



Balalatha's

CSB IAS ACADEMY

The Road Map to Mussoorie...



Prelims EDGE – 07/10/2024

## ABRAHAM ACCORDS

**Context:** As the war in Gaza completes a year, a look back at major developments in the Middle East prompts an understanding of the Abraham Accords.



### About Abraham Accords:

- The Abraham Accords are a series of agreements **signed in 2020** between **Israel and several Arab states**, marking a historic **shift in diplomatic relations** in the Middle East.
- They were named '**Abraham Accords**' in reference to the **supposed common ancestor of the Jews and the**

Arabs, the biblical Abraham, and as an expression of brotherhood.

### Countries involved:

- **Israel:** agreed to normalize diplomatic relations with the participating Arab nations, marking a significant departure from the historically hostile relationships.
- **United Arab Emirates (UAE):** The first Arab country to formally announce its **normalization of relations** with Israel under the Accords. This includes the establishment of full diplomatic relations, as well as economic, technological, and cultural exchanges.
- **Bahrain:** The **Bahrain-Israel Peace Agreement** encompasses diplomatic relations and cooperation in various sectors.
- **Sudan:** Sudan joined the Abraham Accords by agreeing to normalize relations with Israel. This led to the removal of Sudan from the **U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism**.
- **Morocco:** This agreement included the **United States' recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara** in exchange for Morocco's engagement with Israel.
- However, the progress made through the Abraham Accords has since then been diminished due to the ongoing conflict in Gaza and uncertainty over the future of Palestine.

Source: *A three tier war in West Asia with no endgame (The Hindu)*

## INDO-US NUCLEAR DEAL

**Context:** Holtec International, a New Jersey firm's interest in entry into the Indian nuclear market might help in reaping the benefits of the 2008 Civil Nuclear Deal.

**About Indo-US Nuclear deal:**

- It is a 2008 agreement between India and USA for civil nuclear cooperation.

**Background:**

- During the Cold war period, India maintained a non-aligned stance which tilted in favor of the USSR.
- USA favored Pakistan in South Asia as the two countries were treaty allies.
- However, following the rise of China, the United States under President Bush started favoring India with an aim to contain China.
- The US therefore offered India civil nuclear technology and access to uranium, the fuel it needed for nuclear power reactors.
- The Indian government agreed to sign a **123 Agreement** (or the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement).

**The Deal:**

- **NSG Waiver:** Along with the 123 Agreement, the **Nuclear Suppliers Group** (NSG) gave a **special waiver** to India that enabled it to sign cooperation agreements with a dozen countries.
- **Separate Programmes:** It enabled India to separate its civilian and military programmes and placed its civilian nuclear facilities under the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards**.
- **Transfer of Technology:** It refrains India from transfer of enrichment and reprocessing technologies to states that do not have them and India should also support international efforts to limit their spread.

**Nuclear Suppliers Group**

- ✓ It is a group of nuclear supplier countries that seeks to contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of Guidelines for nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports.
- ✓ It was created following the explosion in 1974 of a nuclear device by a non-nuclear-weapon State (India), which demonstrated that nuclear technology transferred for peaceful purposes could be misused.
- ✓ The grouping has 48 participating governments and the NSG Guidelines are implemented by each member in accordance with its national laws and practices.
- ✓ The NSG takes decisions by consensus.
- ✓ Membership of the grouping provides access to the latest and most efficient nuclear technologies.
- ✓ India has been seeking membership of the grouping with a formal application in 2016. But it is consistently blocked by China due to India being a non-signatory to NPT.

**Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty**

- ✓ The NPT is an international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to foster the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to further the goal of disarmament.
- ✓ The treaty was signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970. Presently, it has 191 member states.
  - India is not a member.
- ✓ It requires countries to give up any present or future plans to build nuclear weapons in return for access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- ✓ It represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.
- ✓ Nuclear-weapon states parties under the NPT are defined as those that manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive devices before 1st January, 1967.

Source: 20 yrs after N-deal, New Jersey firm's proposal for small reactor opens a door (The Indian Express)

## ECOMARK SCHEME

**Context:** The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the Ecomark rules under the LiFE Mission.

### About Ecomark Scheme:

- The Ecomark Scheme provides accreditation and labelling for household and consumer products that meet specific environmental criteria while maintaining quality standards as per Indian norms.

### Key Objectives of the Ecomark Scheme:

- **Promoting Sustainable Consumption:** The scheme encourages the demand for environment-friendly products by fostering consumer awareness of eco-conscious choices.
- **Enhancing Production Practices:** It motivates manufacturers to adopt environmentally friendly production methods, aligning with sustainable development goals.
- **Ensuring Accurate Labelling:** The scheme ensures that products carry accurate environmental labels and eliminates misleading information.
- **Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy:** It promotes lower energy consumption and resource efficiency, contributing to a circular economy.

