

GS II

SYLLABUS: REGIONAL AND GLOBAL GROUPINGS INVOLVING INDIA.

INDIA-ASEAN

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 6.

News: "India-Indonesia ties as a beacon for global relations."

India and Indonesia:

- A country in Southeast Asia, It consists of **over 17,000 islands**, including **Sumatra, Java, Sulawesi, and parts of Borneo and New Guinea**.
- Joint Naval (**Samudra Shakti**) and Military exercises (**Garuda Shakti**).
- Potential expansion of **India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway** to Indonesia.
- **Trade routes (Choke points):**
 - **Malacca Strait:** between the Malay Peninsula to the northeast and the Indonesian island of Sumatra to the southwest, connecting the **Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) and the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean)**.
 - **Sabang Port** in the Aceh province of Indonesia that India and Indonesia are developing together.
 - **Sunda Strait:** between the Indonesian islands of Java and Sumatra. It connects the **Java Sea with the Indian Ocean**.

ASEAN

It is a **political and economic union of 10 states in Southeast Asia** with the motto of "one vision, one identity, one community", they include some of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

Objectives of ASEAN:

- Accelerate economic growth and social progress.
- Promote regional peace and adherence to principles of UN charter.
- Efficient utilisation of agriculture & Industries.
- Maintain close and beneficial cooperation with intl. organisations.
- Non-interference in the internal affairs of one another.

Relevance of ASEAN:

- 9% of world population; 3rd largest labor force; fastest-growing consumer market; currently 7th will be 4th by 2050;

Outcomes of ASEAN Summit 2024:

- **Digital Transformation:** India will **share** its knowledge and experience in using **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** such as Aadhaar and Unified Payments Interface (UPI) with the ASEAN nations.
- **Strengthening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace, Stability, and prosperity in the region.**
- **Explore collaboration** to address diverse challenges in education, healthcare, agriculture and climate change.

India and ASEAN:

- **Economic significance:**
 - **Trade:** India's 3rd largest trading partner — **MoC&I annual report 2023**.
 - **FDI inflow:** from April 2000 to March 2023 stood at ~USD 110 billion, accounting for about 22% of India's total FDI inflows — **DPIIT**.
 - **ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (AIFTA)** has expanded market access for Indian exporters.
- **Strategic security:**
 - Critical for India's maritime trade routes **Eg. Strait of Malacca**.

- India's participation in East Asia Summit and ASEAN regional forum enhances its **role in regional stability** and helps India to maintain balance of power in the region, in context of **China's growing influence**.
- Countering Insurgency in Northeast; Combat Terrorism; Tax Evasion etc.
- **Central to Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific vision:**
 - Which aims to enhance economic and strategic relations with countries in Asia-pacific region.
- **Socio-cultural cooperation:** boosting people-to-people ties.
- **Funds to ASEAN countries:** ASEAN-India Cooperation Fund, ASEAN-India Green Fund.
- **Connectivity Projects:** **India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral highway, Kaladan multimodal project**.
- **Defence cooperation:**
 - Eg. Joint Naval and Military exercises **Samudra Shakti**.
 - Sabang Port in the Aceh province of Indonesia that India and Indonesia are developing together.

Initiatives by India for ASEAN:

- **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2022):** focuses on cooperation in trade, security, and connectivity marked 30 years of dialogue relations — **ASEAN summit 2022**.
- **Connectivity Projects:**
 - **India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway:** connect India's Northeast with Southeast Asia, with plans to extend to Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.
 - **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project:** Enhances connectivity between India's eastern seaports and Myanmar's Sittwe port.
 - **Mekong-India Economic Corridor:** integrates four countries Myanmar-Thailand-Cambodia-Vietnam.
- **ASEAN-India Digital Work Plan 2023:** Focuses on cooperation in areas like cybersecurity, digital connectivity, and emerging technologies.
- **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI):** Launched by India in 2019, it emphasises maritime security, ecology, and resources, with ASEAN countries as key partners.

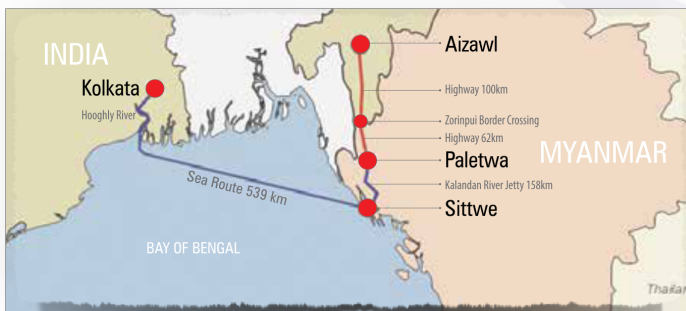
Challenges:

- India has been experiencing a **trade deficit with ASEAN** countries, which stood at USD 40 billion in 2022-23 — **MoC&I annual report 2023**.
- **Connectivity challenges:** Delays in projects like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway due to logistical and security issues.
- **Competition with China:** China's deep economic ties with ASEAN countries present competition for India in Trade, Investment and strategic influence.
- **India's withdrawal from RCEP & opposition to BRI:** limited its trade engagement scope with ASEAN countries.
- **Divergent priorities** of within ASEAN members.

