

GS Paper 2

International Relations

Wing Loong II

Syllabus: India and its neighbourhood- relations.

In News

- China has decided to sell 48 advanced armed drones to Pakistan. Called the Wing Loong II, the drone can be used for both combat and surveillance missions.
- the drones will enhance Pakistan's capabilities in the backdrop of India signing a deal with Russia for the S-400 missile defence system.

Key Highlights

- The Wing Loong II is an improved version of the Wing Loong 1 **Unmanned Aerial Vehicle**.
- Falling in the category of **Medium Altitude Long Endurance**, it is manufactured by the Chengdu Aircraft Industrial (Group) Company in China.
- The Wing Loong II can carry bombs and air-to-surface missiles. It is also integrated with day and infrared cameras and sensors to collect surveillance and targeting data. The UAV is remotely controlled from the mobile ground station.

What Does This Mean For India

- China is the largest supplier of military equipment to Pakistan. A deal providing 48 Wing Loong IIs could be China's largest export order for drones.
- The addition of the armed drones to Pakistan's arsenal will definitely enhance its surveillance and strike capabilities, especially along the border with India.
- However, India which currently does not have armed drones, signed a deal with Russia for the S-400 air defence system. The system can engage all types of aerial targets, including drones, within a range of 400 km.

A Political Crisis in Sri Lanka

Syllabus: India and its neighbourhood- relations.

In News

In an unexpected turn of events, President Maithripala Sirisena **sacked Prime Minister Ranil Wickramasinghe**, and **appointed former President and his political foe Mahinda Rajapaksa** as the new premier of Sri Lanka.

Key Highlights

- On 26 October 2018, Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena withdrew his United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) from the coalition government with the United National Party (UNP).
- He sacked Prime Minister Ranil Wickramasinghe and replaced him with former President turned Member of Parliament Mahinda Rajapaksa.
- This was followed by further drama with the Speaker of the Parliament Karu Jayasuriya refusing to recognize Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister.

- As of now, Rajapaksa has announced his cabinet, while there are agitations in the streets in favour of Wickramasinghe.

Background

- Sirisena was a senior Cabinet member, including Minister of Health, in Rajapaksa's government during the latter's two terms as President from 2005 to 2014.
- He later joined hands with the UNP in November 2014 to contest and win the Presidential election as the common candidate against Rajapaksa, his long-term political partner.
- Sirisena explained that he had defected to the UNP and joined his long-term political rival Wickramasinghe to save the country from being steered towards a dictatorship and to prevent blatant abuse of power.
- Reportedly, hours after this election result was announced, *Rajapaksa failed in a coup attempt to wrestle the presidency from Sirisena.*

What Led To The Difference

- The Wickramasinghe-Sirisena alliance was viewed as a mismatch due to their political history. While Wickramasinghe represented centre-right political ideologies and liberal economic policies, Sirisena was a centre-left, people-centred nationalist.
- At the time of coming together, their primary objective was to defeat the strongman Rajapaksa.
- Later, Sirisena appointed a Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Central Bank bond scam, which found a direct or indirect involvement of the UNP Members of Parliament.
- In late February 2018, the President disbanded the Prime Minister-led Economic Management Committee, indicating an internal conflict in the government.
- Sirisena's silence over the no-confidence motion raised in Parliament against Wickramasinghe by Rajapaksa's supporters in April 2018 fuelled speculations of the rift.
- As Sirisena himself stated, it is the revelation of a plot to assassinate him, and his suspicion of the intervention of UNP Members of Parliament to spread fake news of him *accusing the Indian Research and Analysis Wing's involvement in the assassination plot* that triggered his immediate action of replacing the Prime Minister.

Analysis

- India and China **appear to be on opposite sides** of the widening domestic divide. India – separated from the island republic by the Palk Strait that is barely 80 kilometres at its widest – has always been an important factor in Sri Lanka's domestic politics and international relations.
- Over the last decade, China's economic and political salience in Sri Lanka has steadily grown.
- The domestic politics of Sri Lanka, its economic choices and its foreign policy orientation have all become inextricably tangled with the deepening geopolitical tensions in the IndoPacific.
- As a power struggle unfolded in Colombo at the end of October, New Delhi and Beijing were quickly sucked into Sri Lanka's internal dynamics.
- Many in Colombo questioned the President's right to dismiss the Prime Minister under the constitution, Sirisena made matters worse by delaying a floor test of majority support in the Parliament.

- While Wickremesinghe claimed he still enjoyed the support of the majority, Sirisena appeared to be giving time to Rajapaksa to produce the necessary numbers by engineering defections.
- Beijing is throwing its political lot with Sirisena and Rajapaksa in Colombo's internal political contestation. After all, it was during Rajapaksa's years of presidency (2005-15) that China rapidly gained ground in Sri Lanka.
- Rajapaksa's decision to grant key strategic infrastructure projects to China, including the Colombo Port City, the Hambantota port and the Mattala airport, and his government's decision to host Chinese submarines generated much strategic anxiety in New Delhi and some concern in Washington.
- As Rajapaksa rode a wave of Sinhala nationalism and stepped up and won the war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, India's emphasis on the Tamil minority rights in Lanka was not welcome in Colombo.
- When he lost the presidency, Rajapaksa blamed New Delhi for his rout in the elections.
- Hence, India reacted more cautiously and slowly than China to the developments in Colombo. So far, India has emphasized on **legality and due democratic process**.
- India's diplomatic position was echoed by the European Union and the US. Brussels insisted on "due institutional process" and Washington declared that "it's up to the Parliament to decide who the prime minister is." While this mounts some pressure on Sirisena and Rajapaksa, they hope Beijing's support will turn the tide in their favour.
- It would be unwise, however, to frame the political struggle in Colombo as a zero-sum game between New Delhi and Beijing.
- The weight of geography and history will continue to make India relevant to whatever happens in Sri Lanka. China's enormous economic power and its growing stakes in the Indian Ocean make it a player to reckon with in Colombo.

