



9th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus

For Prelims: ASEAN, cross-border terrorism, Food Security

For Mains: Groupings & Agreements Involving India and/or Affecting India's Interests

Why in News?

Recently, the Defence Minister of India participated in the 9th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

What are the Key Highlights of the address by India?

- **On Terrorism:**
 - India called for **urgent and resolute global efforts to counter transnational and cross-border terrorism**, terming it as the gravest threat to regional and global security.
- **Other Security Concerns:**
 - India brought to the forum's attention other security concerns arising out of the global **Covid-19 pandemic**, such as Energy and **Food Security**.
- **On Maritime Security:**
 - **India advocates a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region** and calls for peaceful resolution of disputes while respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
 - It was also stated that the ongoing ASEAN-China negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the **South China Sea** should be fully consistent with international law, in particular **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** and should not prejudice the legitimate rights and interests of nations that are not party to these discussions.

What is ADMM-Plus?

- **About:**
 - The 2nd ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) in 2007 at Singapore adopted a resolution to establish the ADMM-Plus.
 - The first ADMM-Plus was convened at Hanoi, Vietnam in 2010.
 - Brunei is the Chair of the ADMM Plus forum for the year 2021.
 - It is an **annual meeting of Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN countries** and eight dialogue partner countries.
 - The **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** is a regional organization which was established to promote political and social stability amid rising tensions among the Asia-Pacific's post-colonial states.
- **Membership:**
 - The ADMM-Plus countries include **ten ASEAN Member States** (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia) and **eight Plus countries**, namely **Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and the United States**.

- **Aim:**
 - It aims to **promote mutual trust and confidence between defence establishments** through greater dialogue and transparency.
- **Areas of cooperation:**
 - Maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations and military medicine.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. India is a member of which among the following? (2015)

1. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
2. Association of South-East Asian Nations
3. East Asia Summit

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
 (b) 3 only
 (c) 1, 2 and 3
 (d) India is a member of none of them

Ans: (b)

- Established in 1989, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) cites minimum eligibility that countries must share borders with the Pacific Ocean to be a member. India is not a member and was invited to be an observer for the first time in November 2011. It is a 21 member body. **Hence, 1 is not correct.**
- Established in 1961, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional intergovernmental organization comprising ten countries in Southeast Asia, which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic, political, security, military, educational, and socio-cultural integration among its members and other countries in Asia. India is located in South Asia and is not a member of ASEAN. **Hence, 2 is not correct.**
- Established in 2005, the East Asia Summit (EAS) is an 18 member States body for strategic dialogue and cooperation on the key political, security, and economic challenges facing the Indo-Pacific region. It comprises the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states along with 8 members-Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States. **Hence, 3 is correct. Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q2. Consider the following countries: (2018)

1. Australia
2. Canada
3. China
4. India
5. Japan
6. USA

Which of the above are among the 'free-trade partners' of ASEAN?

- (a) 1, 2, 4 and 5
 (b) 3, 4, 5 and 6
 (c) 1, 3, 4 and 5
 (d) 2, 3, 4 and 6

Ans: (c)

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has free trade agreements with six partners, namely the People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Japan, India as well as Australia and New

Zealand. **Hence, 1, 3, 4 and 5 are correct.**

- ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the founding fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam joined on 7 January 1984, Vietnam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999, making up what is today the ten member states of ASEAN. **Therefore, option (c) is the correct answer.**

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