

Daily Current Affairs

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China to Launch K Visa

- As the U.S. enforces steep hikes and restrictions on H-1B visa applications, China is stepping in with a new immigration initiative.
- From October 1, 2025, China will officially launch the K Visa to attract young STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) professionals and researchers from around the world, offering an alternative route for global talent looking to work abroad.
- The K Visa is China's newly announced visa category designed to,
 - Attract young science and tech professionals
 - Encourage academic, cultural, and entrepreneurial exchanges
 - Offer flexibility in duration of stay, multiple entries, and employment conditions
- **Eligibility Criteria**
 - Recent graduates or professionals in STEM fields
 - Bachelor's degree or higher from recognized global or Chinese institutions
 - No requirement for a local sponsor or employer



India Secures Exclusive Rights for Polymetallic Sulphides Exploration

- Union Minister of State for Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh, announced a historic milestone: India has secured exclusive rights for exploration of Polymetallic Sulphides (PMS) in the Carlsberg Ridge, Indian Ocean.
- The 15-year contract signed between the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and the International Seabed Authority (ISA) grants India access to explore a 10,000 sq km area, making it the first country in the world to hold two PMS exploration contracts.
- By securing rights in the Carlsberg Ridge, India expands its strategic footprint in the Indian Ocean and builds national capacity for future resource utilization.
- **Support to Deep Ocean Mission**
 - Launched by PM Narendra Modi, the Deep Ocean Mission focuses on,
 - Exploration of seabed minerals
 - Development of mining technologies
 - Strengthening of India's Blue Economy initiatives
- **What are Polymetallic Sulphides (PMS)?**
 - Polymetallic Sulphides are rich deposits of valuable metals formed from hydrothermal activity on the ocean floor.
 - Key metals include iron, copper, zinc, silver, gold, and platinum.
 - Due to their strategic and commercial value, PMS exploration is attracting increasing global attention.



BBNJ Treaty to Enter into Force in January 2026

- In a landmark achievement for global ocean governance, the BBNJ Treaty (Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction) has reached the crucial milestone of 60 ratifications, ensuring its entry into force on January 17, 2026.
- This treaty, developed under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), will significantly enhance conservation efforts for marine biodiversity in international waters, often called the “high seas.”
- What is the BBNJ Treaty?
- **What is the BBNJ Treaty?**
- Protecting marine life in areas beyond national jurisdictions, which lie beyond 200 nautical miles from a country’s exclusive economic zone (EEZ)
- Supporting sustainable use of oceanic resources
- Ensuring fair access to marine genetic resources
- Standardizing Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for ocean activities
- 143 countries, including India, have signed the treaty
- 60 countries have ratified it—triggering its enforcement in January 2026
- Recent ratifications include: Sri Lanka, Morocco, Sierra Leone, St. Vincent & the Grenadines

- More ratifications expected during the UN General Assembly High-Level Week beginning September 22, 2025



UK PM Keir Starmer Honoured with 'Living Bridge' Award

- British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has been awarded the prestigious 'Living Bridge' honour for his instrumental role in fostering deeper India-UK relations and successfully concluding the long-awaited India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- The award, presented at a ceremony in the House of Lords in London on September 23, 2025, recognizes individuals and organisations who significantly contribute to strengthening bilateral ties.
- **The India-UK FTA**
 - Aims to double bilateral trade to USD 120 billion by 2030
 - Provides enhanced market access, reduces tariff barriers, and boosts investment flows
 - Covers sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, fintech, education, legal services, AI, and sustainability
 - Promotes mutual recognition of standards, protecting businesses and enhancing predictability



MDL Signs MoU with Tamil Nadu

- Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) has signed a MoU with the Government of Tamil Nadu to explore the development of a world-class greenfield shipyard on the country's eastern coast.
- This strategic collaboration falls under the ambitious Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, a long-term blueprint laid out by the Government of India to bolster the nation's maritime capabilities and shipbuilding ecosystem.
- This proposed shipyard is envisioned to be a state-of-the-art facility that will enhance India's shipbuilding capacity, naval preparedness, and commercial maritime prowess.
- Establishing such a shipyard on the eastern coast complements existing infrastructure on the western coast, helping to balance regional industrial development and create high-value jobs in Tamil Nadu.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. MDL signed an MoU with the Government of Tamil Nadu to explore the development of what?

- A. Offshore oil rigs
- B. Greenfield shipyard on the eastern coast
- C. Defence aviation hub
- D. Submarine base

ANSWER: B

2. Which country's Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, has been awarded the prestigious 'Living Bridge' honour?

- A. United States
- B. United Kingdom
- C. Canada
- D. Australia

ANSWER: B

3. Keir Starmer was honoured for his role in fostering deeper India-UK relations and successfully concluding which agreement? The Silver Award at the

- A. India-UK Defence Pact
- B. India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA)
- C. India-UK Climate Action Plan
- D. India-UK Technology Partnership

ANSWER: B

4. The India-UK Free Trade Agreement is also known as:

- A. SAFTA
- B. CETA
- C. RCEP
- D. TPP

ANSWER: B

5. When is the UK parliamentary ratification of the India-UK FTA expected?

- A. 2024
- B. 2025
- C. 2026
- D. 2027

ANSWER: C

6. The BBNJ Treaty focuses on protecting marine life in areas beyond national jurisdictions. Such areas lie beyond how many nautical miles from a country's EEZ?

- A. 50 nautical miles
- B. 100 nautical miles
- C. 150 nautical miles
- D. 200 nautical miles

ANSWER: D

7. The BBNJ Treaty will officially enter into force on:

- A. January 1, 2025
- B. January 17, 2026
- C. December 31, 2026
- D. February 15, 2027

ANSWER: B

8. India has secured exclusive rights for exploration of Polymetallic Sulphides (PMS) in which region?

- A. Mid-Atlantic Ridge
- B. Carlsberg Ridge, Indian Ocean
- C. East Pacific Rise
- D. Mariana Trench

ANSWER: B

9. Which mission launched by PM Modi focuses on exploration of seabed minerals, mining technologies?

- A. Sagarmala Project
- B. Deep Ocean Mission
- C. Oceanic Development Programme
- D. Maritime Vision 2030

ANSWER: B

10. Which country announced the launch of the new 'K Visa' to attract young STEM professionals?

- A. United States
- B. China
- C. Japan
- D. Germany

ANSWER: B