Malaysia Decides to Abolish Capital Punishment

Syllabus: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests

In News

- The Malaysian Cabinet has decided to abolish the death penalty for all crimes and halt all pending executions.
- The government has taken the decision to scrap capital punishment following strong domestic opposition to the practice.

Key Highlights

- Currently, in Malaysia, capital punishment is mandatory for a wide range of crimes including murder, drug trafficking, treason, kidnapping, possession of firearms and acts of terror.
- Hanging till death is the prevalent form of death penalty in the country, which will be abolished once the Malaysian Parliament accedes to it.
- The decision will have a huge effect on those on a death row, such as the two women accused of assassinating the estranged half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in 2017.
- In April 2017, the Amnesty International had ranked Malaysia at the 10th spot in the use of the death penalty among the 23 countries that carried out capital punishment in 2016.

Death Penalty Around The World

- Around 143 countries across the world have abolished this punishment as a form of punishment for crimes.
- The most recent countries to abolish capital punishment include Malaysia (2018), Burkina Faso (2018), Guinea (2017), Benin (2016), and Madagascar (2015).
- Every European country has abolished it, with one exception: Belarus.
- Overall, there are 52 countries- including *India, China, Japan, US*- which retain death penalty.
- According to Amnesty International's report on capital punishment in 2017, China is believed to be the 'world's top executioner'.

Death Penalty in India

- In India, capital punishment is awarded for murder, gang robbery with murder, abetting the suicide of a child or insane person, waging war against the government, and abetting mutiny by a member of the armed forces.
- It is also given under some anti-terror laws for those convicted for terrorist activities.
- The death sentence is imposed only when the court comes to the conclusion that life imprisonment is inadequate based on the facts and circumstances of the case.
- Recently, in 2018, India has introduced death penalty for those who rape children under age of 12.
- The Supreme Court in **Mithu vs. State of Punjab** struck down Section 303 of the Indian Penal Code, which provided for a mandatory death sentence for offenders serving a life sentence.
- The section was based on the logic that any criminal who has been convicted for life and still can kill someone is too cold blooded and beyond reformation, to be allowed to live.
- Further, in **Bachan Singh case**, the SC laid down the “**extraordinary circumstances**” which define whether or not death sentence was required in the said case.
- In **Shatrughan Chauhan v. Union of India**, SC further humanised the implementation of capital punishment.
- Prior to this judgment, it was well settled that once the courts have awarded the death sentence in the “**rarest of rare**” cases, the process surrounding the execution of the sentence is entirely in the domain of the executive, with any reform of this process on humanitarian grounds being left to the wisdom of Parliament.
- This status quo was challenged through this judgement and created new forms of the accountability of the executive at all stages of the pardon process, right from the level of the Ministry of Home Affairs all the way up to the office of the President of India.
- It will no longer be possible for the executive to give excuses for the delay in taking a decision on pardon petitions.

Recent Executions In India

- Yakub Memon - July 2015
- Afzal Guru: February 2013
- Ajmal Kasab - November 2012

- Dhananjay Chatterjee – in 2004
- India saw an execution-free period of seven years between 2004 and 2012.

Law Commission Recommendation on Death Penalty

The Law Commission of India released a **report in 2015** recommending that the country must move toward abolishing the death penalty, except in terrorism cases to safeguard national security. The Law Commission report cited the following reasons while advocating the abolition of capital punishment:

1. **Developments in India** - India has made significant progress since the last report in 1967. The level of education, general well-being, and socio-economic developments are vastly different today.
2. **Death penalty as a deterrent is a myth**
3. **Arbitrary sentencing of capital punishment** - The Supreme Court has expressed concerns over arbitrary imposition of capital punishment. In most cases, the courts have affirmed or refused to affirm the death penalty without laying down legal principles.
4. **Long delays leading to extreme agony**
5. **International developments** - India has retained capital punishment while 143 countries have abolished it in law or in practice. That leaves India in a club with the USA, Iran, China, and Saudi Arabia as a country which retains it.

US Currency Monitoring List

Syllabus: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests

In News

- The Treasury Department has said that US could *remove India from its currency-monitoring list* of major trading partners.
- This has been mentioned in its latest semi-annual report on **Macroeconomic and Foreign Exchange Policies of Major Trading Partners of the US**.

Key Highlights

- India was for the first time, in April 2018, placed by the US in its **currency monitoring list of countries with potentially questionable foreign exchange policies** along with five other countries — China, Germany, Japan, South Korea and Switzerland.
- In its latest report released the Department of Treasury maintained the same monitoring list.
- However, it added that *if India continued with the same practices* as in the last six months, it would be removed from its next bi-annual report.
- The Treasury praised India for being “exemplary” in publishing its foreign exchange market intervention.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had noted that the value of the rupee was broadly market-determined, with the intervention used only during “episodes of undue volatility”.

Fact:

- India was generally a net purchaser of foreign exchange from late 2013 to the middle of 2017, as the RBI sought to gradually build a stronger external buffer in the aftermath of the May 2013 “**taper tantrum**”.
- Purchases accelerated in the first half of 2017 amid strong portfolio inflows to India (and many other emerging markets); as a result, cumulative net purchases of foreign exchange exceeded 2% of GDP over 2017.
- Foreign exchange purchases generally declined in the second half of 2017, and the RBI shifted to selling foreign exchange in the first half of 2018.
- As of June 2018, foreign currency reserves stood at \$380 billion, equal to 3.7 times gross short-term external debt, eight months of import cover, and 14% of GDP.

