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### 1. 7 countries whose leaders attended Modi's swearing today

#### Why in News?

Narendra Modi has been sworn in as the Prime Minister of India for a third time. A number of dignitaries were present for the functions, including the leaders of seven countries with whom India shares a close relationship.



#### 1. Bangladesh, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

Export-import: \$11.1 Billion - \$1.8 Billion

India and Bangladesh have deep historical ties rooted in India's role in Bangladesh's liberation. Today, they share a robust trade relationship, which amounted to \$12.9 Billion in the 2023-24 financial year, with India exporting machinery and textile, while Bangladesh exports garments and fish. The country has consistently been among the top five to ten export destinations for India. Culturally, too, Bangladesh and India share close bonds with frequent cultural exchanges and educational collaborations taking place.

Bangladesh, specifically Sheikh Hasina's dispensation, has been crucial for India's national security by clamping down on militants and separatist groups who used to seek shelter there.

Currently, India and Bangladesh are still working towards improving connectivity, and a comprehensive water-sharing agreement.

## **2. Sri Lanka, President Ranil Wickremesinghe**

Export-import: \$4.1 Billion - \$1.4 Billion

Ties between the people of India and Sri Lanka can be traced back to ancient times. In 2023-24, their bilateral trade was valued at \$5.5 billion, with significant Indian exports of petroleum and automobiles.

Both India and Sri Lanka share deep religious and cultural ties, especially between the minority Sri Lankan Tamils and the Tamils of India. Future discussions between the two countries are expected to focus on enhancing maritime security cooperation, settle maritime disputes, and strengthen economic cooperation.

## **3. Nepal, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias 'Prachanda'**

Export-import \$7 Billion - \$0.9 Billion

India and Nepal share an open-border relationship, reflecting their deep historical and cultural ties. In 2023-24, bilateral trade amounted to \$7.9 Billion, dominated by Indian exports of petroleum products and machinery. The two countries also share deep cultural and religious ties, with a thriving tourism industry (especially religious tourism) between the two countries. Energy and water-sharing disputes have in the past been a sticking point.

## **4. Maldives, President Mohammad Muizzu**

Export-import: \$0.9 Billion - \$0.09 Billion

Over the years, India and the Maldives have maintained close ties. Most notably, India helped prevent a coup in Maldives in 1988. The Indian Armed Forces continued to have a modest presence in the archipelago, until President Muizzu came in on an "India Out" platform. Relationships have since soured, but Muizzu's presence in New Delhi indicates a possible thaw. In 2023-24, trade between the two nations felt just sort of \$1 billion, primarily involving marine products and construction materials. Many students from Maldives come to India for further studies. Apart from improving strained ties, upcoming discussions will likely be centred around issues such as climate change and sustainable development.

## **5. Seychelles, Vice President Ahmed Afif**

Export-import: \$76 million-\$9 million

India and Seychelles share a strategic relationship, particularly in maritime security and environmental cooperation. Located north of Madagascar, Seychelles is among the most strategically important archipelagos in the Indian Ocean. Trade between the two countries was valued at \$85 million in 2023-24, with a focus on fisheries and tourism.

Both nations have, in the past, engaged in joint heritage conservation projects. Future dialogues will aim to bolster environmental protection agreements, crucial for addressing climate change whose impacts will be disastrous for the island country.

## 6. Bhutan, Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay

Export-import: \$964 million- \$339 million

India and Bhutan are, what one can call, all weather friends with significant economic and cultural exchanges. In 2023-24, bilateral trade was \$1.3 billion, with India being a major partner in Bhutan's hydroelectric power sector. Cultural ties are reinforced through educational exchanges and collaborative efforts in preserving Bhutanese heritage. Future discussions will likely focus on expanding economic cooperation through new trade agreements.

## 7. Mauritius, Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth

Export-import: \$778 million-\$74 million

India and Mauritius enjoy close relations, underpinned by strong cultural and economic ties. Bilateral trade in 2023-24 was valued at \$ 852 million, with key exports from Mauritius including textiles and sugar. Culturally, the countries are connected by a significant Indian diaspora in Mauritius, which is celebrated through regular cultural events and exchanges. Future talks will focus on enhancing strategic partnership in sectors like digital technology and the blue economy (economic activity associated with the sea).

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Bilateral Relations

Source: The Hindu

## 2. What happens at a swearing-in ceremony and what oaths have to be taken?

### Why in News?

Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi was appointed to the post at a swearing-in ceremony. Also called the oath-taking ceremony, the formal event signifies a person assuming control of a post.