**Implemented by:** Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

- The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** will collaborate in ensuring strict environmental standards for accredited products.

**Ministry:** Environment, Forest and Climate Change

### Impact on Environmental and Consumer Awareness:

- **Minimal Environmental Impact:** Products certified under the Ecomark scheme will adhere to specific environmental criteria to reduce ecological footprints.
- **Building Consumer Awareness:** The scheme aims to increase consumer understanding of environmental issues and the benefits of sustainable consumption.

Source: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notifies Ecomark Rules under Lifestyle for Environment initiative (PIB)

## PERSONS IN NEWS

### St. Francis Xavier

- Saint Francis Xavier was a **Catholic missionary** and saint who was a **co-founder of the Society of Jesus**.
- He was born in Javier, Kingdom of Navarre (in present-day Spain), and was a companion of **Ignatius of Loyola** and one of the **first seven Jesuits**.
- He led an extensive mission into Asia, mainly in the Portuguese Empire of the time and was influential in evangelization work, most notably in India.



- He was the first Christian missionary to venture into Japan, Borneo, the Maluku Islands, and other areas.
  - In those areas, struggling to learn the local languages and in the face of opposition, he had less success than he had enjoyed in India.
- Xavier was about to extend his missionary preaching to China when he died on Shangchuan Island.
- Known as the “Apostle of the Indies” and “Apostle of Japan”, he is

considered to be one of the greatest missionaries since Paul the Apostle.

- **The Feast of St. Francis Xavier** is observed on December 3<sup>rd</sup> every year in Goa. It is a regional public holiday in the northern Spanish community of Navarra and the Indian state of Goa.

## TERMS IN NEWS

### Exercise KAZIND



- The 8th edition of the **India-Kazakhstan Joint Military Exercise KAZIND-2024**, commenced in Uttarakhand and is being held from 30th September to 13th October 2024.
- The Exercise between India and Kazakhstan was **initiated as ‘Exercise PRABAL DOSTYK’** in 2016.
- After the second edition, it was upgraded to a company-level exercise

and renamed ‘Exercise KAZIND’.

- The exercise aims to **enhance joint military capabilities** for **counter-terrorism operations** in semi-urban and mountainous terrain, focusing on physical fitness, tactical drills, and sharing of best practices under **Chapter VII of the UN Charter**.

Chapter VII includes action with respect to **threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression**.

## PLACES IN NEWS

### Sudan

- Capital: Khartoum



- **Land Borders:** Egypt (north), Eritrea and Ethiopia (east), South Sudan (south), Central African Republic and Chad (west), and Libya (northwest).
- **Maritime Border:** Red Sea (east).
- **Highest point:** Deriba Caldera (Crater Lake) at Jebel Mara.
- **Major Rivers:** Nile, Tekeze etc.
- **Climate:** Varies from north to south. Northern part is a desert climate, receiving little rainfall, shifting to semi-arid and then tropical savannah towards south.
- The country has been facing a

civil war for almost 1.5 years now.

Darfur is an important region in Sudan which has been at the centre of the conflict.

### Odessa port



- The Odessa port region was in news as Russia renewed attacks.
- Odessa is the third most populous city in Ukraine and a major seaport and transport hub located in the southwest.
- It opens into the Black Sea.
- It is also referred to as “Pearl by the Sea”, the “Southern Capital” as well as “Southern Palmyra”.
- It is a warm water port. The city of Odessa hosts both the Port of Odessa and Port Yuzhny, a significant oil terminal.
- Recently UNESCO has designated Odessa a World Heritage in

Danger site.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q1. How many of the following countries are part of the Abraham Accords?

1. Israel
2. Saudi Arabia

3. UAE
4. Egypt
5. Sudan

Choose the correct answer:

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) Only four

Q2. What is/are the consequences of a country becoming a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group? (2018)

- 1. It will have access to the latest and most efficient nuclear technologies.
- 2. It automatically becomes a member of the Treaty on the non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q3. With respect to the Ecomark Scheme, consider the following statements:

- 1. The Ecomark Scheme provides accreditation and labelling for household and consumer products that meet specific environmental criteria.
- 2. It is implemented by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.
- 3. It is an important component of the LiFE Mission in promoting Pro Planet People.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Q4. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Francis Xavier was one of the founding members of the Jesuit Order.
- 2. Francis Xavier died in Goa and a church is dedicated to him there.
- 3. The Feast of St. Francis Xavier is celebrated in Goa each year.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Q5. Consider the following pairs:

Region in News	Country
Darfur	Ukraine
Odessa	Sudan
Beirut	Lebanon

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one pair
- (b) Only two pairs
- (c) All three pairs
- (d) None of the pairs

Answers:

- 1. C
- 2. A
- 3. C
- 4. C
- 5. A

