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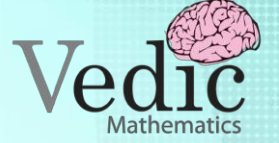
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International News

I. Geopolitical Relations & Diplomacy

EU-China Relations at a Crossroads: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen participated in a European Parliament debate on EU-China relations on July 8, calling it "one of the most defining and consequential of the century." However, the upcoming EU-China Summit (July 24-25) in China is anticipated to be a "non-summit," reflecting strained relations. Key issues include China's role in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the EU's €400 billion trade deficit with China due to what the EU sees as unfair industrial policies, and China's criticism of the EU's carbon border adjustment mechanism and anti-subsidy duties on Chinese EVs. The summit's location in China (after President Xi Jinping declined an invitation to Brussels) and the expected attendance of Premier Li Qiang instead of Xi, further underscore the difficulties.

India-Saudi Arabia Strengthen Ties: India has signed a significant 5-year agreement with Saudi Arabia's Maaden company to secure 3.1 million metric tons of DAP fertilizer annually from 2025 to 2030, a substantial increase from previous years. This deal, finalized during Minister JP Nadda's visit (July 11-13), includes exploring cooperation in Urea supply, investments, and research. Discussions also covered collaborations in digital health, pharma production, and healthcare services.

India Joins Australia's Largest Military Drill:

India has joined Exercise Talisman Sabre for the first time, Australia's largest warfighting drill, which commenced on July 13, 2025. This exercise involves 19 nations, including the US and over 35,000 troops, signalling deepening defence and security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

II. Ongoing Conflicts & Security Concerns

Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Russia launched its third large-scale drone and missile strike in July against Ukraine on the night of July 11-12, bringing the total to over 500 drones and missiles this month. Recent reports also indicate multiple casualties from Russian missile attacks in various Ukrainian regions, and Ukrainian SBU drones striking Russian targets far behind the front lines, including an electromechanical plant in Udmurtia and military assets in Crimea. The United States reportedly halted some key weapons shipments to Ukraine, including aerial defense and precision-guided munitions, citing concerns about American domestic stockpiles.

Middle East & Yemen: Renewed maritime hostilities by the Houthis in the Red Sea and retaliatory Israeli air strikes have led to a "deeply volatile and unpredictable period" in Yemen and the wider region, as warned by a top UN official to the Security Council on July 8, urging immediate de-escalation. The EU remains committed to a two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and continues to press for humanitarian aid access in Gaza, expressing deep concern over the deteriorating situation and the imminent collapse of humanitarian operations if fuel is not urgently allowed to enter.





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Counter-Terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel:

On July 15, the UN Security Council held an informal interactive dialogue on enhancing regional counter-terrorism cooperation in West Africa and the Sahel. This region faces a rapidly deteriorating security situation with increasing terrorist activity and a notable shift in partnerships, including an increased Russian presence (e.g., Africa Corps) following the withdrawal of Western military assistance.

III. Global Governance & International Bodies

UN Ocean Conference 2025 (Nice, France): The conference concluded with strong calls for accelerated action to protect the ocean, adopting the "Nice Ocean Action Plan" in support of SDG 14. Key outcomes included renewed support for the High Seas Treaty (now with 50 ratifications after 19 countries ratified during the conference, needing 60 to enter into force) and rising international calls for a precautionary pause on deep-sea mining.

17th BRICS Summit (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil): Held on July 6-7, 2025, Brazil hosted the expanded BRICS alliance (now including Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE). The summit's theme was "Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance," with discussions focusing on global health cooperation, trade, investment, climate change, AI governance, and multilateral peace and security.

G20 Meetings in South Africa: South Africa, as the current G20 host, is holding various working group meetings in July 2025, including the Second Climate and Environment Sustainability Working Group Meeting and the Fourth G20

Finance and Central Bank Deputies and Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meetings, both from July 14-18, 2025.

IV. Other Significant International Developments

Millionaire Migration 2025: A record 142,000 millionaires are projected to relocate globally in 2025, with the top countries gaining High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs) being the USA, UAE, and Singapore.

