

30/Nov/2019.

Que) The next step at UN General Assembly in 2020 would be the question of resettlement & compensation for the displaced Chagos Islanders from their homeland by the UK and the US. Examine (200 words)

(IR) why in news.

Recently, UK has ignored UN mandate. deadline to return the Chagos island, a small archipelago. to Mauritius. Mauritius along with African Union has called UK "an illegal colonial occupier".

The Chagos Island Dispute

- Mauritius claimed Chagos a part of its territory since 18th Century.
- In 1965, the UK broke archipelago away from the country taking islands — Albabra, Farquhar, Desroches — to form "British Indian Ocean Territory".
- In 1976, after the independence of Seychells, UK returned the islands but the Chagos island claiming that the island was used to accommodate the US army personnel in the Indian Ocean for defense purpose.
- The largest island in the Archipelago is Diego Garcia where UK and the US formed their army base and the US army led attacks in Afghanistan and Iraq in 2000s through this island.
- After terrorist attack 11 September 2001, the US used this island as CIA interrogative cell.

→ The US and the UK followed depopulation policy whereby which they made a marine protected Area (MPA) to prevent the original inhabitants of the Island to dwell.

→ Mauritius offer → for letting US forces use their Island for defense purpose in exchange wanted US to increase quotas in sugar imports to US that would benefit Mauritius economic growth.

Rejected by UK.

Legal Proceedings

In 2015, Mauritius initiated legal proceedings against UK for the following matters in UN Court of Arbitration at The Hague in Netherlands.

- UK failed to regard the Mauritius rights
- UK breached UN's provision under (UN Convention of Law of Sea)
- UK's hidden motives to create MPA around the Indian Ocean to prevent the original inhabitants to enter.

In Feb 2019 UN's highest court ICJ

→ ordered UK to return the ownership of Island to Mauritius within six months.

Way forward

- UK finding itself isolated due to
- situations might compel UK to rethink to return the Chagos Island.
 - UN could claim for rightful compensation for displaced islanders from UK.
- (1) failure of UN's legal proceeding with regards to the Chagos Island.
- (2) Brexit alienated UK from the EU member.