Criteria For Putting A Country In Currency Monitoring List

- The findings are based on the three key criteria:
 - (1) a significant bilateral trade surplus with the United States,
 - (2) a material current account surplus, and
 - (3) engaged in persistent one-sided intervention in the foreign exchange market
- Once included, countries remain on the list for two report cycles to ensure that if there are any improvements in the performance of the country it should not be due to temporary reasons.

What Has Changed Now

- India’s circumstances have shifted markedly, as the central bank’s net sales of foreign exchange over the first six months of 2018 led net purchases over the four quarters through June 2018 to fall to \$4 billion, or 0.2% of GDP.
- This represented a notable change from 2017, when purchases over the first three quarters of the year pushed net purchases of foreign exchange above 2% of GDP.
- Recent sales came amid a turnaround in foreign portfolio inflows, as foreign investors pulled portfolio capital out of India (and many other emerging markets) over the first half of the year.
- The rupee depreciated by around 7% against the dollar and by more than 4% on a real effective basis in the first half of 2018.
- India has a significant bilateral goods trade surplus with the US, totalling \$23 billion over the four quarters through June 2018, but India’s current account is in deficit at 1.9% of GDP.
- As a result, India now only meets one of the three criteria from the 2015 Act. If this remains the case at the time of its next report, Treasury would remove India from the monitoring list.

MoU Towards Sittwe Port Operationalisation

Syllabus: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests

In News

- India and Myanmar have signed an important MoU towards operationalisation of Sittwe port.

- It would lead to the appointment of a private Port Operator for the *Operation and Maintenance of Sittwe Port, Paletwa Inland Water Terminal* and associated facilities included in the **Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project**.

About Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport

- The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is a project that will connect the **eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport** in Rakhine State, Myanmar **by sea**.
- In Myanmar, it will then link **Sittwe seaport to Paletwa**, Chin State **via the Kaladan river boat route**, and then from **Paletwa by road to Mizoram state** in Northeast India.
- The project will provide an alternate access route to the North-Eastern region of India and contribute towards the region's economic development.



- Being a key connectivity project, it will promote economic, commercial and strategic links between India and Myanmar.
- It also provides a strategic link to the North-East, thereby reducing pressure on the Siliguri Corridor.
- In the absence of an alternate route, the development of this project not only serves the economic, commercial and strategic interests of India, but also contributes to the development of Myanmar, and its economic integration with India.
- Since the project is of political and strategic significance, it was decided to execute it through **India's grant assistance to Myanmar**.

Visit of The President of Russia to India

Syllabus: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests

In News

- President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir V. Putin, paid an official visit to New Delhi from October 04-05, 2018, for the 19th India-Russia Annual Bilateral Summit.
- The last Annual Summit was held on June 1, 2017 during the visit of Indian Prime Minister to Russia.

Key Highlights

- The deal on the supply of the **S-400 Triumf missile system** was concluded. The leaders of both the countries also signed eight pacts in areas ranging from defence, nuclear energy, space and economy.
- List of Agreements/MoUs Exchanged between India and Russia during Visit of President of Russia to India are:
 - Protocol for Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation and MEA for the period 2019-2023

- MoU between the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and NITI Aayog
- MoU between Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and the Federal Space Agency of Russia 'ROSCOSMOS' on Joint Activities **in the field of Human Spaceflight Programme Gaganyaan.**
- Memorandum of Cooperation between the Indian and Russian Railways to build **modern railroads**
- MoU between the Russian Ministry of Transport and Indian Railways in the Development Cooperation in **Transport Education**
- Action Plan for Prioritization and Implementation of **Cooperation Areas in the Nuclear Field**
- MoU between the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), of India and the Russian Small and Medium Business Corporation (RSMB), on **Cooperation in the field of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises**
- Cooperation Agreement in the **Fertilizers Sector** between the Russian Direct Investment Fund" ("RDIF"); PJSC Phosagro (PhosAgro) and Indian Potash Limited (IPL)
- Both leaders have discussed in detail Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu--the fourth and fifth units of the plant are being constructed and the fourth and fifth will be constructed next.
- According to India's agreement with Russia, 12 units will be built in the next 20 years.

S-400 Air Defence Missile System

- A missile defence system is intended to act as a shield against incoming ballistic missiles.
- The **Russian-built S-400 Triumph** — identified by NATO as the SA-21 Growler — is the world's most dangerous operationally deployed modern **long-range surface-to-air missile system**, and is considered **much more effective than the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system** developed by the US.
- The S-400 is a mobile system that integrates a multifunction radar, autonomous detection and targeting systems, anti-aircraft missile systems, launchers, and a command and control centre.
- It can be deployed within five minutes, and is capable of firing three types of missiles to create a layered defence.
- It can engage all types of aerial targets including aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles, and ballistic and cruise missiles within a range of 400 km, at an altitude up to 30 km.
- It can simultaneously track 100 airborne targets, including super fighters such as the US-built F-35, and engage six of them at the same time.
- The S-400 was made **operational in 2007**, and is responsible for defending Moscow. It was **deployed in Syria in 2015** to guard Russian and Syrian naval and air assets.

Why India Need This?

- India must have the capability to thwart missile attacks from the two likeliest quarters, Pakistan and China.

