

INTERNATIONAL RELATION**Expansionism of NATO**

When Russia launched a military invasion of Ukraine, the purported reason behind this act of territorial aggression was the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). The expansionism of NATO threatened at some undefined point in the future to allow Ukraine to join the grouping as a treaty ally and thus bring this transatlantic security coalition within striking distance of Russia's western borders.

Earlier, an emergency special session was convened by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) for discussing a resolution that called for Russia to unconditionally withdraw its troops.

What is NATO?

- It is a military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of April, 1949, by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the Soviet Union.
- There are currently 30 member states, with North Macedonia becoming the latest member to join the alliance in 2020.

What are the Origins of NATO?

- **The self-declared mission of NATO when it emerged in 1949, had three points:**
 1. Deterring Soviet expansionism.
 2. Forbidding the revival of nationalist militarism in Europe through a strong North American presence on the continent.
 3. Encouraging European political integration.
- Clearly the legacy of the Nazi (Hitler) affliction and World War II weighed heavily on the minds of the founding members of NATO.
- Although NATO claims that it is only "partially true" that its very creative was to counter the threat from the erstwhile Soviet Union, there was a strong emphasis on military cooperation and collective defence in its clauses. For example, Article 5 of the treaty proclaims that an armed attack against one or more of them (NATO members) shall be considered an attack against them all" and that following such an attack, each ally would take "such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force in response.
- The broader context at the time was that in 1955, a time when the Cold War was gaining momentum, the Soviet Union signed up socialist republics of Central and Eastern Europe to the Warsaw Pact (1955), including Albania (which withdrew in 1968), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania.
 1. The Pact, essentially a political-military alliance, was viewed as a direct strategic counterweight to NATO.
 2. Its focus at the time was the fact that while East Germany was still part of the Soviet occupied-territory of Germany, the Federal Republic of Germany had joined NATO by May 1955, and Russia began to worry about the consequences of a strengthened and rearmed West Germany at its border.
- As a unified, multilateral, political and military alliance, the Warsaw Pact was aimed at tying Eastern European capitals more closely to Russia, which it effectively did for several decades through the worst hostilities of the Cold War.
- Indeed, the Pact even gave the Soviet Union the option to contain civil uprisings and dissent across the European satellite states, including in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980-1981.
- All that began to unravel by the late 1980s, when the sheer downward pressure of inevitable economic slowdown in most Eastern European Pact (Warsaw Pact) allies reduced the potential for military cooperation to make any real difference strategically across the region.
- Thus, it hardly came as a surprise in September 1990 that East Germany quit the Pact to be reunified with West Germany, and soon Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland withdrew from all Warsaw Pact military exercises.
- The Pact was officially disbanded in early 1991 after the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself.

What Were the Rounds of Expansions Carried out by NATO?

- Even as the Soviet Union was dissolved into Russia and former Soviet republics, NATO, emboldened by circumstances and optimism that the global balance of power was tipping in its favour, embarked on a path of expansion. During the term in office of the US, NATO began, in

successive rounds of negotiation and expansion, to pull former Warsaw Pact states into its membership.

- After reunification, while Germany retained membership of NATO, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland joined the alliance in 1999. But it did not end there — in 2004, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia joined the treaty organisation.
- In 2009 Albania and Croatia signed on, in 2017 Montenegro entered the bloc and in 2020 it was North Macedonia's turn.

Why is Russia Sensitive to NATO expansion?

- In 2008, in the week leading up to NATO's Bucharest Conference, NATO Allies welcomed Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership and agreed that these countries will become members of NATO.
- They went on to announce a period of intensive engagement with both countries at a high political level to address the questions still outstanding regarding their Membership Action Plan applications.
- This set off alarm bells in Russia, because even the very concept of Ukraine, a nation considered to hold strong historic ties first to the Soviet Union, was against Russia's belief.
- This development prompted Russia to warn the US that no Russian leader could stand idly by in the face of steps toward NATO membership for Ukraine.
- That would be a hostile act toward Russia. This was only among the more recent of a long list of actions by NATO leaders that Russia considers a political betrayal.

