



Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities: India-Pakistan

For Prelims: Agreement on Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities

For Mains: The Agreement on Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities, its significance and the need and India- Pakistan Relations.

Why in News

Recently, India and Pakistan have **exchanged a list of their nuclear installations.**

- The exchange was in accordance with the Article-II of Agreement on **Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities** between Pakistan and India.
- The two countries also **exchanged lists of prisoners** held in each other's prisons under the provisions of the **Agreement on Consular Access signed in May 2008.**
 - Under this pact, the two countries should exchange comprehensive lists on 1st January and 1st July every year.

Key Points

- **Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities:**
 - **About:**
 - According to this agreement, **both countries have to inform each other of the nuclear facilities.**
 - The agreement was signed in 1988 and ratified in 1991.
 - This was the **31st consecutive exchange** of the list between the two neighboring countries.
 - **Coverage:**
 - Nuclear power and research reactors, fuel fabrication, uranium enrichment, isotopes separation and reprocessing facilities, as well as any other installations with fresh or irradiated nuclear fuel and materials in any form and establishments storing significant quantities of radioactive materials, **are all included under the umbrella term “nuclear installations and facilities”.**
- **Significance of the Agreement:**
 - The need for the agreement had been felt **against the backdrop of Israel's 1981 bombing** of Iraq's Osirak reactor near Baghdad. The strike, carried out by Israeli fighter jets over hostile airspace, had set Iraq's nuclear weapons programme significantly.
 - The agreement had also come at a time of deep anxiety for Pakistan.
 - Islamabad had been rattled by the memory of the 1972 defeat which dismembered the country, and military developments in India, such as Operation Brasstacks in 1987, which was a wargame exercise to prepare for deep strike offensive capabilities. Pakistan had at the time responded by putting its nuclear installations and assets on 'high alert'.

Current Issues in India-Pakistan Relations

- **Cross Border Terrorism:**
 - **Terrorism emanating from territories** under Pakistan's control remains a core concern in bilateral relations.
 - India has consistently stressed the need for Pakistan to take credible, irreversible and verifiable action to end cross border terrorism against India.
- **Indus Water Treaty:**
 - Every now and then, **there is an uproar in India for abrogating the Indus Water Treaty** as a response to Pakistan's **cross-border terrorism** and tenacity.
 - It is a treaty brokered by the **World Bank**, which administers how the waters of the Indus and its tributaries that flow in both the countries will be utilised.
- **Siachen Glacier:**
 - Siachen is regarded as the **world's highest, deadliest and costliest battlefield**.
 - Decades of military operations have **damaged the glacier and the surrounding environment**.
 - But due to the complex nature of Indo-Pak relations and the distrust between the two countries, there has been no decision on the matter yet.
- **Sir Creek:**
 - It is a **96 km long strip of water disputed** between India and Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch marshlands.
 - The dispute lies in the **interpretation of the maritime boundary line between Kutch and Sindh**.
 - Pakistan claims the line to **follow the eastern shore of the estuary while India claims a centerline** (differing interpretations of paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Bombay Government Resolution of 1914 signed between the then Government of Sindh and Rao Maharaj of Kutch).
- **Reorganization of Jammu & Kashmir:**
 - It also **created a crisis in Kashmir-centric Pakistan** as at one go, the large territory of Ladakh was disassociated from the Kashmir dispute.
 - Pakistan's frustration showed in its desperate attempts to push terrorism and failed effort to gather international support against this move by India.

Way Forward

- The two countries agreed to the strict observance of all agreements, understandings and ceasefire along the **LoC (Line of Control)** and all other sectors with effect in February 2021.
- But unless there is a **mutual desire, political will and the two sides must have courage to take decisive difficult decisions**, there is no hope for the countries future engagement.
- Pakistan's never ending struggle to prove itself equal to or better than India has never let the relations get normal between the two countries.
- The **lack of true democracy and the successive toothless** civilian governments have proved that bilateral engagement with the civilian government would be rendered fruitless by the machinations of the Pak military.

Source: IE