



TARGET PRELIMS 2020

International Relations based Current Affairs: 1

9th Sep. 7.30 PM- 9.30 PM

Type of IR Questions in Prelims

- India's ties with neighbouring countries - Recent developments
- India's ties with major powers - Recent developments
- Regional Groupings in News
- Treaties & Conventions in News
- International Organisations in News
- Summits, Conferences & Leaders hosted by India
- Map Based Questions – Locations in News

Practice Question

1. Which of the following statements are correct?
 1. The Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) was setup in 2013 following a proposal made by South Korea.
 2. Election Commission of India had been closely associated with the formation process of the A-WEB and was one of the founding members of AWEB in 2013.
- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Why in News?

- Election Commission of India hosted the **4th General Assembly** of Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) in Sep, 2019.
- **India** has taken over as the **Chair for the 2019-21 term**.
- **Sunil Arora**, the current Chief Election Commissioner of India, is also the chairman for Association of World Election Bodies(A-WEB).

Association of World Election Bodies (A- WEB)

- A-WEB was established in 2013 in Song-do, **South Korea**.
- It is the largest association of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) worldwide
- The permanent secretariat of A-WEB is located at Seoul.
- A-WEB's vision is to foster efficiency and effectiveness in conducting **free, fair, transparent and participative elections** worldwide.
- Its activities are guided by its mission to identify latest trends, challenges and developments in democratic electoral management and electoral processes and to facilitate appropriate exchange of experience and expertise among members with the objective of strengthening electoral democracy worldwide.
- **India continues to promote AWEB's mission** wholeheartedly to promote partnership among Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) around the world.
- Promotion of Democracy and Free & Fair conduct of elections is a **core 'National Interest' for India's foreign policy**.

National Interests

- Protecting & promoting India's '**National Interests**' is the primary objective of Indian diplomacy.
- The pursuit of national interest is the **foundation of the realist school** in international relations.
- *"There are no permanent enemies, and no permanent friends, only permanent interests"*
- **Indian National Interests -**
 - Secure Defence, National Security and Strategic goals
 - Maximize Trade, Economics ties and Commerce
 - Project Soft Power – propagate core cultural assets
 - Export ideological agenda – Democracy, NAM
 - Create more space and options in the international arena – IMF & WB, UN, UNFCCC, NPT etc.
 - Ensure the well-being of Indian Diaspora

Practice Question

2. Which of the following can be considered as India's 'National Interests', in the context of India's foreign policy?

1. Ensuring political stability in neighbouring countries
 2. Providing HADR assistance to a disaster hit country
 3. Ensuring stable energy supplies from key suppliers
-
- a. 1 only
 - b. 1 and 3 only
 - c. 1, 2 and 3
 - d. None of the above

Practice Question

3. Which country has set up the Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) to attract foreign investment to its 'Far East' region?

- a. China
- b. USA
- c. Russia
- d. Canada

Why in News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was invited to take part in the Plenary Session of the 5th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) in Vladivostok.
- During the visit he announced that India would extend a **\$1 billion line of credit** towards the development of the Russian Far East.
- This was the first instance of an Indian Prime Minister attending the Eastern Economic Forum organized by Russia.

Eastern Economic Forum (EEF)

- It was established by a decree of the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, in **2015**, with the aim of supporting the economic development of Russia's Far East, and to expand international cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.
- It is a region extending between **Lake Baikal** - world's largest freshwater lake and deepest lake, and the Pacific Ocean.
- This is a region situated in the **cold Siberian climate** but more significantly, it shares **borders with China, Mongolia, North Korea and Japan** (maritime).
- On its own, it could be the eight largest - just behind India - in terms of area, and fourth least densely populated country.
- The **Russian Far East is rich in natural resources** – hydrocarbons such as coal, oil and gas, vast underpopulated land for agriculture, timber, diamonds (the Russian Far East boasts the worlds largest diamond reserves) and precious metal deposits such as gold, platinum, tin and tungsten.

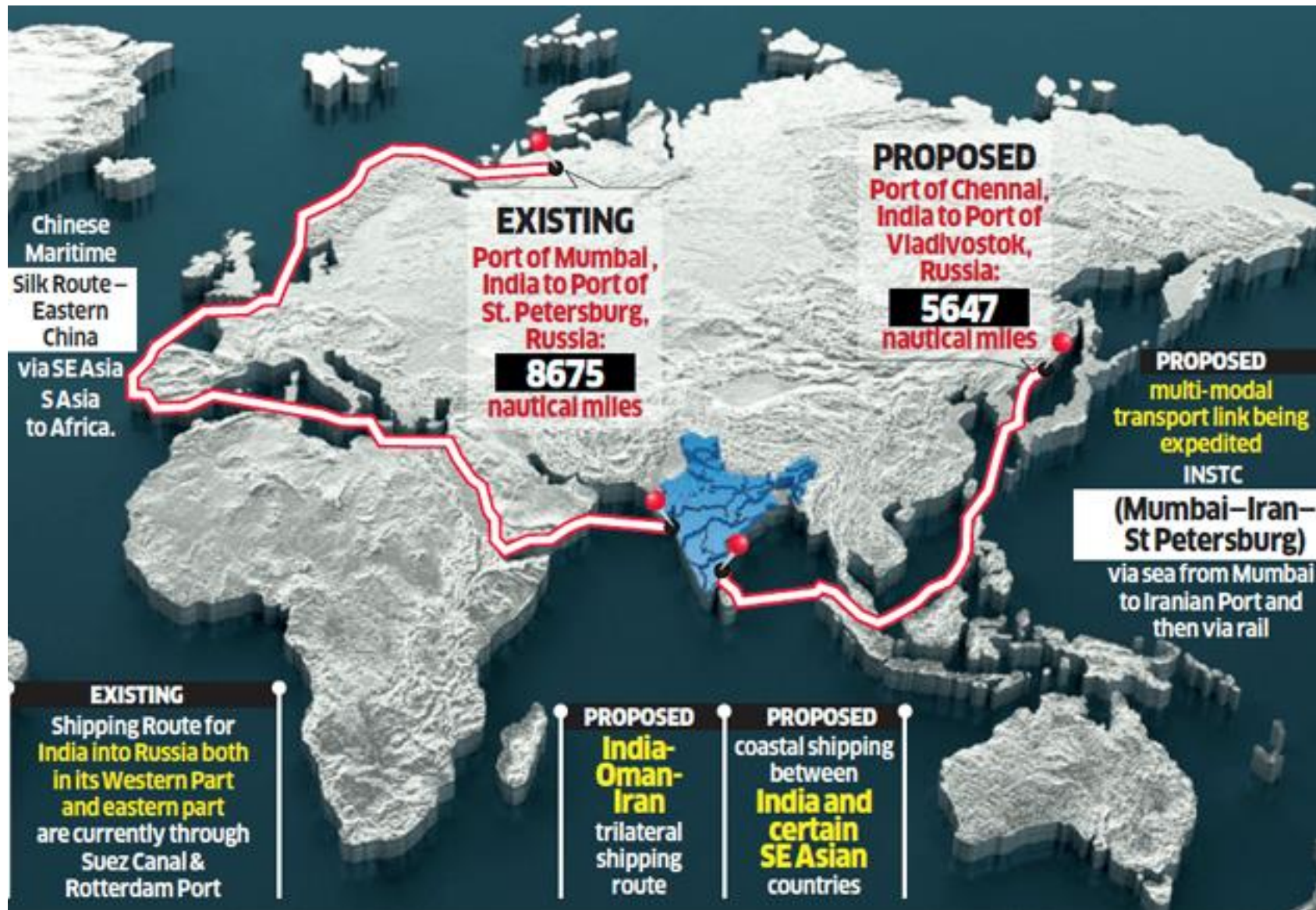


India & Russian Far East

- India was the first country to establish a **Consulate in Vladivostok** in 1992.
- Current engagement of India with the region is limited to isolated pockets such as –
 - The Irkut Corporation in Irkutsk where the **Mig and Sukhoi aircraft** are built
 - Over USD 6 billion worth of investments by ONGC Videsh Limited in the **Sakhalin 1 oil & gas project**
 - Indian private firms have invested in the **Eurasian Diamond Centre** to polish and cut Siberian diamonds

India & Russian Far East

- Proximity of the Russian Far East to the **Pacific Ocean** makes it fall under the ambit of India's '**Act East Policy**' & **Indo-Pacific strategy**.
- The proposed **Chennai-Vladivostok Maritime Link** would enable cargo to be transferred between Chennai and Vladivostok in 24 days in comparison to over 40 days currently taken to transport goods from India to Far East Russia via Europe.
- This proposed maritime route which could be transformed into a corridor could interface with the Indo-Japan Pacific to Indian Ocean Corridor, along with China's own OBOR maritime routes.
- Moscow also has a desire to diversify investment options in Russia's Far East beyond those of **China**.
- Moscow has a demographic issue with developing the region; it is under populated and under utilized. China meanwhile has tens of million of workers at its disposal, and Beijing has already made overtures to Moscow to have them lease land from areas in Siberia to make it productive.
- Moscow's concerns are whether they would ever get the land back once Chinese settlers have occupied their territory. For this reason it is open to other nationals, including Indians.



Practice Question

4. Which amongst the following joint military exercises of India are correctly matched with the participating country?

Military Exercise	Country
1. Maitree	Nepal
2. Yudh Abhyas	USA
3. Ekuverin	Sri Lanka

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 only
- d. 2 and 3 only

Joint Exercises conducted by Army:

S. No.	Country	Exercise
1.	Australia	Ex AUSTRAL HIND
2.	Bangladesh	Ex SAMPRITI
3.	China	Ex HAND IN HAND
4.	France	Ex SHAKTI
5.	Indonesia	Ex GARUDA SHAKTI
6.	Kazakhstan	Ex PRABAL DOSTYK
7.	Kyrgyzstan	Ex KHANJAR

8.	Maldives	Ex EKVURIN
9.	Mongolia	Ex NOMADIC ELEPHANT
10.	Myanmar	IMBEX
11.	Nepal	Ex SURYA KIRAN
12.	Oman	AL NAGAH
13.	Russia	Ex INDRA
14.	Seychelles	Ex LAMITIYE
15.	Sri Lanka	Ex MITRA SHAKTI
16.	Thailand	Ex MAITREE

17.	UK	Ex AJEYA WARRIOR
18.	USA	Ex YUDHABHAYAS Ex VAJRA PRAHAR
19.	Vietnam	VINBAX
20.	Multinational (ADMM Plus)	Ex FORCE 18

Joint Exercises conducted by Navy:

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S. No.	Country	Exercise
1.	Bangladesh	Table Top Ex
2.	Israel	Ex Blue Flag-17
3.	Oman	Ex EASTERN BRIDGE-IV
4.	Russia	Ex INDRA-17
5.	Singapore	JOINT MILITARY TRAINING
6.	Thailand	Ex SIAM BHARAT
7.	UAE	DESERT EAGLE-II

8.	UK	INDRADHANUSH-IV
9.	USA	RED FLAG 16-1
10.	Multinational Air Exercise	Ex Samvedna with Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, UAE

Practice Question

5. India holds the 'Shinyuu Maitri' joint military exercise with which country?

- a. Singapore
- b. Japan
- c. Thailand
- d. Vietnam

Practice Question

6. What do 'Howdy Modi' & 'Namaste Trump' events signify?

1. Growing significance of the Indian diaspora in India-US relations
 2. Increasing migration of American students to study in India
 3. Personal bonhomie between the leaders of the two largest democracies of the world
-
- a. 1 only
 - b. 1 and 2 only
 - c. 3 only
 - d. 1 and 3 only

Why in News?

- The 'Howdy Modi' event was a mega diaspora event that was held in 2019 as a part of Prime Minister Modi's personal outreach to the **strong Indian diaspora community** in the US.
- Later in Feb 2020, when Trump visited India, he was given a grand welcome by India through the 'Namaste Trump' event.
- These events signify the **growing role of the Indian diaspora in India-US relations**.
- It also reflects the **personal bonhomie** between the leaders of the two largest democracies of the world.
- The roughly **3 million strong Indian diaspora** is enrolled in higher education, takes up high skilled employment and occupies an influential position in US politics.
- The India community in US not only helps project **India's soft power & cultural heritage** but also **lobbies actively on behalf of Indian diplomatic interests**.
- From facilitating the **India-US Civil Nuclear deal** to countering **Pakistan's attempts at internationalising the Kashmir issue**, the Indian Diaspora in US has played an active role in furthering the bilateral relationship.

