



Boosting Infrastructure Along China Border

Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has announced to spend 10% funds of **the Border Area Development Programme (BADP)** only to **improve the infrastructure** along the **China border**.

Key Points

▪ Enhancing Infrastructure:

- **The Border Area Development Programme (BADP)** has been allocated Rs. 784 crore for projects in areas of States/UTs inhabited along the **Indo-China border** i.e. **Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Sikkim and Uttarakhand**.
- The fund is distributed to the border States and Union Territories (UTs) depending on **various criteria** such as the **length of the international border and population**.
- Under this, the projects for developing **strategically important villages and towns** in border areas will be given priority.
- Construction of roads, bridges, primary schools, health infrastructure, playfields, irrigation works, etc. will be undertaken within 10 km of the border.

▪ Role of Various Security Forces:

- Security Forces such as the **Border Security Force (BSF)**, deployed along the Bangladesh and Pakistan borders, **the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** on the China border, **the Sashastra Seema Bal along the Nepal border**, and the **Assam Rifles** stationed along the Myanmar border would provide independent feedback on the projects in the blocks concerned and may be tasked to conduct social audit of the works, it stated.
- These forces will play a crucial role in **identification of the villages and implementation** of the related work.

▪ Significance:

◦ Bridging Socio-economic gaps:

- It is an important intervention of the Government to bring about development of border areas by supplementing the State Plan Funds to **bridge the gaps in socio-economic infrastructure** on one hand and **improving the security environment in border areas on the other**.
- **Safe and Secure Borders:** It would create a **positive perception of care and encourage people to stay** on in the border areas **leading to safe and secure borders**.

- This would help **integrate these areas with the hinterland**.

- **Better Management of the Border:** In the light of the recent incident of face-off between India and China the creation of infrastructure is a strategic move for the better management of the border areas.

- It will provide **faster mobility to troops and equipment** to the border with China.

- India is continuing the infrastructure for better connectivity to the **Line of Actual Control** with China. E.g. the construction of a strategic tunnel in Uttarakhand as a part of the **Char Dham Pariyojana**.

The Border Area Development Programme (BADP)

- The BADP was launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs in **1986-87** as part of a **comprehensive approach to Border Management**.
- BADP was initiated in the border areas of the western region during **the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90)**, for ensuring balanced development of border areas through development of infrastructure and promotion of a sense of security among the border population.
- The States covered are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

Way Forward

- For a very long time China has been claiming various parts of India as its territory. The infrastructure development would ensure the territorial integrity of India along the borders. There is also a need of strengthening the **Border Road Organisations (BRO)** so that projects can run without any hurdle.
- As the India-China border is witnessing the highest tensions since the Doklam stand-off in 2017, It is required that development projects must be implemented across the border to make it safe and secure for all.

Source: TH

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