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CURRENT AFFAIRS



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Pre-Sampriti-X Exercises



- India-Bangladesh joint military training exercise 'Purva SAMPRITI-X' (EX SAMPRITI-X) is being organized from June 05 to June 16, 2022 at Jashor Military Station, Bangladesh.

Introduction:

- Exercise Sampriti is an important bilateral defense cooperation conducted by the two countries alternately, with a focus on deepening and widening interoperability and cooperation between the armies of the two countries.

Purpose:

- Strengthening inter-operability between the two armies and understanding each other's tactical exercises and operational techniques.

Representation of India:

- The Indian contingent in this exercise is being represented by a battalion of the Dogra Regiment.

Importance:

- During the joint military exercise, armies of both the countries will share their expertise in multiple scenarios of UN Peacekeeping Force in matters like terrorism, humanitarian aid and disaster relief under UN mandate.
- Participants involved in this joint military exercise will be able to get acquainted with each other's organizational structure and tactical exercise.

Swadeep Kumar

EX Khan Quest 2022



- A multinational peace exercise “EX Khan Quest 2022” involving troops of 16 countries has started in Mongolia.
- The Indian Army is represented by a contingent of Ladakh Scouts.
- Nomadic Elephant is another military exercise that is conducted between the two countries.

EX Khan Quest:

- Khan Quest 2022 is a multinational peacekeeping mission held in Mongolia.

- This includes a United Nations Peacekeeping Mission Command Post exercise in the Five Hills Mountain Training Area of the Mongolian Armed Forces and a United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) mission field training exercise.
- The exercise is designed to improve peacekeeping capabilities, strengthen military ties and enhance the UN principle PKO competencies of all participants.
- The 2008 Doctrine reaffirms this and provides a contemporary understanding of how the United Nations can apply three basic peace principles, namely: consent, fairness and non-use of force except in self-defense and the defense of the mandate.
- The exercise will also enable sharing of best practices among the armed forces of the participating countries and will include field training exercises, combat discussions, lectures and demonstrations.
- The military exercise will enhance the level of defense cooperation between the Indian Army and the Armed Forces of the participating countries, especially Mongolia, thereby enhancing the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Swadeep Kumar

India-Bangladesh passenger train services resume



- India-Bangladesh passenger train services have recently resumed, two years after train services were suspended due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the resumption of train services, the following trains have been flagged off:

- Maitree Express from Dhaka to Kolkata.
- Mithali Express between New Jalpaiguri to Dhaka.
- Bandhan Express from Kolkata to Khulna.

Other important rail links between India and Bangladesh:

- Petrapole (India)-Benapole (Bangladesh)
- Gede (India)-Darshan (Bangladesh)
- Singhabad (India)-Rohanpur (Bangladesh)
- Radhikapur (India)-Birol (Bangladesh)
- Haldibari (India) – Chilahati (Bangladesh)
- Agartala (India) – Akhaura (Bangladesh)

India-Bangladesh Relations:

Historical Relations:

- India made unprecedented cooperation in the Bangladesh Liberation Struggle 50 years ago in the year 1971 as it helped towards the formation of the new nation of Bangladesh.

Defense Cooperation:

Joint practice:

- Sampreeti (Army) exercise
- Table Top (AF)
- IN-BN CORPAT (Navy)
- Bongosagar exercise (Navy)
- SAMVEDNA (Multinational Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise with Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and United Arab Emirates)
- **Border Management:** India shares the longest land border with Bangladesh (4096.7 km) of any neighboring country.

Economic Relations:

- Bangladesh is India's largest trading partner in the subcontinent, with total bilateral trade between the two countries at US\$9.5 billion (2019-20), an increase of US\$10 billion mark over the previous fiscal (2018-19) has crossed.
- India's exports to Bangladesh account for more than 85% of the total bilateral trade.
- India-Bangladesh CEO Forum was launched in December 2020 to further boost bilateral trade cooperation.
- Bangladesh has appreciated duty-free and quota-free export of goods by Bangladesh to India under the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) since 2011.

Connectivity Support:

- In March 2021, a 1.9 km friendship bridge on the Feni river connecting Sabroom in India and Ramgarh in Bangladesh was also inaugurated.
- Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT).
- Negotiations on the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement are underway.

Partnership in multilateral fora:

- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)
- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)
- Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

Other Developments:

Line of Credit:

- India has provided 3 Lines of Credit (LoC) worth USD 8 billion to Bangladesh in the last 8 years for infrastructure development in several sectors including roads, railways, shipping and ports.

COVID-19 Support:

- Bangladesh is the largest recipient of Made in India COVID-19 vaccine doses, accounting for 16% of the total supply.

- India also offered partnership in medical science and cooperation in vaccine production.

Emerging Controversies:

- Bangladesh has already raised concerns over the roll out of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, a detail designed to identify native Indian citizens living in Assam and drive out illegal Bangladeshis.
- Bangladesh is currently an active participant in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which Delhi has not signed.
- Bangladesh is also a major recipient of Chinese military, including submarines, in the security sector.

Swadeep Kumar

