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ANALYSIS**



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09 NOVEMBER 2023

1 - Ghauri ballistic missile:

GS II

International Issues

- **Context:**

- Pakistan tests its readiness with a Ghauri ballistic missile launch.

- **Important information:**

- The test was designed to assess Army Strategic Forces Command's operational and technological preparedness.
- Pakistan's land-based, nonconventional ballistic and cruise missiles are operated by ASFC; the majority of these missiles are capable of carrying nuclear warheads.
- Given that the Ghauri missile would need to travel with a convoy of support vehicles that supply fuel and get it ready for firing, its survival on a battlefield seems improbable.
- The arrangement of those platforms would leave it open to discovery.
- The more sophisticated and resilient Shaheen family of solid-fuel ballistic missiles has taken the weapon's place in the nation's arsenal.
- Tested for the first time in 1998, the Ghauri remains functional.
- In Pakistan's strategic forces, it is the sole ballistic missile with liquid fuel.
- TM-185, a fuel blend mostly consisting of kerosene and petrol, and fuming nitric acid power the Ghauri.

- **Source** → *The Hindu*

2 - Importance of the China-Bhutan boundary negotiations:

GS II

International Issues

- **Context:**

- In Beijing, China and Bhutan signed a Cooperation Agreement on the “Responsibilities and Functions of the Joint Technical Team (JTT) on the Delimitation and Demarcation of the Bhutan-China Boundary” during their 25th round of border negotiations.

- **Important information:**

- This builds on the positive momentum from their previous conversations in 2016 and progresses their 3-Step Roadmap for border resolution, which was started in 2021.
- After a seven-year break, Bhutan and China held the boundary talks.
- Bhutan's northern and western borders are continuous with those of the Tibetan Autonomous Region.
- Up until 2016, Bhutan and China had held 24 rounds of negotiations to settle their differences since 1984. However, it seems that the Doklam standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries in 2017 and the COVID-19 epidemic in 2019–2021 delayed the 25th round of discussions.
- The two parties made quick use of the pause to have talks at different levels, particularly as China threatened to create a new front in the border issue with Bhutan to the east.
- Following that, in 2021, the Expert Group of diplomats from both sides convened to settle on a three-pronged plan.
- In 2023, the first technical discussions on boundary delimitation took place.
- For the first time, a boundary separating Chinese and Bhutanese territory is intended to be drawn by the JTT and the 3-Step roadmap MoU, which were formed by the Expert Group in August to carry out the roadmap.
- Since Bhutan has always shunned diplomatic relationships with all permanent members of the UN Security Council, it does not have diplomatic ties with China.

- **The Three-Step Roadmap entails:**

- acceptance of the table's boundary
- after that going to the locations on the ground and
- explicitly defining the frontier

- **Importance to India:**
- **This Doklam problem:**
 - The Doklam delineation talks are being closely watched by New Delhi because one of China's proposals is to exchange regions in Doklam under Bhutanese control for territory China claims in Jakarlung and Pasamlung.
 - India would prefer that China not have access to any region near the Doklam trijunction since it is quite close to the Siliguri corridor, a tiny stretch of land that links the country's northeastern states to the rest of India.
 - China has increased its authority over the Doklam plateau and has been constructing new roads, underground storage facilities, and villages in disputed areas of adjacent Bhutan ever since the Doklam standoff in 2017.
 - Many of the strategic advantages that New Delhi had hoped for following China's agreement to retreat from the standoff point in 2017 were gone.
- **Bhutan's Chinese embassy:**
 - China's demand for full diplomatic relations with Bhutan and the establishment of an embassy in Thimphu is the source of India's concern.
- **Chinese-led initiatives in Bhutan:**
 - Any Chinese presence in Bhutan would be troublesome given India's issues with Chinese projects and funding in other neighbouring nations including Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.
- *Source → The Hindu*

3 – Osteoporosis:

GS II

Health related issues

- **Context:**
 - There aren't any extensive research on osteoporosis in India, but estimates indicate that at least 46 million women there suffer from post-menopausal osteoporosis, which is just one kind of the disease.

