

## ENVIRONMENT

PRE-CONTEXT

### GLOBAL PLASTIC TREATY

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

**News:** "A cut in time."

#### Context:

- Last round of negotiations on a **legally binding treaty to address the global scourge of plastic pollution** has opened in Busan, South Korea.
- **Global plastics production is projected to reach 736 million tons by 2040**, a 70% increase from 2020, without policy changes, as per the OECD.

#### Ongoing Plastic Pollution Treaty Highlights:

- Led by **United Nations**.
- The treaty **lacks a universally agreed-upon definition for the term 'plastic'**.
- **Is there a limit** on the amount of plastic companies can produce?
- **Resolve whether to end the use of hazardous chemicals in plastics** and whether these steps will be mandated or merely encouraged.
- To promote design of plastic products so they can be **recycled and reused**.
- There is demand for a treaty that tackles the root causes of the crisis rather than just managing plastic waste.
- **Overlooks** the key **issue of limiting production**.

#### India's Proposals:

- India proposes **creating a dedicated multilateral fund** with distinct contributions from other financial transfers.
  - The **fund will be governed by a subsidiary body** that facilitates:
    - **Technology transfer from developing to developed countries** for achieving a just transition towards sustainable plastic production and consumption.
- India says it will not back 'use' of plastic alternatives.

#### India and Plastic:

- India **banned single-use plastic** in 2022.
- Nearly **24 million tonnes of plastic** packaging have been introduced into India since 2022, despite its limited mechanical **recycling capacity of 9.8 million tonnes**— **Centre for Science and Environment investigation**.

#### Similar Conventions:

- **Basel Convention:** aims to reduce the movement of hazardous waste between nations
- **Stockholm Convention:** seeks to eliminate or restrict the production and use of persistent organic pollutants (POPs).
- **Rotterdam Convention:** promotes shared responsibilities in the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides.

"We are not demonising plastic. It helps our planes and cars get lighter, but we have to get rid of polluting plastic"— *Climate & Environment Ambassador, of EU.*

30 Nov 2024

## GS II

SYLLABUS: GROUPINGS AND AGREEMENTS AFFECTING INDIA'S INTERESTS.

### INDIA-AFRICA RELATIONS

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 9.

**News:** "India's strategic focus on West Africa."

#### India and China Approach towards African nations:

#### Diplomatic Engagements:

- **Forum on China-Africa Corporation:**
  - China's **non interference policy**.
  - **Largest multilateral platform** for **Sino-African relations**.
  - It strengthens diplomatic ties, offering financial packages, infrastructural loans, and aid.
- **India- Africa Forum Summit:**
  - Multilateral platform **reflecting India's growing interest** in Africa's, development, trade, and political stability.
  - Here **India emphasises shared values of democracy, anti-colonialism and South-South Cooperation**.

#### Towards scale of Investments:

- **China's strategy:**
  - Heavy investments with **focus on large scale projects** like ports, railways, power plants etc under **Belt and Road Initiative**.
  - Driven by **economic interests**.
- **India's engagement** is more development-focused and people centric. India's strategy centres on:
  - **Lines of credit** for smaller scale projects.
  - **Capacity building** and technical training.
  - Education and scholarships,
  - Healthcare Eg. **Pan-African e-Network Project** offers telemedicine and tele-education.

#### Trade and Economic relations:

- **China's trade with African nations:**
  - **Largest trading partner** surpassing \$250 billion 2021.
  - Mostly trade **restricted to Africa's natural resources**.
- **India's trade with African nations:**
  - Third largest trading partner of \$60billion in recent years.
  - **Volume of trade is smaller but diversified** with significant investments in Pharmaceuticals, IT, Agriculture, etc. rather just to raw material extraction.

#### Sustainability issues:

- **China's Debt diplomacy:**
  - Eg. African countries like **Zambia, Djibouti's larger portion of their GDP linked to Chinese loans**.
  - African nations may loose control over strategic assets Eg. **Hambantota Port case in Srilanka** serves as a warning.
  - Interference into local politics Eg. **Supporting authoritarian regimes**.
- **Indian investments** are **people centric and sustainable:**
  - But faces criticism due to their smaller scale and limited impact on infrastructure development.
  - Further, **India's engagement is often fragmented** compared to China's comprehensive, continent-wide approach.

5 Dec 2024

**PYQs: CSE (M)**

**GS II 2021:** "If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's." In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years.

**MAPPING**

PRE-CONTEXT

**NIGERIA**

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 9.

