Environment (GSIII)

Spain Becomes 99th Member Of International Solar Alliance



- The ISA was conceived as a joint effort by India and France to mobilize efforts against climate change through the deployment of solar energy solutions. It was conceptualized on the sidelines of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Paris in 2015.
- ISA was formed at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Paris in 2015 and is partnering with multilateral development banks (MDBs), development financial institutions (DFIs), private and public sector organisations, civil society, and other international institutions to deploy cost-effective and transformational energy solutions powered by the sun, especially in the least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS).