

Linking Chabahar Port with INSTC

❖ Context

- **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, GoI**, in association with India Ports Global Ltd, conducted Workshop on the 'Linking Chabahar Port with INSTC' in Mumbai.

About INSTC:

- The **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** is a **multi-modal transportation** route linking the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea via Iran and onward to northern Europe via St. Petersburg in Russia.
- The INSTC envisages the movement of goods from Mumbai (India) to **Shahid Beheshti Port – Chabahar (Iran)** by sea.
- From **Chabahar to Bandar-e- Anzali** (an Iranian port on the Caspian Sea) by road.
- Then from **Bandar-e- Anzali to Astrakhan** (a Caspian port in the Russian Federation) by ship across the Caspian Sea.
- Then from **Astrakhan to other regions of the Russian Federation** and further into Europe by Russian railways.
- INSTC (International North-South Transport Corridor) is **India's vision and initiative** to reduce the time taken for EXIM shipments to reach Russia and Europe and enter the central Asian markets.



- **Successful activation of the corridor** will help connect India to Russia & Central Asian countries.

Importance of Chabahar Port for India:

- The Chabahar Port in the **Sistan-Balochistan province of Iran**, is a hub of activity and one of the country's economic lifelines.
- It is located in the **Gulf of Oman** and is the only oceanic port in the country.
- The port **gives India access to the energy-rich Persian Gulf nations'** southern coast and India can bypass Pakistan in transporting goods to Afghanistan.
- Chabahar port will boost India's access to Iran, **the key gateway** to the International North-South Transport.
- Chabahar port will be beneficial to India in **countering Chinese presence in the Arabian Sea** which China is trying to ensure by helping Pakistan develop the **Gwadar port**.
- Chabahar could be used in case China **decides to flex its navy muscles by stationing ships in Gwadar port** to reckon its upper hand in the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf and Middle East.
- There will be a significant boost in the import of iron ore, sugar and rice to India and **the import cost of oil to India will also see a considerable decline**.
- **The Zaranj-Delaram road** constructed by India in 2009 can give access to Afghanistan's Garland Highway, setting up road access to four major cities in Afghanistan - Herat, Kandahar, Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012

❖ Context

- **Ten years have passed** since the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012**, enacted in consequence to India's ratification of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992**, came into effect on November 14, 2012.

Recent Court's Directions Related to POCSO Act:

- The Karnataka High Court said that the **courts have no power to reduce the minimum sentence** prescribed in the POCSO Act on convicting the accused for committing sexual assault on children.
- The **Delhi High Court** reminded judicial officers, public prosecutors and police to be **mindful of the "adverse impact on the psyche"** of child victims of sexual offences when insisting on their physical appearance in court at the time of arguments.

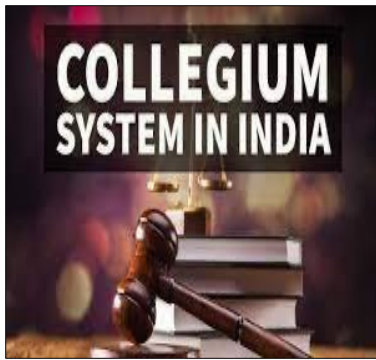

POCSO Act:

- **About**
 - The Act has been enacted to **protect children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography**.
 - It provide for **establishment of Special Courts** for trial of such offences and related matters and incidents.
 - The Act was **amended in 2019**.
- **Salient Features of the Act**
 - **It is a gender-neutral law**.
 - By defining a child as **'any person' below the age of 18 years**, the POCSO Act sets a gender-neutral tone for the legal framework available to child sexual abuse victim.
 - **Not reporting abuse is an offence.**
 - It penalises those who have failed to report the offence with either imprisonment or a fine or both.
 - **No time limit for reporting abuse.**
 - Victim can report an offence at any time, even a number of years after the abuse has been committed.
 - **Maintaining confidentiality of the victim's identity.**
- It **defines different forms of sexual abuse**, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography.
- People who traffic children for sexual purposes are also punishable.
- The **storage of child pornography material** has been made a new offence.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It provides for special courts that conduct the trial in-camera and without revealing the identity of the child, in a manner that is as child-friendly as possible. It also casts the police in the role of child protectors during the investigative process. Terms of the POCSO Act. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The age of consent for sex in India is 18 under the POCSO Act. Consent given by a girl aged below 18 is not regarded as valid and sexual intercourse with her amounts to rape. <p>National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It monitors the implementation of POCSO Act. It's a statutory body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established by an Act of Parliament, the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005. The Commission works under the aegis of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Gol. Composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A chairperson and six members of which at least two should be women. All of them are appointed by the Central Government for three years. The maximum age to serve in commission is 65 years for Chairman and 60 years for members.
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News in Between the Lines

<p>Collegium System</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recently, Union Minister of Law and Justice said the Collegium system will prevail, in the absence of alternative mechanisms and legislations enacted by the Parliament. ❖ About Collegium System: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is the system of appointment and transfer of judges. It has evolved through judgments of the SC, and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution. SC collegium is headed by the CJI & comprises four other senior most judges of the court. Judges of the SC and HC are appointed only through the collegium system and the government has a role only after names have been decided by the collegium. The collegium sends its final recommendation to the President of India for approval through the Law minister. The President can either accept it or reject it. In the case it is rejected, the recommendation comes back to the collegium. If the collegium reiterates its recommendation to the President, then he/she is bound by that recommendation. Articles 124(2) and 217 of the Indian Constitution deal with the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts.
<p>New Plateau Type Discovered</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New plateau type discovered in Maharashtra could prove to be a repository of information to study climate change effects on species survival. ❖ Key Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rare low-altitude basalt plateau housing 76 species of plants and shrubs from 24 different families discovered in the Thane region in the Western Ghats. Being one of the four global biodiversity hotspots in India, it can prove to be a repository of information for species interactions. It can help study the effects of climate change on species survival and increase awareness of the conservation needs of rock outcrops and their immense biodiversity value in the global context. It is believed this is an important discovery, as the plateau shares the vegetation with the three other rock outcrops, simultaneously holding a few unique species. This gives a unique model system to study the species' interactions in varying environmental conditions.
<p>Debt Ceiling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recently, The United States hit its debt ceiling of \$31.4 trillion. ➤ It is forcing the Treasury Department to initiate "extraordinary measures" to ensure that the federal government keeps paying its bills and can stave off default until June — when it will run out of funds.

Face to Face Centres





Key Highlights:

- The debt ceiling was introduced in 1917 during World War I.
- It is the maximum amount that the US federal government can borrow to fulfill its financial obligations.
- As the government spends more than it earns through taxes and other revenues, it needs to borrow money in order to pay for expenses, such as social security and Medicare benefits, military etc.
- In 2021, this borrowing limit was raised to \$31.4 trillion.
- **Consequences of Breaching Debt Ceiling.**
 - The Treasury Secretary warned that if they failed to raise the debt limit by June, the **government would default on its debt, which might trigger an economic catastrophe.**
 - Once the debt default happens, analysts say that the **dollar would weaken**, the stock markets would collapse.

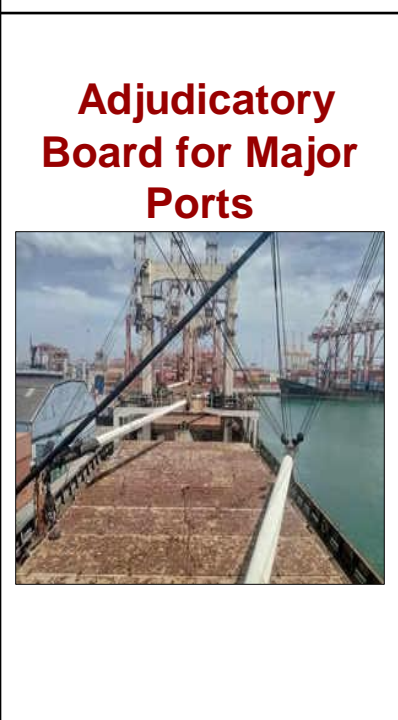


❖ **Context**

- Recently, Telecom operators have said that a proposal by the Telecom Regulatory Authority (TRAI) of India to display callers' names could have **privacy implications.**
- The proposal, called **Caller Name Presentation (CNAP)**, will also be **difficult to execute** from a technical perspective given that a number of phones in the Indian market may not be able to support it.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- The feature would provide an **individual with information about the calling party.**
- **Significance**
 - The idea is to ensure that telephone subscribers are able to make an **informed choice about incoming calls.**
 - It can curb harassment by unknown spam callers & protect against fraudulent calls.
 - Additionally, there have been rising concerns about **robocalls.**
 - Robocalls are calls made automatically using IT-enabled systems with pre-recorded voice calls.
- **Concerns**
 - Some experts have expressed concerns over how the feature would balance the caller's right to remain anonymous which is an essential component of the right to privacy.



❖ **Context**

- **The Major Port Authorities Act** envisages constitution of an Adjudicatory Board which is to perform the functions stipulated under section 58 of the Act.
- **This board will take over** the responsibility of the Tariff Authority for Major Ports and will now be vetting the policy against which these ports fix tariffs.

❖ **About the Adjudicatory Board:**

- The Adjudicatory Board shall consist of a **Presiding Officer and two members.**
- **The Presiding Officer shall be** a retired Judge of the Supreme Court of India or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court.
- **The two Members** shall either be a retired Chief Secretary of a State Government or equivalent; or a retired Secretary of the Government of India or equivalent.
- The Presiding Officer and Members of the Adjudicatory Board **shall be appointed on the recommendation of a Selection Committee** consisting of the Chief Justice of India or his nominee; the Secretary of the Department of Personnel and Training and Secretary of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.



Context

- Recently birders and ornithologists in the **State of Kerala spotted a migratory bird the Sedge Warbler.**

Key Highlights:

- Birdwatchers are now excited to name these new feathered friends locally as "**Pottakuruvi**" to introduce them to the Kerala community.

