UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 17-05-2020

Borders of a Country

- Borders are geographic boundaries of political entities or legal jurisdictions, such as governments, sovereign states, federated states, and other subnational entities.
- Borders are established through agreements between political or social entities that control those areas, the creation of these agreements is called boundary delimitation.
- Some borders such as a state's internal administrative border, or inter-state borders within the Schengen Area are often open and completely unguarded.
- Other borders are partially or fully controlled, and may be crossed legally only at designated border checkpoints and border zones may be controlled.
- Borders may even foster the setting up of buffer zones.
- A difference has also been established in academic scholarship between border and frontier, the latter denoting a state of mind rather than state boundaries.
- The frontiers were particularly porous for the physical movement of migrants, and people living in borderlands easily maintained transnational cultural and social networks.
- A border may have been:

1. Agreed by the countries on both sides
2. Imposed by the country on one side
3. Imposed by third parties, e.g. an international conference
4. Inherited from a former state, colonial power or aristocratic territory
5. Inherited from a former internal border, such as within the former Soviet Union
6. Never formally defined.
7. In addition, a border may be a de facto military ceasefire line.

- Recently a border fence was erected between German city of Constance and the Swiss city of Kreuzlingen, which had become a symbol of the division created by the global pandemic.
- But after Switzerland and Germany agreed to open up, the fence came

down by midnight.

Anakkampoyil-Kalladi-Meppadi corridor

- Union government has given the nod for a ₹658-crore two-lane tunnel road in the Anakkampoyil-Kalladi-Meppadi corridor.
- It would run parallel to the landslip-prone Thamarassery pass that links Kozhikode to Wayanad.
- On completion, the 6.5-km tunnel will be the third longest in the country.
- This alternative subterranean road would be 30-km shorter than the present ghat road.
- Approach roads and a 70-metre bridge over the Iranjipuzha river are part of the project.
- Kerala's longest is the 962-metre tunnel at Kuthiran, between Thrissur and Palakkad.
- The Konkan Railway Corporation, which prepared the detailed project report for this project.
- Cabinet has given the nod to make available the funds of the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) for the tunnel road.

Perumon bridge

- The Cabinet has also given the nod for Perumon bridge across Ashtamudi Lake in Kollam district.
- The proposed bridge will link Perumon and Munrothuruthu.
- The Naluchira bridge acoss the Pampa river to link Thottappally and Naluchira in Alappuzha district has also got the approval.

Ashtamudi Lake

- Ashtamudi Lake or Ashtamudi Kayal , in the Kollam District of the Indian state of Kerala, is the most visited backwater and lake in the state.
- It possesses a unique wetland ecosystem and a large palm-shaped (also described as octopus-shaped) water body, second only in size to the Vembanad estuary ecosystem of the state.
- Ashtamudi means 'eight braids' in the local Malayalam language.
- The name is indicative of the lake's topography with its multiple branches.
- The lake is also called the gateway to the backwaters of Kerala and is well known for its houseboat and backwater resorts.
- Ashtamudi Wetland was included in the list of wetlands of international importance, as defined by the Ramsar Convention for the conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands.

Diamer Bhasha Dam

- The Diamer-Bhasha Dam is located on the Indus River in northern Pakistan between Kohistan district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Diamer district in Gilgit Baltistan.
- The dam will have a gross storage capacity of 8.1 Million Acre Feet (MAF) and power generation capacity of 4500 MW.
- With the height of 272 meters, it will be the tallest Roller Compact Concrete (RCC) dam in the world, would be completed in 2028.
- Recently, Pakistan signed a contract with a joint venture of a China Power (Chinese state-run firm) and the Frontier Works Organization (FWO-a commercial arm of Pakistan's military) for the construction of the Diamer-Bhasha dam.
- The contract covers construction of a diversion system, main dam, Access Bridge and the 21MW Tangir hydropower project.
- The objectives of the project are

1. Fulfil the increasing water and electricity requirements of the country.
2. Serve as the main storage dam of the country, besides Mangla and Tarbela dams.
3. Help alleviate acute irrigation shortage in the Indus basin irrigation system.
4. Reduce intensity, quantum and duration of floods and reduce magnitude and frequency of floods in the River Indus downstream.

- India has opposed the move on the grounds that Gilgit-Baltistan region is part of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir that was illegally occupied by Pakistan.

Gilgit Baltistan

- Gilgit-Baltistan formerly known as the Northern Areas, is a region administered by Pakistan as an administrative territory.
- It constitutes the northern portion of the larger Kashmir region of India, which has been the subject of a dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947, and between India and China from somewhat later.
- The territory shares a border with Azad Kashmir, together with which it is referred to by the United Nations and other international organizations as "Pakistan administered Kashmir".
- The territory also borders Indian-administered union territories Jammu

and Kashmir (union territory) and Ladakh to the south and is separated from it by the Line of Control, the de facto border between India and Pakistan.
- Three of the world's longest glaciers outside the Polar Regions are found in Gilgit-Baltistan.
- Attabad Lake is a lake in Hunza, Gilgit Baltistan, was created in January 2010 as a result of the Attabad Disaster, a major landslide in the region.
- Attabad Lake has become one of the biggest tourist attractions in Gilgit-Baltistan offering activities like boating, jet skiing, fishing and other recreational activities.

