

Headlines

Making India safe - Page No.6 , GS 2

Exercise, La Perouse - Page No.14 , Prelims fact

ASEAN grouping - Page No.16 , GS 2

A surge in radical governments - Page No.6 , GS 2

Text and Context - 'Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers'

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A person in a brown t-shirt and black shorts is running on a paved path, captured from a low angle showing their legs and torso. The background features a line of trees and a bright, hazy sky. The quote is overlaid on the right side of the image.

SUCCESS

**IS THE SUM OF
SMALL EFFORTS,
REPEATED
DAILY IN AND DAY OUT.**

~ROBERT COLLIER

Nine Navies hold joint drills in strategic straits between Indian Ocean and the Pacific

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Dinakar Peri

NEW DELHI

The Navies of nine Indo-Pacific countries, including India, are taking part in a multilateral exercise, La Perouse, hosted by France in the strategic straits of Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok, between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.

The Indian Navy has deployed its guided-missile destroyer *INS Mumbai* for the exercise scheduled from January 16 to 24 and led by the French Carrier Strike Group (CSG) headed by the carrier *Charles de Gaulle*.

The three straits are critical choke points as these

provide entry and exit into the Indian Ocean Region. With forays by the Chinese Navy in the region rising, the straits are under increased focus.

Maritime safety

“Strengthening maritime safety will be at the core of this exercise, with the development of interoperability and the ability to act collectively in the event of a maritime crisis, which will contribute to it,” the French Embassy in India said in a statement.

On the location of the exercise, it noted that these straits, mainstays of global maritime trade, are subject to numerous human-induced risks such as

maritime accidents and environmental hazards, illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and natural risks such as earthquakes and tsunamis.

Australia, Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the U.K., and the U.S. are part of the exercise.

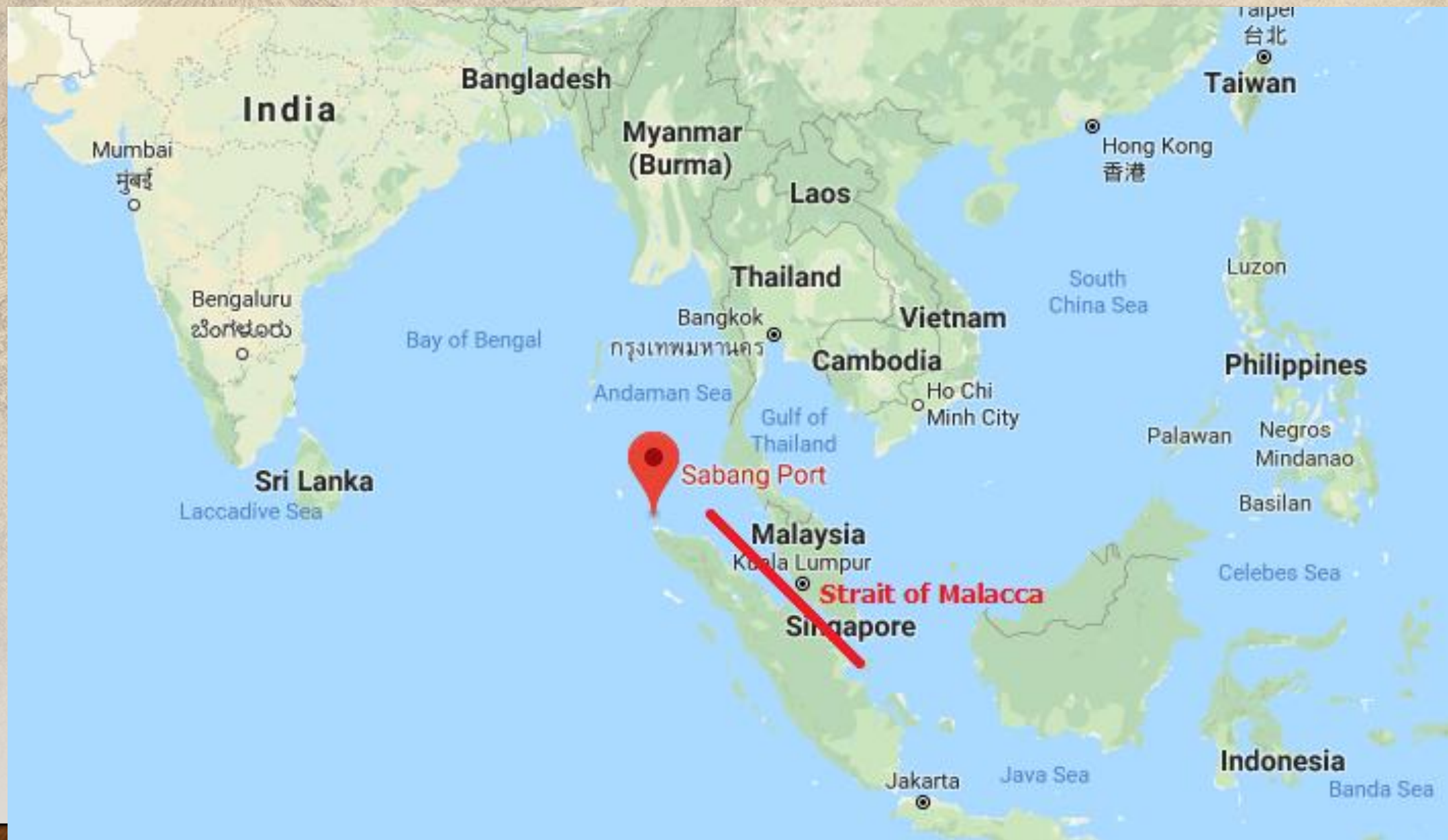
In an important sign of strengthening interoperability, the statement said, “During this exercise, all navies will train in the use of IORIS, a communication and coordination system dedicated to the exchange of information, documents in order to effectively and collectively face a maritime crisis in a synchronized manner.”

