

TARGET PRELIMS 2024

BOOKLET-35

INTERNATIONAL BODIES-5

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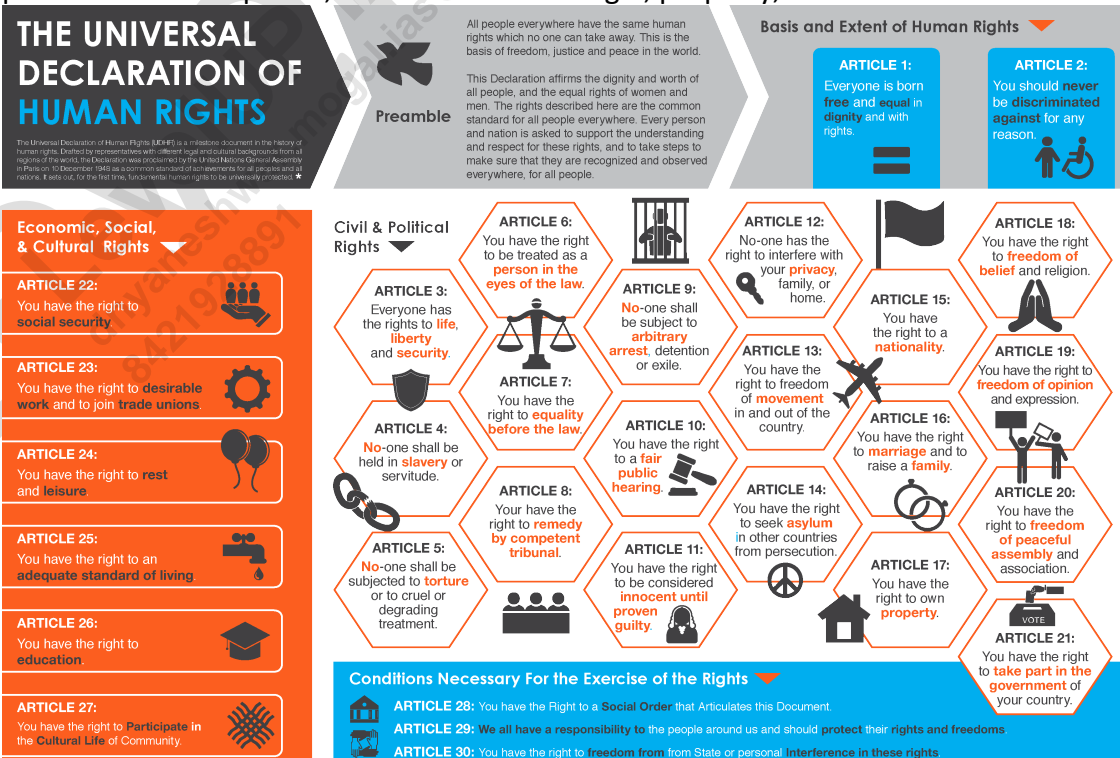
1. UN BODIES, CONVENTION, SUMMITS ETC.

1) ARTICLE 99 OF UN CHARTER

- **Why in news?**
 - » Article 99 of the UN Charter invoked for the first time in decades as Israel invokes Gaza (Dec 2023)
- **Article 99:** "The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten maintenance of international peace and security".
 - » **More details:** It is seen as a discretionary power. According to the UN, the **President of the Security Council is under the obligation to call a meeting of the Council** if the Secretary-General brings to the attention of the Council any matter under Article 99
- **UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres** as invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter in a bid to establish ceasefire amid the Israel's military action on the Gaza Strip.

2) UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)

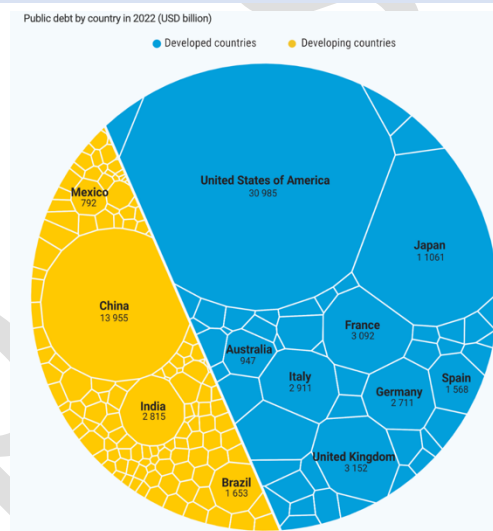
- **75 years ago**, on 10th Dec, 1948, the UNGA approved UDHR at a meeting in Paris - laying one of the foundation stones of the international order that emerged following the horrors of WW-II.
- **Some details about the UDHR:**
 - The document consist of a preamble and 30 articles setting out fundamental rights and freedoms.
 - **Article-1:** "All humans being are born free and equal in dignity and rights".
 - **Article 2:** says that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms the declaration sets out, "without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."



