Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)

Why in news?

The Prime Minister attended the 3rd summit of Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) was held in Papu New Guinea.

What is forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)?

- **Multinational grouping** - Forum for India-Pacific Islands cooperation (FIPIC) is a multinational grouping developed in 2014 for cooperation between India and 14 Pacific Islands.
- **14 Pacific Islands nations** - Include Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
- **Fiji** - All Head of state/head of government of the above countries met in Suva, Fiji in November 2014 for the first time where the annual summit was conceptualized.
- **Exclusive economic zones (EEZs)** - Since many have large exclusive economic zones (EEZs) it offers promising possibilities for fruitful cooperation with India.
- **Strategic and commercial interests in Indian Ocean** - India's focus has largely been on the Indian Ocean where it has sought to play a major role and protect its strategic and commercial interests.
- **Business Accelerator for Forum for India - Pacific Islands cooperation (FIPIC)** - An initiative to strengthen the India ties with pacific nation countries.
- **Free and open Indo-Pacific** - PM Modi underlines importance of free and open Indo-Pacific at FIPIC summit in Papua New Guinea.

What is Oceania?

- Oceania is a region made up of ***thousands of islands*** throughout the Central and South Pacific Ocean.
- It includes ***Australia***, the smallest continent in terms of total land area.
- Oceania has traditionally been divided into four parts which are Australasia (Australia and New Zealand), Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.
- The marine environment is an important and influential physical region in Australia and Oceania.

What is Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)?

- **Freedom of navigation** - It is a vision for the region that is based on the principles of freedom of navigation, the rule of law, and respect for sovereignty.
- **China’s rise** - The FOIP is seen by many as a way to counter China's growing

assertiveness in the region.

- **Supporting countries** - The FOIP is supported by a number of countries, including the United States, Japan, Australia and ***India***.
- **Maintaining peace and stability** - The supporting countries believe that the FOIP will help to promote economic growth, prosperity, maintain peace and stability in the region.
- **China's opposition** - China has been critical of the FOIP, arguing that it is a thinly veiled attempt to contain China's rise.

What are the significance of India-Papu New Guinea relations?

- Modi is the first Indian prime minister to visit the country.
- Can strengthen India stands in the forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation.
- Can be vital to counter the china’s growing presence in the region.
- Lauch of Tamil classic ‘Thirukkural’ to the Tok Pisin language of Papua New Guinea give impetus to cultural exchange relationship.

References

1. The Hindu | FOIP
2. The Indian Express | Forum For India-Pacific Islands Cooperation
3. Britannica | About Oceania

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