Practice Question

7. Which of the following statements are correct?

1. The India-China Strategic Economic Dialogue was established in 1954
 2. It was set up between the erstwhile Planning Commission of India and the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) of China
 3. It has emerged as a crucial mechanism to facilitate bilateral trade, investment flows and enhance economic cooperation between the two countries.
-
- a. 1 only
 - b. 1 and 2 only
 - c. 1 and 3 only
 - d. 2 and 3 only

Why in News?

- In 2019, the NITI Aayog (predecessor to the Planning Commission) hosted the India-China Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED) along with the NDRC of China.
- Mutual agreements:
 - **Working Group on Infrastructure:** feasibility study on Chennai-Bangalore-Mysore railway upgradation project and personal training of Indian senior railway management staff in China
 - **Working Group on High-Tech:** Artificial intelligence, high-tech manufacturing, and next-generation mobile communications
 - **Working Group on Resource Conservation and Environmental Protection:** water management, waste management, construction & demolition waste and resource conservation
 - **Working Group on Energy:** Renewable Energy space, clean coal technology sector, Smart Grid & Grid integration and Smart meters & E-mobility sectors.
 - **Working Group on Pharmaceuticals:** promoting Indian generic drugs and Chinese APIs

Practice Question

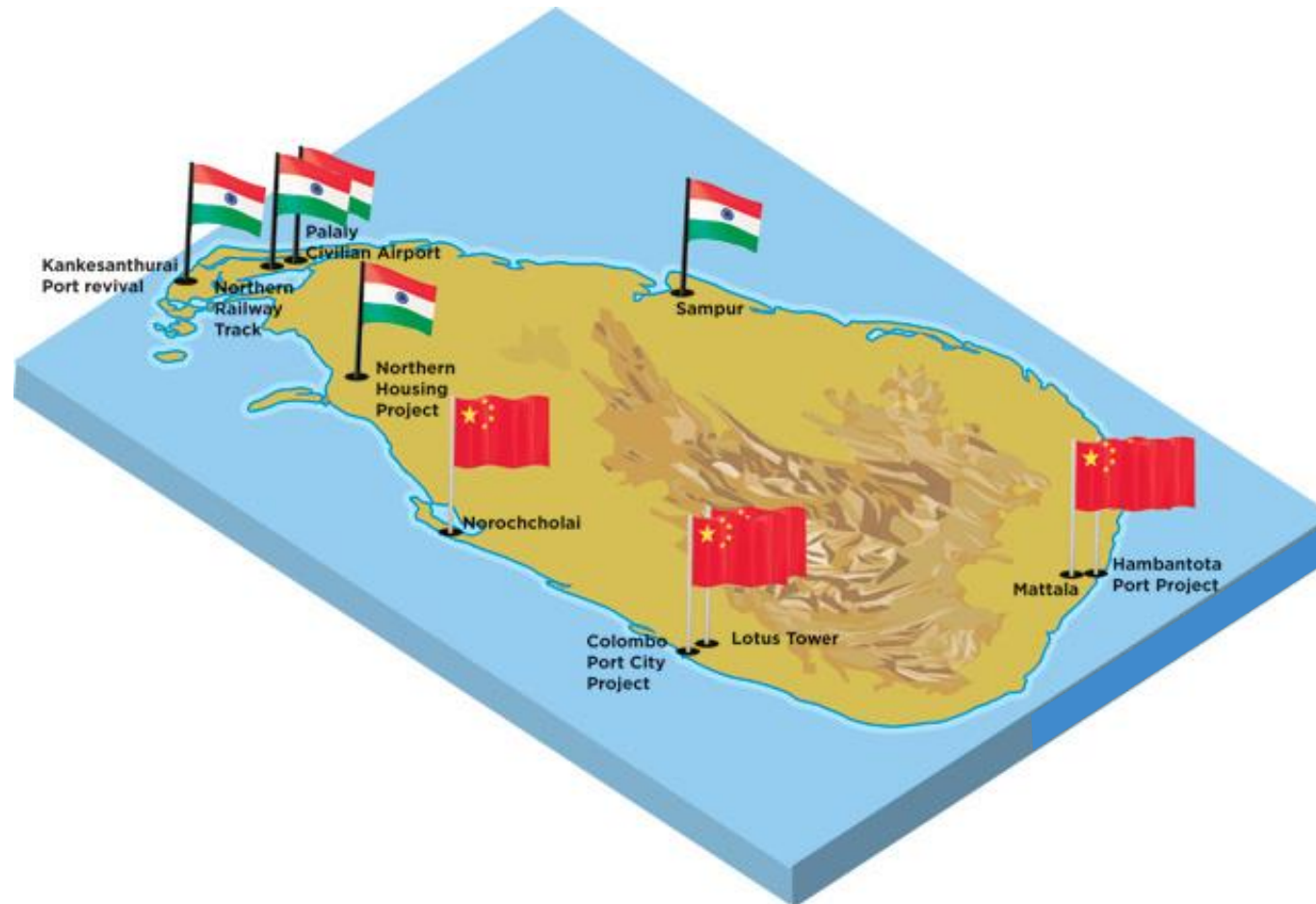
8. The 'Lotus Tower', said to be South Asia's tallest tower built with funding from China under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has come up in which country?

- a. Pakistan
- b. Nepal
- c. Sri Lanka
- d. Maldives

Why in News?

- Sri Lanka unveiled **South Asia's tallest tower**, costing over USD 100 million, 80 per cent of which has been funded by **China's EXIM Bank** under the **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**.
- The 350-metre-tall 17-storey Lotus Tower, located in the heart of Colombo city, comprises a television tower, a hotel, a telecommunications museum, restaurants, auditorium, an observation deck, a shopping mall and a conference centre.
- The tower, which is expected to function as Sri Lanka's 'digital TV tower', is built with fibre optic cables and is fully equipped with necessary **telecommunication equipment**.

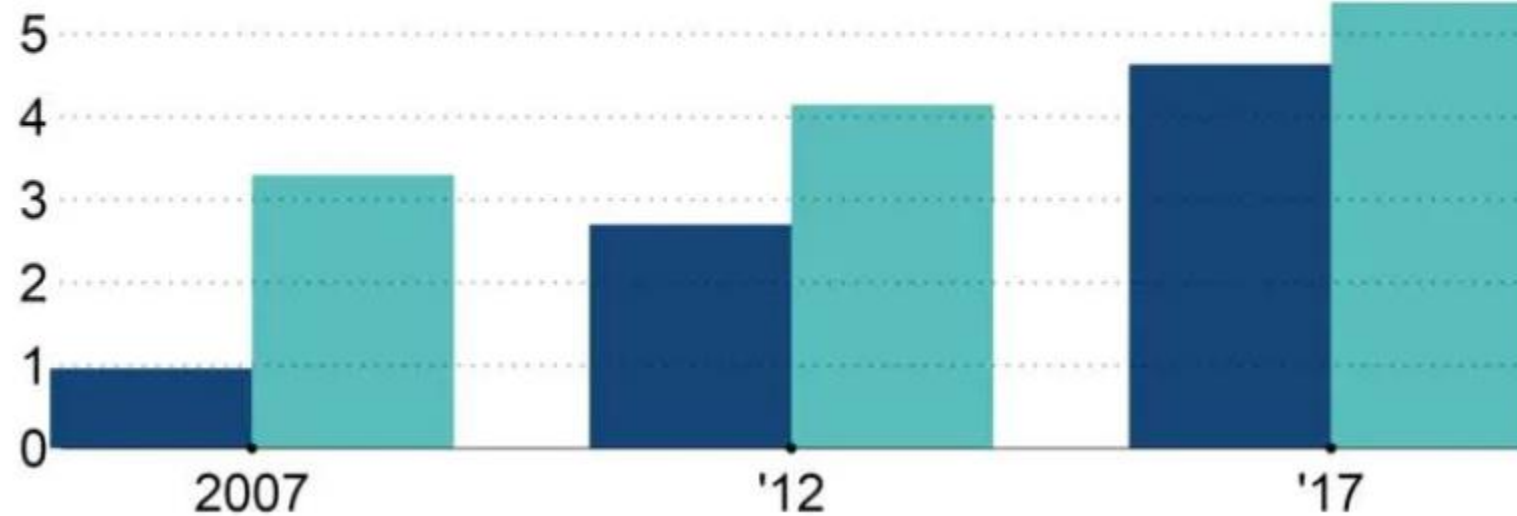
Chinese Investments in Sri Lanka – Debt Trap Diplomacy?



China catches up in Sri Lanka

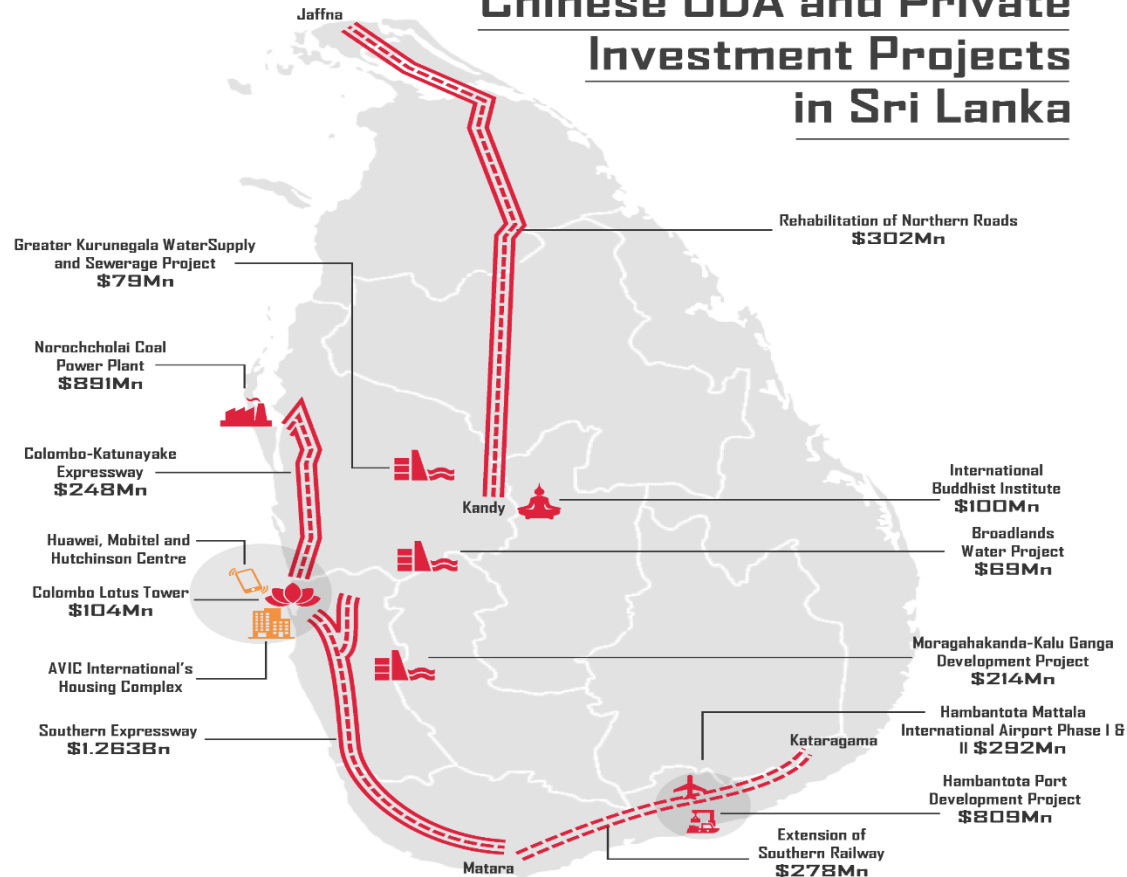
(Bilateral trade in billions of dollars)

