1. Kaladan Project

Topic: International Relations

KALADAN MULTI-MODAL TRANSIT TRANSPORT PROJECT
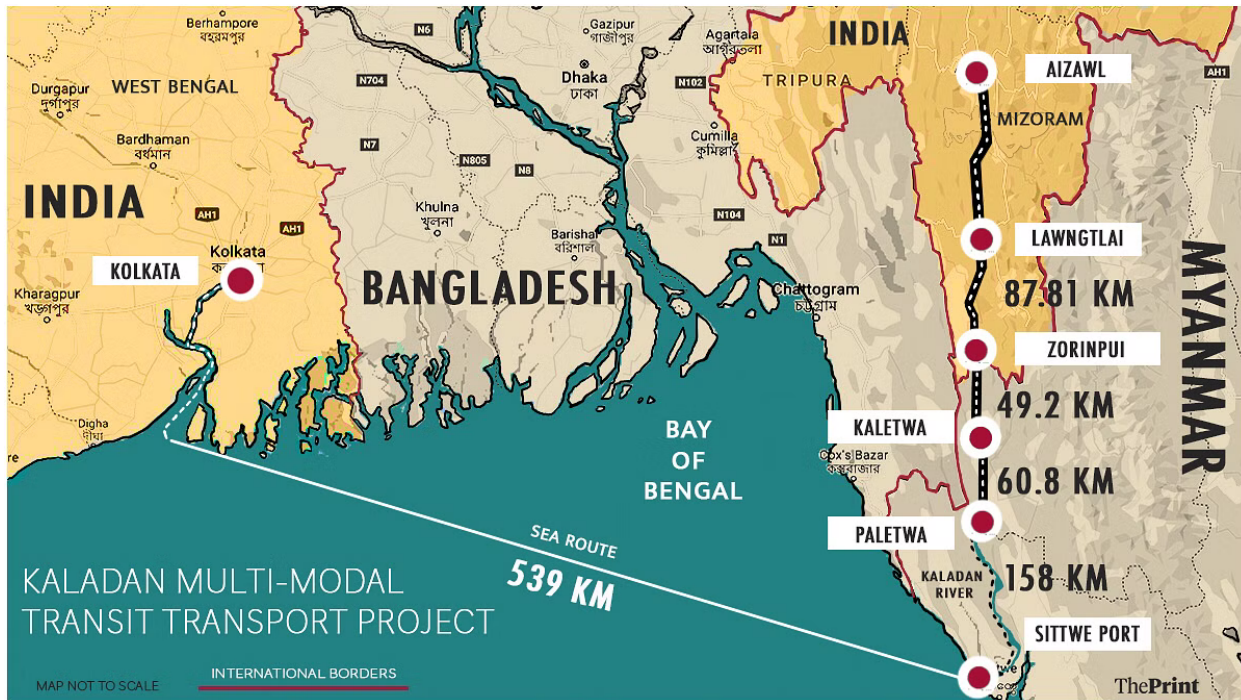
In News: A vessel containing cement was flagged off from the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port in Kolkata to officially kick-start the operation of Sittwe Port in Myanmar.

More on the Topic

- The initiative was part of **Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP),** and has been built under grant assistance from India.
- The primary aim of the project has been to **create an alternative route to connect northeast and mainland India.**
- So far, the narrow Siliguri Chicken's Neck corridor is the only feasible route for transportation.
- Sittwe Port has been developed under **a framework agreement between India and Myanmar** for the construction and operation of a multimodal transit transport facility on Kaladan river connecting the port with Mizoram.
- **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** is the Project Development Consultant for KMTTP.

The project envisaged four important stages:

- Kolkata to Sittwe waterway;
- Sittwe to Paletwa inland (River Kaladan) waterway;
- Paletwa to India-Myanmar border post in Myanmar;
- Finally, linking the road to Lawngtlai in Mizoramas part of the project's last leg;

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Importance of Better connectivity to North Eastern States:
- Shorter journeys mean lower transport costs, which in turn will have multiplier economic effects .
- Industrial development and harnessing of tourism potential that will help in socio-economic development and employment generation.
- The connectivity is important for strategic reasons. As Siliguri Corridor is the only access to North East, the alternative short access will help to maintain the connectivity even when Silliguri is blocked.

Source: Indian Express

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2. Cyclone
Topic: Geography

In News: The Indian Meteorological Department, IMD has issued a warning that a cyclonic circulation is likely to develop over the Southeast Bay of Bengal.

More on the Topic:
- Cyclones are **centres of low pressure surrounded by closed isobars** and having increasing pressure outwards.
- As air enters an area of low pressure from all directions, **the Coriolis Effect bends the direction of the wind to the right of its path.**
- This creates **a counter clockwise rotation** around the low and convergence near the centre of the system.
- As the air collides near the centre it is forced aloft where divergence takes air away from the centre of the system.

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- A Cyclone is a system of **low level convergence and high level divergence** with a rising column of air in the centre of the rotating air mass. If the upper air is not diverging then there cannot be a cyclone present.

Types of Cyclones:

Temperate cyclones:

- They are caused in middle and high latitudes, As India Not lies here it does not occur in India.

Tropical cyclones:

- Tropical cyclones are violent storms that originate over oceans in tropical areas and move over to the coastal areas.
- It brings large-scale destruction caused by violent winds, very heavy rainfall and storm surges.
- The winds blow counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.
- Tropical cyclones usually develop in summer season in the vicinity of Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) over warm ocean surface.
- Tropical cyclones are one of the mechanisms by which surface heat energy is redistributed from the equator to the poles.