Content.

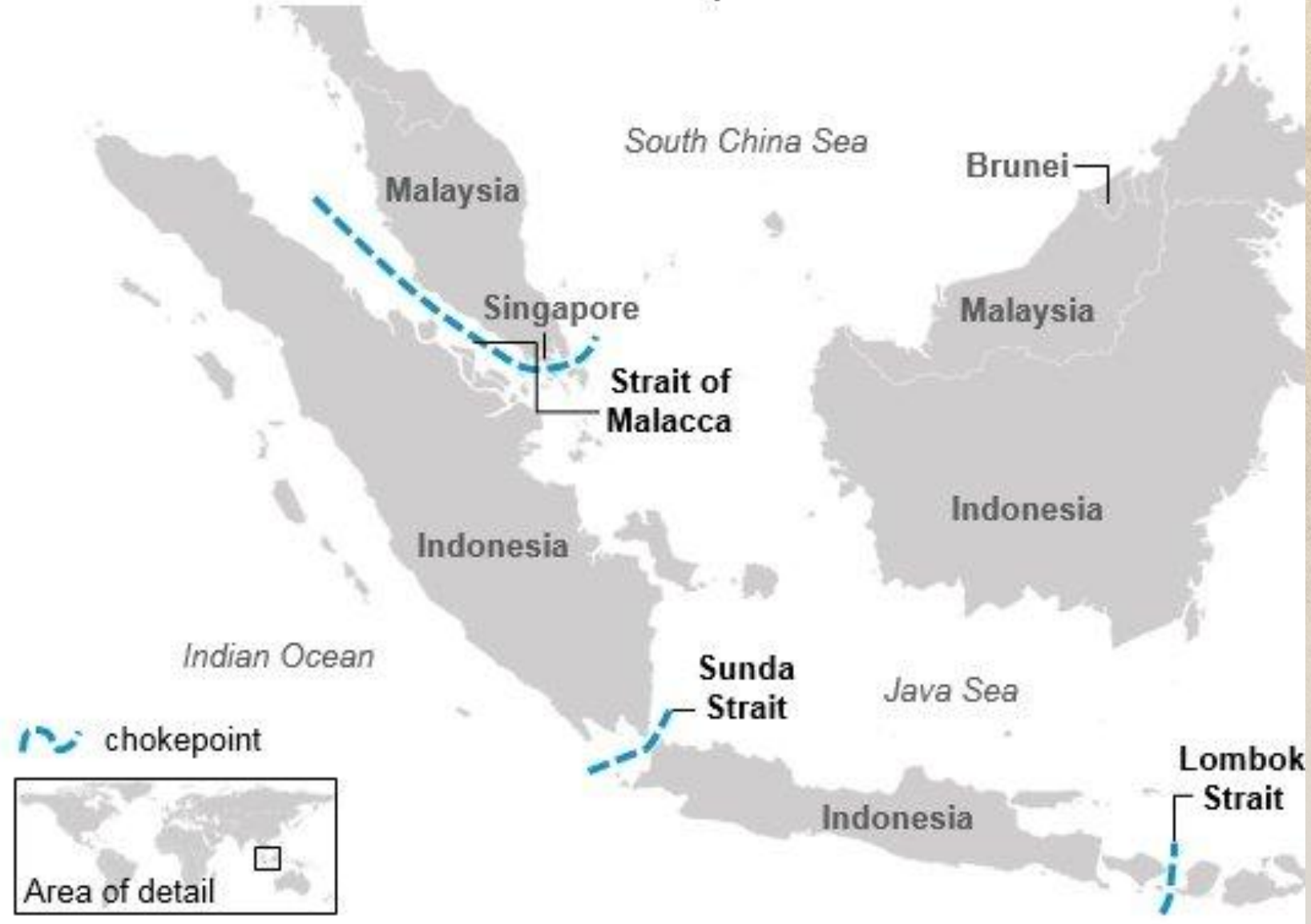
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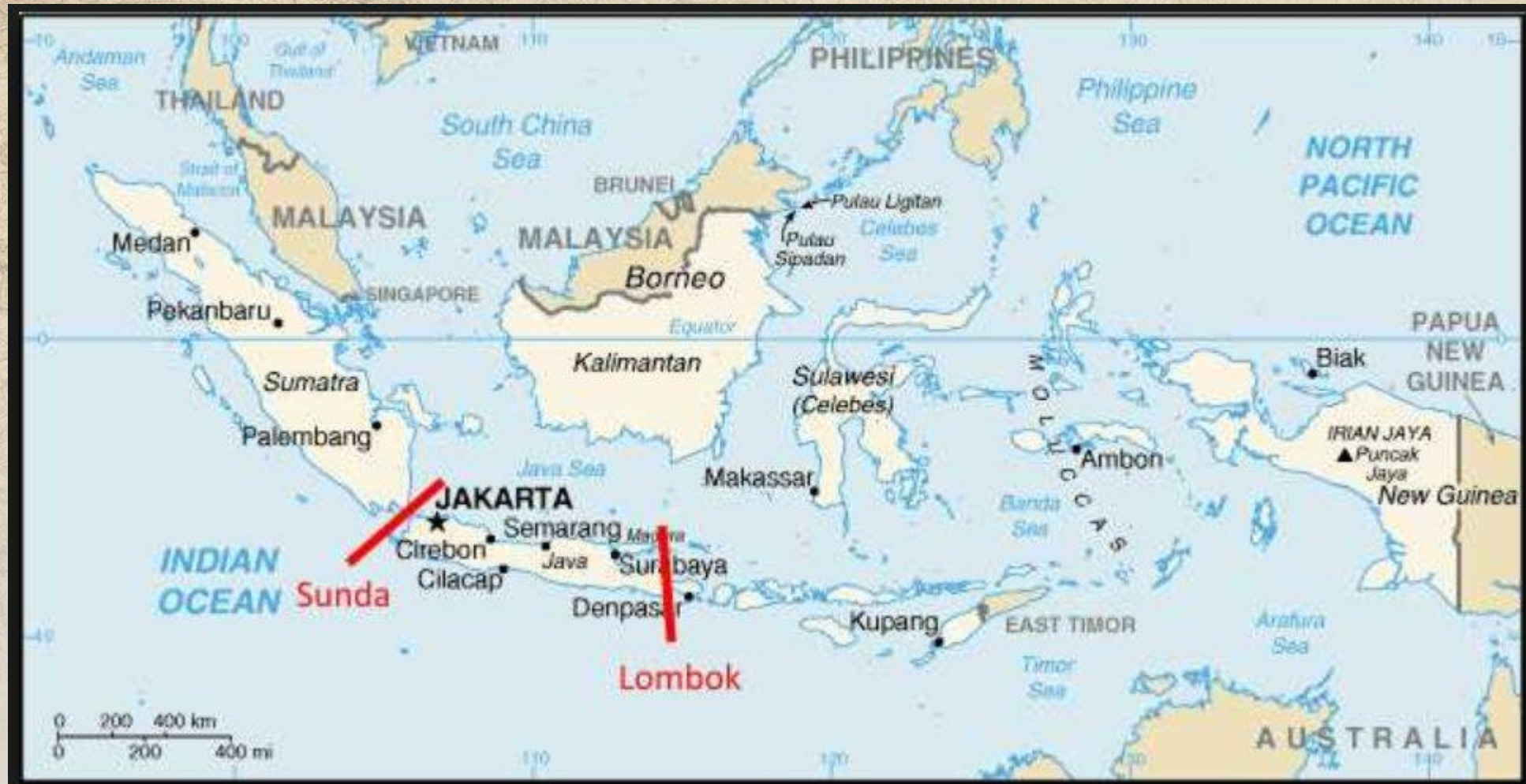
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Indian Ocean to Pacific Ocean maritime chokepoints





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2. NCERT Playlist:-

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[list=PLpuxPG4TUOR5Q3pN6ivhc77yZ6HY9v7Ad](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpuxPG4TUOR5Q3pN6ivhc77yZ6HY9v7Ad)

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Description

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Education

Educator at StudyIQ IAS

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LANGKAWI

ASEAN tells Myanmar junta to prioritise ceasefire over elections

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AP

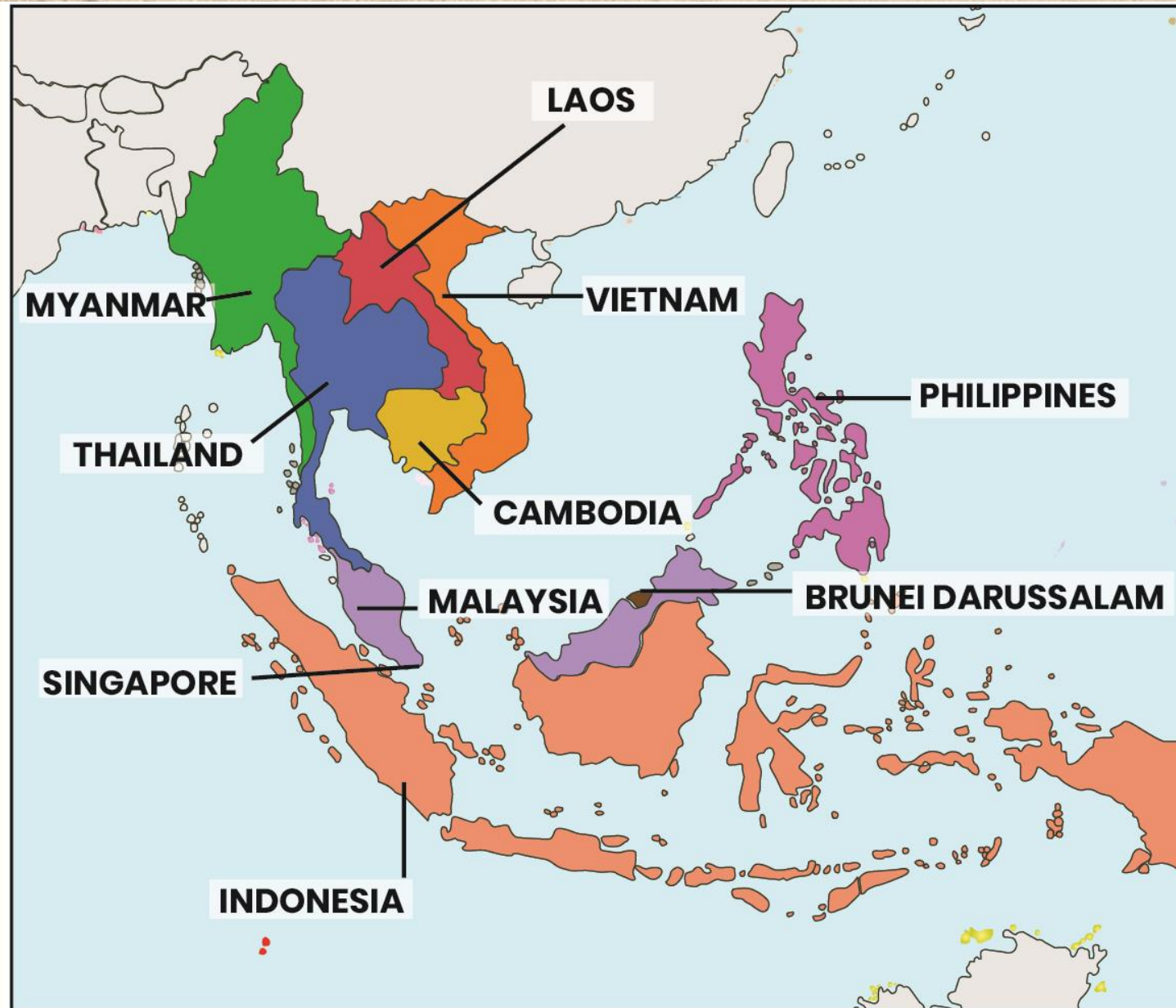
Foreign Ministers of the ASEAN grouping told Myanmar's junta to prioritise a ceasefire in its civil war over fresh elections during a meeting in Malaysia on Sunday. Malaysia is this year's rotating chair of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Myanmar was represented by the junta's foreign affairs secretary. AFP