- **About Osteoporosis:**

- A bone condition called osteoporosis arises when bone mass and mineral density decline, or when alterations occur to the composition and integrity of bone.
- This may result in a weakening of the bones, raising the possibility of fractures.
- Because osteoporosis usually goes undetected until a bone breaks, it is known as a silent illness.
- For older men and women who have gone through menopause, osteoporosis is the main cause of fractures.
- Although fractures can occur in any bone, they most frequently occur in the wrist, hip, and vertebrae of the spine.

- **Osteoporosis causes:**

- When too much bone mass is lost and the structure of bone tissue alterations, osteoporosis results.

- **The following are some factors that may raise the risk of osteoporosis:**

- **Sexual:**

- Women are more likely than males to acquire osteoporosis.

- **Age:**

- Bone loss increases with age, while the formation of new bone slows down.

- **Size of body:**

- Osteoporosis is more common in men and women with slender, thin bones.

- **Ethnicity:**

- The women who are most at risk are White and Asian women, whereas Mexican American and African American women are less at risk.

- **Family background:**

- If one of the parents has a history of hip fractures or osteoporosis, the child may be more at risk for both conditions.

- **Alterations in hormones:**

- Osteoporosis risk may increase with low levels of specific hormones.
- **Nutrition:**
- Your risk of osteoporosis and fractures may increase if your diet is deficient in calcium and vitamin D.
- **Way of life:**
- Prolonged periods of inactivity and low levels of physical exercise can both accelerate the rate of bone loss.
- **Indian context:**
- According to a 2019 study, India was the country that contributed the most to global fatalities and disability from osteoporosis fractures.
- Every patient should have a high index of suspicion for osteoporosis since Indian women often lack certain micronutrients and do not have time for exercise.
- The majority of people in India lack access to DEXA, the gold standard test for osteoporosis, or bone mineral density scanning.
- According to a survey, there are just 0.26 DEXA machines per million people in India.
- *Source → The Hindu*

4 - Caste survey experience in Tamil Nadu:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- A caste census by itself might not result in further reservations for the other backward classes (OBCs), given Tamil Nadu's historical background.
- **About:**

- In Tamil Nadu, the Second Backward Classes Commission (1982–1985) suggested lowering the percentage of reservations.
- The A.N.-led First BC panel (1969–1970). Though Sattanathan proposed addressing BC's concerns, the concept of a creamy layer hasn't acquired political traction.
- **Regarding the Second Commission of BC:**
 - The Tennessee government declared in 1980 that the reserve percentage for Black citizens would increase from 31% to 50%, bringing the total amount to 68%. This included:
 - 18% of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes (SC & ST).
 - Following the allocation of 1% of all reservations to STs in 1990, the total climbed to 69%.
 - The State administration promised in 1982 that it would form a commission to examine the current enumeration and classification of BCs after the decision became the focus of Supreme Court action.
 - J.A. Ambasankar, the former chairman of the Tamil Nadu Public Services Commission, was appointed to lead the panel.
 - In 1985, the government received the findings from the BC panel.
- **The Commission's work highlights include:**
 - In two phases, the Socio-Educational-cum-Economic Survey was carried out in 1983–1984.
 - To identify and classify BCs, a 100% door-to-door enumeration was carried out in the first phase.
 - A list of 298 communities was compiled by the Second BC panel and categorised into many major groupings, including BCs, Most BCs, Denotified Communities (DNCs), SCs, and STs.
 - The panel did not provide a comprehensive breakdown of all the communities, instead limiting its discussion to the BCs.
 - Based on their calculations, the Commission determined that 67.15% of the State's total population lived in the BCs.
 - Within the overall 50% share of BCs, an exclusive quota of 20% was granted to MBCs and DNCs in 1989.
 - Lastly, it organised a comprehensive survey of "public servants" in every grade as of July 1, 1983, in order to determine the representation of BCs in public services.
- **The Commission's recommendations:**
 - The government received two sets of recommendations: one from the Chairman and another from the Members.
 - It made the decision to maintain the current level of reserve, which is 50% for BCs.
 - Despite following the panel's suggestion to include 29 villages, the government disagreed with the proposal to remove 24 municipalities.
- **What impact did the 1992 ruling by the Supreme Court have on State reservations?**