■ China ■ India



Source: United Nations

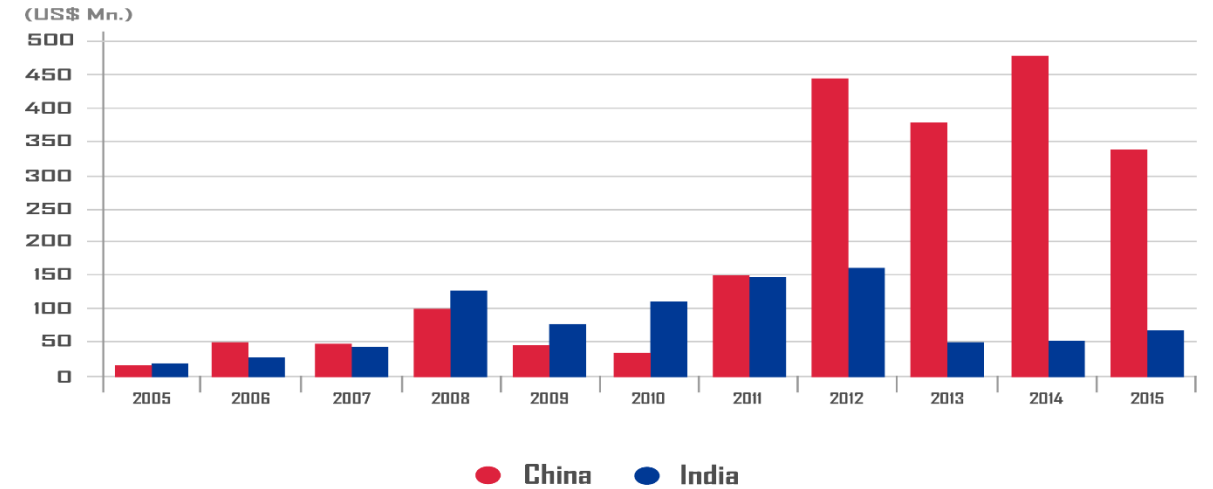
Chinese ODA and Private Investment Projects in Sri Lanka



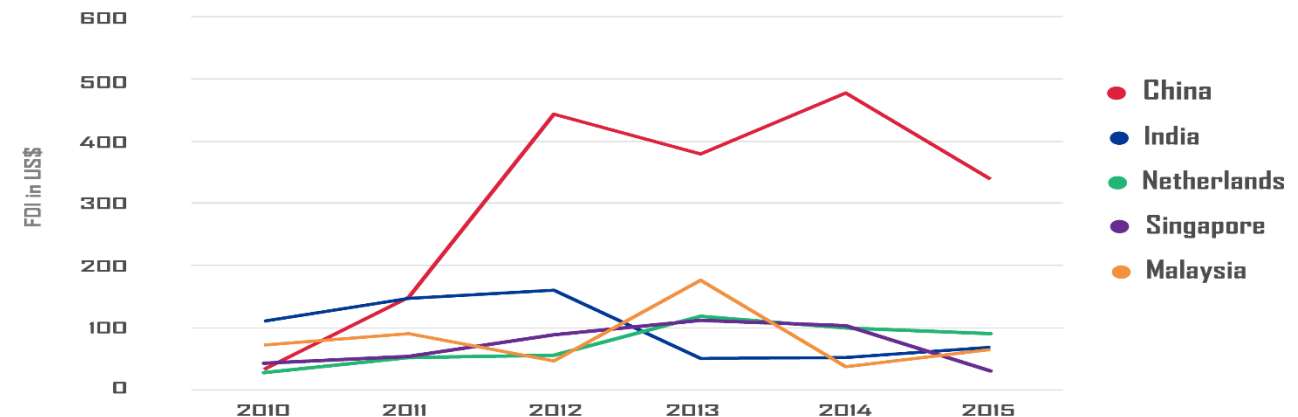
Investment in various Sectors



FDI from China and India



Top Five FDI Sources (2010 -15)



Practice Question

9. Which of the following statements are correct?

1. The '2+2' Dialogue is a format where the respective Foreign Ministries and Defence Ministries of two countries have a joint meeting to discuss strategic issues.
 2. India has set up a 2+2' Dialogue at the Ministerial level with USA, Japan and Australia.
- a. 1 only
 - b. 2 only
 - c. Both 1 and 2
 - d. Neither 1 nor 2

Why in News?

- In Nov 2019, **India and Japan** held the inaugural meeting of their '2+2 Dialogue' at the ministerial level.
- In June 2020, during the **India – Australia Virtual Summit** both Prime Ministers agreed to take the “2+2” format of bilateral meetings to the level of Foreign and Defence Ministers.
- **India** established a '2+2 Ministerial Dialogue' with the **USA** in 2018.
- There is a proposal to hold a similar meeting at the '**QUAD**'.

Practice Question

10. When a foreign national is arrested by a government, it has an obligation to notify the embassy or consulate of his government. This has been mandated under which convention?

- a. Geneva Convention
- b. Vienna Convention
- c. Rotterdam Convention
- d. There is no such obligation on a government to notify the arrest of foreign nationals

Why in News?

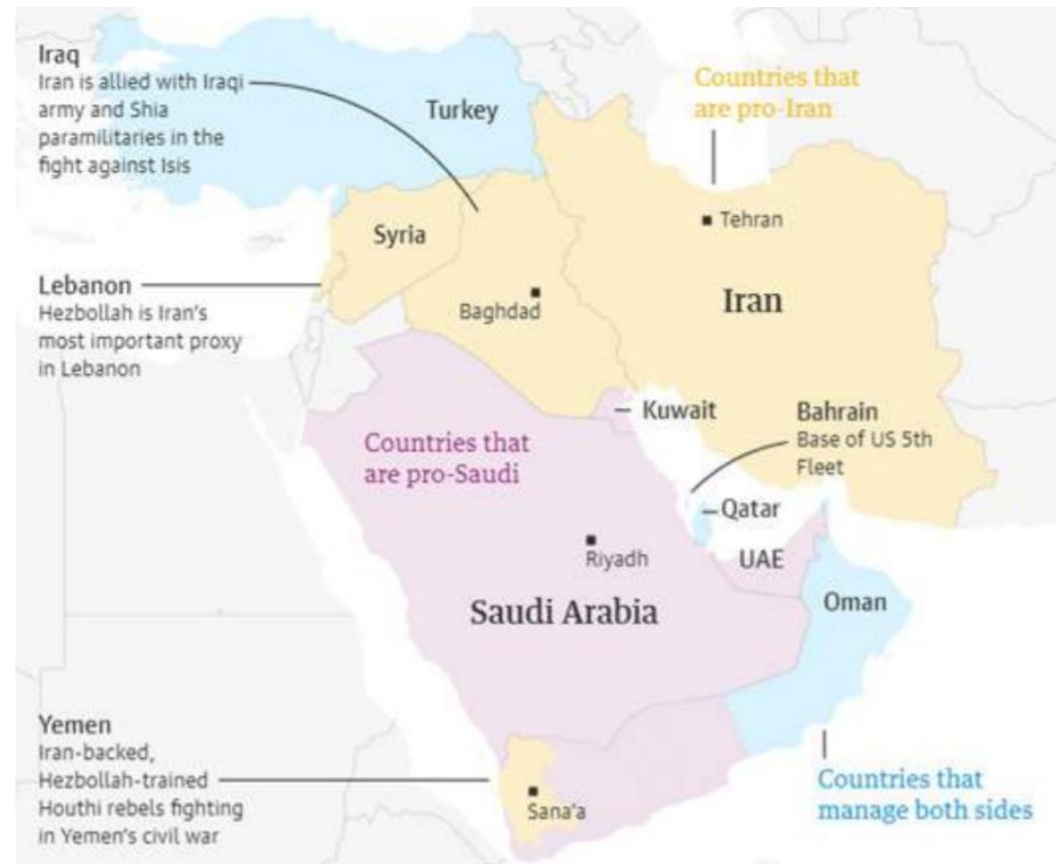
- Indian national **Kulbhushan Jadhav** was arrested by Pakistan in 2016 on charges of espionage and terrorism.
- India finally received **consular access** in 2019.
- India had demanded consular access to Jadhav under the rules of the **Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963**.
- This is an international treaty that defines consular relations between independent states
- India invoked **Article 36** of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations which provides for consular access to foreign nationals.
- Article 36 addresses communications between consular officers and nationals of the sending state.
- The Convention provides that "consular officers shall be free to communicate with nationals of the sending State and to have access to them."
- Foreign nationals who are arrested or detained be given notice "without delay" of their right to have their embassy or consulate notified of that arrest, and "consular officers shall have the right to visit a national of the sending State who is in prison, custody or detention, to converse and correspond with him and to arrange for his legal representation."

