33rd APEC Leaders' Meeting in Shenzhen adopts the 'Shenzhen Outlook'

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News

The 33rd Leaders' Meeting of the 21 member economies of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was held on 18–19 November 2026 at the Shenzhen International Communication Center, chaired by Chinese President Xi Jinping. The year's theme was 'Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together'. On 19 November leaders adopted by consensus the 2026 APEC Leaders' Declaration setting out the 'Shenzhen Outlook', plus three outcome documents on trade, connectivity and innovation, China's Foreign Ministry said. They pledged supply-chain resilience, reliable access to energy and the use of emerging technologies in trade (SCMP). Xi urged steady progress towards a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), and announced US$20 million for APEC cooperation and a Center for Asia-Pacific Community Studies in Shenzhen. This is China's third time as APEC host. Viet Nam will host in 2027 – President To Lam invited leaders to Phu Quoc Island (China's Foreign Ministry; Viet Nam Government portal).

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Meeting	33rd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting
Date, venue	18–19 Nov 2026; Shenzhen International Communication Center

Point	Details
Chair	President Xi Jinping
Theme	Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together
Documents	2026 Leaders' Declaration ('Shenzhen Outlook') + 3 outcome papers
China's offer	$20 million; Center for Asia-Pacific Community Studies
FTAAP	2026 marks 20 years of the FTAAP goal (2006, Hanoi)
Next host	Viet Nam – 2027
India	Not a member

Background

- APEC was formed in 1989. In 1994 at Bogor, Indonesia, leaders adopted the 'Bogor Goals' – free and open trade and investment by 2010 for industrialised and by 2020 for developing economies. In 2020 Malaysia (hosting from Kuala Lumpur, the first virtual leaders' meeting) launched the 'Putrajaya Vision 2040'.
- APEC calls its members 'member economies' rather than countries, as its work is chiefly about trade and economics. In 1991 'Hong Kong, China' and 'Chinese Taipei' joined along with the People's Republic of China. Viet Nam joined in 1998 and hosted in 2006 (Hanoi) and 2017 (Da Nang).
- Shenzhen, in Guangdong province next to Hong Kong, became one of China's first Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in 1980 and grew from a fishing area into a technology metropolis. The 2025 APEC meeting was at Gyeongju, South Korea.
- India has sought APEC membership since the 1990s but is still outside it, partly because of a moratorium on new members imposed in 1997 (until 2010). Trade with APEC economies is central to India's 'Act East' policy.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu too followed the export-zone model: the Madras Export Processing Zone (MEPZ) at Tambaram, Chennai, set up in 1984, was converted into a multi-product SEZ in 2003 and works under the Commerce Ministry. Chennai and Thoothukudi ports handle much of the State's trade with APEC economies such as China, Japan, South Korea and ASEAN members.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

The 33rd Leaders' Meeting of the 21 member economies of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was held on 18–19 November 2026 at the Shenzhen International Communication Center, chaired by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Meeting: 33rd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting; Date, venue: 18–19 Nov 2026; Shenzhen International Communication Center; Chair: President Xi Jinping; Theme: Building an Asia-Pacific Community to Prosper Together.

What is the background to this news?

APEC was formed in 1989. In 1994 at Bogor, Indonesia, leaders adopted the 'Bogor Goals' – free and open trade and investment by 2010 for industrialised and by 2020 for developing economies.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Which member economy will host the APEC Leaders' Meeting in 2027?

A) Viet Nam

B) Peru

C) Chile

D) Thailand

Answer: A – Explanation: Viet Nam – its third time after 2006 (Hanoi) and 2017 (Da Nang). South Korea hosted in 2025.

2. What are the free-and-open trade and investment targets adopted by APEC leaders in Indonesia in 1994 called?

A) Osaka Action Agenda

B) Manila Action Plan

C) Bogor Goals

D) Lima Declaration

Answer: C – Explanation: Bogor Goals – by 2010 for industrialised and 2020 for developing economies. The Osaka Action Agenda (1995) set out how to reach them.

3. The presence of which members is one reason APEC calls its members 'economies' rather than 'countries'?

A) European Union

B) HK, Chinese Taipei

C) Macau, Tibet

D) Observer states

Answer: B – Explanation: 'Hong Kong, China' and 'Chinese Taipei' joined with China in 1991. APEC's work is chiefly about trade and the economy.

4. APEC's 'Putrajaya Vision 2040' was launched in 2020 at the first virtual leaders' meeting hosted by which member?

A) Thailand

B) New Zealand

C) Peru

D) Malaysia

Answer: D – Explanation: Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur). Putrajaya is Malaysia's administrative capital. New Zealand issued the Aotearoa Plan of Action in 2021.

5. MEPZ, set up in 1984 as an export zone and now a Special Economic Zone, is located in which part of Chennai?

A) Ennore

B) Sriperumbudur

C) Tambaram

D) Guindy

Answer: C – Explanation: Tambaram – the Madras Export Processing Zone; it became a multi-product SEZ in 2003, under the Commerce Ministry.

Sources: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC; The Standard (HK); SCMP; APEC (history); APEC (FAQ); APEC 2026 theme; MEPZ SEZ; Tribune (Gyeongju 2025); The Star (Viet Nam takes over APEC 2027); Viet Nam Government portal – en.baochinhphu.vn (APEC 2027, Phu Quoc). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.