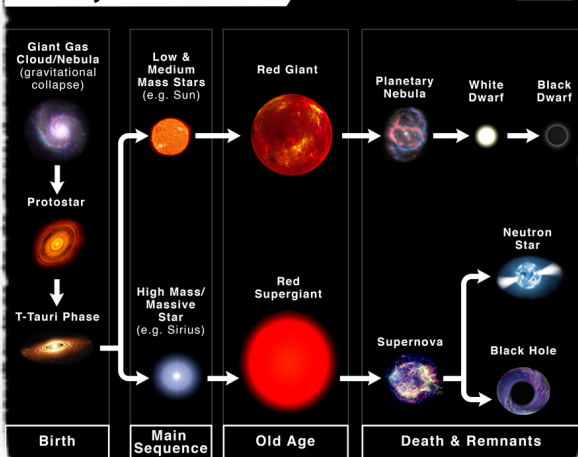
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Map 1: MIEC Corridor Region



Life Cycle of a Star



SPACE

PRE-CONTEXT

BLACK HOLES & LIFE CYCLE OF STAR

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 20.

News: "Scans of seemingly empty space reveal black holes not far from earth".

Black hole:

- A region of space where **gravity is so strong** that nothing, **not even light and other electromagnetic waves can escape it.**
- They are **'visible' because of the effects they have on their surroundings.** As matter swirls around a black hole, it is compressed, heated up, and **emits X-rays.**
- **Black hole forms when a star dies.** It may happen as a supernova or a collapse.
- **On June 13, 2022, scientists discovered a star orbiting something dark:**
 - They were as far apart as the sun and Mars.
 - But the star was moving three times faster than Mars, so it must have been nine-times as massive as the sun — which meant it was a black hole.
 - The **Gaia BH1 is the closest black hole to earth yet.**

AstroSat

- Launched **by ISRO** in 2015.
- **First dedicated Indian astronomy mission** aimed at **studying celestial sources in X-ray, optical and UV spectral bands** simultaneously.
- Unique feature of mission is that it enables **simultaneous multi-wavelength observations** of various astronomical objects with single satellite.
- **Objectives of AstroSat:**
 - Understand high energy processes in binary star systems containing **neutron stars and black holes.**
 - Studies star birth regions and high energy processes in **star systems lying beyond our galaxy.**
 - Detect new bright X-ray sources in sky.

Life Cycle of Star

Red Giant:

- At the end of Stars life, it will **puff's to enormous size,** astronomers name it as Red giant
- A dying star that has exhausted the supply of hydrogen in its core.

White Dwarf:

- **Stellar core left behind after a dying star (Red Giant)** has exhausted its nuclear fuel and expelled its outer layers to form a planetary nebula.

Supernova

- A **powerful and luminous explosion** of a star.
- Explosion may lead to formation of a **Neutron star or Black hole.**

Neutron Star:

- **Extremely dense** astronomical object, typically the remnants of Red Giant star that has needed its life in supernova explosion.

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POLITY

PRE-CONTEXT

STATE EMBLEM

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 12.

News: "Home Ministry asks States to prevent improper depiction of the State Emblem of India."

About State Emblem:

- Adapted from the *Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath (250 BCE)*, erected by Emperor Ashoka.
- Features:**
 - Four Asiatic Lions* (only three visible in the emblem, symbolising power, courage, and confidence).
 - A *Dharma Chakra* (wheel) in the center, representing the "wheel of law" (Dharma).
 - A *bull* (symbolizing hard work), *horse* (energy), *elephant* (strength), and *lion* (courage) on the abacus.
- Differences from Original Lion Capital:**
 - The *original lacks the motto "Satyameva Jayate"* and the *lotus base (added in the emblem)*.
 - The motto "*Satyameva Jayate*" (Truth Alone Triumphs) inscribed below in *Devanagari script*, taken from the *Mundaka Upanishad*.
 - The *original Lion Capital has four lions* (all visible from behind), while the *emblem shows three lions* (frontal view).
 - Designed by artist *Dinanath Bhargava* under the guidance of *Nandalal Bose*.
- Adopted on 26 January 1950** (the day India became a Republic).
- The emblem is part of the *official seal of the Government of India* and is mentioned in the *First Schedule of the Indian Constitution (Article 111)*.
- Governed by the *State Emblem of India (Prohibition of Improper Use) Act, 2005* and *State Emblem of India (Regulation of Use) Rules, 2007*.
- Appears on *official documents, currency, passports, and government buildings*.
- Prohibitions:**
 - Cannot be used for commercial purposes.
 - Cannot be displayed by unauthorised individuals/institutions.

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ECONOMY

PRE-CONTEXT

CESS & SURCHARGE

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 7.

News: "Cess and surcharge continue to shrink States' tax share."

About Cess:

- Levied by Central Govt.*
- A **tax on taxes** that is levied for a specific purpose.
- Levied on all taxpayers*, regardless of income level.
- The revenue collected is earmarked for a *specific purpose and cannot be used for any other purpose*.
 - Eg. Education cess, Swachh Bharat cess, and Krishi Kalyan cess etc.
- Levied under **Article 270 of the Constitution**.
 - Parliament can impose a cess if it is for a specific public purpose.
- GST Compensation Cess (2017–2022):**
 - Introduced to compensate states for revenue losses after GST implementation. It expired in June 2022.

About Surcharge:

- Levied by Central Govt.*
- An **additional tax imposed on higher-income individuals or entities**.
- The rate of **surcharge can vary based on income level**.
- The revenue collected *can be used for any purpose*.
 - Eg. surcharge on income tax and surcharge on corporate tax.
- Levied under Article 271*.
 - Parliament has the exclusive power to impose a surcharge on taxes listed in the Union List (e.g., income tax).

Note:

- Proceeds collected** from a surcharge and a cess form part of the *Consolidated Fund of India*.
- Proceeds of cess and surcharge** are *not shared with the States*.

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सत्यमेव जयते



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Thank you!