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India-Egypt Relations

News: The recent visit of PM Modi to Egypt was hailed as a potential “game changer” for bilateral ties and a ladder for Egypt to gain entry to the BRICS economic bloc.

Key Takeaways:

- PM Modi and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi held bilateral talks and reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations, and regional and international issues of mutual interest.
- The two leaders witnessed the **signing of several agreements and memoranda of understanding** in various fields such as trade, investment, defense, security, culture, education, health, tourism, agriculture, renewable energy, and civil aviation.
- Modi announced a **\$1 billion line of credit to Egypt for infrastructure development** projects and a **\$50 million grant** for community development projects.
- PM Modi also announced that India will support Egypt’s bid to join the BRICS economic bloc as a full member and invited El-Sisi to attend the BRICS summit in New Delhi in September
- PM Modi visited the 11th-century **Al-Hakim mosque**, which was renovated with **assistance from the Dawoodi Bohra community**, and interacted with the members of the community and other Indian diaspora.



India-Egypt Trade and economic opportunities:

- **Bilateral trade** between the two countries in 2021-22 was over **\$7 billion**. India’s exports amounting to \$4.76 Billion and imports from Egypt amount to \$2.5 Billion.
- The main items of India’s exports to Egypt are petroleum products, automobiles, machinery, cotton yarn, textiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, rice, and tea. The main items of India’s imports from Egypt are crude oil, rock phosphate, fertilizers, chemicals, cotton, and dates.
- **Egypt’s strategic location** (12 percent of global trade passes through the Suez Canal) and role as a major market makes it important for India. It offers an **important gateway** to the Gulf States and North Africa.
- India is looking at increasing investments in the country, especially in major infrastructure projects in and around the **Suez Canal**, and special economic zones in **Alexandria and Cairo**.
- India is planning to supply **LCA Tejas, missiles like Akash, DRDO’s Smart Anti-Airfield Weapon, and radars**.

Other aspects of the visit:

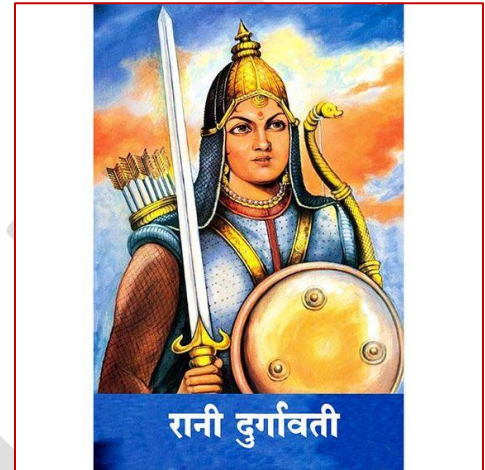
- Egypt conferred PM Modi with the highest state honour, the **Order of the Nile**, which was acclaimed for the Indian Prime Minister's growing stature in world politics. It was the 13th state honor for Modi in his ninth year as PM.
- During his visit, PM Modi also paid tribute at the **Heliopolis War Cemetery** in Cairo to Indian soldiers who laid down their lives during World War I fighting for British India. The Heliopolis (**Port Tewfik**) Memorial commemorates nearly 4,000 Indian soldiers who died fighting in Egypt and Palestine in the First World War.

Rani Durgavati

News: A 6-day Rani Durgavati Gaurav Yatra was recently launched in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

Who was Rani Durgavati?

- Rani Durgavati is said to have been born in 1524, in Mahoba's Chandela dynasty.
- She was later married to Dalpat Shah, the son of the Gond King Sangram Shah of the kingdom of Garha-Katanga.
- Durgavati, however, was widowed in 1550, a few years after her marriage. Her young son Bir Narayan presided over the throne in name and she then "ruled the country with great vigour and courage."
- Historian Satish Chandra, in his book Medieval India, describes her as a good marksman, skilled at using guns, bows, and arrows.
- She was a **wise** and **benevolent ruler** who promoted **peace, trade, culture, and learning** in her kingdom. She **constructed reservoirs** for irrigation and public welfare. She also patronized the **Pushtimarg sect of Vaishnavism**.
- Given the number of lakes and tanks she constructed in her kingdom, Durgawati came to be known as "**the lady of lakes** (tal talab Rani).
- She defended her kingdom from various invaders, such as Baz Bahadur of Malwa and Asaf Khan (fighting on behalf of Akbar) of the Mughal Empire. She fought valiantly against Asaf Khan's army at **Narra** in 1564 but was outnumbered and outmatched by the superior Mughal forces.



Death:

- She chose to die with honour rather than surrender to the enemy. She stabbed herself with a dagger after her son and most of her soldiers were killed in the battle. She died on 24 June 1564 at the age of 39.
- Rani Durgavati is remembered as a symbol of courage and patriotism in Indian history.