Indus Water Treaty

- The Indus system comprises of main Indus River, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej.
- The basin is mainly shared by India and Pakistan with a small share for China and Afghanistan.
- Under the treaty signed between India and Pakistan in 1960, all the waters of three rivers, namely Ravi, Sutlej and Beas (Eastern Rivers) were allocated to India for exclusive use.
- While, the waters of Western rivers - Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab were allocated to Pakistan except for specified domestic, non-consumptive and agricultural use permitted to India as provided in the Treaty.
- India has also been given the right to generate hydroelectricity through run of the river (RoR) projects on the Western Rivers which, subject to specific criteria for design and operation is unrestricted.
- To utilize the waters of the Eastern rivers which have been allocated to India for exclusive use, India has constructed following dams:

1. Bhakra Dam on Satluj,
2. Pong and Pandoh Dam on Beas and
3. Thein (Ranjit Sagar) on Ravi.

Other Projects in Indus

- The above following projects will help India to utilize its entire share of waters given under the Indus Waters Treaty 1960.
- **Shahpurkandi Project -** This project will help in utilizing the waters coming out from powerhouse of Thein dam for irrigation and power generation in J&K and Punjab.

- The construction work is being undertaken by the Govt of Punjab under monitoring of Govt of India.
- **Construction of Ujh multipurpose project -** This project will create a storage of water on river Ujh , a tributary of Ravi for irrigation and power generation in India
- **The 2nd Ravi Beas link below Ujh -** This project is being planned to tap excess water flowing down to Pakistan through river Ravi, even after construction of Thein Dam, by constructing a barrage across river Ravi for diverting water through a tunnel link to Beas basin.
- Govt. of India declared Ujh project as National Project.

ICGS Sachet

- Recently, the Defence Minister of India has commissioned Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Sachet and two Interceptor Boats (IBs) C-450 and C-451 in Goa via video conference.
- It is the first in the series of five Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) and has been designed and built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) and is fitted with state-of-the-art navigation and communication equipment.
- The 105 metre long ship is designed to carry a twin-engine helicopter, four high speed boats, one inflatable boat for swift boarding and search and rescue operations.
- The ship is also capable of carrying limited pollution response equipment to undertake oil spill pollution response at sea.
- It is for the first time in Indian maritime history that a ship was commissioned through digital medium, maintaining strict protocol of social distancing in the backdrop of Covid-19 pandemic.

IBs C-450 and C-451

- These are indigenously designed and built by Larsen & Toubro Shipyard, Hazira and fitted with the latest navigation and communication equipment.
- The two 30 metre long boats are designed for high speed interception, close coast patrol and low intensity maritime operations.
- The quick response capability of the IBs makes it an ideal platform to respond and thwart any emerging maritime situation.
- The ICG, which is the fourth largest Coast Guard in the world, has established itself as a reliable force in coastal security.
- The ICG along with Indian Shipyards plays a major role in realising India's SAGAR Vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and Make in

India or Self-reliant India Mission (Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan).
- The ship and boats, on joining the ICG fleet, will be deployed extensively for EEZ (exclusive economic zone) surveillance, coastal security and other duties.

Indian Coast Guard

- It was established by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India as an independent armed force of India.
- It operates under the Ministry of Defence, Headquartered in New Delhi.
- It has jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India including contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone (EEZ).
- It is responsible for marine environment protection in maritime zones of India and is coordinating authority for response to oil spills in Indian waters.

Super Earth

- All of the planets in our solar system orbit around the Sun, those planets that orbit around other stars are called extra solar planets or exoplanets.
- They are very hard to see directly with telescopes as they are hidden by the bright glare of the stars they orbit.
- So, astronomers use other ways to detect and study these distant planets.
- They search for exoplanets by looking at the effects these planets have on the stars they orbit.
- According to NASA, Super Earths are quite common in our galaxy and these planets can be up to 10 times more massive than Earth. .
- Recently astronomers got success when they found a rare new Super-Earth planet towards the centre of the galaxy.
- The planet is one of ‘only a handful of extra-solar planets that have been discovered with both size and orbit comparable to that of Earth.
- According to the researchers, the planet’s host star is about 10% the mass of our Sun.
- The Super Earth planet’s mass would be somewhere between that of Earth and Neptune, and would orbit at a location between Venus and Earth from the parent star.
- The planet’s ‘year’ would be of approximately 617 days.

Source: The Hindu, Economic Times, PIB



SHANKAR
IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering