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News: Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

- Recently, in response to the allegations raised by the Canadian Foreign Minister regarding India's purported violation of diplomatic protocols, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) emphasized that India's actions are consistent with the provisions outlined in Article 11.1 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

- The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) is established to define fundamental principles and terms governing how countries must treat each other's diplomatic representatives.
- It was adopted on 14th April 1961 by the United Nations Conference on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunities held at the Neue Hofburg in Vienna, Austria.
- It aims to foster friendly relations and maintain effective communication channels between nations.
- Today, 193 countries have ratified the convention.
- India ratified it through the Diplomatic Relations (Vienna Convention) Act of 1972.

Major Provisions

- A key principle of the Convention is **diplomatic immunity**. It grants **diplomats exemption from certain laws and taxes in the host country where they are posted**. It ensures that **diplomats can fulfill their duties without fear, threat, or intimidation**.
- According to Article 29 of the Convention, **diplomats are not subject to arrest or detention**. The **host country must accord the diplomatic agent the appropriate level of respect and is responsible for undertaking all necessary measures to prevent any form of harm or violation to the diplomat's person, liberty, or dignity**.
- Article 11.1 of the **Convention empowers the host country to establish reasonable and appropriate limits on the size of a foreign diplomatic mission, taking into consideration the prevailing conditions and circumstances in the host nation**, as well as the unique requirements of the diplomatic mission.
- Article 9 of the Convention allows the **receiving State to declare the head of the mission or any member of the diplomatic staff persona non grata or unwelcome without the need for an explanation, and this notification can be made at any time**.