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Important Facts for Prelims (14th December 2018)

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Boe Declaration

- Pacific countries vulnerable to climate change have urged Australia to abandon coal power generation within 12 years, and to prohibit new coal plants or expansion of existing plants.
- Recently, Tuvalu has urged Australia to avoid opening of new mines such as **Adani project for the Carmichael mine in Queensland**. It cited the Boe Declaration which Australia signed in September.
- The “**Boe Declaration**” of the “**Pacific Islands Forum**” reaffirmed that **climate change** remains the **single greatest threat** to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific.
- Boe declaration recognises and reaffirms the commitments and principles of **Biketawa Declaration of the year 2000**.

Biketawa Declaration

- It is a declaration agreed to by all the leaders of the **Pacific Islands Forum** constituting a framework for **coordinating response to regional crises**.
- The declaration was agreed to at the **31st Summit of Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, held at Kiribati in October 2000**.
- It's principles are: commitment to good governance, belief in the liberty of the individual under the law, upholding democratic processes and institutions and recognising **the vulnerability of member countries to threats to their security**.

Pacific Islands Forum

- The Pacific Islands Forum is the region's premier **political and economic policy organization which was founded in 1971**.

- It comprises **18 members**: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
- The Pacific Islands Forum aims to foster cooperation between governments, collaboration with international agencies, by representing the interests of its members for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead-free, healthy, and productive lives.

India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway

- Thailand's envoy has said that **India, Myanmar, and Thailand** should expedite negotiations on a **motor vehicles pact**.
- The nearly **1,400-km trilateral highway** is aimed at giving a massive boost to trade in Southeast Asia and is an integral part of **India's "Act East" policy**.
- The project is scheduled to be **completed by 2021**.
- The **National Highways Authority of India** has been appointed as the technical executing agency and project management consultant for implementing this project.

Virgin Galactic's SpaceShipTwo

- Sir Richard Branson's **Virgin Galactic test flight SpaceShipTwo** has successfully reached to a height of more than 50 miles in **California's the Mojave Desert**.
- It is the first time a plane has reached the **boundary of space** and earth before making its descent back to earth.
- This flight success is a step closer towards **making commercial space tourism into reality**.