**News:** "India's strategic focus on West Africa."

**Facts on Nigeria:**

- **Africa's most populous country** and **largest economy**.
- Located in the **Gulf of Guinea** (on west coast of Africa).
- **Nigeria Borders:** Benin to the west, Niger to the north, Chad to the northeast (across Lake Chad), and Cameroon to the east.
- **River Niger:** principal river of Nigeria.
- Nigeria is the **largest producer Crude Oil in Africa**.
- **Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria** is primarily associated with Northeastern Nigeria.
- **Nigeria gained independence from:** British.
- **Lake Chad (shrinking in recent years):** Borders with Chad, Niger, and Cameroon.
- In 2023, China funded the **Lekki Deep Sea Port**. The port, one of the largest in West Africa

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**GOVERNANCE**

PRE-CONTEXT

**CENSUS**

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 10.

**News:** "Is the caste Census a useful exercise?"

- A **census is a periodic official count of a population**, which gathers details like age, gender, and occupation.
- It helps govt. in planning and resource distribution.

**Census:**

- **First Census** in India was completed in **1881**, initiated by **Viceroy Lord Mayo**.
- **First census after independence was in 1951**, latest being 2011.
- In India census is conducted by **Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India**, under **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
- It is an **Union list item of 7th schedule** and conducted under **provisions of Census Act 1948**.

**Caste Census:**

- **Last "Caste census" was in 1931**.
- **Caste Census is not backed by any specific statute (law)** but Census is conducted under **Census Act 1948**.
- **India has counted and published caste data from 1951 to 2011 of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes only**.
- **Socio-Economic and Caste Census** was conducted in 2011 but never released.

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**P.T.O**

**GS II**

SYLLABUS: EFFECT OF POLICIES AND POLITICS OF DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON INDIA'S INTERESTS.

**SOUTH CHINA SEA**

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 16.

**News:** "Chinese ship fired water cannon at vessel: Manila."

"China views the East and South China Seas through the prism of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national security."

**East China Sea borders with:**

- **China, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea.**
- China asserts that the **Senkaku/ Diaoyu islands**, located in the East China Sea belong to Beijing and are currently under Japanese control.

**The South China Sea:**

- Lies between **China, Taiwan and five Southeast Asian countries:** Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, Philippines, and Indonesia.
- China has been actively pushing its claims in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Philippines. Eg. recent **Thomas Shoal and Sabina Shoal islands** issue.

**Significance of East and South China Seas:**

- **Key maritime trade routes in East Asia** pass through these two seas. Eg. 10 billion barrels of petroleum and petroleum products passed through the South China seas— **U.S. Energy Information Administration 2023.**
- **Taiwan Strait** is a critical maritime choke point.
- It is **home to undersea cables** which are important for the global digital economy.
- **Vast reserves** of untapped oil and natural gas.

**Response from regional countries to Chinese aggression:**

- **Building their own defence capabilities** Eg. by 2027, Japan wants to double its defence expenditure.
- **Public diplomacy:** Philippines filming the behaviour of Chinese vessels and is releasing it through social media.
- **Defence partnerships:** Philippines, Japan and SouthKorea are treaty allies of the U.S. in order to strengthen their defence capabilities.

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**PYQs: CSE (M)**

**GS II 2014:** With respect to the South China sea, maritime territorial disputes and rising tension affirm the need for safeguarding maritime security to ensure freedom of navigation and over flight throughout the region. In this context, discuss the bilateral issues between India and China.

**TECHNOLOGY**

PRE-CONTEXT

**PROBA-3**

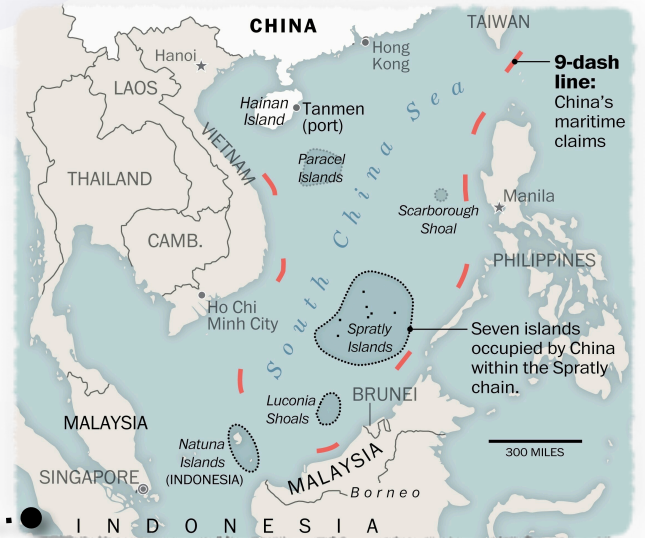
THE HINDU, PG.NO: 14.

**News:** "After anomaly alert, ISRO sets PROBA-3 launch for today."

**PROBA-3:**

- Mission of **European Space Agency**, it will **study the Sun's corona.**
- **Two satellites will fly in formation:** one will observe the Sun, while the other blocks its view of the Sun's center, **creating an eclipse** that only lets the corona's light reach the cameras.
- Proba 3 is scheduled **launch on board a PSLV-C59 vehicle.**

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**Thank you!**