Greenland

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Geography*

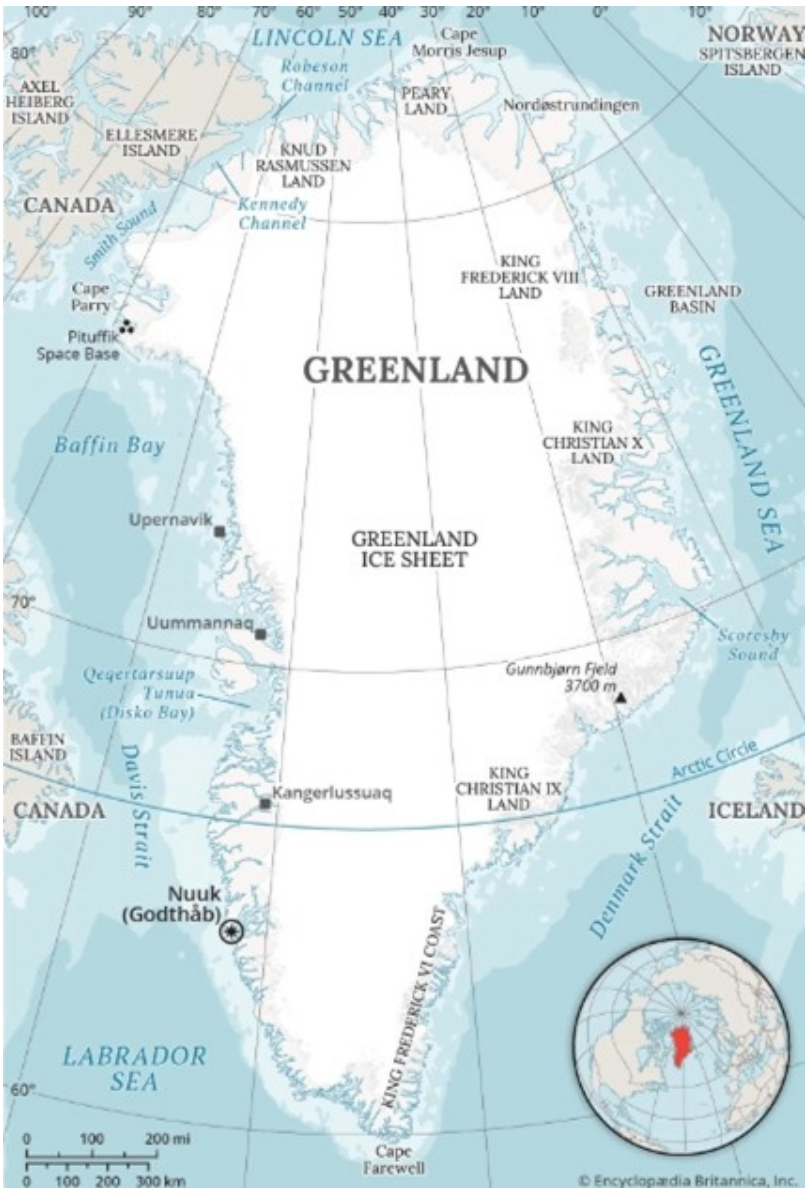
Why in News?

Recently, Greenland has been in focus after U.S. President Donald Trump called for immediate talks on acquiring the island.

- Greenland, the ***world's largest non-continental island***, functions as a semi-autonomous territory of Denmark.
- **Location & Extent –** Situated in the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, between North America and Europe.
- Though part of the North American continent, it is politically associated with Europe through Denmark.
- *Canada's Ellesmere Island (north) and Iceland* (southeast) are its nearest neighbours.
- **Arctic Position –** About two-thirds lies above the Arctic Circle.
- Experiences 24-hour daylight in summer and near-total darkness in winter.
- **Landscape –** Dominated by the Greenland Ice Sheet, which shapes most of the terrain and is the second largest in the world after Antarctica.
- **Protected Areas –** Nearly half of Greenland is protected as the National Park of Greenland, the world's largest national park.
- **Major mountain ranges –** Watkins Range, Stauning Alps
- **Major rivers –** Børglum, Qinnguata Kuussua, Majorqaq
- **Geopolitics – NATO Linkage –** Greenland is ***part of NATO through Denmark's membership***, giving it strategic relevance in the transatlantic alliance.
- **Strategic Location –** Positioned between North America, Europe and the Arctic, making it vital for military surveillance and security.
- **U.S. Military Presence –** Hosts a key U.S. air base, highlighting its importance in Arctic and North Atlantic defence.
- **Resource Competition** – Greenland lies in a region rich in oil, gas and

critical minerals, increasing interest from major powers amid Arctic thaw.

- **Arctic Geopolitics –** Melting ice is opening new Arctic shipping routes, increasing global and regional competition from global powers such as the U.S., Russia and China.
- **India's stand – Climate Linkage –** India's Arctic Policy recognises that Greenland's ice melt affects global sea levels and alters atmospheric circulation, influencing the Indian monsoon.
- **Arctic Council Role –** *India has Observer status in the Arctic Council since 2013* and engages in discussions on environmental protection and sustainable resource use.
- **Market Impact –** Geopolitical uncertainty linked to the "Greenland factor" has contributed to global financial market instability.
- **Scientific Presence –** India operates the Himadri research station in Svalbard, with long-term scientific engagement with Arctic climate processes.



References

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