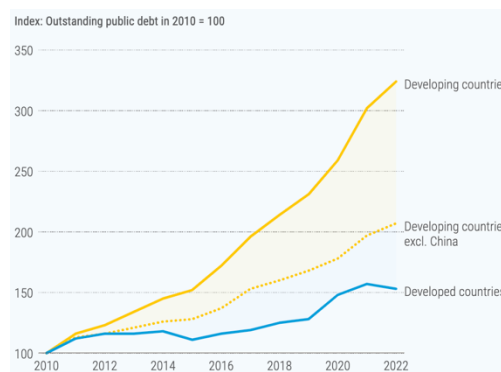
- **Background: Need of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**
 - » The declaration was born of the "never again" sentiment among political leaders after the two world wars and the holocaust.
- **Is it legally binding?**
 - » The declaration isn't a treaty and isn't legally binding in itself, but the principles it sets out have been incorporated into many countries' laws and it is viewed as the basis for international human rights law.

3) GLOBAL CRISIS RESPONSE GROUP

- **About GCRG:**
 - » The GCRG was set up by the United Nation Secretary General (UNSG) in March 2022 to address the urgent and critical global issues pertaining to interlinked crisis in food, security, energy, and finance and to coordinate a global response.
 - » The GCRG is overseen by the Champions Group comprising of HOS/HOGs of Bangladesh, Barbados, Denmark, Germany, Indonesia, and Senegal.
 - » The UN Deputy Security General leads the steering committee of the GCRG.



- **Update: July 2023: India has joined GCRG, accepting an invitation from UNSG Antonio Guterres to PM Modi.**
 - » The decision to join reflects India's increasing global leadership and commitment addressing contemporary global challenges.
 - » India's participation will boost efforts of UN in finding result-oriented solutions on developmental issues that impact the world, particularly developing countries.
- **Update: July 2023: Report 'A World of Debt: A growing burden to global prosperity'**



- » **Global Public Debt at Record Highs:** Public debt has increased more than fourfold since 2000 (USD 22 trillion in 2002 to USD 92 trillion in 2022)
- » **Around 30% of Global public debt is owned by developing countries.**
- » **Public debt is growing faster in the developing world:**
- » **A growing number of countries** are facing high levels of debt.
- » **Public debt can be vital for development.** But at the same time, it can also be a heavy burden. It will be the case when public debt grows too much too fast.

4) 2023 IMO STRATEGY ON REDUCTION OF GHG EMISSIONS FROM SHIPS

- In support of the UN SDG Goal 13, to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.
- **Background:**
 - » In **2018**, IMO adopted an initial strategy, on the reduction of GHG missions from ships.
 - » In Oct 2018, IMO approved a follow-up program, intended to be used as a planning tool in meeting timelines identified in the initial IMO Strategy upto 2023. Further, the initial strategy had envisaged that a revised strategy would be adopted by 2023.
- In **July 2023**, IMO adopted the new strategy: **Key Highlights**
 - » The 2023 IMO GHG Strategy represents a framework for Member States, setting out the future vision for international shipping, the levels of ambition to reduce GHG emissions and guiding principles.
 - » **Levels of Ambition directing the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy** are as follows:
 1. **Carbon Intensity of Ships to decline** through further improvement of energy efficiency for new ships.
 2. **Carbon intensity for international shipping to decline** to reduce CO2 emissions per transport work, as an average across international shipping, by at least 40% by 2030, compared to 2018.
 3. **Uptake of zero or near zero GHG emission technologies**, fuels and/or energy sources to represent at least 5% striving or 10% of the energy used by international shipping by 2030
 4. **Peak GHG emissions from international shipping ASAP** and to reach net-zero GHG emissions by or around, close to, 2050.
 - » The 2023 IMO GHG strategy also introduces indicative checkpoints to reach net zero GHG emissions from international shipping:
 1. Reducing annual GHG emissions from international shipping by at least 20%, striving for 30%, by 2030 from 2008 levels and by 70% (striving for 80%), by 2040 from 2008 levels.

