

21st ASEAN-India Summit

Why In News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will **attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** in Vientiane, the capital of Lao PDR, as part of this two-day visit to the country.
- In a statement, the PM said, “This year we are marking a decade of our **Act East Policy**. I will join the ASEAN leaders to review progress in our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and chart the future direction of our cooperation.”



What Is ASEAN

- **On August 8, 1967, five Southeast Asian leaders** – the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – came together in Bangkok. Thailand was brokering some disputes among Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, and the event eventually led to the signing of a document.
- “The five Foreign Ministers who signed it – Adam Malik of Indonesia, Narciso R. Ramos of the Philippines, Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia, S. Rajaratnam of Singapore, and Thanat Khoman of Thailand – would subsequently be hailed as the **Founding Fathers of probably the most successful** inter-governmental

organisation in the developing world today. And the document that they signed would be known as the **ASEAN Declaration**,” the ASEAN website states.



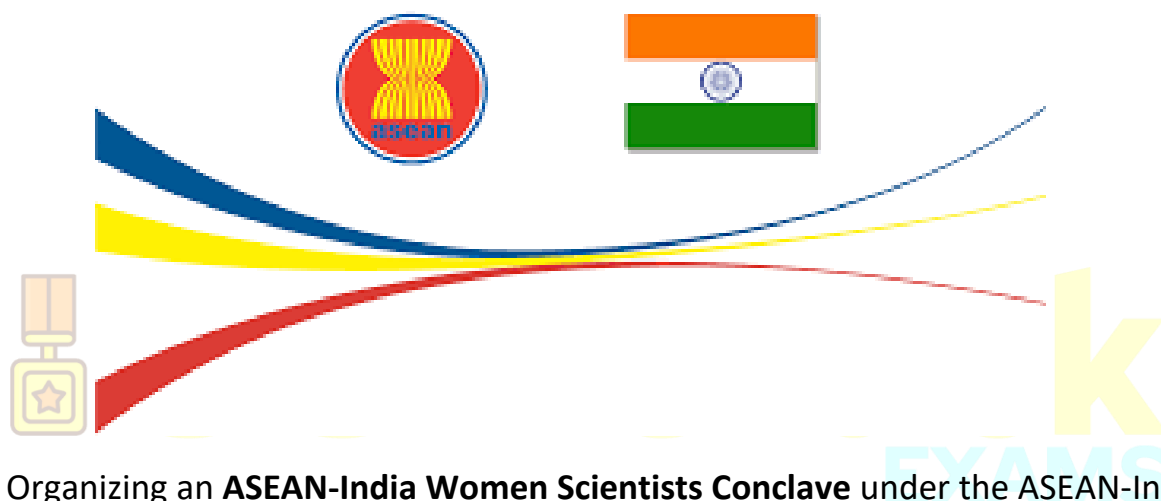
- Five others joined – Brunei Darussalam, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam. The 10-nation grouping has an anthem, a flag and biannual summits (twice a year) with a rotating chairmanship.
- An example of the focus on unity, its official motto is **“One Vision, One Identity, One Community”**. Its major pillars are Political-Security Community (APSC), Economic Community (AEC) and Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC).

10-Point Plan

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a **10-point plan to strengthen India-ASEAN** comprehensive partnership and asserted that ties with the regional grouping were critical to guiding Asia's future.



- Addressing the 21st India-ASEAN Summit here, Modi noted that India-ASEAN trade had **doubled to over \$130 billion in the past decade** and announced a review of the trade in goods agreement to harness the greater economic potential of the partnership.
- Celebrating 2025 as the '**ASEAN-India Year of Tourism,**' with India contributing \$5 million for joint activities.
- Marking the tenth anniversary of the '**Act East**' policy through various initiatives such as a youth summit, start-up festival, hackathon, and a music festival.



- Organizing an **ASEAN-India Women Scientists Conclave** under the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund.
- Doubling **scholarships at Nalanda University** and providing new scholarships for ASEAN students at agricultural universities in India.
- Reviewing the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement by 2025.
- Initiating a new Health Ministers' track to enhance health resilience, alongside a regular mechanism for ASEAN-India Cyber Policy Dialogue.
- Hosting workshops on green hydrogen and inviting ASEAN leaders to participate in the 'Plant a Tree for Mother' campaign.

Other Events

- Prime Minister Modi witnessed a performance of **Lao Ramayan-called Phalak Phalam** or Phra Lak Phra Ram-by the prestigious Royal Theatre of Luang Prabang.

- This is the Lao adaptation of the ancient epic Ramayana. The Prime Minister also participated in a blessing ceremony by Buddhist monks from the Central Buddhist Fellowship Organization of Lao PDR.



- PM is also scheduled to attend the **19th East Asia Summit in Vientiane** during his visit. Earlier, in his departure statement, the Prime Minister said India shares close cultural and civilizational ties with the ASEAN region, including Lao PDR, which are enriched by the shared heritage of Buddhism and the Ramayana.

