

2020



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CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

17th February - 22nd February



BusinessLine



1. Visit of Home Minister of Maldives

Why in News

The Home Minister of Maldives, Mr. Sheikh Imran Abdulla, met Indian Home Minister on 21st February, 2020.

Key Points

- India and Maldives discussed issues of mutual interest in the area of security and law enforcement cooperation.
- The Ministers welcomed the expansion of bilateral cooperation between India and Maldives in diverse fields including policing and law enforcement, counter-terrorism, counter-radicalization, organized crime, drug trafficking and capacity building.
- The Directorate of Enforcement will assist Maldives in setting up a probe agency like itself and guide the island nation on raising a Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) infrastructure.

India-Maldives

- Significance of Maldives for India:
 - Maldives' proximity to the west coast of India - barely 70 nautical miles away from Minicoy -island of Lakshadweep.
 - Lakshadweep group is separated from Maldives by Eight Degree Channel.
 - It is situated at the hub of commercial sea-lanes running through Indian Ocean. More than 97% of India's international trade by volume and 75% by value passes through the region.
 - Since China's naval expansion into the Indian Ocean, Maldives' significance has steadily grown and now it's at the heart of international geopolitics.
 - Maldives is an important aspect of India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy.
 - Maldives is a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC).
 - Operation Cactus: In 1988, in response to a request from the Maldives, India activated Operation Cactus to deploy its military and ensure regime continuity in Male.
 - India was among the first to recognize Maldives after its independence in 1965 and later established its mission at Male in 1972.

2. Arab World's first nuclear reactor

Why in News?

Recently, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has issued an operating licence for the Arab world's first nuclear power plant.

Key Points

- The Barakah nuclear power plant in Abu Dhabi is being built by Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO).
- The Barakah nuclear power plant will start production in 2020.
- Barakah will have four reactors with a total capacity of 5,600 megawatts. It will be almost a fifth of the country's current installed generating capacity.
- The plant is located on a sparsely populated strip of desert on the Persian Gulf coast.


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