5) UNITED NATION CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (UNCTOC) AND THE PROTOCOLS THERETO

- **Why in news?**
 - » Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri Nithyanand Rai attends two-day conference to mark the 20th anniversary of UNCTOC at Palermo, Italy (Sep 2023)
- The UNCTOC was adopted by UNGA in 2000. It is the main international instrument against transnational organized crime. It is also known as **Palermo Convention**.
- It entered into force in 2003.
- The convention is **supplemented by three protocols**:
 - » The Protocol to Prevent Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children
 - » The Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

- » The Protocol against Illicit Manufacturing or and Trafficking in Firearms, their parts and components and Ammunition.
- Countries must first become party to the convention before becoming parties to any of the protocol.
- **India** signed the convention and the three protocols in Dec 2002.
 - » CBI is the nodal agency to deal with UNTOC.

6) UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FOREST (UNFF)

- **Why in news?**
 - » The MoEF&CC organized a Country Led Initiative (CLI) event as part of the UN Forum on Forests from 26-28th Oct 2023 at the Forest Research Institute (FRI), Dehradun, Uttarakhand (Oct 2023: Source-PIB)
- **About UN Forum on Forests (UNFF)**
 - » It promotes, **management, conservation, and sustainable development of all types of forests**.
 - » It was **established in 2000** by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN.
 - » The forum meets annually at the UN HQ in New York and brings representation from all member states and forest related agencies for high-level dialogue on technical matters in odd years and policy matters on even years.
 - **Note:** The eighteenth session of UNFF (UNFF18) was held in New York in May 2023 and the UNFF19 will be held in May 2024.
 - » **Note:** The forum has universal membership and is composed of all member states of UN and Specialized agencies.
 - » **India** is a founding member of the forum.
- **About Country Led Initiative:**
 - » The CLI's primary goal is to contribute to the discussions of UNFF regarding the implementation of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UN SPF).
 - » It also aims to facilitate the sharing of best practices among UNFF member states for the implementation of SFM and UN SPF
 - » **Note:** The UN General Assembly adopted the first-ever UN Strategic Plan for Forests for the period of 2017-2030. This Strategic Plan serves as a global framework for actions at all levels to achieve the sustainable management of all types of forests, including trees outside forests, and to combat deforestation and forest degradation.

7) UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION (UNSC)

- **Why in news?**
 - » India starts four-year term as UN Statistical Commission member (Jan 2024)
- **About UN Statistical Commission:**
 - » It was established in 1946 by UN Economic and Social Council.
 - » It is the highest body of the global statistical system. It oversees the work of the UN Statistics Division (UNSD) and is a Functional Commission of the UN Economic and Social Council.
 - » It brings together Chief Statisticians from member states from around the world.

- » It is the highest decision making body for international statistical development activities, responsible for setting of statistical standards and the development of concepts and methods, including their implementation at the national and international level.

A) IN APRIL 2023, INDIA WAS ELECTED TO THE UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION FOR A FOUR-YEAR TERM WITH 46/53 VOTES IN UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL.

- » **India and South Korea** have been elected from Asia Pacific region.

B) IN JAN 2024, INDIA BEGAN ITS FOUR-YEAR TERM AS UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION MEMBER.

- The Commission consist of 24 member countries of the UN elected by UN Economic and Social Council on the basis of equitable geographic distribution.
 - » **Five Members** are from African States; Four from Asia Pacific States; Four from East European States; Four from Latin American and Caribbean States; Seven from Western Europe and other States.
- India has been able to become a member after 2 decades.
- **Significance of the tenure:**
 - » The most crucial business India will participate in is the finalization and implementation of the 2025 System of National Accounts (SNA). The current estimates of national income are based on the 2008 SNA, with 2011-12 as the base year.

C) 55TH SESSION OF THE UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION (FEB - MARCH 2024)

- At the UN headquarters -> New York.

8) UN COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (UN CSOCD)

- It is one of the eight commissions established by the UN ECOSOC since 1946 to assist it in carrying it work.
- Since the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, the CSocD has been the key UN body in charge of the follow up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Program of Action.
- **CSocD** consist of 46 members elected by ECOSOC based on equitable geographical distribution.
- **India chairs 62nd session of CSocD** (Feb 2024)
 - » It's a historic moment for India as it was the first time since 1975 that the country had held this esteemed position within the CSocD.
 - » India's Permanent Representative to the UN **Ruchira Raj** was elected as the chair of the CSocD.