### What is a swearing-in ceremony?

It is the formal taking of office, where the person set to occupy the office swears to be loyal to the Constitution and to discharge their duties faithfully.

At different levels of government, the oath is administered by different people. For CMs and ministers at the state level, the Governor administers the oath. For the Prime Minister and the Union Cabinet, the President discharges the function. The oath of office to the President is administered by the Chief Justice of India.

Those taking the oath can either swear in the name of God, or simply "solemnly affirm" (more on this later). The ceremony also underlines the layers which make up India's political power structure, and affirms the supremacy of the Constitution in our polity.

### And what exactly do they swear to?

The words of the oath of allegiance for each post are given in the Constitution of India. The President's oath of office, in Article 60 of the Constitution, says, "I, A. B., do swear in the name of God/solemnly affirm that I will faithfully execute the office of President (or discharge the functions of the President) of India and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law and that I will devote myself to the service and well-being of the people of India."

The Third Schedule of the Constitution details the oaths for other offices. Holders of these offices also take an oath of secrecy.

Form of oath of secrecy for a Minister for the Union:— "I, A.B., do swear in the name of God/solemnly affirm that I will not directly or indirectly communicate or reveal to any person or persons any matter which shall be brought under my consideration or shall become known to me as a Minister for the Union except as may be required for the due discharge of my duties as such Minister," the Schedule reads.

There are a few variations to these words in the oaths for post-holders at the state level.

#### **Are variations of oaths allowed?**

As earlier reported, constitutional experts and those familiar with procedures and rules of swearing-in ceremonies say that Article 164 makes it clear that the text of the oath has to be read out exactly as it is.

In 2019, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray invoked Chattrapati Shivaji and "my parents" before reading out the oath, while his minister Eknath Shinde named Bal Thackeray. While BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis objected and said these acts violated the oath itself, several experts disagreed with that argument.

Former Maharashtra Advocate General Shreehari Aney said: "It is the content of the oath that is important. That should be as per the format laid down in the Constitution. Addition something before or after the oath is not unlawful as long as the substance of the oath is unaltered."

Similarly, in the Karnataka cabinet's swearing-in ceremony in 2023, Yamakanmardi MLA Satish Jarkiholi took oath in the name of Buddha and Basavanna, while Chamrajpet MLA Zameer Ahmed Khan took oath in the name of Allah and his mother.

But if a person wanders from the text, it is the responsibility of the person administering the oath — in this instance the Governor — to interrupt and ask the person being sworn in to read it out correctly.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: Indian Express

### **3. Highway to 'climate hell': What breaching the 1.5 degree Celsius warming threshold could mean**

## Why in News?

This May was the warmest May ever. In fact, each of the last 12 months have set a new warming record for that particular month, Europe's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said last week.

The average global temperature last month was 1.5 degree Celsius above the estimated May average for the 1850-1900 pre-industrial reference period. For the 12-month period (June 2023 – May 2024), the average temperature stood at 1.63 degree Celsius above the 1850-1900 average.

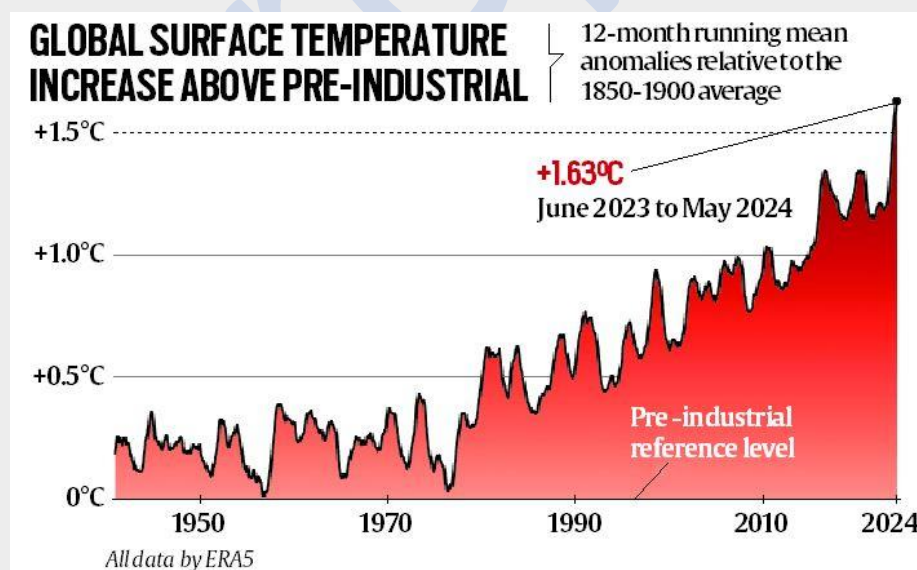
The World Meteorological Organization (WMO), in a separate report published on June 6, said there is now an 80% chance that at least one calendar year between 2024 and 2028 would see its average temperature exceed 1.5 degree Celsius above the pre-industrial levels — for the first time in history. Just a year ago, the WMO had predicted a 66% chance of the same.

