India – Bangladesh

Why in news?

\n\n

Bangladeshi PM has planned to visit India in early April 2017.

\n\n

What are the agreements that are expected to be signed?

\n\n

\n
- Bangladeshi PM’s visit will further build on the boost the relations received from signing the historic Land Boundary Agreement in 2015.
\n
- Speculation is, a defence partnership agreement, Teesta water-sharing agreement, the Ganga water barrage project, and other energy & connectivity projects will be announced during PMs Indian visit.
\n
- Any of these will go a long way in cementing ties between both the neighbours.
\n

\n\n

What are issues involved?

\n\n

\n
- Some of the said agreements **involve the Centre-State relations.**
\n
- Ex: water-sharing is a highly emotive subject. Also, the movement on Teesta water-sharing has been held up because of West Bengal’s reservations.
\n
- So, to address them, the Central government needs to reach out to West Bengal Chief Minister.
\n
- Similarly Bihar Chief Minister is against the Farakka Barrage project.

\n
- Also, the Bangladeshi PM faces an election in 2018. Her opposition accusing her of being soft on India.
\n
- It means, **she cannot return home empty-handed on the water question.**
\n
- Other major issue is, while the border issue has been resolved, **border firing has not ceased**.
\n
- Bangladeshi PM also faces an uphill task of addressing India's mistrust over Chinese investment in Bangladesh ($38 billion pledged in infrastructure cooperation and joint ventures).
\n

\n\n

What is the way forward?

\n\n

\n
- Recently, India has decided to allow its border roads in Mizoram and Tripura to be used by Bangladeshi forces since they are constructing border outposts in the terrain areas.
\n
- The decision shows how far the two countries have come to **bridge their trust deficit.**
\n
- So, the time is now ripe for India and Bangladesh to consolidate the gains on key issues.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n