Did NATO Violate a Promise to Avoid Expansion?

- In 1990 the US informed Russia that there would be no extension of NATO's jurisdiction for forces of NATO one inch to the east.
 1. While Russia seized upon this comment to fuel its ostensive outrage at NATO expansion into the Baltic states region.
 2. It is a fact that in early 1990, the locus of the diplomacy for the Two Plus Four – including East and West Germany plus the United States, France, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom – agreement was whether a unified Germany would be part of NATO.
- The US wanted to reassure Russia that NATO command structures and troops would not be transferred to the territory of the former German Democratic Republic.
- It was a difficult time in Russia, domestically, because in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's dissolution, there was a failure to institutionalise democratic practices, a stable market economy, and a robust law and order system.
- Facing all manner of chaos at home, erstwhile Russia began to interpret the Two Plus Four Treaty (Treaty on the final settlement with respect to Germany, 1990) as a ban on NATO expansion east of Germany.
- Russia informed the US that it ruled out “the option of expanding NATO territory eastward.”
- Through the 2000s, Russia carried on in this vein, speaking with increasing alarm and anger at NATO's steady expansion into Eastern Europe, and saying in Munich, Germany in 2007 that it is obvious that NATO expansion does not have any relation with the modernisation of the alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust.
- In 2008, following NATO announcement of its intent to admit Georgia and Ukraine into its alliance, Russia invaded Georgia and took control of several of its territorial regions, and in 2014, with Ukraine drifting closer towards an economic alliance with the European Union, Russia marched into Ukraine and seized Crimea.

2. Humanitarian Corridors

Recently, Russia declared a temporary ceasefire in the Russia-Ukraine War to provide "humanitarian corridors" for civilians. As the war enters a likely deadlier phase, numerous civilians attempt to leave the country for safety and refuge, there must be humanitarian measures taken to reduce civilian casualties.

What are Humanitarian Corridors?

- **About:** They are demilitarised zones, in a specific area and for a specific time — and both sides of an armed conflict agree to them.
 1. The United Nations (UN) considers humanitarian corridors to be one of several possible forms of a temporary pause of armed conflict.

2. For example through large-scale bombing of civilian targets — humanitarian corridors can provide crucial relief.
- **Need:** The corridors are necessary when cities are under siege and the population is cut off from basic food supplies, electricity and water.
 - **Function:** Through these corridors, either food and medical aid can be brought to areas of conflict, or civilians can be evacuated.
 - **Accessibility:** Access to humanitarian corridors is determined by the parties to the conflict. It's usually limited to neutral actors, the UN or aid organisations such as the Red Cross. They can also be used by UN observers, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and journalists to gain access to contested areas where war crimes are being committed.

What are International conventions related to the Humanitarian Corridor?

- Even before international organisations recognised humanitarian corridors, such zones were defined in armed conflicts including in World War II when Jewish children were evacuated from areas under Nazi control to the United Kingdom.
- Humanitarian corridors were defined in resolution 45/100 of the UNs' general assembly in 1990.
 1. It said that "relief corridors" are seen by the international community as an important instrument to back up the right of civilians to receive assistance during armed conflicts.
 2. It is also recognized in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977.
- In 1992, the International Institute of Humanitarian Law from Sanremo in Italy defined the concept more specifically. "Humanitarian assistance can transit, in this case, through the so-called humanitarian corridors, which must be respected and protected by the relevant authorities and, if necessary, under the authority of the UN".
- Humanitarian corridors have been frequently used in the Syrian civil war, Libyan civil war, and Gaza war among other such conflict zones.

What are Associated Issues?

- **Difficult To Enforce:** Since all sides need to agree to set up the corridors, Humanitarian corridors are difficult to enforce.
 1. There are many wars and conflicts where calls for civilian corridors or a pause in fighting have been made in vain.
 2. In the ongoing war in Yemen, for instance, the UN has so far failed in its negotiations.
- **Possible Misuse:** There is a risk of military or political abuse. For example, the corridors can be used to smuggle weapons and fuel into besieged cities.

