Prelim Bits 30-10-2017

India-Afghan Connectivity

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- Iran's key strategic port of Chabahar became operational with the maiden shipment of wheat from India to Afghanistan recently.
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- This is a major push for India's Afghan outreach bypassing Pakistan for the first time under the 2016 Indo-Afghan-Iran trilateral pact.
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- India is also constructing a railway line between Chabahar and Zahedan to connect the port to rest of the Iranian railway network.
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- It is further to be linked with Delaram-Zaranj road, built by India in Afghanistan that connects at Afghan-Iran border via rail through Zahedan.
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- The port, through Zahedan railway network, could also be linked with the International North South Transport Corridor connecting India with Russia.
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International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC)

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- INSTC is a multi-modal connectivity project via ship, rail and road route for moving freight between India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia.
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- INSTC would enhance accessibility to the land locked central Asian nations.
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- The current members are India, Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Belarus, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, and Bulgaria (observer).
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Centres for vulnerable victims

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- The Supreme Court has recently ordered the setting up of at least two vulnerable witnesses' deposition centres in the jurisdiction of every High Court.
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- It is primarily to help witnesses in criminal cases, often minor survivors of rape or victims of sex abuse, to testify without fear or intimidation in a conducive environment.
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- The order upholds the right of vulnerable witnesses to be protected while testifying in court and is in consonance with international norms in these matters.
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INS Viraat

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- INS Viraat, the second aircraft carrier in the Indian naval fleet is set to become museum which was proposed by the Andhra Pradesh Government.
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- INS Vikrant is India's first aircraft carrier.
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- INS Viraat is the second centaur class aircraft carrier in service.
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- Earlier known as HMS Hermes, it served Royal Navy of UK from 1950 to 1980's and later re-commissioned in Indian Navy in 1987.
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- It holds the Guinness Record for being the oldest-serving warship.
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- It played a pivotal role in the Indian peacekeeping operations in Sri Lanka and the 1999 Kargil War.
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- It also took part in major operations like Op. Parakram – a India Pakistan in the LOC and Op. Pawan by IPKF to take control of Jaffna from the LTTE as

part of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord.
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INS Vikramaditya

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- US team members of joint working group (JWG) on aircraft carrier cooperation have been allowed to visit and operate Russian built Aircraft INS Vikramaditya.
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- INS Vikramaditya is a Kiev class aircraft carrier which was commissioned by Russian Navy in 1987 under the name Baku.
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- It was later renamed as Admiral Gorshkov and later offered to India in 2004.
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- It is the biggest and heaviest ship to be operated by the Indian Navy.
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INS Vishal

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- INS Vishal is a follow up of INS Vikrant class air craft carriers.
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- It is currently being built by Cochin Shipyard limited for the Indian Navy.
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- It is intended to be the first supercarrier to be built in India.
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- It would be a 65,000-70,000 tonne, nuclear-powered vessel that launched aircraft with an "electro-magnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS)".
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- EMALS uses electro-magnetic energy to catapult aircraft to launch speed.
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- India's selection of EMALS would allow the US a place in the design of the ship.
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Source: The Hindu, Economic Times

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