- Beijing signed a deal with Moscow in 2015 to buy six battalions of the S-400 system, and deliveries began in January 2018.
- While the Chinese acquisition has been seen as a “gamechanger” in the region, the concern for India is limited because of the system’s range. However, the S-400 can play a **crucial role in case of a two-front war**.

US In Picture

- In August 2017, President Donald Trump signed into law the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), which specifically targets Russia, Iran, and North Korea.
- The act empowers the US President to impose at least five of 12 listed sanctions — enumerated in Section 235 — on persons engaged in a “significant transaction” with the Russian defence and intelligence sectors.
- In July 2018, the US communicated that it was ready to grant India (along with Indonesia and Vietnam) a waiver on the CAATSA sanctions. The waiver also conveyed the acceptance by the US that India could not be dictated on its strategic interests by a third country.
- Moments after India and Russia signed S-400 deal air defence system deal, the US embassy in India said that the US sanctions were aimed to punish Russia, **not to damage military capabilities of 'our allies'**.

Analysis Of This Visit

- The 19th bilateral summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin left a **mixed feeling** about the current state of the Indo-Russian relationship and its future prospects.
- Though important deals including the supply of the S-400 Triumf missile system was concluded, a number of questions pertaining to the future trajectory of bilateral ties still remain.
- Earlier it was reported that the two sides would sign a “political document” with a clause on unacceptability of imposition of sanctions not approved by the United Nations. However, **the word “sanctions” did not even figure** in the joint statement.
- Surprisingly, now that CAATSA is a major challenge in Indo-Russian defence cooperation, Moscow and New Delhi seem to have decided to downplay the issue of sanctions by omitting any mention of it in the current joint statement. The idea probably is **not to further irritate Washington**.
- Reference to defence cooperation is very short and placed somewhere in the middle of the joint statement. The two leaders did not elaborate on the bilateral military partnership. This raises the important issue of taking defence cooperation forward.
- Also, the deal on the S-400 was neither announced by the leaders nor mentioned in the list of agreements. The possible explanation could be to demonstrate that bilateral ties *do not revolve around defence alone* and that it is not the sole sphere of cooperation.
- Surprisingly, the widely discussed deals on Kamov helicopters and Krivak/Talwar class frigates were not concluded.
- It was left to be discussed at the **Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation** scheduled to take place in December 2018.

- There is a growing perception in Russia that India has been slowly drifting away and, as a consequence, imports of Russian arms is likely to shrink in size. In such scenario, the finalisation of contracts will be an **important indicator of the trajectory** of Indo-Russian defence cooperation.
- Amidst the **American sanctions on Iran** becoming a new reality, several projects that both New Delhi and Moscow are interested in are under threat of being shelved.
- This was reflected in the joint statement where Iran was mentioned several times: Firstly, in the context of the upcoming trilateral meeting on the side-lines of “Transport Week-2018” in Moscow and, secondly, in support of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear programme.
- Dialogue on regional dynamics and maritime cooperation has turned into an integral part of India’s engagement with the US, Japan, Australia, France and other regional players. However, Moscow and New Delhi are **yet to begin consultations on regional issues**.
- This can be seen from the fact that the Russian version of the Indian Prime Minister’s statement **did not include the word “Indo-Pacific”**.
- The Indo-Pacific concept is not endorsed by Russian officialdom. Thus, the usage of terms is an indicator of different prisms through which Moscow and New Delhi view regional processes. Their approaches towards the Indo-Pacific are thus **not broadly congruent**.

Conclusion

While adjusting and adapting to the geopolitical challenges, the two countries cannot afford to overlook bilateral issues that remain chronically unresolved. The India-Russia partnership, albeit showing some positive signals by way of increased interaction at the top most level, is still lagging behind in many spheres.

Visit of Indian Prime Minister To Japan

Syllabus: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests

In News

- Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi visited Japan on October 28-29, 2018 for the India-Japan Annual Summit with Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Shinzo Abe.
- This was the 13th such annual summit and fifth for current Indian Prime Minister.

Key Highlights

Besides the five annual summits during which both the leaders have met, there are six other occasions on which they have also met in the sidelines of international and multilateral meeting. So far, they have **already met 12 times** in the past four and a half years.

A) Announcements

- Japan announced **joining the International Solar Alliance (ISA)** submitting the instrument of ratification. It became the 71st country to join ISA and 48th country to ratify it.
- Exchange of Notes concerning the provision of seven Yen loan projects including
 - Project for the Construction of *Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail*,
 - Project for Renovation and Modernization of *Umiam-Umtru Stage-III Hydroelectric Power Station*,

- *Delhi Mass Rapid Transport System Project (Phase 3),*
- *North East Road Network Connectivity Improvement Project,*
- *Project for the Construction of Turga Pumped Storage,*
- *Project for the Construction of Chennai Peripheral Ring Road and*
- *Project for Sustainable Catchment Forest Management in Tripura*

B) MoUs Signed:

- Implementing arrangement for deeper cooperation between Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force and Indian Navy
- MoC on **Japan-India Digital Partnership** to tap into the synergies and complementarities between Japan's "Society 5.0" and India's flagship programmes like "Digital India", "Smart City" and "Start-up India" in areas of next generation technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), and IoT (Internet of Things) etc.
- Statement of Intent between NITI Aayog and Ministry of Economy, Trade & Industry (METI), Japan on Artificial Intelligence (AI) to encourage and develop **cooperation on AI technologies**
- MoU between Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India and NEXI, Japan for *stimulating trade and investment between India and Japan and strengthening cooperation in projects in third countries.*
- MoU between Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), India and Hiroshima University, Japan **for Research Partnership** to promote research partnership in areas such as Electronics, Sensors, High Speed Vision, Robotics, Advanced Manufacturing including Mechatronics, Environmental Research, Intelligent Transportation, etc.
- MoU between CSIR, India and Research Centre for Advanced Science and Technology (RCAST), University of Tokyo, Japan **for Research Partnership** to promote research partnership in areas like Renewable Energy, Electronics including Robotics/IoT, Advanced Materials, etc.
- MoU on Further Cooperation toward Indo-Japan Global Startup between Nagasaki University and IIITDM Kancheepuram, India.
- MoU between Sports Authority of India (SAI), India and University of Tsukuba, Japan for academic exchanges and sports cooperation

