

International Current Events, 2016

Part 2

For Entrance and Competitive (Preliminary) Examinations

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1. A First in elections for women

1. In December, 2015, [Saudi Arabia](#), held its first and only elections for the municipal council, and gave female voters to get registered and stand as candidates. 978 women voters registered, and 18 women won as candidates.
2. In [Myanmar](#), in November 2015, Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won a [landslide victory](#) in the country's first general elections. But as per existing law, she [cannot become the President](#) because her children have British passports. She has nominated her family driver in her place.
3. In the United States of America, the first woman candidate for Presidential election, was [Victoria Woodhull in 1872](#). After 134 years, in 2016, two women candidates nominated are Hillary Rodham Clinton (Democrat) and Carly Fiorina (Republican).

1.1 In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia a TCS GE Saudi Aramco BPO with 85% women

- “This centre is proof of our intent and ability to partner in the kingdom's transformation journey by establishing a new industry in the country and by tapping into the talent pool of qualified Saudi women,” TCS CEO N Chandrasekaran told ET.
- The centre is among the first BPOs to set up shop in Saudi Arabia. 65% of Saudi graduates are women, yet they comprise 16% of workforce.

1.2 First for women in India

- Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti as the first woman chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir on April 4, 2016.
- 400 years old tradition is given up to allow women to offer prayers at the Shani Shingnapur Temple in Maharashtra

2. In the Nuclear Security Summit in March April, 2016

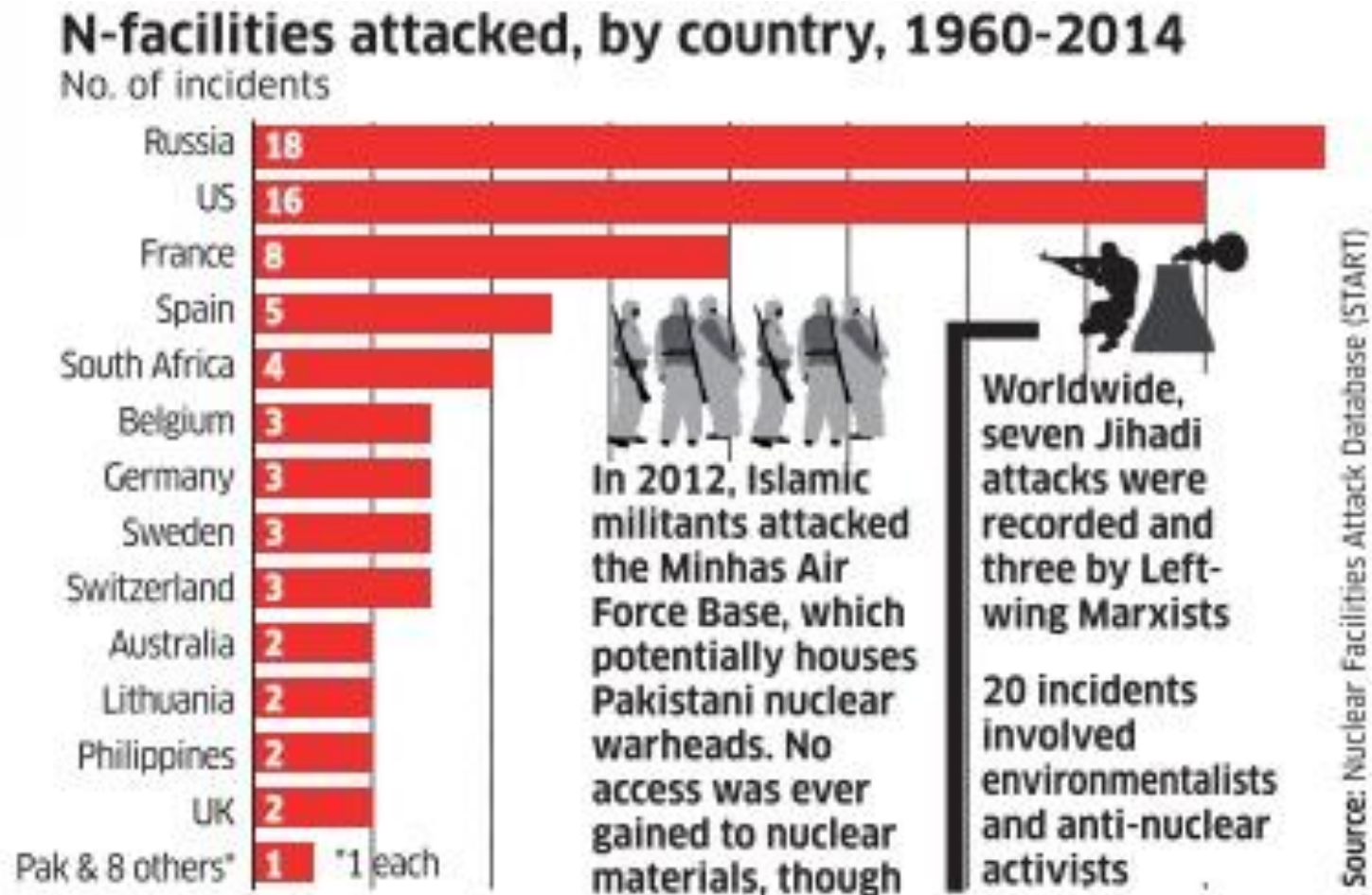
India's stand is as follows :