It's name varies location to location.

- They are known as
- Cyclones in the Indian Ocean
- Hurricanes in the Atlantic
- Typhoons in the Western Pacific and South China Sea, and,
- Willy-willies in the Western Australia.

Source: AIR

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3. Internal Complaints Committees

Topic: Social Justice

In News: The investigation in lights of National Prominent Wrestlers protest to take action on Sexual Harassment allegations has found that there was no Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) in Wrestling Foundation India, as mandated by law under the 2013 Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act.

More on the Topic:

- The ICC was designed to be the first port of call for any grievance under the PoSH Act, a key element needed to create a safe workplace environment for women.
- As per the law, **it needs to have a minimum of four members – at least half of them women –** of whom one shall be an external member, preferably from an NGO or an association that works for women's empowerment or a person familiar with issues related to sexual harassment, like a lawyer.
- In fact, a functional ICC is one of the key conditions set up by the Ministry of Sports to grant annual recognition to the federations.

What needs to be done?

- ICCs should be immediately constituted.
- The government should ensure that all organizations comply with the act and set up ICCs as per the guidelines.

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- The government should provide **legal aid and assistance to women who file complaints under the PoSH Act.**
- Along with ICC there is a need to create awareness on Posh Act and importance and procedures of Posh act and ICC.
- As athletes and sports person are not in formal office spaces there is a need to create awareness when they come for tournaments or through other mediums like digital media.

About PoSH Act:

- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, often known as the PoSH Act, was passed in 2013.
- The Act defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome act or behaviour (whether directly or by implication) such as;
- Physical contact and advances
- A demand or request for sexual favours
- Making sexually coloured remarks
- Showing pornography
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.
- The Act provides a mechanism for the prevention, prohibition, and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment in the workplace.
- **Responsibilities of the Employer:**
- To provide a safe working environment for women.
- Display the penal consequences of sexual harassment.
- Organize awareness programs and workshops.
- Assist the complainant if she chooses to file a criminal case against the respondent.
- **Investigations and Actions:**
- The **ICC or LCC is required to complete the inquiry into the complaint within 90 days** and submit a report with its recommendations to the employer or district officer.
- **The employer or district officer** is required to take action on the recommendations of the ICC or LCC within 60 days and inform the complainant and respondent about it.
- The Act provides for p**enalties for false or malicious complaints, non-compliance with the provisions of the Act by the employer or ICC or LCC members, and victimization or retaliation against the complainant or witness.**

Source: Hindu

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4.River-Cities Alliance (RCA)

Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) in association with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) organized the 'River-Cities Alliance (RCA) Global Seminar: Partnership for Building International River-Sensitive Cities'.

More on the Topic:

- The River Cities Alliance (RCA) is **a joint initiative of the Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation under the Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) & the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA),** with a vision to connect river cities and focus on sustainable river centric development.
- RCA is a dedicated platform for river cities to ideate, discuss and exchange information for sustainable management of urban rivers.
- Beginning with 30 member cities in November 2021, the Alliance has expanded to 109 river cities across India and one international member city from Denmark.

Source: Indian Express

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5. Project Dantak

Topic: International Relations

In News: The BRO's project DANTAK completed 60 years in Bhutan.

More on the Topic:

- Project DANTAK was established on 24th April1961.
- It was a result of the visionary leadership of the third King of Bhutan and then Prime Minister of India Jawahar Lal Nehru.
- DANTAK was tasked to construct the pioneering motorable roads.
- Over the years, the Project has completed approximately 1600 km of blacktopped roads and 120 km of tracks in Bhutan with 5000 meters of bridges over them.
- The medical and education facilities established by DANTAK in far flung areas were often the first in those locations.

Source: Business Standard

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6. Washington Declaration

Topic: International Relations

In News: South Korean President I arrived in the U.S. to commemorate the 70th anniversary of U.S.-South Korea bilateral relations. A highlight of the visit was the signing of the "Washington Declaration" as a nuclear deterrence strategy.

More on the Topic:

- According to the declaration, an American nuclear ballistic submarine would be deployed in the Korean peninsula;
- a nuclear consultative group would be formed to formulate principles of joint response tactics;
- South Korea would receive Intel from the U.S. regarding nuclear advancements; and
- the U.S. will strengthen South Korea's nuclear deterrence capabilities through joint military training programs and an annual intergovernmental simulation.
- The declaration reaffirmed **the non-proliferation Treaty implying that South Korea would not venture into the creation of its own independent nuclear capabilities** and would instead focus on deterrence measures through an alliance-based approach.
- It also mandates **the U.S. President as the only 'sole authority' to use the nuclear arsenal of the U.S. in the event of a nuclear confrontation.**
- While the existence of the agreement is based on the security needs of South Korea, the **policy reflects big power politics where the interests of the larger power (U.S.) takes precedence.**

Source: Business Standard

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7. Government Widens Aadhaar Ambit

Topic: Polity and Governance

In News: Widening the list of non-banking reporting entities, the Finance Ministry has allowed 22 financial entities to verify the identity of their customers via Aadhaar under the ambit of the money laundering law.

More on the Topic:

- These entities can access the Aadhaar authentication and e-KYC services of UIDAI through **a secure application programming interface (API),** and use them for verifying their customers.
- According to MeitY, these entities have been selected based on their compliance with the **Aadhaar Act, 2016 and the Information Technology Act, 2000,** as well as their track record of providing quality services to customers.
- Recently, the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) proposed allowing a wide range of private entities to carry out Aadhaar authentication for a number of services, expanding the use of the digital identity beyond its ministries and departments.

Source: Business Standard

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