



## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### 1. Azerbaijan launched an anti-terrorist operation in the Armenia-backed breakaway enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh -

- The region has long been at the centre of tensions between Azerbaijan and Armenia, leading to two wars for its control. The last large-scale conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh lasted for six weeks in 2020 before a Russian-brokered truce. The ceasefire saw Armenia cede swathes of territory it had controlled since the 1990s.
- Nagorno-Karabakh is a mountainous and heavily forested region that under international law is recognised as part of Azerbaijan. However, ethnic Armenians who constitute the vast majority of the population there reject Azeri rule (the legal system of Azerbaijan).
- After Azerbaijan's troops were pushed out of the region following a war in the 1990s, these ethnic Armenians have been in administrative control of Nagorno-Karabakh, with support from Armenia.
- The self-declaration of independence by Nagorno-Karabakh in September 1991 in the backdrop of an imminent collapse of the USSR resulted in a war between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh — supported by Armenia. Past events, such as the 1985 bombing of an Air India aircraft by a Canada-based Khalistani separatist group, have strained relations between India and Canada. These incidents have contributed to India's vigilance regarding Sikh-related activities in Canada.

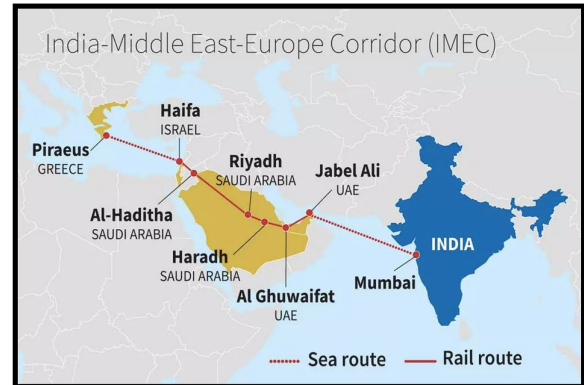


### 2. India-Middle East-Europe Corridor -

- Recently, the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) Project was signed at the G20 Summit in New Delhi, which holds significant geopolitical and economic implications for India.



- The project forms part of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII). PGII is a values-driven, high-impact, and transparent infrastructure partnership to meet the enormous infrastructure needs of low and middle-income countries.



The proposed IMEC will consist of Railroad, Ship-to-Rail networks and Road transport routes extending across two corridors, that is,

- The East Corridor – connecting India to the Arabian Gulf,
- The Northern Corridor – connecting the Gulf to Europe.
- The IMEC corridor will also include an electricity cable, a hydrogen pipeline and a high-speed data cable.
- Signatories- India, the US, Saudi Arabia, UAE, the European Union, Italy, France, and Germany.

#### Ports to be Connected -

- India- Mundra (Gujarat), Kandla (Gujarat), and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (Navi Mumbai).
- Middle East- Fujairah, Jebel Ali, and Abu Dhabi in the UAE as well as Dammam and Ras Al Khair ports in Saudi Arabia.
- Railway line will connect Fujairah port (UAE) to Haifa port (Israel) via: Saudi Arabia (Ghuwaifat and Haradh) and Jordan.
- Israel- Haifa port.
- Europe- Piraeus port in Greece, Messina in South Italy, and Marseille in France.

#### Objective-

- It aims to create a comprehensive transportation network, comprising rail, road, and sea routes, connecting India, the Middle East, and Europe.
- It aims to enhance transportation efficiency, reduce costs, increase economic unity, generate employment, and lower Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.



### **3. Invitation to U.S. President Biden for Republic Day Celebration -**

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended an invitation to U.S. President Joe Biden to be the chief guest at India's Republic Day celebrations on January 26 next year. U.S. Ambassador Eric Garcetti confirmed the invitation, stating that it is under consideration by the U.S. government. President Biden is also scheduled to visit India in 2024 for the Quad Summit, and efforts are being made to align the summit with his visit.
- Prime Minister Modi formally invited President Biden during their bilateral talks at the G-20 summit.
- The invitation specifically pertains to Republic Day on January 26 and did not mention the Quad Summit, which requires coordination among all four Quad countries (India, U.S., Japan, and Australia).
- This marks the third time the Modi government has invited a U.S. President to be the chief guest at the Republic Day parade. In 2015, President Barack Obama was the first American President to attend Republic Day as the chief guest.
- President Donald Trump declined the invitation for January 2019 due to scheduling conflicts in the U.S. Congress.
- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is heading to New York, where he is expected to meet with Quad Ministers on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting.
- A U.S.-India Defence and Foreign Ministers' "2+2" meeting is being scheduled for November in Delhi, setting the stage for President Biden's potential visit in January.
- India aims to host the Quad Summit early in the year due to upcoming elections in both India and the U.S. in 2024, which could affect travel plans.





## Quiz

**Q1. In which one of the following groups are all the four countries members of G20 ?**

- a) Argentina, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey
- b) Australia, Canada, Malaysia and New Zealand
- c) Brazil, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam
- d) Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and South Korea

**Q2. Consider the following statements**

- 1. The point of the orbit farthest to Earth is called perigee
  - 2. The point nearest from Earth is known as apogee.
- Choose the correct answer from the codes given below.

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

**Q3. Which of the following countries are part of 'Five Eyes', an intelligence alliance**

- 1. Australia
- 2. Canada
- 3. China
- 4. United Kingdom

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 1, 2 and 4 only
- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4 only

**Q4. What name has Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested for the old Parliament House ?**

- a) Samvidhan Bhawan
- b) Samvidhan Sadan
- c) Rashtra Gaurav Sadan
- d) Gandhi Bhawan

**Q5. What has been added as India's 42nd UNESCO World Heritage site, according to recent recognition ?**

- a) Khajuraho Temples
- b) Santiniketan
- c) Hoysala Temples
- d) Hampi

**Q6. Which of the following defines depreciation ?**

- a) Destruction of a plant in a fire accident
- b) Loss of equipment over time due to wear and tear
- c) Closure of a plant due to labour trouble
- d) Closure of a plant due to lockout

### Answer Key

1	2	3	4	5	6
a	d	b	b	c	b