



Balalatha's

# CSB IAS ACADEMY

The Road Map to Mussoorie...



PRELIMS EDGE – 2025 – 21/10/2024

## AUKUS :

**Context:** Shashi Tharoor's opinion piece in the Hindu mentions the changing canvas of the Indo Pacific including the many mini-laterals forming in the region.

### About AUKUS:

- It is a trilateral security partnership between the **United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Australia** agreed in 2021.
- AUKUS is intended to strengthen the ability of each government to support security and defense interests, building on longstanding and ongoing bilateral ties.
- It consists of **two key pillars**.
  - **Pillar 1** focuses on **supporting Australia to acquire its first conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine fleet**. (It does not involve the transfer of nuclear weapons to Australia.)
  - **Pillar 2** focuses on cooperation in **eight advanced military capability areas**: artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technologies, innovation, information sharing, and cyber, undersea, hypersonic and counter-hypersonic and electronic warfare domains.



Source: India's choices in a world becoming bipolar again (The Hindu)

**Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) :**

**Context:** The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation had a net addition of 18.53 lakh members to its subscriber base in August.

**About EPFO:**

- It is a **statutory body** that came into existence under the **Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, of 1952**.
- The EPFO is under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**.
- It is one of the world's largest organizations in terms of clientele and the volume of financial transactions undertaken by it.
- An establishment with a minimum of 20 employees is required to register with the EPFO and make provident fund contributions for eligible employees.
  - A wage ceiling of 15,000 per month is set for the employees for mandatory availing of the benefits of the EPF Scheme.

**Structure of EPFO:**

- The Act and all its schemes are **administered by a tripartite board** called the Central Board of Trustees.
- The board comprises representatives of the **government** (both central and state), **employers**, and **employees**.
- The board is **chaired by the Union Minister of Labour and Employment**.
- The Central Board of Trustees administers a contributory **provident fund**, a **pension scheme** and an **insurance scheme** for the workforce engaged in the **organised sector in India**, namely the EPF Scheme 1952, the Pension Scheme 1995 (EPS), and the Insurance Scheme 1976 (EDLI).
- EPFO is also the **nodal agency** for implementing **Bilateral Social Security Agreements** with other countries on a reciprocal basis.

- **Bilateral Social Security Agreements** are instruments executed to protect the social security interests of workers posted in a foreign country.
- It **avoids double coverage** under the social security legislations of the domestic and host countries.

*Source: With a total 9.3 lakh new members, EPFO shows 9% growth in subscriber base (The Hindu)*

### Terms in News

#### Business 20 :

- The B20 is the **official G20 dialogue forum** involving the **global business community**.
- B20 plays a leading role in mobilizing global business leaders' perspectives on global economic and trade governance.
- It represents the unified voice of the entire G20 business community.
- Each year, a B20 Chair is appointed by the G20 Presidency, supported by a B20 Sherpa and secretariat.
- B20's goal is to provide actionable policy recommendations aligned with rotating presidency priorities to foster economic growth.
- B20 operates through Task Forces (TFs) and Action Councils (ACs) responsible for consensus-based policy recommendations.
- These recommendations are directed towards the G20 and international organizations.
- **2024 Theme:** Inclusive Growth for a Sustainable Future.

#### Cyclone Dana :

- A low-pressure system has developed over the East-central Bay of Bengal. It is expected to intensify into a cyclone in the coming days.
- Once it intensifies, the cyclone will be identified as **Dana**, a name proposed by **Qatar**.
  - It means beautiful, precious pearl in Arabic.

#### Naming of cyclones:

- In 2000, a group of nations under WMO/ESCAP (World Meteorological Organisation/United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the

Pacific), comprising of **Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand**, decided to start naming cyclones in the region.

- After each country sent in suggestions, the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones (PTC) finalised the list.
- The WMO/ESCAP **expanded** to include **five more countries** in 2018 — **Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen**.
- While picking names for cyclones, countries need to follow some **rules**:
  - The proposed name should be neutral to
    - a. politics and political figures
    - b. religious believes,
    - c. cultures and
    - d. gender.
  - Name should be chosen in such a way that it does not hurt the sentiments of any group of population over the globe.
  - It should not be very rude and cruel in nature.
  - It should be short, easy to pronounce and should not be offensive to any member.
  - 
  - The maximum length of the name will be eight letters.
  - The proposed name should be provided with its pronunciation and voice over.
  - The names of tropical cyclones over the north Indian Ocean will not be repeated. Once used, it will cease to be used again.

#### Exercise Malabar :

- It was **started in 1992** as a **bilateral naval exercise** between **India and US navy**.
- The first Malabar Exercise in the Bay of Bengal took place in 2007.