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- **The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a regional organization which was established to promote political and social stability amid rising tensions among the Asia-Pacific's post-colonial states.**
- **The motto of ASEAN is “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”.**
- **8th August is observed as ASEAN Day.**
- **ASEAN Secretariat – Indonesia, Jakarta.**
- **It was established in 1967 in Bangkok with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by five members (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand).**



10-Point Plan to strengthen India-ASEAN ties



ASEAN-India Year of Tourism (2025):

Commitment of **\$ 5 million** for promoting tourism between India and ASEAN countries.



Annual Women Scientists' Conclave:

To be organized under the '**India-ASEAN Science and Technology Fund**'.



Review of trade agreement: Review of '**ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement**' by 2025.



Health resilience track:

Institutionalization of **ASEAN-India Health Ministers meeting**.



Cyber policy dialogue: Mechanism for an **India-ASEAN cyber policy** dialogue to **strengthen digital and cyber resilience**.



Celebrate 10 years of Act East Policy:

Focus on youth summits, hackathons, start-up festivals, and cultural exchanges etc.



Scholarship expansion: Doubling Masters Scholarships at **Nalanda University** and new ones at **India's agricultural universities**.



Disaster resilience: Allocation of **\$ 5 million** for enhancing disaster resilience from '**ASEAN-India Fund**'.



Workshops on green hydrogen: To promote green future and sustainable energy solutions.



Climate resilience campaign: Inviting ASEAN leaders to participate in '**Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam**' (Plant for Mother) campaign.

Importance of ASEAN for India

- **Economic partnership and Trade: ASEAN is India's 4th largest trading partner and accounts for 11% of India's global trade.**
- **The bilateral trade between India and ASEAN stood at \$ 122.67 Billion during 2023-24.**
- **Convergence with Indo-Pacific strategy: ASEAN Centrality is a crucial component of India's 'Act East' policy and its 'Indo-Pacific' strategy, reflecting the convergence of interests in the region.**
- **Also, it plays role in stability in the eastern neighbourhood, for example in Myanmar.**
- **Connectivity with North East: Connectivity initiatives with ASEAN can boost economic development in India's northeastern states by positioning them as a hub for regional trade and commerce.**

What did the ILO report state about international migrants?