Practice Question

11. The 'Houthi' rebel group, often seen in news, operates in which country?

- a. Saudi Arabia
- b. Yemen
- c. Iran
- d. Syria

Yemen Civil War



Why in News?

- **Yemen's Houthi rebels** launched '**swarm drone**' attacks on the **world's largest oil processing facility** in Saudi Arabia sparking huge fires and halting about half of the supplies from the world's largest exporter of oil.
- **Abqaiq** is the world's largest oil processing facility, owned by **Saudi Aramco**, the country's state-owned oil company, often described as the kingdom's crown jewel.
- The Houthis, the **Iran-aligned rebel army** that has been fighting a Saudi-led military coalition in neighboring Yemen, claimed responsibility for the attack.
- The Houthis recently acquired much more powerful drone technology that has given them the power to strike targets up to 1,500 km away, according to the UN.
- The Houthis are regarded as part of a network of militias in the Middle East who are sponsored or assisted in some way by Tehran, part of a broader fight to dominate the Middle East between **Iran and Saudi Arabia** that dates back to the Iranian revolution of 1979.
- The pair do not directly clash; the battle is playing out through **proxy actors** in Syria, Lebanon and Yemen, among other countries.

Practice Question

12. Which of the following foreign ports has India gained access to for improving connectivity with the North-East of India?

1. Mongla port
 2. Sittwe port
 3. Chittagong port
-
- a. 1 only
 - b. 2 only
 - c. 1 and 3 only
 - d. 1, 2 and 3

Bangladesh - Mongla & Chittagong Port



Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project Myanmar – Sittwe Port



Why in News?

- **India and Bangladesh** have signed an agreement to use the **Chattogram (Chittagong) and Mongla ports** in Bangladesh for movement of goods to and from India.
- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on the use of Chattogram and Mongla ports was signed in 2019.
- It will serve the **North-East states** and improves their connectivity with the rest of India.
- The **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project** is a US\$484 million project connecting 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** in Chin State via the **Kaladan river through inland navigation**, and then from **Paletwa by road to Mizoram state in Northeast India**.
- Originally, the project was scheduled to be completed by 2014, but execution was delayed and is expected to be operational soon.

Practice Question

13. The Minsk Dialogue is a Track-II initiative focused on the international affairs of which region?

- a. Eurasia and West Asia
- b. Indo-Pacific Region
- c. Western Indian Ocean
- d. Eastern Europe



The Minsk Dialogue

- It was launched as a **Track-II initiative** focused on **international affairs and security in Eastern Europe** in early 2015.
- The mission of the Minsk Dialogue is to offer an **open and geopolitically unbiased platform for research and discussion on international affairs and security in Eastern Europe**.
- Regular Minsk Dialogue events gather international experts, as well as high-level officials and diplomats.
- In its work the Minsk Dialogue pursues the following main goals:
 - *To promote greater security in Eastern Europe.*
 - *To **help Belarus to advance its sovereign interests** in the system of international relations.*
 - *To enhance the potential of the Belarusian expert and academic communities in the fields of international relations and security.*
- **2020 Belarusian protests:** Belarus has been hit by a series of ongoing political demonstrations and protests against the Belarusian government and **President Alexander Lukashenko** against allegations of electoral malpractice.

Practice Question

14. The 'Nitaqat law', that affects Indian workers, has been introduced by which country?

- a. Kuwait
- b. Saudi Arabia
- c. UAE
- d. Oman

‘Nitaqat Law’

- Nitaqat is a **Saudization program** introduced by the Saudi Ministry of Labour.
- Enacted in 2011, the Nitaqat law makes it **mandatory for all businesses in the private sector to reserve at least 10 percent of jobs for Saudi nationals**.
- The ‘Nitaqat’ law aims to **gradually replace the existing expatriate workers** with Saudi workers by processes involving **quotas and threats of punishment** and also, tackles the issue of rising unemployment among Saudi nationals.
- **Indian Workers in Saudi Arabia:** An estimated **4.5 million Indians** work in Saudi Arabia and most of them are employed in **low-skilled blue collar jobs**.
- It is one of the largest sources of **remittances** in to India.
- **Issues faced by them:** Poor working conditions, low-wages, abuse & exploitation etc.