India- Japan Fact Sheets**1. India-Japan Development Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, including Africa**

- Synergizing India's "**Act East Policy**" and Prime Minister Modi's **10 guiding principles** for India's sustained and regular engagement with African countries, with Japan's "**Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure Initiative**" and **TICAD VI Nairobi declaration**
- **Cooperation in Sri Lanka**, such as the development of LNG-related infrastructure
- **Cooperation in Myanmar**, synergizing development efforts in the Rakhine State by collaborating in housing, education and electrification projects
- **Cooperation in Bangladesh**, for enhancing connectivity by way of four-laning of road and reconstruction of bridges on the Ramgarh to Baraiyarhat stretch, and providing rolling stock and constructing the Jamuna Railway Bridge over the Januma River

- **Cooperation in Africa**, such as organising an SME development seminar in Kenya and seeking a possibility of a collaborative project in the area of health service such as developing a cancer hospital in Kenya.
- 2. India-Japan Cooperation Act East Forum**
- The Act East Forum established last year has served as a driving force to advance India-Japan cooperation in the North-East.
 - *Meghalaya North East Connectivity, Sikkim: Biodiversity Conservation & Forest Management, Nagaland: Forest Conservation Livelihood Improvement, Japan-India North East Bamboo Initiative* are few examples highlighting the cooperation between these two countries under this forum.
- 3. India-Japan Economic and ODA Cooperation**
- Japan's ODA to many projects has contributed to the socio-economic development of India.
- 4. India-Japan Security and Defence Cooperation**
- India and Japan have made significant progress in the last decade in fostering joint efforts towards shared security since the announcement of the **India-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in 2008**.
 - Both countries attach importance to the **Malabar exercise**, regular Passage Exercises (**PASSEX**) and other joint exercises including the first counter terrorism exercise between the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) and the Indian Army as well as Japan Air Self-Defense Force's (JASDF) participation as observer in **Cope India** and welcome increased cooperation with like-minded countries.

India - Japan Vision Statement

During the visit, recognizing the unparalleled potential for development of relations between the two countries, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Abe outlined the following shared vision for the future of India-Japan relations:

- India and Japan must endeavour to work together for a **rule-based and inclusive world order** guided by the universal values of freedom, humanism, democracy, tolerance and non-violence.
- The two leaders also affirmed that **ASEAN unity and centrality are at the heart of the Indo-Pacific concept**, which is inclusive and open to all. They shared willingness to *expand concrete cooperation with the U.S. and other partners*.
- The two leaders' **vision for the Indo-Pacific** is based on a rules-based order that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, ensures freedom of navigation and overflight as well as unimpeded lawful commerce, and seeks peaceful resolution of disputes with full respect for legal and diplomatic processes in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including those reflected in the UNCLOS, without resorting to threat or use of force.
- For **Partnership for Prosperity**, the two Prime Ministers reviewed with satisfaction the cooperation on development of connectivity via quality infrastructure, and other projects including capacity building. This synergy is embodied in collaborative projects between India and Japan in the Indo-Pacific region, including in Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Bangladesh as well as in Africa.

- In this regard, the two Prime Ministers welcomed the discussions for establishing the "**Platform for Japan-India Business Cooperation in Asia-Africa Region**" to further enhance the exchanges between Japanese and Indian businesses toward developing industrial corridors and industrial network in the region.
- The two Prime Ministers remain committed to **synergising India's demographic dividend and Japan's capital and technology** to realise the true potential of the India-Japan economic partnership for a prosperous future. In this regard, India welcomed Japan's strong support for key transformational initiatives such as "Make in India", "Skill India" and "Clean India Mission".
- For **Partnership for Peace**, they reaffirmed their desire to further deepen bilateral security and defence cooperation and institute Foreign and Defence Ministerial Dialogue (2+2), in addition to existing mechanisms, including the Annual Defence Ministerial Dialogue, Defence Policy Dialogue, the National Security Advisers' Dialogue, Staff-level Dialogue of each service.
- For cooperation between India and Japan on **defence equipment and technology**, both leaders further reaffirmed to promote interaction between Indian and Japanese defence industries and relevant authorities, and also welcomed the commencement of the cooperative research in the area of Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV) and Robotics.
- The two sides will continue to make efforts with regard to cooperation on US-2 amphibian aircraft.
- Both leaders decided to launch an **Annual Space Dialogue** for enhancing bilateral cooperation in outer-space. Both leaders also welcomed the technological collaboration between their respective agencies in the Joint Lunar Polar Exploration Mission.
- The two leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to the total **elimination of nuclear weapons** and remained resolute in the task of strengthening international cooperation to address the challenges of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism.
- The two leaders called for an immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral, and internationally and effectively verifiable **Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)** on the basis of Shannon Mandate.
- The two Prime Ministers condemned in the strongest terms the **growing threat of terrorism** and its universal reach. They called upon all countries to work towards rooting out terrorist safe havens and infrastructure, disrupting terrorist networks and financing channels, and halting cross-border movement of terrorists.
- India and Japan seek **expeditious and meaningful reforms of the United Nations**, in particular the comprehensive reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), to make it more legitimate, effective and representative, taking into account the contemporary realities of the 21st century.
- For **Partnership for Global Action**, the two Prime Ministers underlined the importance of their growing collaboration for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Underscoring the need for concerted global action to combat climate change, in line with the Paris Agreement adopted under UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), they shared the view to play a leading role in this field and reiterated their

commitment to finalising the work programme for implementation of the Paris Agreement and accelerate further **consultations for establishing the Joint Crediting Mechanism**.

- Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation on sustainable and clean forms of energy, including nuclear and renewables; explore possibilities for collaboration in hydrogen-based energy.
- They also expressed their commitment for cooperation in use of clean coal technology, petroleum and natural gas projects and LNG supply chain and welcomed "**Japan-India Energy Transition Cooperation Plan**".
- They acknowledged the importance of effective implementation of the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030**, in areas such as early warning mechanism, water resource management, use of space-based technology and disaster resilient infrastructure.
- The two leaders underlined the crucial role of the rules-based multilateral trading system and shared the **urgent necessity to reform the WTO** leading to the reinforced functioning of the WTO and to free, fair, and open trade, for achieving sustainable growth and development.
- They reaffirmed the strategic importance of the early conclusion of the negotiations for a high-quality, comprehensive and balanced **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement** for realising full benefits of a free and open Indo-Pacific region.
- They underscored their mutual trust and deep faith in the maturity of the India-Japan **Special Strategic and Global Partnership** today and the immense promise it holds for the future of the two countries as they jointly endeavour to build a more secure, peaceful and prosperous region and the world.

Visit of External Affairs Minister to State of Qatar and State of Kuwait

Syllabus: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests

In News

- External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj visited two countries in the Gulf region from 28 to 31 October 2018.
- The visit was in pursuit of India's objective of enhanced engagement with the Gulf region which is in India's extended neighbourhood.

Key Highlights

A) Qatar

- India and Qatar share millennia old historic multi-dimensional, relations. The bilateral visit of His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar in March 2015 and His Excellency Prime Minister of Qatar to India in December 2016 and that of the visit of Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Qatar in June 2016 have further boosted traditionally cordial and close ties between the two countries.
- Qatar hosts about seven lakh Indians who form the largest expatriate community there.

- Qatar is a reliable energy partner, supplying more than 50% of India's natural gas imports. Our bilateral trade with Qatar in 2017-18 was US\$ 9.9 billion.
- During the first ever visit of External Affairs Minister of India Smt. Sushma Swaraj to Doha on 28-30 October 2018, both countries have decided to establish a **Joint Commission to strengthen the relations** between the two countries in various fields with a view to further the common interests of their two friendly peoples.
- The Joint Commission will be charged with the following tasks:
 - Formulating the required basis to strengthen the relations between the two countries particularly in the economic, commercial, cultural, scientific, technological, information technology and educational fields.
 - Following up the implementation of the Agreements concluded between the two countries; and finding the suitable solutions for the resulting problems of the implementation thereof.
 - Facilitating the exchange of information and expertise; and encouraging bilateral consultation in service of cooperation between the two countries.
- The Joint Commission will be co-chaired by the Ministers of External Affairs and Foreign Affairs of the two countries or their representatives; and may include in its membership representatives of the sectors concerned with the bilateral cooperation in both the countries.

B) Kuwait

- India and Kuwait have close and friendly bilateral relations. Kuwait is a reliable energy supplier to India and hosts about ten lakh Indians forming the largest expatriate community. Our bilateral trade with Kuwait in 2017-18 was US\$ 8.5 billion.
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Kuwait on mutual exemption from visa requirements for holders of Diplomatic, Special and Official Passports was signed during the visit.

U.S. Exit from INF Treaty

Syllabus: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements.

In News

- President Donald Trump announced at a campaign rally on October 20 that the United States would withdraw from the **Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty**.
- The United States will exit the agreement six months after it gives formal notification.

The INF Treaty

- Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev signed the INF Treaty in December 1987.
- The INF Treaty **banned all U.S. and Soviet land-based cruise and ballistic missiles** with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers.
- It entered into force in summer 1988.
- Three years later, the United States and Soviet Union had destroyed almost 2,700 missiles as well as their launchers, all under the **most intrusive verification measures** ever agreed, including on-site inspections.

- The treaty also led to the end of a dangerous standoff between US Pershing and cruise missiles and Soviet SS-20 missiles in Europe.

Why US Took This Step

- US blames Russia of cheating and not adhering to the treaty. According to it, Russia developed and deployed a land-based cruise missile of intermediate-range, identified in 2017 as the 9M729.
- US hawks have also argued that the INF treaty ties the country's hands **in its strategic rivalry with China** in the Pacific, with no response to Chinese medium-range missiles that could threaten US bases, allies and shipping.

Analysis

- Many analysts have described the abandonment of the accord as a "**dangerous and destabilizing move**" with the potential revert the world back to the worst days of the Cold War.
- It was a **landmark treaty** in many ways. When enforced, the pact eliminated all ground-launched nuclear missiles with a range of 300 to 3,000 miles and aimed at the total destruction of over 800 U.S. missiles in Europe and 1,700 Russian missiles in Asia and Europe.
- Moscow appeared satisfied with the treaty's performance up until the early 2000s.
- Senior Russian officials then began to express concern that, while the United States and Russia could not have intermediate-range missiles, third countries could. (The exceptions were Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, which, like Russia, remained party to the INF Treaty after the Soviet Union's collapse.)
- Third countries such as South Korea, North Korea, China, India, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Israel have developed and deployed intermediate-range missiles, with China producing hundreds. Each of these countries is geographically much closer to Russia than it is to the United States.
- Hence, many analysts believe that by announcing the U.S. intention to withdraw, Trump has set in motion a train that will leave Washington and be seen as responsible for killing the treaty.
- In addition, withdrawal from the treaty will allow the Russians to deploy land-based intermediate-range missiles without constraint, missiles for which the U.S. military currently has no land-based counterpart. It will be **a win-win for Moscow**.
- Many critics view this decision as part of the US policy course to **withdraw from those international legal agreements that place equal responsibilities** on it and its partners and make vulnerable its concept of its own 'exceptionalism'.