Why are there more male international migrants in the global labour force than women? Which are the countries that have absorbed the most international migrant workers?

Garimella Subramaniam

The story so far:

By addressing labour market shortages in host nations and contributing remittances to home countries, International Migrants (IM) continue to make contributions to world economic growth, the fourth edition of 'Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers', released by the International Labour Organization (ILO), said.

What did the ILO state?

In 2022, IMs made up 4.7% (167.7 million) of the global labour force, defined as both employed and unemployed (but available for work); over 30 million more than in 2013. An estimated 155.6 million were employed and 12.1 million unemployed. The share of IM men in the total employment for males globally was

estimated at 4.7% and that of IM women at 4.4%. However, between 2019-2022, the rate of growth dipped annually to less than 1%, influenced among other factors by the pandemic.

What about age and gender?

A higher proportion of IM males were employed – 61.3% out of a total of 102.7 million. Conversely, only 38.7% female IMs were employed out of a total of 64.9 million in 2022. All the same, the number of women IMs has steadily risen ever since the ILO began compiling global estimates in 2015.

One explanation for the smaller proportion of women in the global labour force is their lower representation in the total population of IMs.

At 74.9% (125.6 million), prime-age adult IM workers – those aged between 25 and 54 years, both men and women – constituted the largest majority of IM

workers in the labour force in 2022. Less than one out of 10 IMs were below 25. Way behind the above category, at 9.3% were young IM workers, aged between 15-24 years, numbering 15.5 million, in the global labour force. IMs aged between 55-64 years were 12.5% and those above 65 at 3.4%.

Which economic sectors attract IMs?

The largest proportion of IMs, 68.4%, were concentrated in the services sector, even higher than non-migrants. Women IMs held the dominant share in this arena at 80.7%, as against 60.8% among their male counterparts. The corresponding figures for non-migrant women and men in the services industry were 59.4% and 46.3% respectively. Significantly, the dominance of IMs in this sector has remained consistent over the decade, upwards of 67% between 2013-2022. In industry, the proportion of IMs was 24.3%

and that of non-migrants 24.2%. In agriculture, IMs accounted for 7.4%, whereas non-migrants were at a significantly higher share of 24.3%.

Which are the main host countries?

High-income countries absorbed the largest number of IMs, accounting for 68.4% (114 million people), in key sectors such as services, especially in the provision of care. At about a quarter of this share, 17.4% (29.2 million), were distributed among upper-middle-income countries. For an entire decade between 2013-2022, high-income and upper-middle-income countries have consistently remained primary destinations for IMs.

The share of IM workers in northern, southern and western Europe in the year 2022 was at 23.3%, increasing by less than one percentage point after 2013. In Northern America on the other hand, the share of IMs in the labour force in 2022 was at 22.6%, a more than one percentage point decrease over the same decade. The Arab states accounted for 13.3% of IM workers in 2022, down three percentage points over 2013. A combination of ageing populations, growing demand in the care economy and greater economic opportunities means that high income countries will continue to remain attractive destinations for the bulk of IMs.

The writer is Director, Strategic Initiatives, AgnoShin Technologies.

THE GIST

▼
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Content.

- **International Labour Organization (ILO) is the only tripartite U.N. agency, since 1919. It brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.**
- **Established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League of Nations.**
- **Became the first affiliated specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946.**
- **Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland**
- **Founding Mission: social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace.**
- **Promotes internationally recognized human and labour rights.**
- **Received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969.**

A surge in radical governments, the hope of democracy

One thing seems fairly certain now. If an Islamic radical group were to seize power by force, then the world will be willing to legitimise it and forgive its past deeds. But till the time such a group does not capture power, it will either be fought tooth and nail and/or treated like an enemy.

We had Afghanistan in 2021. We now have Syria in 2024.