Practice Question

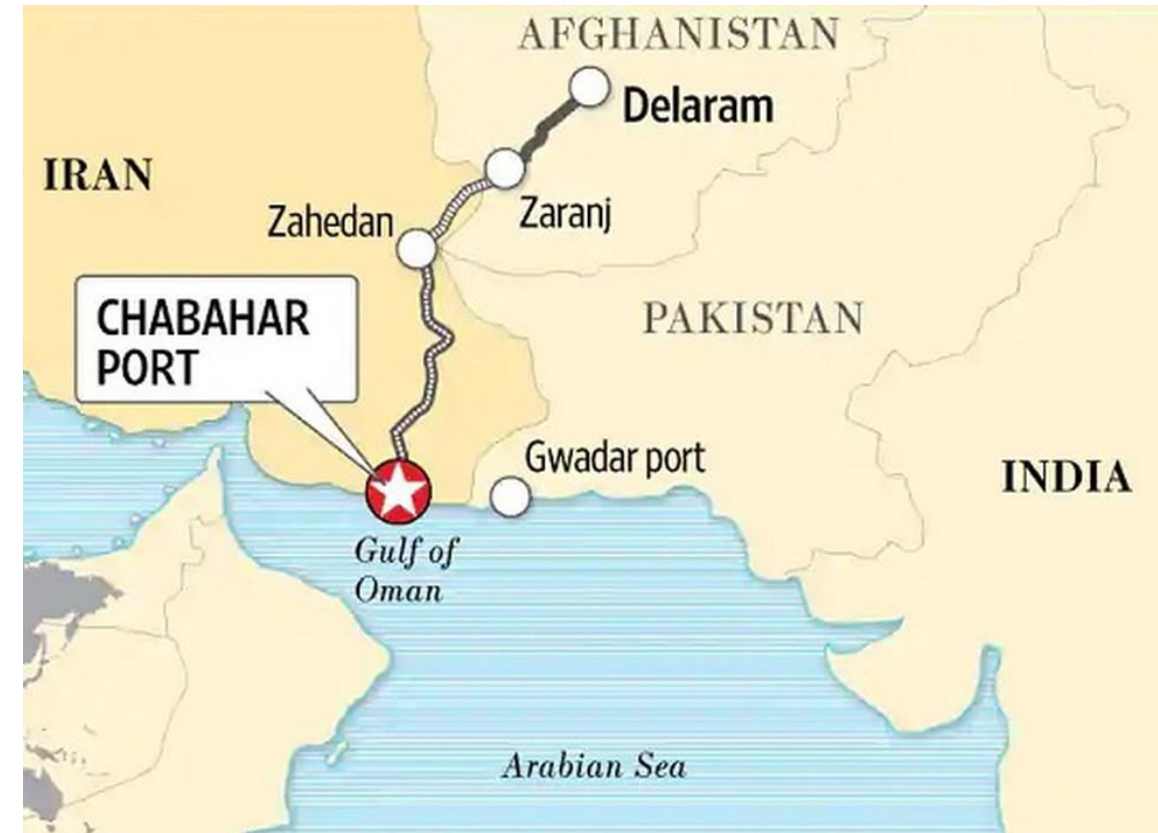
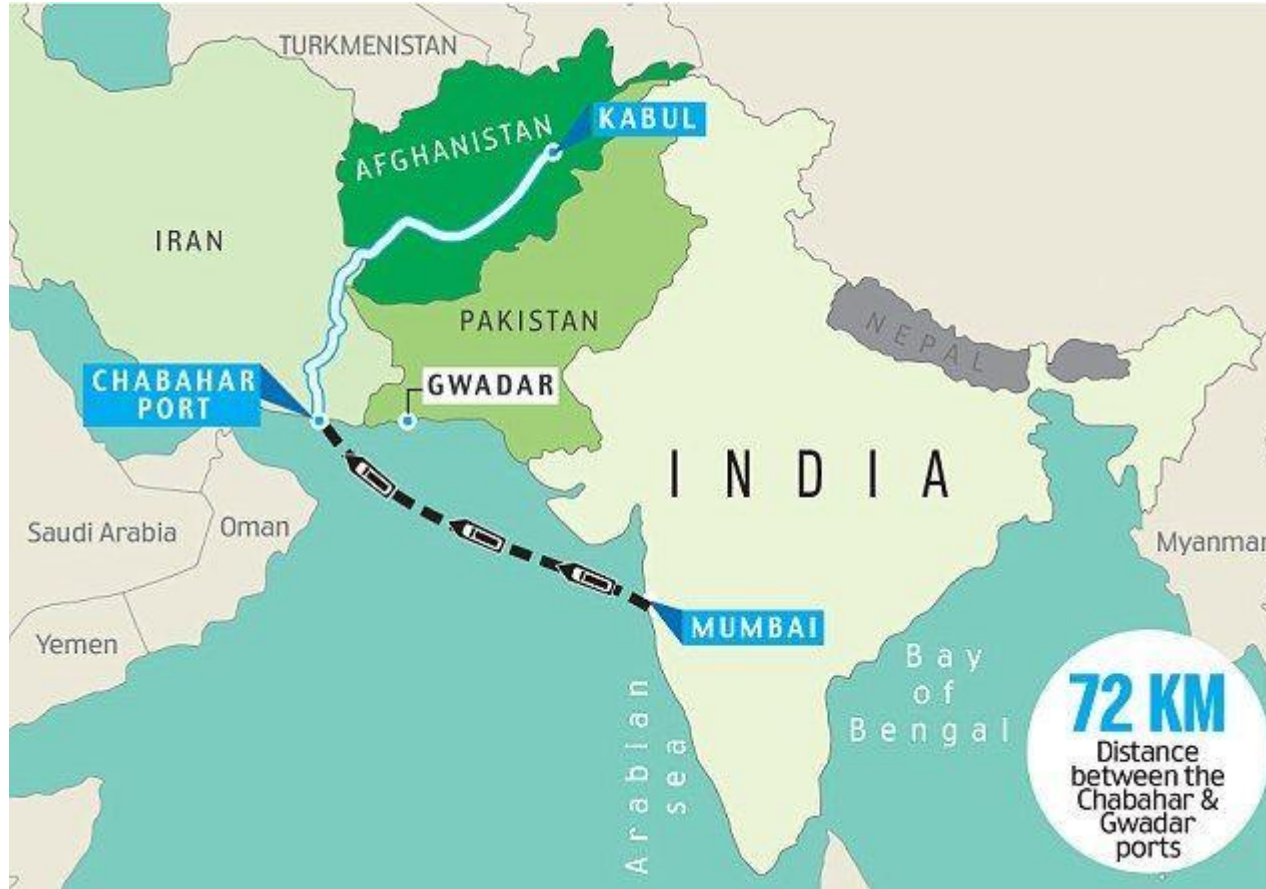
15. US sanctions under its CAATSA law is primarily aimed at which countries?