Anxiety Disorders

News: Anxiety disorders are among the most frequently occurring mental health problems in the community today.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ANXIETY



Generalised Anxiety Disorder:

Persistent and excessive worry that tends to interfere with daily activities.



Phobias:

Persistent and excessive fear around a particular object, activity, or situation.



Social Anxiety Disorder:

Intense anxiety about being embarrassed or rejected in social situations.



Panic Disorder:

The main symptom is panic attacks, physical and psychological distress episodes.



What are Anxiety Disorders?

- Anxiety disorders are a **group of mental health conditions** that involve excessive and irrational fear and worry about various aspects of life.
- Anxiety disorders can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, culture, or background.
- According to **India's National Mental Health Survey, neurosis and stress-related disorders** have a prevalence of **3.5% in India**.
- These disorders are more commonly observed in women and are often overlooked or misdiagnosed in primary care settings. Childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood are considered high-risk periods for the onset of anxiety disorders.

What are the types of Anxiety disorders?

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, Separation Anxiety Disorder.

What are the causes of Anxiety Disorders?

- An increased likelihood of anxiety disorders can be observed in individuals with a family history of anxiety, suggesting a genetic predisposition.
- Imbalances in neurotransmitters, which are responsible for regulating mood and emotions, may play a role in the development of anxiety disorders.
- Traumatic or stressful experiences, such as abuse, violence, loss, or illness, can trigger or exacerbate anxiety disorders. Conversely, even positive life events like marriage, having a baby, or starting a new job can induce anxiety in some individuals.
- Underlying physical health issues, including diabetes, heart disease, thyroid problems, or hormonal imbalances, can contribute to the onset or manifestation of anxiety symptoms.

What initiatives are taken by GOI to address mental health?

- **National Mental Health Program (NMHP):** The National Mental Health Program (NMHP) was adopted by the government in 1982 in response to the large number of mental disorders and the shortage of mental health professionals.
- **Mental Healthcare Act, 2017** – Every person affected has access to mental healthcare and treatment from government institutions.
- **Manodarpan initiative**
- **Tele MANAS** - Tele-MANAS aims to provide free tele-mental health services all over the country round the clock, particularly catering to people in remote or under-served areas.
- **Kiran Helpline**

Global Slavery Index 2023

News: According to the **Walk Free Foundation's Global Slavery Index 2023**, **50 million people** are living in conditions of modern slavery – a 25% rise over the last five years.

What is Modern Slavery?

- It refers to situations of exploitation in that a **person cannot refuse or leave** because of **threats, violence, coercion, or deception**.
- It manifests as **forced labour, child labour, forced marriage, debt bondage, commercial sexual exploitation, human trafficking**, etc.

About Global Slavery Index 2023:

- It is an assessment of modern slavery conditions in 160 countries. It uses data released by the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**, the **International Organisation for Migration (IOM)**, etc.
- The Index provides rankings across **3 dimensions** - **Size of the problem** (prevalence), **Government response and Vulnerability** (political instability, inequality).
- The 2023 index is significant as India holds the G20 presidency this year, with a focus on sustainable development and climate change mitigation.

Most prevalent

The countries estimated to have the highest prevalence of modern slavery tend to be conflict-affected, have state-imposed forced labour, and have weak governance.

	Rank	Prevalence Rate*	# of People
North Korea	1	104.6	2,696,000
Eritrea	2	90.3	320,000
Mauritania	3	32.0	149,000
Saudi Arabia	4	21.3	740,000

Least prevalent

The countries with the lowest prevalence of modern slavery are those with strong governance and strong government responses to modern slavery.

	Rank	Prevalence Rate*	# of People
Switzerland	160	0.5	4,000
Norway	159	0.5	3,000
Germany	158	0.6	47,000
Netherlands	157	0.6	10,000

Key Findings:

- India, China, Russia, Indonesia, Turkey, and the U.S. are among the top G20 countries with the highest number of forced labourers.
- 50 million people were living in conditions of modern slavery on any given day in 2021.
- The practice has become more prevalent over the last five years (a 25%/10 million rise), due to climate change, armed conflict, weak governance and COVID-19.
- G20 nations account for more than half of all people living in modern slavery because their trade operations and global supply chains allow for human rights abuses.

What are the reasons for increasing Modern slavery?

- Climate change has magnified other drivers of displacement such as loss of livelihoods, poverty, food insecurity and a lack of access to water and other resources. Thus, people are pushed to migrate and become vulnerable to modern slavery.
- Lack adequate livelihood options become more vulnerable to forced labour as they and may be easily tricked into accepting risky opportunities for survival.
- While some governments improved identification measures but legal frameworks, gaps in services available to survivors remained and only limited action has been taken to address systemic risk factors to modern slavery.