Way Forward

Need for Humanitarian Pause: In addition to the humanitarian corridor, the global community should encourage a humanitarian pause as the corridors are constructed. A humanitarian pause would involve a temporary cessation of fighting to protect civilians. This will enable civilians to reach the corridors and move through safely.

ENVIRONMENT

Great Barrier Reef: IPCC

Recently, a report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that the Great Barrier Reef is in crisis and suffering grave impacts from climate change. The report points to three previous mass bleaching events from 2016 to 2020 that caused significant coral loss, and warns that there has been "mass mortality" of some coral species.

Great Barrier Reef, world's largest coral reef complex, located in the Pacific Ocean off northeastern Australia.

What are the Findings of the Report?

- Warming ocean temperature is causing frequent and severe coral bleaching. The worst bleaching event, in 2016, affected over 90% of the reef, and a punishing succession of bleaching incidents has left the northern and middle portion of the reef system in a highly degraded state.
- Even if the global community achieves its goal of limiting future warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius since pre-industrial times, that still wouldn't be sufficient to prevent more frequent mass bleaching events, though it may reduce their occurrence.

- The ocean warming and marine heatwaves will cause the loss and degradation of tropical shallow coral reefs, leading to “widespread destruction” of coral reef ecosystems.
- If bleaching persists, the IPCC estimates 10,000 jobs and AUD1 billion in revenue would be lost every year from declines in tourism alone.
- Around a billion people worldwide rely on coral reefs for their everyday living, which is why a failure to urgently reduce greenhouse gas emissions could have devastating effects for humanity.
- Beyond the reef, climate change will lead to a surge in heat-related deaths in Australia, the extinction of certain animal species, and more wildfires.
- Koalas are at risk of local extinctions due to increasing drought and rising temperatures.
- And rising sea levels and storm surges led to the recent extinction of a rodent species called Bramble Cay melomys, which lived on a remote cay in the northern Great Barrier Reef.
- Black Summer fires of late 2019 and early 2020 that killed at least 33 people and destroyed more than 3,000 homes.
- Even Australia’s famed eucalyptus trees, which are naturally resilient to the country’s seasonal fires, may not be able to withstand the ferocity and frequency of the predicted blazes, which could lead to the decimation of forests.
- The report also provides extensive lists of climate adaptation strategies, such as improving building standards so that homes stay cooler during potentially deadly heat waves.

What is the Great Barrier Reef?

- It is the world’s most extensive and spectacular Coral Reef ecosystem composed of over 2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands.
- The reef is located in the Coral Sea (North-East Coast), off the coast of Queensland, Australia.
- It can be seen from outer space and is the world’s biggest single structure made by living organisms.
- This reef structure is composed of and built by billions of tiny organisms, known as coral polyps.
 1. They are made up of genetically identical organisms called polyps, which are tiny, soft-bodied organisms. At their base is a hard, protective limestone skeleton called a calicle, which forms the structure of coral reefs.
 2. These polyps have microscopic algae called zooxanthellae living within their tissues. The corals and algae have a mutualistic (symbiotic) relationship.
- It was selected as a World Heritage Site in 1981.

What are the Initiatives to Protect Corals?

- A number of global initiatives are being taken to address the issues, like:
 1. International Coral Reef Initiative
 2. Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN)
 3. Global Coral Reef Alliance (GCRA)
 4. The Global Coral Reef R&D Accelerator Platform
- Similarly, the Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), India has included the studies on coral reefs under the Coastal Zone Studies (CZS).
 1. In India, the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), with help from Gujarat’s forest department, is attempting a process to restore coral reefs using “biorock” or mineral accretion technology.
 2. National Coastal Mission Programme, to protect and sustain coral reefs in the country.

PRELIMS FACT

Flying Trainer HANSA-NG

Recently, HANSA-NG, a first of its kind, indigenously developed aircraft trainer has completed sea level trials. It is developed by the CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL).

- National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), a constituent of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) established in the year 1959 is the only government aerospace Research & Development laboratory in the country's civilian sector.
- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is the largest Research and Development (R&D) organisation in India.

What are the features of HANSA-NG?