Face to Face Centres

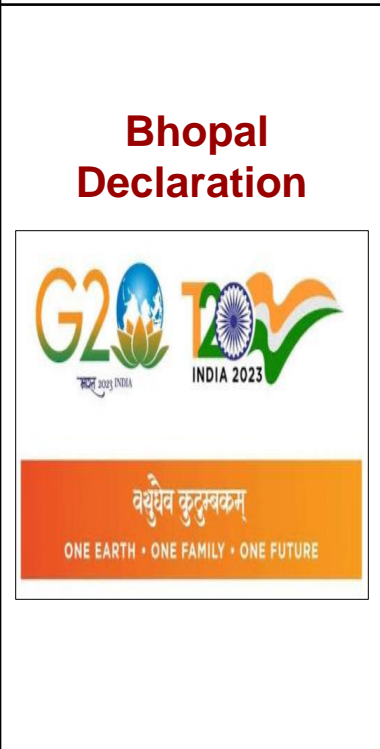




- Experts claimed that the visit of Sedge Warbler bird clearly recorded only once in India.

About Sedge Warbler:

- It is a **medium sized warbler** with streaked brown back, wings and pale underparts.
- It is known for its **daring crossing of the Sahara to reach its breeding grounds in Europe** and some parts of Asia.
- **Diet and Habitat.**
 - Sedge Warblers are insectivores in nature and frequently seen amidst the shrubs to hunt for insects.
- **Threat**
 - The loss of wetland and the expansion of the Sahara Desert which was spotted in the South Asian region.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN Red List-** Least concern.



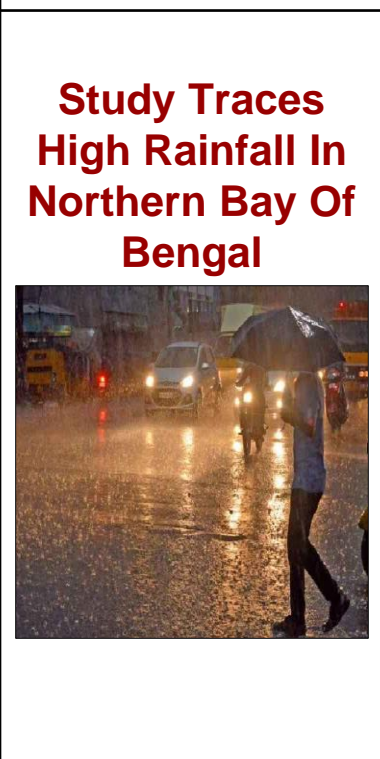
Bhopal Declaration

- ❖ **Context**
 - Recently, In Madhya Pradesh, more than 300 intellectuals from India and abroad released the **Bhopal Declaration** after discussing the G-20 agenda in the two-day meeting of Think-20 under G20 in Bhopal.
- ❖ **Key Highlights of Bhopal Declaration:**
 - The Bhopal Declaration has **emphasized promoting traditional medicine systems** like AYUSH and encouraging value-oriented development in infrastructure development.
 - The importance of localization in achieving G-20 sustainable development goals has been acknowledged in the Bhopal Declaration.
 - The Bhopal Declaration made an appeal to all the stakeholders to.
 - Focus more on **inclusive development and care** for the welfare of every section of society in comparison to GDP.
 - Give **special attention to children.**
 - Encourage the model of development led by women.
 - Bridge the gap between North and South.
 - Work together to ensure the health for all.



Exercise Cyclone - I

- ❖ **Context**
 - Inaugural Edition of Indo-Egypt Joint Training Exercise Cyclone - I commences in Rajasthan.
- ❖ **About Exercise Cyclone - I**
 - Exercise "Cyclone - I" is the **first exercise** of its kind bringing the special forces of both nations on a common platform.
 - The **exercise aims to bolster defence co-operation** between the two nations and focus on sharing professional skills and interoperability of Special Forces.



Study Traces High Rainfall In Northern Bay Of Bengal

- ❖ **Context**
 - Regions surrounding northern Bay of Bengal (BoB) received **higher precipitation than the other parts of India for the last 10200 years**, says a new study that traced the dynamics of Indian Summer Monsoon Rainfall (ISM) over the 10000 years.
- ❖ **Key Highlights:**
 - BSIP, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), **for the first time**, reconstructed the history of the ISM variability from this region by using both biotic & abiotic proxies that predate instrumental records (records taken before 19th Century).
 - The study **can help understand long-term trends of climate change** impacts on the ecosystems and may help mitigate future climate extremities.
 - **The Bengal Basin or the 'Bengal region'** being located at the trajectory of the Bay of Bengal (BoB) branch of the ISM is very sensitive to changes in the ISM strength.
 - Study found that while the millennial-scale variations in the ISM rainfall may largely be attributed to changes in solar insolation & dynamics of Inter tropical Convergence Zone ITCZ.
 - **The centennial scale variations** may be collectively triggered by phenomena like North Atlantic Oscillation, El Nino Southern Oscillation and Indian Ocean Dipole.

