Explained - Nobel Peace Prize 2019

Why in news?

The Nobel Peace Prize for 2019 has been awarded to PM of Ethiopia for resolving Ethiopia-Eritrea border conflict.

What is a brief history of Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict?

- In April 1993, Eritrea broke from its federation with Ethiopia, becoming an independent country that was located strategically at the mouth of the Red Sea on the Horn of Africa, in close proximity to one of the world's most crucial shipping lanes.
- Independence was the outcome of a 30-year war by Eritrean liberation fighters against Ethiopia, which had annexed the small multiethnic territory to its north in 1962.
- Just over five years after Independence, however, war broke out between the two countries over the control of Badme, a border town of no apparent significance, but which both Addis Ababa and Asmara coveted.
- Massive displacements of the population followed, families were torn asunder, and the local trading economy was utterly destroyed.
- As the conflict evolved into a major refugee crisis, thousands of Eritreans fled to Europe.
- In June 2000, the two countries signed an Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities.
- It was followed, in December that year, by a Peace Agreement in Algiers, Algeria.
- This agreement formally ended the war and established a Boundary Commission to settle the dispute.
- The Commission gave its "final and binding" ruling in April 2002. Badme was awarded to Eritrea.
- However, Ethiopia refused to accept the decision without additional conditions, and a stalemate ensued.
- Ethiopia refused to give up control over Badme, and the border kept erupting in clashes.
- Due to this a long standing war broke out, which had killed at least 80,000 people till June 2019, in two of Africa's poorest countries.

What are the contributions of Abiy Ahmed Ali?

- PM of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed Ali achieved peace and international cooperation, and made initiatives to resolve the border conflict with neighboring Eritrea.
- In 2017, Ethiopia's ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) indicated that it was looking to change its relationship with Eritrea.
- In April 2018, Abiy Ahmed, then a 41-year-old former Army officer who had fought in the war, became Prime Minister. Things picked up pace immediately.
- In June, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed broke the nearly two-decade stalemate, announcing that Addis Ababa would abide by the full terms of the 2000 agreement.
- He reassured trade, diplomatic, and travel ties between Ethiopia and Eretria and promised a new era of peace and friendship in the war-bloodied Horn of Africa.

What are the positive outcomes?

- Ethiopia is landlocked, and through the years of the war with Eritrea, had been dependent heavily on Djibouti, which sits on the Bab al-Mandab strait, for access to the Gulf of Aden and onward to the Arabian Sea.
- The peace deal with Eritrea opened up Eritrean ports for Ethiopian use, most prominently the port of Assab, located at the tip of the country's 'tail', to balance its reliance on Djibouti.

Source: Indian Express

Quick Facts

The Nobel Peace Prize

- It is one of the five Nobel Prizes established by the will of Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel.
- It has been awarded annually (with some exceptions) to those who have "done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses.
- The **recipient is selected by the Norwegian Nobel Committee, a five-member committee appointed by the Parliament of Norway.**
- Since 1990, the prize is awarded on 10 December in Oslo City Hall each year.
- Due to its political nature, the Nobel Peace Prize has, for most of its history,

been the subject of numerous controversies.

