Assassination of Shinzo Abe

What is the issue?

Japan's former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was assassinated during a campaign speech in western Japan and later died of heart failure.

Who was Shinzo Abe?

- Abe came from a political family. His father Shintaro Abe was foreign minister (1982-86) while his grandfather Nobusuke Kishi was prime minister (1957-60).
- Following their footsteps, Abe became the country's longest serving Prime Minister.
- Abe announced his resignation in 2020 due to poor health.
- With this, he ended a stint at the helm of the world's third biggest economy.
- But he remained a dominant presence over the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, controlling one of its major factions.

What are the contributions of Abe for Japan's development?

- **Economy**- Abe launched his "**Abenomics**" policies with three arrows that aimed at kick starting economic growth and higher wages - loose monetary policy, fiscal stimulus and structural economic reforms.
- **Defence**- One of his more-controversial goals was revising Article 9 of the constitution, which stipulates that "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation".
- He was also credited with strengthening the country's military by bolstering defence spending.
- **Domestic affairs**- Abe promised to shore up the country's pension and health-insurance systems.
- His government oversaw the post-quake reconstruction.
- **Maritime domain**- He was ardinent in making Japan a leader in the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.
- He wanted Japan to step up to become "a guardian of the global commons" in an increasingly contested maritime domain, and to work closely with "like-minded democracies", such as the United States, India, Australia and South Korea.

How was Abe's relation with other foreign countries?

- **North Korea**- Abe supported United Nations sanctions against North Korea following that country's nuclear test and imposed a set of unilateral sanctions.
- **India**- Abe was the first Japanese PM to be chief guest at India's Republic Day parade in 2014.
- **China**- Abe was one of the architects of **Quad**- an alliance aimed at countering China's growing influence and military might.
- The Abe administration managed to establish **Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal** even without U.S. as an economic counter to China.

How was India-Japan ties during the term of Mr. Shinzo Abe?

- **Bilateral/ Multilateral platforms**- The Quad, the ASEAN-led forums, the Indo Pacific Oceans Initiative, the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure all benefited from his contributions.
- **Indo Pacific-** He transformed Japan's strategic engagement, including in defence, connectivity, infrastructure and sustainability, across the Indo Pacific region.
- **Bullet train project**- He championed the Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train project in which India uses Japanese technologies for the first such high-speed rail corridor in the country.
- **Japan-India Association**- Recently, Abe took over as the Chair of the Japan-India Association, one of the oldest friendship associations in Japan that was established in 1903.

References

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