- Following the 1992 Mandal Commission ruling by the Supreme Court, the State was compelled to pass legislation securing the 69% quota and placing it under the Ninth Schedule.
- Between 2007 and 2009, the DMK government allocated 3.5% of the BC quota to Muslims and Christians respectively.
- The distinct quota for Christians was later eliminated.
- Arunthathiyars, who make up the SCs, received 3% of the SCs' 18% quota in 2009.
- The AIADMK government succeeded in getting a measure approved by the Assembly in 2021 that would have given Vanniyars, also known as Vanniyakula Kshatriyas, a 10.5% reservation in employment and education under the total 20% MBC cap.
- Nonetheless, the Ambasankar panel's statistics were not contemporaneous, according to the Supreme Court, which overturned the legislation.
- *Source* → *The Hindu*

5 - 800-year history of India's relationship with Jerusalem:

GS II

International Issues

• Context:

- India started its presence in Jerusalem in the 12th century, long before Israel and Palestine became two of the most disputed locations in the world.

• Important information:

- Within the walls of the ancient city is a two-story brown stone structure.
- There's a plaque on exhibit that says, "Indian Hospice, Estd. 12th century A.D., with assistance from the Indian government's Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi."
- "The Indian corner" is the name of the street that leads to the hospice: "Zawiyat El-Hunud."
- The 800-year relationship between India and Jerusalem was highlighted in this new plaque, which was unveiled in 2021 by the Indian Minister of External Affairs.

• How did this relationship start?

- At the location mentioned above, Baba Farid, a Sufi saint from Punjab, stayed in deep meditation for 40 days.

- Even though he went back to Punjab, Indian Muslims travelling to Mecca began to come to this location to pray in the walled city of Jerusalem.
- This location evolved over time into a hospice and shrine for Indian tourists.
- **Who was Farid Baba?**
- Baba Farid was descended from a family that had moved from Kabul to Punjab and was born in the village of Kothewal, close to Multan, in 1173 CE.
- One of the first Sufi saints to write poetry in Punjabi, he adhered to the Chishti order.
- A large number of these verses are included in the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikhs' sacred text.
- He visited Jerusalem throughout his travels across Punjab and beyond, where he wrote verses and offered prayers at the Al-Aqsa mosque.
- According to legend, he discovered a little lodge inside one of Old Jerusalem's gates, which Christians refer to as Herod's Gate and Muslims as Bab-az-Zahra.
- Within Herod's Gate, this lodge was housed in a modest khanqah perched on a little hill:
- Khanqahs are special buildings for Sufi organisations that function as pilgrims' hospices as well as seminaries for the order's adherents.
- The khanqah became a hospice for Indian travellers after Baba Farid left, and it was given the name Zawiya Al-Hindiya, which translates to "the Lodge of Hind."
- In 1671, Zawiya Al-Hindiya was one of the biggest Zawiya's in the city, according to the mediaeval traveller Evliya Chelebi.
- **Fixing the lodge:**
- The Indian Khilafat Movement's leaders were notified by the Grand Mufti in 1921 that the "Indian Lodge" needed urgent repair.
- A young man from Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh named Khwaja Nazir Hasan Ansari took on the work.
- After he finished renovating the lodge in 1924, it served as a haven for many tourists and pilgrims from British India for the following fifteen years.
- The lodge provided shelter to British Indian soldiers fighting in North Africa in 1939, during World War II.
- **How did the lodge come to be connected to India's independence?**
- In order to solidify the lodge's Indian character after India attained independence, Nazir Ansari applied for official registration from the Indian embassy in Egypt.
- On its grounds are located the Jerusalem Health Centre and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).
- Its administrator today is Sheikh Mohammad Munir Ansari, who was born in Jerusalem in 1928.
- The highest award given by the Indian government to its abroad citizens, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman (abroad Indian Award) was given to him in 2011.

- "Saare jahaan se achha, Hindustan hamara" is the song the Ansaris sing to commemorate Independence Day every year on August 15.
- Only those with Indian ancestry or citizenship are permitted access to this land, which is owned by the Waqf Board of India.
- *Source* → *The Hindu*



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