- The world has to give up the 'his terrorist is not my terrorist' attitude.
- Terror has evolved and terrorists were using 21st century technology, "The reach and supply chains of terrorism are global, but genuine cooperation between nation states is not" .
- Without prevention and prosecution of acts of terrorism, there could be no deterrence against nuclear terrorism.
- State actors working with nuclear traffickers and terrorists present the greatest risk"
- Nuclear security must remain an abiding national priority for all countries.

2.1 India on International terrorism

- In March, 2016, from Brussels to Washington, Modi highlighted the grave threat posed by **transnational terrorism** and the need to collectively tackle it. The international community is desperate for solutions to pressing problems
- The core message he has delivered is the need for **unity among concerned nations** instead of narrow, individualistic responses that play into the hands of violent extremists.
- The **core of the problem** is that “the reach and supply chains of terrorism are global, but genuine cooperation between nations is not”.

2.2 Source: ET (Delhi) 08.04.2016 : Since 1960, there have been 80 incidents of assault, sabotage and unarmed breaches of nuclear facilities worldwide, according to a new University of Maryland-led database. While no such incident was reported from India, one Pakistani event figures in the list. Russia and USA account for 42% of such incidents



IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL: THE FALLOUT

Ajit Ninan

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PACT

- If implemented correctly, Iran will not be able to produce fissile material at its declared facilities for 10-15 years
- After this period, Iran can create facilities to produce fissile material. But making a bomb will violate its commitments to IAEA & NPT
- In case Iran decides to weaponise after 10-15 years, US and other nations are free to choose their response
- Restrictions increase the 'break out' time to produce weapons from 2-3 months to 1 year
- Curbs on enriched uranium stocks, enrichment levels, backers hope economic benefits from removal of sanctions will reduce incentive to weaponise
- Hard to predict if Iran will alter its view of US as 'great satan', but cheating on the deal may invite military action
- Israel is bitterly opposed to it as it feels Iran will retain bomb options in future. Other sanctions will be hard to sustain, pro-deal Iran leaders will be discredited



WHAT IT MEANS FOR REGIONAL AND GLOBAL GEO-POLITICS

MIDDLE EAST

- Sanctions gone, some estimates say Iran's economy can touch 6% growth. Israel fears this will boost Iran's support for extremists like Hezbollah & Hamas. Shia-Sunni rivalry may sharpen in conflicts in Yemen, Iraq
- Iranian oil will add to the current glut but may not impact oil prices immediately. Will strengthen Iran president Hassan Rouhani, who is relatively moderate

US AND EUROPE

- Many US companies will not be able to restart business with Iran immediately. Tensions over missile programme continue
- European firms may gain access to a market of 80 million people. Can help a Europe that is stagnated for years now. Iran can be an ally against IS, though its clergy is itself fairly radical

INDIA AND PAKISTAN

- Pakistan, a largely Sunni nation, is under increased pressure from Saudi to oppose Iran in Yemen. Pakistan can benefit with Chinese help for an oil-gas pipeline from Iran but objectives can clash in Afghanistan
- US pressure on India to freeze ties with Iran will ease. Iran sees India as a natural partner and oil trade will be easier. Iran can be an ally in Afghanistan and Indian exporters could gain a new market

2.3 Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, in Riyadh, in April 2016, conferred **the highest civilian award of Saudi Arabia** on the Prime Minister of India

- Aiming to elevate their strategic partnership to **effectively counter threat of cross-border terror**, India and Saudi Arabia signed a key pact on terror financing and money laundering.
- MOU between the **financial intelligence units** of the two countries on cooperation in exchange of intelligence related to money laundering, terrorism financing and related crimes amid the spread of Islamic State, enhance cooperation in counter-terrorism operations, intelligence sharing and capacity-building.
- The menace of **extremism and terrorism** threatens all nations and societies as a universal phenomena , but it cannot be linked to any particular race, religion or culture.

4. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

- Is a unique initiative to ensure that extradition proceedings of hardened criminals and wanted terrorists are not obstructed or delayed due to legal 'lacunas'
- UNODC has prepared a compendium of documents pertaining to extradition and "mutual legal assistance" in the eight SAARC countries.
- This will serve as a ready reckoner for investigating agencies and judges in the South Asian nations

- The foreword of the compendium said:

“With the increased mobility of people, information and goods, terrorism has progressively evolved into a transnational threat, transcending classic geographic and cultural borders, as both actors and victims alike have become involved on a worldwide scale.