When the Taliban captured power on August 15, 2021, 13 members of the United States troops were killed in an Islamic State (IS) suicide attack, and \$7.1 billion worth of U.S. weaponry was left behind in Afghanistan. However, the U.S. and the West as well as China and Russia bent backwards to work with the Taliban. The West justified this by saying that this would wean the Taliban away from supporting terrorism and help in the protection of women's and minorities' rights. They talked about "inclusive government" but democracy was not uppermost in their minds. The then UN Special Representative to Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons, even told the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) that the Taliban was 'misunderstood'.

Treated with kid gloves

The ultimate irony was how "*karma*" had come full circle. In the days preceding the Taliban's capture of Afghanistan, the "Troika Plus", of the U.S., China and Russia with Pakistan, had tried to coordinate their efforts in Afghanistan to keep India completely out and ignore our vital interests. In the UNSC, even an innocuous reference to the Heart of Asia Conference on Afghanistan was deleted from the draft statement because India was one of the countries attending it.

But when the events of August 2021 unfolded, India was the president of UNSC that month. Any text or resolution required India's concurrence. When UNSC Resolution 2593, after the Taliban takeover, was passed on August 30, India left its imprint particularly in the paragraph relating to Afghan soil not being used for terrorist activities. The express reference to terrorists and terrorist organisations in the UNSC Resolution 1267 sanctions list was inserted at India's behest, where it coordinated closely with the U.S. side. This was necessary to remove any ambiguity about Pakistani terrorist organisations associated with the ISIL (Daesh) and al-Qaeda, including the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed – listed in 1267 – from using Afghan soil to launch terrorist attacks on India.

In December 2021, the UNSC allowed the Taliban to get donor money directly into its coffers. With no political will among the P-5 or the West to demand accountability for implementing UNSCR 2593, the Taliban soon



T.S. Tirumurti

was Permanent Representative/ Ambassador of India to the United Nations (UN), New York (2021-22) and President of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for August 2021

denied girls school education, imposed restrictions on women, and stopped all moves for an inclusive government. Now, the world looks the other way.

Now, Syria and Bangladesh

And now Syria in 2024. We have just witnessed a radical Islamic leader Abu Muhammad al-Jolani or Ahmed al-Shaara of the Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS) seize power, culminating in the toppling of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Al-Jolani was earlier leader of the al Qaeda in the region, with links to international terror groups. His radical outfit, the HTS, which was earlier an al Qaeda wing in Syria called the Jabhat al-Nusra, still features in the U.S. State Department list of terror groups. Mirroring what they did with the Taliban, the U.S. and the West have lined up behind the HTS and its leader. The first move of the U.S. was to remove the bounty of \$10 million on al-Jolani's head for his capture. Capturing power can help evade capture also.

This is wonderful news for Islamic terrorists and extremist groups gaining ground, especially in Africa such as in Mali, and adopting IS and al Qaeda techniques to topple governments. But the world is preoccupied with Ukraine and West Asia. Now, India has a situation brewing closer to home, in Bangladesh.

Even if the collapse of the elected government in Bangladesh has been largely due to an autocratic government stifling democratic forces and losing the plot, under the guise of supporting regime change, the U.S. clearly downplayed the interests of its "strategic" partner India. It is propping up the interim military-led government of Muhammad Yunus, which is seen as tolerating, even encouraging, Islamic radical groups in Bangladesh and is a threat to its minorities. The last thing India needs is the revival of Islamic radicalism in Bangladesh, where the last 16 years have seen the two countries and its peoples come closer in a variety of ways for mutual benefit.

When Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League came to power in 2008, it was seen as free and fair elections with a cleaned-up electoral list and the Bangladesh Army staying on the sidelines. The people overwhelmingly rejected the violent past of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) of Khaleda Zia and their Islamic radical partners such as the Jamaat-e-Islami. Just when one thought that the Jamaat-e-Islami stood discredited for siding with Pakistan in the 1971 war and rejected by the people of Bangladesh for causing mayhem and disrupting lives, the popular student protests of 2024 and the ensuing military coup have given them a fresh lease of life.