9) UN RELIEF AND WORK AGENCY (UNRWA) FOR PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

- **About UNRWA**
 - » Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli Conflict, UNRWA was established by **UNGA Resolution 302 (IV) of Dec 1949** to **carry out direct relief and works programmes for Palestinian Refugees**.

- The UNRWA definition of refugee covers Palestinians who fled or were expelled from their homes during the 1948 war.
 - It started functioning on 1st May 1950 and is **funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions** from UN member states. It receives some funding from UN Budget which is mostly used for International Staffing Cost.
 - In the **absence of solution to the Palestinian Refugee Problem**, the UNGA has repeatedly renewed UNRWA's mandate.
 - The agency's human development and humanitarian services encompass primary and vocational education, primary health, relief and social services, infrastructure and camp improvement, microfinance and emergency response, including in situations of armed conflict.
 - It is **unique** in terms of its long-standing commitment to **one group of refugees**.
- » UNRWA operates in five areas:
- Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza strip, and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- » **Outside these areas** the aid for Palestinian refugees is provided by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

A) PAUSING OF THE FUNDING FOR THE AGENCY (JAN 2024)

- **USA and 8 other western countries**, which together provide more than half of the UNRWA's 2022 budget, have **decided to pause funding** for the agency. The development could have had severe implications for Palestinians in Gaza.
- **UN asked the countries to reconsider** their decision to suspend the funding as 2 million Palestinian in Gaza are dependent on UNRWA services that could be scaled back if the funding is not restored.
- **What has Israel accused UNRWA of?**
 - » It has alleged that 12 staff of UNRWA were involved in the 7th Oct 2023 attack. It has also claimed that Hamas siphons off funds given to UNRWA and fights from in and around the agency's facilities.
 - » Israel has also alleged that **"Hamas tunnels (are) running next to or under UNRWA facilities** and accuses the agency of teaching hatred of Israel in its schools,"
- **Updates:** Canada lifting ban on UNRWA funding after facing severe criticism for cutting assistance during Israel's war on Hamas (March 2024)
 - » **Finland** will also resume funding to the UN agency (March 2024)

2. INTERNATIONAL GROUPINGS

1) SASEC

- **Why in news?**

- » Prime Minister Modi laid the foundation stone for multiple road upgradation projects worth Rs 34,00 crore, under which 43 roads including 38 bridges will be upgraded as part of SASEC Corridor Connectivity (Feb 2024)

- **Introduction**

- » SASEC Program was formed in 2001 in response to the request of the four countries in South Asia - BD, Bhutan, India and Nepal - from ADB to assist in **facilitating economic cooperation among them**. The four countries comprised the **South Asia Growth Quadrangle (SAGQ)**, formed in 1996, as a vehicle of accelerating sustainable
- » Now, it brings together Maldives, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar in a project-based partnership to promote regional prosperity by improving cross-border connectivity, boosting trade among member countries, and strengthening regional economic cooperation.
 - **Membership**
 - Founding members were BD, India, Nepal and Bhutan.
 - Maldives and Sri Lanka joined in May 2014.
 - Myanmar became a part of this in Feb 2017.
- » **Secretariat**
 - Manila, Philippines-based Asian Development Bank serves as the secretariat of the SASEC countries.

- **Need of such a program**

1. **Poor Economic integration of South Asia**
2. **Poor Cross Border Energy Networks**
3. **Poor Cross border telecommunication connections**
 - Better telecommunications connections would also expand personal and business links, increasing trade at all levels.

- **Key Priority Areas Cooperation for SASEC**

- » In 2005, SASEC countries agreed on priority sectors for investment and coordinated action:
 1. **Transport**
 2. **Trade Facilitation**
 3. **Energy**
- » In 2016, SASEC countries approved the SASEC Operational Plan 2016-2025, a 10-year strategic roadmap, which introduced **4. Economic Corridor Development (ECD)** as a fourth sectoral area of focus. SASEC also supports regional initiatives in ICT.