Trade Deal Replacing NAFTA

Syllabus: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements.

In News

- The US and Canada have reached a new trade deal, along with Mexico, to replace the current North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

- The new deal has been named as the **United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)** and is expected to be signed by the three North American countries before the end of November

Key Highlights

- The new USMCA is intended to last 16 years and be reviewed every six years.
- The deal has 34 chapters and governs more than \$1tn (£767bn) in trade.
- The new deal gives the US greater access to Canada's dairy market whilst Canadian car makers will be protected from US tariffs.
- In addition, according to the deal, 40% of car parts of vehicles produced in the USMCA area must be made in areas of North America, paying wages of \$16 an hour.
- On the lumber (or wood) industry, Canada secured protection from US anti-dumping tariffs through the preservation of a dispute-settlement mechanism.
- The new deal has, for the first time, set rules for financial-services and digital businesses and intellectual property that have emerged since the bloc was created.
- The deal, however, failed to resolve U.S. tariffs on Canada's steel and aluminum exports.

Background

- US President Donald Trump, during Presidential campaign, labelled NAFTA "the worst trade deal" ever signed by the US.
- He blamed NAFTA for wiping out US manufacturing jobs because it allowed companies to move factories to Mexico where labour is cheaper.
- In April 2017, US President threatened to pull out of the trade agreement. Canada and Mexico insisted to renegotiate it instead, and Trump agreed.
- As per the NAFTA agreement, a country **can withdraw** from it after **giving six months notice**.
- The US made a deal with Mexico in August 2018, but relations with Canada over the trade pact had become increasingly strained in recent weeks.
- Finally, the US President had imposed September 30 midnight deadline to reach the deal.

Why September 30 as Deadline?

- The Trump administration has been working to sign a new trade deal before Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto leaves office on December 1.
- To meet that deadline, the text of the agreement had to be submitted to Congress before October so that US congress gets sufficient time to review.

Analysis Of The Current Deal

- The new deal is expected to **re-balance US' trade relations** with Mexico and Canada.
- It has also **modernized** what was covered in NAFTA by including new area such as Digital processing and IPR etc.
- After this deal, it will be **harder, or at least more expensive, for car makers** to use parts from outside North America, notably from China. American dairy farmers are getting better access to the highly protected Canadian market.

- Many analysts believe that the **new deal would be able to reduce the imbalance** in US international trade, with individual trade partners and globally.
- However, many economists **do not think trade balances are primarily the outcome of trade policy** - instead they reflect government borrowing, private investment and savings decisions and international capital movements.
- The powerful Dairy Farmers of Canada group, **which opposes increased US access** to Canadian markets, released a statement saying “any final NAFTA deal should have no further negative impact on the dairy sector”.

About NAFTA:

- NAFTA stands for the **North American Free Trade Agreement** to lift tariffs (taxes on imports and exports) on virtually all goods traded among the US, Canada, and Mexico.
- NAFTA came into effect on January 1, 1994, after it was signed on December 17, 1992.
- The aim of NAFTA was to make it easier for companies in the three countries to do business across borders.
- The argument for NAFTA was that - by boosting economic integration - there would be increased economic prosperity in all three countries.

Has US Lost Jobs Because Of NAFTA?

- Since NAFTA, trade quadrupled among the three countries, surpassing \$1tn in 2015.
- Economists Shushanik Hakobyan and John McLaren studied NAFTA's effect on the US labour market in 2016. They found a **severe impact on income among blue-collar workers** in the most affected industries and areas.
- College-educated workers were less likely to be affected, they said, and executives saw some benefits. The **most affected workers were college dropouts** working in industries that depended heavily on tariff protections in place prior to NAFTA.
- However, many economists note that manufacturing employment was already in decline before NAFTA was signed.
- They attribute much of the decline to **automation in US industry**. Companies have been able to increase output with fewer workers.
- Also, **US tariff cuts** on Mexican trade under NAFTA were implemented at roughly the same time as tariff cuts with most other countries as the US entered the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995.
- Competition from **Chinese exports** increased during the same time period and boomed as China joined the WTO in 2001. Economists are more united in the view that the US has lost more jobs to China than to Mexico.

Impact on Mexico and Canada

- NAFTA gave a **major boost to Mexican farm exports** to the US, which have tripled since NAFTA's implementation.
- Hundreds of thousands of **Mexican auto-manufacturing jobs** have also been created, and most studies have found that the pact had a positive impact on Mexican productivity and consumer prices.

- But there are **significant downsides**: Mexico's economy grew at an average rate of just 1.3 percent a year between 1993 and 2013 during a period when Latin America was undergoing a major expansion, and poverty remains at similar levels to 1994, while mass unemployment has increased.
- Some believe that, instead of fulfilling its promise of providing cheaper food to Mexicans, NAFTA **deepened Mexico's dependency on food imports**, leaving it unprotected from volatility in international food prices and exchange rates.
- According to one study, Canada has seen strong gains in cross-border investment in the NAFTA era.
- Since 1993, *US and Mexican investments in Canada have tripled*. Canadian agriculture, in particular, saw a boost, while employment in Canadian manufacturing held steady.
- However, the "**productivity gap**" between the Canadian and US economies remains wide: Canada's labour productivity remains at 72 percent of US levels.