- It was expanded into a trilateral format with the **inclusion of Japan in 2015**.
- In **2020**, the **Australian Navy** joined the Malabar Exercise, making it a quadrilateral naval exercise.
- It takes place annually in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Oceans alternatively.
- The exercise aims to strengthen cooperation and security in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Malabar 2024 will focus on a broad range of activities designed to enhance cooperation and operational capabilities, including discussions on special operations, surface, air, and anti-submarine warfare through a Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE).
- Complex maritime operations such as anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare, and air defense exercises will be conducted at sea, with an emphasis on improving situational awareness in the maritime domain.
- The exercise will feature participation of various Indian naval platforms, including guided missile destroyers, multi-purpose frigates, submarines, fighter aircraft and helicopters.

**Exercise Kakadu :**

- Exercise Kakadu is a joint-enabled, biennial exercise hosted by the **Royal Australian Navy** and supported by the Royal Australian Air Force.
- Kakadu is the Navy's premier maritime exercise, developing interoperability between nations in the maritime and air domains, and providing training opportunities for maritime security and surveillance.
- It started in **1993**.

**New Collective Quantified Goal :**

- The NCQG is a **forthcoming international climate finance target**.
- It is being developed to replace and build upon the current commitment of mobilizing **\$100 billion per year** by developed countries to support climate action in developing countries.
- The NCQG aims to establish a new, more ambitious financial target that reflects the evolving needs and challenges associated with addressing climate change, particularly in developing nations.
- **Key aspects:**

- **Increased Financial Commitment** - The NCQG is expected to surpass the existing \$100 billion annual target, recognizing that the financial needs for climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience have grown significantly.
- **Expanded Scope** - The goal will address not only the quantum of financial resources but also associated issues such as sources of funding, types of projects to be funded, and effective mechanisms for financial disbursement and utilization.
- **Inclusivity and Fairness** - The NCQG discussions involve ensuring that the contributions are equitable, with clear criteria on who should contribute based on capabilities and responsibilities.
- **Monitoring and Accountability** - Establishing robust systems for tracking the flow and impact of the climate finance to ensure transparency and effectiveness.
- The goal is expected to be finalized and adopted at upcoming climate conferences, such as COP29.

#### International Abhidhamma Divas :

- Abhidhamma Divas commemorates the day when **Lord Buddha descended from the celestial realm**, Tāvatiṃsa-devaloka, to Sankassiya (now Sankisa Basantapur) in Uttar Pradesh.
- The **Asokan Elephant Pillar**, a historical marker at the site, marks this significant event.
- According to **Theravāda Buddhist texts**, Lord Buddha spent three months teaching the Abhidhamma to the deities in **Tāvatiṃsa**, including his mother.
- The celebration of Abhidhamma Divas coincides with the end of the first Rainy Retreat (Vassa) and the Pavāraṇā festival, a time when monks and nuns conclude their retreat period with a ceremony.
- This year International Abhidhamma Divas was hosted by the **Ministry of Culture** in collaboration with the **International Buddhist Confederation (IBC)**.

#### Practice Questions

##### Q1. With reference to AUKUS, consider the following statements:

1. It is a security grouping comprising Australia, UK and the United States.
2. Under the alliance, Australia will acquire nuclear powered submarines.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Q2. Consider the following statements:**

1. The Employees' Provident Fund Scheme is a social security measure for workers in the unorganized sector.
2. The Employees' Provident Fund Organization is an executive body meant to administer the Provident Fund Scheme.
3. It functions under the administrative control of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

How many of the given statements is/are correct?

- a. Only one
- b. Only two
- c. All three
- d. None

**Q3. Which of the following countries are participants in 'Exercise Malabar' hosted by the Indian Navy?**

1. Thailand
2. Japan
3. Indonesia
4. Australia

Choose the correct answer based on the code given below.

- a. 1, 2, 3 and 4
- b. 1 and 3 only

- c. 2 and 4 only
- d. 2 only

**Q4. The 'New Collective Quantified Goal', a term often seen in news, is related to:**

- a. Emissions targets for nations under the Paris Agreement
- b. Pollution control targets set up under the Stockholm
- c. Climate Finance for developing countries
- d. Targets under the Global Biodiversity Framework

**Q5. With reference to Business20, consider the following statements:**

1. It is an international organization similar to G20 comprising top 20 business friendly nations.
2. B20 plays a leading role in mobilizing global business leaders' perspectives on global economic and trade governance.

**Which of the given statements is/are correct?**

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

**Answers:**

1. (c)
2. (d)
3. (c)
4. (c)
5. (b)