

**21– 11 – 2023**

**News: ASEAN**

- Recently, the Defence Minister of India has participated in the 10<sup>th</sup> Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Jakarta, Indonesia.

**Key Highlights of the Indian Address in ADMM-Plus Meeting**

**ASEAN Centrality**

- India affirmed the importance of ASEAN's central role and commended its efforts in fostering dialogue and consensus in the region.

**Commitment to International Laws**

- India reiterated its commitment to freedom of navigation, overflight, and lawful commerce in international waters, aligning with international laws, notably the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982.

**Regional Security Initiatives**

- India advocated for consultative and development-oriented security initiatives that reflect consensus among stakeholders, aiming for practical,

forward-looking cooperation within ADMM-Plus to enhance Maritime Security in the region.

### **Dialogue and Diplomacy**

- India stressed the significance of dialogue and diplomacy for enduring peace and global stability, emphasizing moving away from an "us versus them" mindset, asserting that this is not an era of war.

### **Collaborative Initiatives**

- India appreciated ASEAN Member States' participation in joint initiatives like the Initiative for Women in UN Peacekeeping Operations, Initiative for Marine Plastic Pollution Response, ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise, and Expert Working Group (EWG) on Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR).
- India proposed to co-chair the EWG on Counterterrorism, a concern endorsed by ADMM-Plus due to terrorism's serious threat in the ASEAN region.
- In the present cycle from 2021-2024, India is co-chairing EWG on HADR along with Indonesia.

## Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

- Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is established under **Bangkok Declaration** or ASEAN Declaration 8<sup>th</sup> August 1967.
- ASEAN Secretariat is in **Jakarta, Indonesia**.
- Members: **Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam**.
- Observers: Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste.
- Demographic dividend – It constitutes **the 3rd largest population in the world**, of which more than **half is below thirty years of age**.
- Its official languages are English (working language), Burmese, Filipino, Indonesian, Khmer, Lao, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil, Thai, and Vietnamese.
- The **Year 2022 has been highlighted as India – ASEAN Friendship** by the leaders.

### ASEAN Way

- Over the years the ASEAN member countries have developed a form of interaction that is **informal, non-confrontationist and cooperative called the ASEAN Way**. It is in sync with the modest ideas and goals of the ASEAN.

## **ADMM - Plus**

- The ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) is a **forum comprising 10 ASEAN member countries and eight partner nations including India, China, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the United States.**

## **Economic**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> largest market in the world - larger than EU and North American markets.
- 6<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, 3<sup>rd</sup> in Asia.

## **ASEAN plus Three**

- ASEAN plus Three is a forum that functions as a **coordinator of co-operation between the ASEAN and the three East Asian nations of China, South Korea, and Japan.**

## **ASEAN plus Six**

- The group includes **ASEAN plus Three as well as India, Australia, and New Zealand.**

# United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Seas

## (UNCLOS)

- The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is an international treaty which was adopted and signed in **1982 in Montego Bay (Jamaica)**.
- The Law of the Sea Convention **defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans.**
- It **establishes guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources.**
- The Convention has become the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.
- UNCLOS came into **force in 1994.**
- The convention has been ratified by 168 parties, which includes 167 states (164 member states of the United Nations plus the UN Observer state Palestine, as well as the Cook Islands, Niue and the European Union.
- **India is a member. USA is the most important non-subscriber** to the UNCLOS.
- UNCLOS divides the marine areas into Internal Waters, Territorial Seas, Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone and High Seas (Open Oceans).
- **Internal waters:** Waters on the landward side of the baseline. Each **state has full sovereignty** over the Internal Waters.

- **Territorial seas:** Extends from **12 nautical miles from the baseline**. (1 nm = 1.85km). States have sovereignty and jurisdiction over surface, seabed, subsoil and even airspace.
- **Contiguous Zone:** Extends from **24 nautical miles from baseline**. Jurisdiction of state over contiguous zone is limited to ocean surface and sea floor but not airspace.
- **Exclusive Economic Zone:** Extends from **200 nautical miles from baseline**. Rights to explore and exploit natural resources and rights to carry out activities like energy-production can be done by the state. However, it is not exclusive.
- **High-Seas:** **Ocean Surface over the EEZ** is termed as High-Seas. It is considered as common heritage of mankind. It is **beyond any national jurisdiction**.
- **Protection of seas until 5 nautical miles is vested with coastal police and Coast guard and till 30 miles is vested with Coast Guard and rest is with Indian Navy.**