Prelim Bits 13-03-2017

Brahmos Missile

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- It is the supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air based platforms.
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- It is developed by a joint venture between DRDO of India and NPOM of Russia.
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- It is a two-stage missile with a solid propellant booster engine in its first stage and the liquid ramjet engine in the second stage.
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- The missile has flight range of up to 290 km with supersonic speed all through the flight, making it the first supersonic cruise missile.
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- It can carry a conventional warhead weighing 200 to 300kgs.
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- It uses Transport Launch Canister (TLC) for transportation, storage and launch.
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- It is also the world's fastest anti-ship cruise missile in operation.
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- Recently, **Brahmos Extended Range (ER) Missile** was successfully test fired.
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- Brahmos ER missile is capable of hitting the enemy targets at much higher range than the current range of 290 km with the supersonic speed of 2.8 Mach.
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- This technology upgrade comes after India’s full membership to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which removed caps on range of Brahmos cruise missile.
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Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods

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- Recently, Cabinet has given its approval for India's accession to the Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention).
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- TIR Convention is an international transit system under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). It came into force from 1975.
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- At present there are 70 parties to the Convention, including the European Union.
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- The TIR Convention facilitates the international carriage of goods from one or more customs offices of departure to one or more customs offices of destination (up to a total of four customs offices departure and destination) and through as many countries as necessary.
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- Accession to this agreement would enable India to move goods seamlessly along the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and also boosting trade with the Central Asian Republics and other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).
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Ancient Jainism site in Karnataka

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- **Aratipura**, the ancient site which belongs to 9-14th century had been one of the most important Jain religious complexes in Karnataka.
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- It is also called as Tipruru and surrounded by the Kanakagiri hills.
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- The artefacts belongs to the Ganga and Hoyasala dynasties that ruled this region between 9th and 14th century.
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- The script and language of the inscriptions found in the site were in the Kannada of the Hoysala period.
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- The site is known for the sculpture of Parsvanatha, the 23rd Tirthankara in the Jain pantheon, standing on a lotus pedestal under the hood of a

snake.
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- There is also a 2.2-metre sculpture of Bahubali stands on Shravana Betta that predates the one at Sravanabelagola.
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- The monolithic statue of Bahubali at Shravanabelagola was carved from a single block of granite.
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- It was built by the Ganga Dynasty Minister Chavundaraya in 10thCentury and it is 17 m tall, one of the largest free-standing statues in the world.
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