With this ever growing challenge for the international community, one state alone is no longer in a position to respond to terrorism.

Rather, international cooperation has become a fundamental necessity in the global fight against terrorism”.

5. India's request for NSG membership

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi in recent foreign tour had two objectives:
- (a) to garner support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG),
- (b) to highlight that nuclear security cannot be achieved without a concerted global cooperation to tackle terrorism. This entails acting on countries where state actors collude with terrorists.
- PM invited to address the US Parliament on 8th June, 2016.
- The NSG plenary is in Tokyo on 21st June 2016 considered India's application, but rejected it due to lack of consensus . China opposed India's membership.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi : Number of countries visited in 2015 = 26

- **Biggest deal** in 2015 was between **India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)**, to create a \$75 billion fund for infrastructure in India.
- Modi was the first Indian leader **to visit UAE** in more than **30 years**.
- **In China:** Modi's tour of **Xi's home province of Shaanxi**, where he was greeted by red-robed monks at a Buddhist temple and saw a collection of terracotta warriors dating back to China's first emperor.

AFRICA

- In 2015 : A mega Indo-Africa summit was held in Delhi, with the participation of over 40 heads of state.
- In 2016 : The President, the Vice President and PM would be visiting African States

Reaching Out

LIKELY ITINERARY		
PM Eastern & Southern Africa	PRESIDENT Key and old partners in Western Africa	VICE-PRESIDENT Morocco & Senegal

REASON BEHIND VISIT

- **AFRICA TO PLAY** a key role in Delhi's UNSC ambition
- **TO HELP FIGHT** against terror and piracy in Indian Ocean
- **TO BE DESTINATION** for natural resources & investments
- **MOROCCO IS KEY** counter-terror partner for India
- **DELHI EYEING INVESTMENTS** in infra sector in Morocco
- **CONTINENT ACCOUNTS FOR** 50% of the total Line of Credit extended by India



The Export Import Bank of India had earlier extended 140 Line of Credit (LoC) covering 41 African countries, amounting to credit commitment of \$ 7.23 billion. Some of the major sectors covered under LoC are Power, Sugar, Agriculture, Roads & Transport and Engineering. In October 2015 , India had announced a fresh LoC of \$10 bn for the continent.

6. Border issues sorted out with Bangladesh

- West Bengal's Cooch Behar district is **one of the 51**, erstwhile Bangladeshi enclaves, that were received by India on July 31, 2015, **in exchange for the 111 enclaves in India** that were given to Bangladesh under the India-Bangladesh Land Boundary **Agreement, 1974, Protocol of 2011**, ensured on **July 31, 2015**.

India got 51 enclaves with 7,110 acres of land, 2,884 families with 14,864 persons. 56.7% are Muslim and 43.3% Hindus

Bangladesh got 111 Indian enclaves with 17,995 acres and 36,382 persons.

In November, 2015, 987 person in 19 enclaves had opted to be with India. Of These, 816 were Hindus, 150 Muslims And 21 Christians.

They are residing in temporary camps in Dinhat, Mekhliganj and Haldibari.

Free cooked food was given for one month And free ration continues. Each family With up to 7 members is given a 380 sq ft Flat.

There are 5 Assembly constituencies for the First time voters.

7. United National will host an event to commemorate the 125th birth anniversary of Ambedkar on 13th April, 2016, as the first ever event on him in the UN

- The landmark UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognises that
 - a) combating inequality within and among countries,
 - b) creating inclusive and sustainable growth
 - c) fostering inclusion are interdependent.

The vision of BR Ambedkar the architect of the Indian constitution, to achieve social justice and equality, finds resonance in the core message of the 2030 Agenda.

7.1 UN Panel Discussion on theme 'Combating Inequalities for the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals'

Objective is to raise awareness on the importance of addressing all forms of inequality for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

To also highlight inequality as a major challenge to sustainable development, both within and among all countries.

It will bring together political leaders, senior UN officials, diplomats, academia, civil society and private sector from India, the US and other parts of the world.

Continued in part 3

8. India and Israel

STRATEGIC TANGO

➤ India establishes **diplomatic ties with Israel in 1992**. Israel rushes **emergency weapon supplies** during **Kargil war** in 1999. Stage set for major bilateral defence ties

➤ Israel now among **top 3 arms suppliers to India** (next to Russia & the US), with annual sales worth \$1 billion

➤ Inductions range from Phalcon AWACS, Searcher & Heron UAVs to Barak



Phalcon AWACS

anti-missile defence systems, Aerostat & Green Pine radars. Combined value over \$10bn

➤ India has **de-hyphenated its relations with Israel & Palestine**. Ties with Israel out of closet, but support to Palestinian cause continues