



Roads on Arunachal Border

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Why in News

The Union government approved **more than Rs 1,100 crore for critical infrastructure development in Arunachal Pradesh.**

- The **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)** also cleared a proposal for construction of 32 roads under phase II of the **Indo-China Border Roads (ICBR) scheme.**
- **Earlier**, the government **followed a restrictive policy** and areas along the China border were not developed much.

Key Points

- **Critical Infrastructure Development in Arunachal Pradesh:**
 - Most projects have been earmarked in areas along the China border in the north and northeast part of Arunachal.
 - It includes motorable roads, mule tracks and facilities for porters. It envisages construction of roads and 18 foot-tracks measuring 598 km.

This will enhance the capabilities of **Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)**, which maintains vigil along the border. These tracks can be used by the Army to supplement the main border roads for transportation of men and material.

- **Indo-China Border Roads Scheme:**

- The first phase was **initiated in 2005**, when it was decided that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) would construct 27 priority roads totalling 608 km along China areas at an estimated cost of Rs. 912 crore and other 14 roads will be built by agencies such as the **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)**.

Some of the important projects include the **Darbuk-Shayok-Daulat Beg Oldie (DS-DBO) road** and **Rohtang tunnel** in the Ladakh; and in the northeast, the **Sela Tunnel** and a road and rail tunnel under the Brahmaputra river with Indian Railways.

- Under phase II of the Indo-China Border Roads (ICBR) scheme, the roads, measuring 638.12 km and amounting to Rs. 12,434.90 crore, are to come up in **Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh**.

- **Importance of Roads near Arunachal Border:**

- Arunachal **shares its longest border with China**, followed by Myanmar and Bhutan.

Further, **China claims the entire Arunachal Pradesh** as South Tibet.

- **Lack of proper communication and other basic facilities** in the border areas not only affects the local population but also is a major cause of concern from the country's security point of view.
- **Insurgency** in the north-east, **smuggling** and **illegal migration** are factors that demand more restricted border security.
- **Encroachment:** China has made rapid strides in border areas of Arunachal by **setting up new villages** and a labyrinth of road network, including highways.

- **Other Related Steps:**

- India will spend 10% funds of the **Border Area Development Programme (BADP)** only to improve the infrastructure along the China border.
- The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed the **Daporijo bridge** over Subansiri river in Arunachal Pradesh.
 - It links roads leading upto the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China.
- The Defence Minister has virtually laid the foundation of **a tunnel at Nechiphu** in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The state government of Arunachal Pradesh has advocated **selection of 10 census towns along the India-China border** as pilot projects for infrastructure development in order to stop people living along its international borders, specifically with China, from migrating to faraway urban centres in the State.
- The **Sisseri River Bridge** is located at lower Dibang Valley in Arunachal Pradesh, connecting Dibang Valley and Siang.
- In 2019, the Indian Air Force inaugurated resurfaced runway at India's **easternmost Village-Vijaynagar (Changlang district)** in Arunachal Pradesh.
- In 2019, the Indian Army conducted **exercise 'HimVijay'** in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam with its newly created Integrated Battle Groups (IBG).
- **Bogibeel bridge**, which is India's longest road-rail bridge connecting Dibrugarh in Assam to Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh was inaugurated in 2018.

Source:TH