Syllabus subtopic: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests

Prelims and Mains focus: about the India-EU summit and its significance; about Raisina Dialogue and its importance

News: PM Modi is likely to visit Brussels in March for the next India-European Union summit. While the dates have not been officially announced, the proposed date is likely to be March 13.

Background

- The March summit will take place against the backdrop of the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the government’s move to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. In October, a group of Members of European Parliament (MEPs) — many of them from far-right parties in Europe — were taken to Kashmir.

- The EU had said that it was not an official delegation, and these MEPs were visiting in their private capacity.

- Earlier this month, when a group of 15 ambassadors went to Kashmir at the government’s invitation. The European Union envoys could not join them, as envoys from 27 EU countries wanted to go together. The envoys who were invited could not make it since it was too short a notice for them to get approvals from their Foreign ministries.

India-EU Summit 2017

- The last India-EU summit took place in October 2017 in Delhi and both sides have had ambitious plans. But the Indian assessment that the relationship has not achieved its potential was articulated by External Affairs minister S Jaishankar during his remarks at the Raisina Dialogue earlier this week.

- During the 2017 India-EU summit, PM Modi had led the Indian delegation
and European Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean Claude Juncker led the EU side.

- The leaders had held wide-ranging discussions on foreign and security policy, migration, trade, climate, research and innovation. A Joint Statement was adopted by the leaders which reflected common understanding on these areas and reaffirmed commitment to strengthen the India-EU Strategic Partnership.

- The two sides are likely to prepare for the summit and pick up the threads from where they left.

About the Raisina Dialogue:

- This is an annual geo-political event, organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and Observer Research Foundation (ORF).

- It is designed to explore prospects and opportunities for Asian integration as well as Asia’s integration with the larger world.

- It is predicated on India’s vital role in the Indian Ocean Region and how India along with its partners can build a stable regional and world order.

Participants:

The conference is a multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral meeting involving policy and decision-makers, including but not limited to Foreign, Defence and Finance Ministers of different countries, high-level government officials and policy practitioners, leading personalities from business and industry, and members of the strategic community, media and academia.

Significance of the event:

The Raisina Dialogue was born in 2016, in the belief that the Asian century that the world was talking about was not about any exclusive geographical region. It
was rather about the engagement of global actors with Asia and of Asia with the world. So this dialogue took birth as a platform, where the old and the new could work together, to discover their connections, their inter-dependence.

**About European Union (EU)**

- The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of **28 member** states that are located primarily in Europe.

- The EU and European citizenship were established when the **Maastricht Treaty** came into force in 1993.

- The EU traces its origins to the **European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)** and the **European Economic Community (EEC)**, established, respectively, by the **1951 Treaty of Paris** and **1957 Treaty of Rome**.

- The EU has developed an internal single market through a standardised system of laws that apply in all member states in those matters, and only those matters, where members have agreed to act as one. EU policies aim to ensure the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within the internal market, enact legislation in justice and home affairs and maintain common policies on trade, agriculture, fisheries and regional development.

- For travel within the **Schengen Area**, passport controls have been abolished.

- A monetary union was established in 1999 and came into full force in 2002 and is composed of 19 EU member states which use the euro currency.