India And 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention Or Its 1967 Protocol

Syllabus: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements.

In News

- India has neither signed nor ratified the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol. Despite this fact, India continues to host a large population of refugees on its soil.
- India is home to diverse groups of refugees, ranging from Buddhist Chakmas from the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, to Bhutanese from Nepal, Muslim Rohingyas from Myanmar and small populations from Somalia, Sudan and other sub Saharan African countries.
- Many critics argue that it is precisely the large numbers that enjoin upon India the duty to enshrine in law how these refugees will be treated.
- In the absence of any domestic law or regional South Asian framework, India has desisted from taking its rightful regional leadership role in this increasingly critical matter.

Reasons

- The reasons are chiefly security-related. The government's stand is that borders in South Asia are **extremely porous** and any conflict can result in a mass movement of people.
- This can have two results: first, **a strain on local infrastructure and resources** in countries that are poorly equipped to deal with sudden spikes in population. Second, it can upset the **demographic balance**.
- Another argument is that India already does its duty, so where's the need to sign this piece of paper? It mostly **does not even take UN money** to look after the refugees.
- Another reason offered by some scholars is that India retains a degree of **scepticism about the UNHCR**, which apparently flows from the Bangladesh war of 1971.
- Although, UNHCR played a stellar role in helping devise India's administrative response to Bangladeshi refugees. However, India was upset that the UNHCR began talking about the need for repatriation of refugees only in June 1971.

- It was the time when Pakistani atrocities were causing millions more to flee to India. New Delhi felt talk of repatriation at that particular point in time gave the wrong signals to the world.
- Additionally, India was far from pleased by a visit to Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) by the UNHCR high commissioner, Sadruddin Agha Khan, on the invitation of Pakistani president Yahya Khan. This was seen as an **endorsement of Pakistani propaganda** that its eastern territory was normal.

India Elected to UNHRC

Syllabus: Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

In News

- India has been elected to the United Nations' top human rights body for a period of three years beginning January 1, 2019.
- The 193-member UN General Assembly held elections in United Nations for new members to the UNHRC. The 18 new members were elected by absolute majority through a secret ballot. Countries needed a minimum of 97 votes to get elected to the Council.

Key Highlights

- India was vying for a seat in the Asia-Pacific category. Along with *India, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Fiji, and Philippines* had also staked a claim in the same regional group.
- Given that there were five nations vying for five seats in the Asia Pacific category, all the countries were likely to get elected.
- India will join Pakistan, China and Nepal, which were elected to the Council in previous years.
- India secured 188 votes in the Asia-Pacific category, the **highest number of votes** among all candidates. Countries need a **minimum of 97 votes** to get elected to the Council.
- India had **previously been elected** to the Geneva-based Human Rights Council for the 2011-2014 and 2014-2017 term.
- Its last tenure had ended on December 31, 2017 and in accordance with the rules, it was not eligible for immediate re-election since it had already served two consecutive terms.

Facts:

- Created by the Assembly in March 2006 as the principal United Nations body dealing with human rights, the Human Rights Council comprises 47 elected Member States.
- On the basis of equitable geographical distribution, Council seats are allocated to the **five regional groups** as follows: African States, 13 seats; Asia-Pacific States, 13 seats; Eastern European States, 6 seats; Latin American and Caribbean States, 8 seats; and Western European and other States, 7 seats.
- India was among the **first batch of 47 countries** elected to the Council in 2006 soon after it was set up and received an initial one-year term instead of three to facilitate a rotating roster of vacancies each year.

IORA Countries Adopt The Delhi Declaration

Syllabus: Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

In News

- 21 countries in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) have adopted the **Delhi Declaration on Renewable Energy in the Indian Ocean Region**.
- Adoption of the declaration took place at *2nd IORA Renewable Energy Ministerial Meeting* held at the 2nd Global Re-Invest India-ISA Partnership Renewable Energy Investor's Meet & Expo in Greater Noida.

Key Highlights

- The declaration calls for **collaboration** among IORA member states in meeting the growing demand for renewable energy in the Indian Ocean littorals, **development** of a common renewable energy agenda for the Indian Ocean region and **promote** regional capacity building.
- It also calls for *promotion of technology development and transfer, strengthening of public private partnerships* in renewable energy and *collaboration among IORA member states and the member nations of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)*.
- IORA member countries also resolved to collaborate with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).
- Additionally, IORA member nations and IRENA will undertake the **expansion of the Global Renewable Energy Atlas** the world's largest-ever joint renewable resource data project coordinated by IRENA).
- This collaboration would result in creation of the Indian Ocean region's first and most comprehensive map and database which can then be used to tap the sizable renewable energy potential of the region.

About IORA

- The Indian Ocean Rim Association was set up with the objective of strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean Region with 21 Member States and 7 Dialogue Partners.
- India, Australia, Iran IR, Indonesia Thailand, Malaysia, South Africa, Mozambique, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Singapore, Mauritius, Madagascar, UAE, Yemen, Seychelles, Somalia, Comoros and Oman are members of IORA.
- The last Renewable Energy Ministerial Meeting was held on 21st January, 2014 in Abu Dhabi, UAE. Subsequently, during the meeting of IORA Council of Ministers, held in October, 2016 in Bali, Indonesia, it was decided that the next conference will be held in India.