Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

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Why in News?

Defence Minister recently refused to sign the draft statement at the SCO meeting, after the document omitted the reference to the Pahalgam terror attack, but mentioned the Jaffar Express hijacking in Pakistan.

- **SCO -** The SCO is a permanent intergovernmental organization consists of 10 countries, including **India**, China, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, and Belarus.
- **Aim -** To promote regional peace, stability, and prosperity through cooperation in politics, economics, culture, and a coordinated effort to combat terrorism, extremism, and separatism.
- **Formed in -** 1996, consisting of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.
- It is the ***world's largest regional organisation*** by geographical area and population.
- The SCO is one of the few international organisations with primarily Asian members that deals with security issues.
- Its ***Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)*** regularly holds meetings and exchanges information.
- **2025 SCO Meeting –** Chaired by Beijing, and the meeting of defence ministers took place in the east China city of Qingdao.
- **India's reason behind rejection -** Russia and China have traditionally dominated the SCO.
- However, with Russia engaged in the Ukraine war since 2022, China's footprint has grown.
- Pakistan is a major ally of China, and Beijing provided aid to Pakistan in the military confrontation with India in the aftermath of Operation Sindoor.
- China has also long used its clout in international fora to shield Pakistan from adverse resolutions.
- In such a scenario, Rajnath refusing to sign the SCO draft document assumes more significance.
- No joint statement was issued for this year's SCO meeting as India refused to come on board.
- This shows India's sustained upholding of the 'no compromise on terrorism' position.
- India has long made it clear that terrorism and business as usual can't go together.

Reference

The Indian Express | What is the SCO?



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