Antarctic Sea Ice at Record Lows: New studies confirm that Antarctica's summer sea ice is melting at record levels, warming the ocean, damaging ecosystems, and posing long-term climate risks. This includes increasing surface meltwater in East Antarctica, traditionally considered too cold for substantial surface melting.

Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) India: India launched the world's first digital library to protect and share traditional medicine. The library uses AI to study Ayurveda, Unani, and other systems, a move praised by WHO as a step toward merging traditional knowledge with modern healthcare.

MCQS

1. What is the estimated trade deficit the EU currently has with China, largely due to what the EU perceives as unfair industrial policies?

- a) €100 billion
- b) €250 billion
- c) €400 billion
- d) €50 billion

Answer: c) €400 billion





The text states: "Key issues include... the EU's €400 billion trade deficit with China due to what the EU sees as unfair industrial policies..."

2. India has signed a 5-year agreement with Saudi Arabia's Maaden company to secure annual supply of what crucial agricultural input?

- a) Crude oil
- b) Wheat
- c) DAP fertilizer
- d) Gold

Answer: c) DAP fertilizer

The text highlights: "India has signed a significant 5-year agreement with Saudi Arabia's Maaden company to secure 3.1 million metric tons of DAP fertilizer annually from 2025 to 2030..."

3. India recently joined which country's largest warfighting drill, Exercise Talisman Sabre, for the first time?

- a) United States
- b) Japan
- c) Australia
- d) United Kingdom

Answer: c) Australia

The text mentions: "India has joined Exercise Talisman Sabre for the first time, Australia's largest warfighting drill, which commenced on July 13, 2025."

4. According to reports in July 2025, which country reportedly halted some key weapons shipments to Ukraine, citing concerns about domestic stockpiles?

- a) Germany
- b) United States
- c) United Kingdom
- d) France

Answer: b) United States

The text states: "The United States reportedly halted some key weapons shipments to Ukraine, including aerial defense and precision-guided munitions, citing concerns about American domestic stockpiles."

5. What major shift in partnerships in West Africa and the Sahel is observed following the withdrawal of Western military assistance, leading to an increased presence from another global power?

- a) Increased Chinese investment
- b) Increased Indian humanitarian aid
- c) Increased Russian presence (e.g., Africa Corps)
- d) Increased Turkish military training

Answer: c) Increased Russian presence (e.g., Africa Corps)

The text describes: "...a notable shift in partnerships, including an increased Russian presence (e.g., Africa Corps) following the withdrawal of Western military assistance."

6. At the UN Ocean Conference 2025, how many additional countries ratified the High Seas Treaty, bringing the total to 50, with 60 needed for entry into force?

- a) 10
- b) 19
- c) 25
- d) 30

Answer: b) 19

The text states: "Key outcomes included renewed support for the High Seas Treaty (now with 50 ratifications after 19 countries ratified during the conference, needing 60 to enter into force)..."





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7. Which country hosted the 17th BRICS Summit on July 6-7, 2025?

- a) India
- b) China
- c) South Africa
- d) Brazil

Answer: d) Brazil

The text explicitly mentions: "Held on July 6-7, 2025, Brazil hosted the expanded BRICS alliance..."

8. What is the overarching theme of the 17th BRICS Summit?

- a) "Global Economic Recovery and Trade Liberalization"
- b) "Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance"
- c) "Technological Innovation and Digital Transformation"
- d) "Addressing Climate Change and Environmental Protection"

Answer: b) "Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance"

The text provides: "The summit's theme was 'Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance'..."

9. Which three countries are projected to be the top gainers of High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs) in the "Millionaire Migration 2025" report?

- a) Canada, Germany, Australia
- b) USA, UAE, Singapore
- c) China, UK, India
- d) Japan, South Korea, Switzerland

Answer: b) USA, UAE, Singapore

The text states: "...with the top countries gaining High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs) being the USA, UAE, and Singapore."

10. What is India's Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) designed to do, as praised by WHO?

- a) Digitally preserve ancient historical documents.
- b) Protect and share traditional medicine systems using AI.
- c) Provide online access to modern medical research papers.
- d) Facilitate international trade in herbal products.

Answer: b) Protect and share traditional medicine systems using AI.

The text describes: "India launched the world's first digital library to protect and share traditional medicine. The library uses AI to study Ayurveda, Unani, and other systems..."