- **Significance**

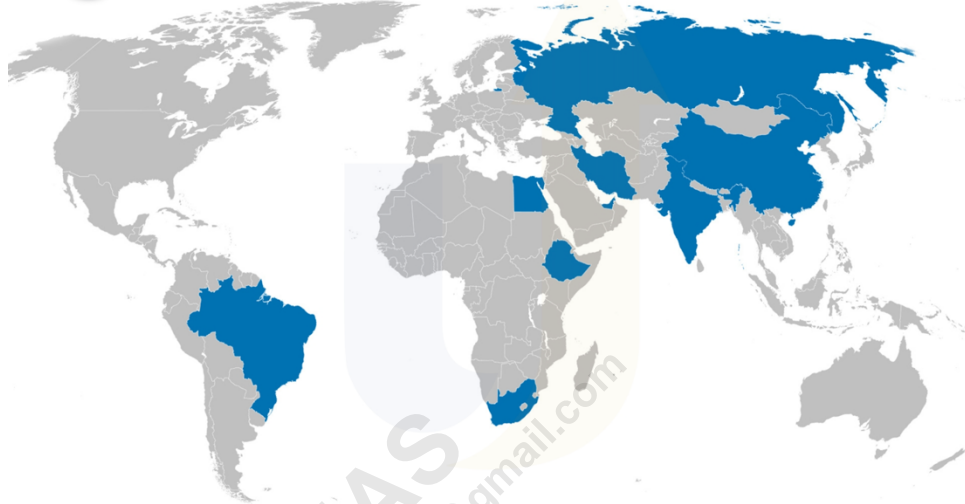
- » Promoting trade, cooperation and economic growth in the region
- » Compensate for the failure of SAARC.

2) BRICS

- **BASICS**

- » BRICS is an intergovernmental organization which comprise of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and UAE**.

- » **Originally**, the grouping was **BRIC** (and only consisted of Brazil, Russia, India and China). It became **BRICS** with the induction of **South Africa** in **2010**.
- » **Note:** The term "**BRIC**" was coined in 2001 by the then chairman of **Goldman Sachs Asset Management** **Jim O'Neil**, in his publication "**Building Better Global Economic BRICS**". On the basis of economic analysis he claimed that the four economies would individually and collectively occupy far greater economic space and become **among the world's largest economies in the next 50 years**.
- » **9 Members:** The founding countries - Brazil, Russia, India and China held the first summit in Yekaterinburg in 2009, with South Africa joining in 2010. **Iran, UAE, Ethiopia and Egypt** joined the organization on 1st Jan 2024.
- » **Note:** All five initial countries are member of G20.



- **AIMS and Objective**
 - » Promoting a **more legitimate international system** including UNSC and IMF/WB reforms
 - » Promote **South-South Cooperation** and regional cooperation.
 - » Act as a **bridge** between developed and developing countries.
 - » Present a **united front of developing countries** in climate change negotiations.
 - » Embrace cultural diversity and promote people to people contact among BRICS countries
- **In Recent years BRICS has **diversified**** its objectives and is also working towards **fighting protectionism and promoting & protecting multilateralism**. Focus on **counterterrorism** has also increased.
- **Significance of BRICS**
 - » **BRICS countries are emerging as new centre of gravity in the international economic system.**
 - BRICS countries now comprise of more than 40% of the world's population and have surpassed G7 countries in terms of purchasing power parity.
 - » **Shaping of global economic and political architecture:**
 - BRICS have managed to **increase the representation and say of developing countries and global south** in major international organizations such as IMF, WB and WTO in recent years.

- BRICS is also championing an open and multilateral world order against a growing tide of protectionism.
- **Push towards de-dollarization.**
- » **New Development Bank** has made BRICS a **serious international actor** in financial arena.
- » **Expanding the group's footprint** in key regions like middle east, Africa etc

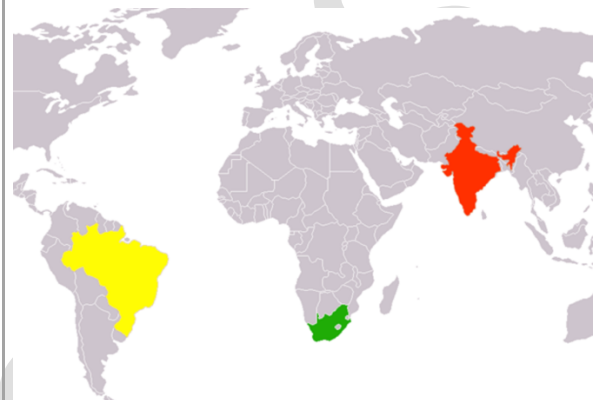
3) IBSA FORUM

It's a unique forum that brings together India, Brazil, and South Africa (three large democracies and major economies from three different continents). All three countries are developing, pluralistic, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-religious nations.

The group was formalized and named the **IBSA Dialogue Forum** when the foreign ministers of the three countries met in Brasilia on 6th June 2003 and issued the Brasilia Declaration.