- The HANSA-NG, or HANSA-New Generation, is one of the most advanced flying trainers.
 1. HANSA-NG is an upgraded version of HANSA, which saw the first flight in 1993, and was certified in 2000.
 2. The Centre approved HANSA-NG in 2018 and NAL retro-modified HANSA-3 aircraft with a glass cockpit and got it certified by DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation). The aircraft was demonstrated at Aero-India 2019.
- It is powered by a Rotax Digital Control Engine and is designed to meet the need for trainer aircraft by flying clubs in India.
- It is an ideal aircraft for Commercial Pilot Licensing (CPL) due to its low cost and low fuel consumption.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE
Qns. Explain what is GDP and GVA and how are they useful in growth calculation? (250 words)
Introduction

Gross domestic product (GDP) is the total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period. As a broad measure of overall domestic production, it functions as a comprehensive scorecard of a given country's economic health.

Gross value added (GVA) is a measure of total output and income in the economy. It provides the rupee value for the amount of goods and services produced in an economy after deducting the cost of inputs and raw materials that have gone into the production of those goods and services. It also gives sector-specific picture like what is the growth in an area, industry or sector of an economy. GVA is important because it is used to adjust GDP, which is a key indicator of the state of a nation's total economy.

Body
How GDP differs from GVA

- While GVA gives a picture of the state of economic activity from the producers' side or supply side, the GDP gives the picture from the consumers' side or demand perspective.
- Both measures need not match because of the difference in treatment of net taxes.
- At the macro level, from a national accounting perspective, GVA is the sum of a country's GDP and net of subsidies and taxes in the economy. $\text{Gross Value Added} = \text{GDP} + \text{subsidies on products} - \text{taxes on products}$

GDP and GVA in growth calculation

- Gross Value Added makes up a significant part of the total GDP of the country.
- When goods are produced, the final value attached before taxes and subsidiaries are charged, is the contribution that the said producer has made.
- GDP, while is a substantial value that measures the growth and development of the country, GVA provides the same picture, albeit more objectively and includes all the primary incomes.
- A sector-wise breakdown provided by the GVA measure helps policymakers decide which sectors need incentives or stimulus and accordingly formulate sector-specific policies.
- From a global data standards and uniformity perspective, GVA is an integral and necessary parameter in measuring a nation's economic performance.
- But GDP is a key measure when it comes to making cross-country analysis and comparing the incomes of different economies.

Conclusion

While India had been measuring GVA earlier, it had done so using 'factor cost' and GDP at 'factor cost' was the main parameter for measuring the country's overall economic output till the new methodology was adopted in 2015. In the new series, in which the base year was shifted to 2011-12 from the earlier 2004-05, GVA at basic prices became the primary measure of output across the economy's various sectors and when added to net taxes on products amounts to the GDP.

DAILY QUIZ

Q1. Which Article of the Constitution of India safeguards one's right to marry the person of one's choice?

- a. Article 19
- b. **Article 21**
- c. Article 25

d. Article 29

Q2. Consider the following statements about ISRO's Earth Observation Satellite -04:

1. It is a radar imaging satellite capable of providing high-quality images under all weather conditions.
2. The satellite has a mission life of 100 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. **1 only**
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q3. The outermost part of the Sun's atmosphere is called the

- a. Photosphere
- b. Chromosphere
- c. Corona
- d. None of the above

Q4. The word Modified Elephant is sometimes mentioned in media in reference to:

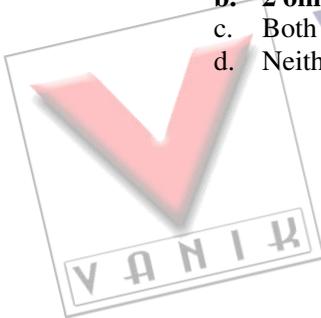
- a. **Hacking group**
- b. Human-wildlife conflict
- c. Genetically modified Elephant
- d. None of the above

Q5. Consider the following statements about One Ocean Summit:

1. It was recently organised by Indian Ocean Commission.
2. It aims to raise the collective level of ambition of the international community on marine issues.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. **2 only**
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2



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