

3. Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit

Prelims Syllabus: International Institutions – Summits, Working, Organisations

Mains Syllabus: GS-II Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their Structure, Mandate.

Why in News?

- Recently, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit was held online chaired by Vietnam. The discussions pertained to the impact of Covid-19 on southeast Asia.

About Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

- It is a regional grouping that promotes economic, political, and security cooperation.
- It 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.
- Its ten members are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Its Chairmanship rotates annually, based on the alphabetical order of the English names of Member States.
- Its country has a total population of 650 million people and a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$2.8 Trillion.

Highlights:

- Its leaders have warned of the crippling economic cost of Covid-19 and called for trade routes to reopen to protect jobs and food supplies, as well as the stockpiling of medical equipment.
- The Covid-19 has affected the region's tourism and export-reliant economies. Vietnam has urged Southeast Asian leaders to set up an emergency fund to tackle the Coronavirus.

About the impact of Covid-19 on the Region:

- The Singapore has raised fears the pandemic due to the recent surge that could rebound in places which had battled back the initial outbreak.
- Health systems from Myanmar to Laos are widely believed to be missing the true scale of infections.
- The Thai economy, is expected to shrink by 5.3% in 2020 -- a 22-year low -- with millions left jobless.

- Limited testing in Indonesia has resulted in the lower number of cases and under 400 deaths for a country of 260 million.