Cooperation in IBSA is on three fronts:

- first, as a **forum for consultation and coordination on global and regional political issues**, such as, the reform of the global institutions of political and economic governance, WTO/Doha Development Agenda, climate change, terrorism etc.;
- second, trilateral collaboration on concrete areas/projects, through fourteen working groups and six People-to-People Forums, for the common benefit of three countries; and
- third, **assisting other developing countries by taking up projects in the latter through IBSA Fund**



A) IBSA FUND

- The **IBSA facility for poverty and hunger alleviation (IBSA Fund)** was established jointly by India, Brazil, and South Africa in May 2004. It became operational in 2006 to identify replicable and scalable projects that can be disseminated to developing countries on a demand driven basis as examples of best practices in combating poverty and hunger.
- Since its inception, 42 project in 35 countries have been supported by the fund with disbursement of US\$46.78 million.
- **India** has been a regular contributor to the IBSA fund since its inception and has contributed more than \$18 million till date.
 - **In Feb 2024**, India contributed \$US 1 million to IBSA fund.
- The informal understanding so far has been that the partners countries sponsor projects corresponding to the proportion of their contribution to the fund.

- The fund has an appeal for small states who seek funding for small and medium sized project and it has proved to be a useful outreach tool with states which we are not able to assist through bilateral development projects.

4) WEIMAR TRIANGLE

- It is a regional alliance of France, Germany and Poland, created in 1991 in the Germany city of Weimar. The group is intended to promote cooperation between the three countries in cross-border and European Issues.
- It provides the three countries with a unique forum to coordinate approaches to cross-border and European issues. Along with the governments themselves, the parliaments and civil societies of the three countries are also working closely together.
- **Update:**
 - » **In Feb 2024**, the foreign ministers of the three countries met in the Paris Suburb of La Celle-Saint-Cloud to talk about Ukraine, amid other issues. They discussed about reviving the Weimer Triangle, a long dormant regional grouping that was designed to promote cooperation between France, Germany and Poland.

5) MISSION ASPIDES

- **In Feb 2024**, EU launched 'Mission Aspides' to protect Cargo ships in Red Sea from Houthi attack.
 - » **Note:** ASPIDES is the Greek for "the Shield".
- It is a naval mission to help protect cargo ships.
- It will be run out of Larissa in Central Greece - which is home to the Hellenistic Air Force and a NATO headquarters.
- **Note:** Previously, the USA had launched Operation Prosperity Guidance with a similar mission.

3. IMPORTANT SUMMITS

1) SUMMIT FOR DEMOCRACY

- **Why in news?**
 - » PM Addresses Summit for Democracy virtually. (March 2024)
- The first summit of the Summit for Democracy was a virtual summit hosted by US in 2021.
- The second summit was held in March 2023 and was co-hosted by USA, Costa Rica, Zambia, Netherlands, and Korea.
- The **third Summit for Democracy** kicked off in March 2024 in Seoul, South Korea amid global declines in democracy and the resurgence of authoritarian tendencies.
 - » The ambition is to strengthen democratic institutions, reverse consequential backsliding globally, and tackle thorny problems, including corruption.

- » Implementing the commitments made at the S4D3 and other bilateral events is key to fully deliver concrete and sustainable democratic and anti-corruption reforms at local, national and global levels.

4. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

1) HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX

- **Why in news?**
 - » India has fallen one position from last year in the recently released Henley Passport Index (HPI) 2024 (Feb 2024)
- **DETAILS**
 - » Henley Passport Index ranks all the passports of the world according to the **number of countries their holders can travel to without prior visa**. The ranking is based on exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and lists the countries that can be accessed visa-free, with an electronic visa (e-TA) or with a Visa-on-Arrival.
- **Key Highlights of the 2024 Index:**
 - » **The most powerful** passports in the world now allow citizens of **France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan and Singapore** to travel to 194/227 countries.
 - » **Indian passport** rank 85th in the list. This came as a surprise as now Indian passport can get visa free access to 62 countries in 2024 when compared to 60 countries in 2023.
 - **Ranking of Neighbours:** Pakistan (106), BD (102), Maldives (58)
 - » **China** (rank - 64) is saw a marginal jump from last year (rank-66).

2) WORLD INEQUALITY LAB – A RESEARCH PAPER

- **India's top 1% income and wealth shares** have reached historical highs and are among the very highest in the world: Paper released by World Inequality Lab (March 2024)
 - » By 2022-23, the top 1% income share in India was 22.6% and top 1% wealth share rose to 40.1%, with India's top 1% income share among the very highest in the world, higher than even South Africa, Brazil and USA