Scary as these facts are, they do not imply that the world is about to breach the commonly talked about 1.5 degree Celsius temperature threshold. That threshold refers to a warming over a longer period, with usually a two or three decade average taken into consideration.

## What is the 1.5 degree Celsius threshold?

In 2015, 195 countries signed the Paris Agreement, which pledged to limit global temperatures to "well below" 2 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century. It also said countries would aim to curb warming within the safer 1.5 degree Celsius limit.

While the Agreement did not mention a particular pre-industrial period, climate scientists generally consider 1850 to 1900 as a baseline, since it is the earliest period with reliable, near-global measurements. Some anthropogenic global warming had already taken place at that time — the Industrial Revolution began in England in the mid-1700s. Nonetheless, a reliable baseline is crucial to measure the rising temperatures today.



## Why 1.5 degree Celsius?

The safer 1.5 degree Celsius limit was chosen based on a fact-finding report, which found that breaching the threshold could lead to “some regions and vulnerable ecosystems” facing high risks, over an extended, decades-long period.

The 1.5 degree Celsius was set as a “defence line”, to ensure that the world avoids the disastrous and irreversible adverse effects of climate change which would begin to unfold once the average temperature increases by 2 degree Celsius above the pre-industrial levels. For some regions, even a smaller spike will be catastrophic.

### **What happens when threshold is breached?**

The 1.5 degree Celsius threshold is not a light switch which, if turned on, would trigger a climate apocalypse. It is just that once this threshold is breached for a long period of time, the impact of climate change such as sea level rise, intense floods and droughts, and wildfires will significantly increase and accelerate.

The world is already witnessing these consequences, to some extent. For instance, the severe heatwave over North and Central India in late May, which saw temperatures nearing 50 degree Celsius in Delhi and Rajasthan, was nearly 1.5 degree Celsius warmer than past heatwaves. The heatwave reportedly caused hundreds of deaths, and can be attributed to rising global temperatures.

In April, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said the fourth global mass coral bleaching event has been triggered by extraordinarily high ocean temperatures. This could harm ocean life, and the lives of millions of people who rely on reefs for food, jobs, and coastal defence.

Last year, a report found that five major climate tipping points are already at risk of being crossed due to warming. Climate tipping points are critical thresholds beyond which a natural system can tip into an entirely different state. They cause irreversible damage to the planet, including more warming.

Scientists have identified a number of these tipping points across Earth, which fall into three broad categories: cryosphere (for example, melting of the Greenland ice sheet), ocean-atmosphere (change in water temperature), and biosphere (death of coral reefs), according to a report by the European Space Agency (ESA).

### **How can the world stay within the threshold?**

2023 was the warmest calendar year ever recorded. The WMO reported that the average global temperature reached 1.45 degree Celsius above the pre-industrial levels. But the unusually high temperatures were also partly due to the onset of El Niño, an abnormal warming of surface waters in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. This weather pattern is known to lead to record-breaking surface and ocean temperatures in some parts of the world.

El Niño has now peaked and is likely to transition towards the cooler La Niña in the following months. Nonetheless, the world is most likely to temporarily breach the 1.5 degree Celsius limit in the next five years. Each year between 2024 and 2028 is predicted to be between 1.1

degree Celsius and 1.9 degree Celsius higher than the pre-industrial average, the recent WMO report found.

The only certain way of remaining under the threshold is to immediately, and radically, curb the emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases (GHG). To do this, the world needs to stop burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas, which release GHGs into the atmosphere. So far, countries have failed to make a significant dent in this regard.

In 2023, the levels of GHGs in the atmosphere reached historic highs. Carbon dioxide, which is the most abundant anthropogenically produced GHG, rose in 2023 by the third-highest amount in 65 years of recordkeeping, according to NOAA.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Environment

Source: Indian Express