What is India's stance on Modern slavery?

- The Bonded Labour Abolition Act 1976.
- A Central Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour.
- According to the SC, non-payment of minimum wages amounts to "forced labour" under Article 23 of the Constitution.

What are challenges in India?

- Poor implementation of laws due to corruption, apathy, legal loopholes and lack of political will.
- India's new Labour Codes (which are yet to be implemented) may give "legal sanction" to forced labour by extending work hours and diluting the social security of people working in the organized and unorganized sectors.
- No data on people stuck in modern slavery: India's last national survey of bonded labour was done in the mid-90s.

Facts for Prelims

Joha Rice

News: Recently, researchers at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Science and Technology explored the nutraceutical properties of Joha rice to investigate its potential benefits.

What is Joha Rice?

- Joha rice is an **aromatic rice variety grown in northeastern India**. Traditional claims suggest that Joha rice consumers have a lower risk of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.
- Joha rice contains several antioxidants, flavonoids, and phenolics, which contribute to its beneficial effects. Some of the identified bioactive compounds in Joha rice include oryzanol, ferulic acid, tocotrienol, caffeic acid, catechuic acid, gallic acid, and triclin. These compounds have reported antioxidant, hypoglycaemic, and cardio-protective effects.

Key Findings:

- The researchers discovered two essential fatty acids, linoleic acid (omega-6) and linolenic acid (omega-3), through laboratory analysis. These fatty acids, which the human body cannot produce, play a role in maintaining various physiological conditions.
- Omega-3 fatty acid has been found to prevent metabolic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer. In diabetic rats, Joha rice was effective in reducing blood glucose levels and preventing the onset of diabetes.
- Additionally, the researchers found that scented Joha rice has a more balanced ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids compared to the commonly consumed non-scented variety.

Global Liveability Index

News: The **Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)** has released its ranking of the “Most Liveable Cities in the World 2023”

Key Findings:

- **Vienna, Austria** has been named the most livable city for the second consecutive year due to its exceptional quality of life, including stability, infrastructure, education, healthcare, and cultural offerings.
- **Copenhagen**, Denmark, secured the second position, followed by **Melbourne** and **Sydney** in Australia.
- From India, **New Delhi** and **Mumbai** are at 141st position and **Chennai** at 144th. **Ahmedabad** and **Bengaluru** are ranked 147 and 148.
- The index score increased from the previous year, reflecting global recovery from the pandemic, although stability experienced a slight decline.
- **Damascus** was ranked the **least livable** due to civil unrest and conflicts

Which factors were considered?

- Healthcare, Education, Culture, Environment and Stability

International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

News: The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, or World Drug Day, is marked on 26 June every year.

About:

- It seeks to strengthen action and cooperation in achieving a world free of drug abuse.
- Theme for 2023 - **People first: stop stigma and discrimination, strengthen prevention.**
- The aim of this year’s campaign is to raise awareness about the importance of treating people who use drugs with respect and empathy; providing evidence-based, voluntary services for all; offering alternatives to punishment; prioritising prevention; and leading with compassion.
- The campaign also aims to combat stigma and discrimination against people who use drugs by promoting language and attitudes that are respectful and non-judgmental.
- Every year on 26th June, the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** also releases the **World Drug Report**.

Places in News

Kruger National Park

News: Nearly half of the Kruger National Park will be burnt in controlled fires to protect the ecosystem after floods and heavy rains this season.

About:

- Kruger National Park is a **South African National Park** and one of the largest game reserves in Africa.
- Kruger National Park is home to a rich diversity of wildlife, including the Big Five (lion, leopard, rhino, elephant, and buffalo), as well as giraffes, zebras, wildebeests, impalas, and numerous birds.
- The park has a **generally flat terrain** with low ranges of hills and six perennial rivers that cross it.
- The park has one of the **most fire-dependent systems** and some plant species rely on and are shaped by the regular burning of the veld.
- The park also joined with **Mozambique's Limpopo Park** and **Zimbabwe's Gonarezhou National Park** to form the **Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park**, the largest game park in Africa, in 2002.

Which are the important rivers that flow through Kruger NP?

- The crocodile river, The Sabie River, The Letaba River, The Olifants River, The Luvuvhu River, and the Limpopo River.
- Out of the above rivers, The crocodile River, The Sabie River join another river named the **Komati river** (which flows into the Indian Ocean).
- The Limpopo River, which forms the **northern boundary of the park** and is one of the **largest rivers in Africa**. It flows through **Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique** before reaching the Indian Ocean.

Note - Any River that drains into the Indian ocean is important to be remembered from a Prelim's perspective!