While there is no doubt that the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) – affiliated to the Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), the

The last thing India needs is the revival of Islamic radicalism in Bangladesh

Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing, the Islami Chhatra Shibir, the Hefazat-e-Islam, the Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (MJJB) and the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISKP) have taken advantage of the situation, it is not as if the people of Bangladesh have embraced them wholeheartedly. Consequently, these radical groups have tried to shore up support for their extremist ideologies by attacking the minority communities, forcing the interim government to release Islamic extremists from prison (such as like Jashimuddin Rahmani, head of the ABT), and adopting shrill anti-India rhetoric, conflating the dismantling of Sheikh Hasina's legacy with attacks on India. India should be careful not to fall into this trap.

Religious hate has been on the rise around the world. It was when this writer was India's Permanent Representative to the UN that India brought up, for the first time, in 2021-2022, the rise of religiophobia against non-Abrahamic religions, including against Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. India condemned all forms of religious hate, whether in the U.S. and the West or in Bangladesh and the neighbourhood. While India may have taken its eye off the ball when it came to the Sheikh Hasina government, it cannot ignore Islamic extremism again rearing its head in Bangladesh and posing renewed danger to India's national security – something which New Delhi successfully prevented over the last 16 years.

The larger picture

However, for both sides to view the unfolding events purely through a religious lens – be it an Islamic lens or Hindu lens – would be a mistake. This has been counterproductive before and will be so now. In fact, Islamic radicals are baiting India, and, unfortunately, so are the officials who have been appointed as advisers to Mr. Yunus, precisely to polarise forces within their own country. On the other hand, India has the larger perspective in mind to protect its bilateral relations from damage. It has reiterated its readiness to do business with the interim government. India has removed most irritants in its bilateral relations in the last two decades, except maybe for the sharing of Teesta river waters. What is forgotten is that when Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) revolted in February 2009, just after the first clean elections of Bangladesh in December 2008, it was India which gave its rock solid support to the newly-elected government and helped save democracy.

It is in Bangladesh's own interest that this military coup does not translate into an Islamic coup and goes the way of Syria or Afghanistan. The silver lining is that, having tasted the power of democracy in 2008, and now in 2024, it will be difficult to put the clock back.

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Murder most foul

Making India safe for all must be
a priority for State authorities

The conviction on Saturday of a former civic police volunteer in the rape and murder of a second-year postgraduate trainee doctor in Kolkata has brought some closure to her parents, but the struggle to make systemic changes to make the workplace safe for women continues. The District and Sessions Court, Seal-dah, found Sanjay Roy guilty of the horrific crime at the State-run R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9, 2024, while on duty. Pronouncing the verdict in the presence of the parents and the accused, Judge Anirban Das said the accused was found guilty based on evidence put forward by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The accused is being held guilty under Sections 64 (rape), 66 (causing death), and 103(1) (murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Reading out the verdict, the judge said the crime carries the highest punishment of a death sentence and the lowest of life imprisonment; the terms of the sentence will be announced today. In his observations, the judge also put the spotlight on the functioning of the hospital administration, saying that the actions of the college's principal and other senior members had "created some confusion" in his mind. In widespread protests after the crime, doctors, the parents, and civil society had alleged that it could not have been the handiwork of only one individual.

Sandip Ghosh, principal of the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital at the time of the murder, was arrested by the CBI on charges of evidence tampering and the delay in filing the first information report (FIR), but was released on bail as the charge sheet had not been filed in 90 days, as is the rule. Inefficiencies in policing have also come to the fore; there was an inordinate delay in filing the FIR, for example, and other lapses. The parents of the doctor said they respect the judgment and sought the highest punishment for the accused but expressed hope that the investigation would not be halted so that all the culprits are nabbed, a sentiment echoed by protesting doctors, activists – and also the Opposition. There are cases pending in the High Court and the Supreme Court of India, which began hearing it *suo motu* after the uproar over the rape. It should not need a rape and murder to wake up to appalling working conditions, such as the lack of basic amenities and a safe room to rest. Kolkata's State-run hospitals are stretched thin and reports of corruption are rife. The State government announced a slew of measures for the protection of health workers, and the onus is on the administration to follow through with the promises.

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Education

Educator at StudyIQ IAS

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