1. China
 2. Russia
 3. Iran
 4. North Korea
-
- a. 1 and 2 only
 - b. 1, 3 and 4 only
 - c. 2, 3 and 4 only
 - d. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)

- It is a United States federal law that imposed sanctions on **Iran, North Korea, and Russia**.
- It includes **secondary sanctions** against countries that engage in **significant transactions with these countries in key sectors such as defense, oil, etc.**
- India's deal to procure the **S-400 Triumf missile system from Russia** has been threatened by CAATSA sanctions.
- India has been looking for a waiver from the United States.
- **Sanctions Waiver:** The **exit clause** in the CAATSA states that "The US President may waive the application of CAATSA sanctions if the President determines that such a waiver is in the national security interest of the United States.
- India has obtained a similar waiver from the US for its investments in the **Chabahar Port project of Iran**.

Chabahar Port Project



Practice Question

16. Which of the following are correctly matched?

Ethnic Groups in News	Region
1. Uyghurs	Af-Pak Border
2. Kurds	Xinjiang & Central Asia
3. Pashtuns	Iran-Iraq Border

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 3 only
- d. None of the above

Xinjiang 're-education' camps

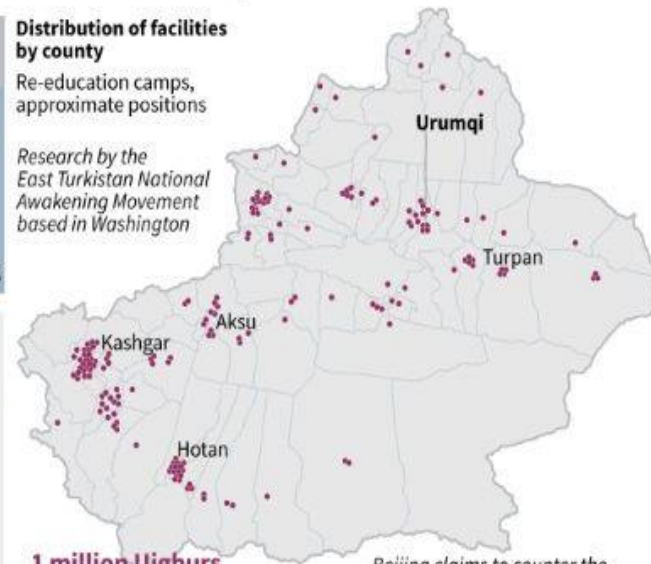
Suspected camps and prisons in China's northwestern Muslim region



Distribution of facilities by county

Re-education camps, approximate positions

Research by the East Turkistan National Awakening Movement based in Washington



1 million Uighurs and other minorities believed held in camps in 2018, according to experts cited by the UN

Beijing claims to counter the spread of separatism, terrorism and religious extremism through "free" training

Revelations from cables leaked in November

According to investigative reports by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ)

Guidelines on running detention camps

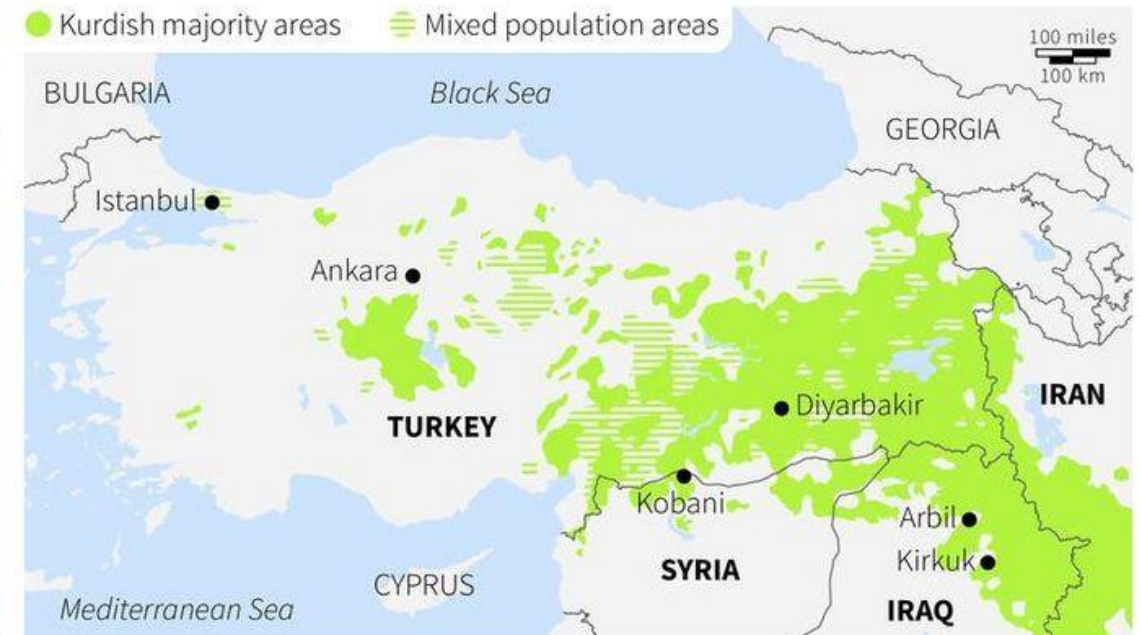
Inmates should be judged based on a points system that measures "ideological transformation, study and training, and compliance with discipline"

"Dormitory doors, corridor doors and floor doors must be double-locked, and must be locked immediately after being opened and closed"

"There must be full video surveillance coverage of dormitories and classrooms free of blind spots, ensuring that guards on duty can monitor in real-time, record things in detail, and report suspicious circumstances immediately"

Distribution of Kurdish population

● Kurdish majority areas ■ Mixed population areas



Practice Question

17. Which of the following statements are correct?

1. India is one of the founding members of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
 2. It is focused entirely upon building naval cooperation in the region.
 3. The concept of 'Blue Economy' has recently emerged as a focus area for the grouping.
-
- a. 1 only
 - b. 1 and 2 only
 - c. 1 and 3 only
 - d. 2 and 3 only

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

- In 1995, a Indian Ocean Rim Initiative was formed by **India, South Africa and Mauritius** and subsequently in 1997, the IOR-ARC was formally launched.
- IOR-ARC was later renamed as the IORA.
- It consists of **22 member countries** that are littoral states of the Indian Ocean. It has **10 dialogue partners** as well.
- Its secretariat is based in **Mauritius**.
- Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) has identified six priority areas, namely:
 - i. maritime security
 - ii. trade and investment facilitation
 - iii. fisheries management
 - iv. disaster risk reduction
 - v. academic and scientific cooperation and
 - vi. tourism promotion and cultural exchanges
- Recently, the domain of **Blue Economy** has gained the attention of all IORA member states.