American Sanctions Over North Korea

For Prelims: North Korean missile launches, 38th parallel, Korean Armistice Agreement.

For Mains: Korean War, Korean Armistice Agreement , Cold War, Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 2003, THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defence), American Sanctions Over North Korea.

Why in News

Recently, the US has imposed its first sanctions over **North Korea's weapons programs** following a series of **North Korean missile launches.**

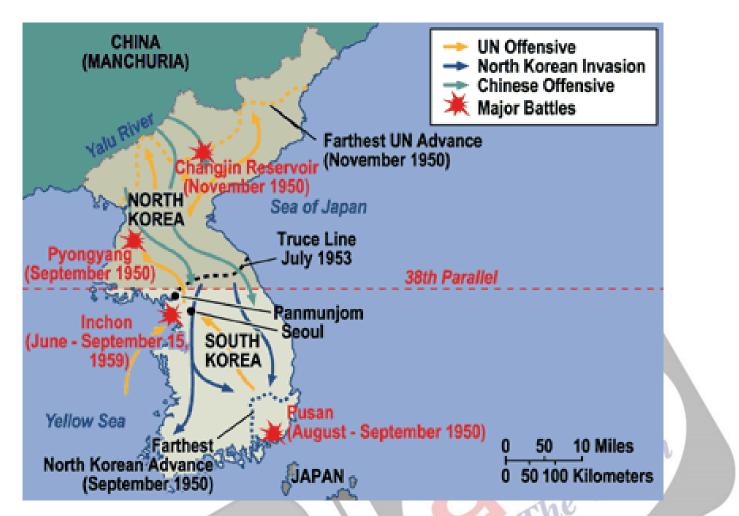
- These sanctions were aimed both to prevent the advancement of North Korea's programs and to impede its attempts to proliferate weapons technologies.
- North Korea is continuing its missile program despite several <u>UN Security Council</u> resolutions and the international community's calls for **diplomacy and** <u>denuclearization</u>.

Key Points

- Origin of Divide in Korean Peninsula:
 - The present-day conflict between the US and North Korea can be traced from the <u>Cold</u> <u>War</u> between the USSR and US.
 - After the defeat of Japan in <u>World War II</u>, the Allied forces at the Yalta Conference (1945), agreed to establish a "four-power trusteeship over Korea".
 - The fear of the spread of communism (state ownership over economic resources of a country) and the mutual distrust between the USSR and the US led to the failure of the trusteeship plan.
 - Before a concrete plan could be formulated, the USSR invaded Korea.
 - This led to a condition where the north of Korea was under the USSR and the south under the rest of the allies, mainly the US.
 - The Korean peninsula was divided into two regions by the 38th parallel.

In 1948 the United Nations proposed free elections across all of Korea.

- The USSR rejected this plan and the northern part was declared as Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea).
- The election took place in the **American protectorate** resulting in the establishment of the **Republic of Korea (South Korea).**
- Both North Korea and South Korea tried to enhance their reach, territorially and ideologically, which gave birth to the Korean Conflict.



The Korean War:

- On 25th June 1950, North Korea, backed by the USSR, launched an attack on South Korea and occupied most of the country.
 - In response, the United Nations force led by the US retaliated.
- In 1951 the US forces led by Douglas MacArthur crossed the 38th parallel and triggered the entry of China in support of North Korea.
 - To prevent further escalation, peace talks began later in 1951.
- India was actively involved in negotiating peace in the Korean peninsula by engaging all the major stakeholders US, USSR and China.
 - In 1952, the Indian resolution on Korea was adopted at the <u>United Nations</u> (UN).
- On 27th July 1953, the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed between the UN Command, the Korean People's Army and the Chinese People's Volunteer Army.
 - It led to an **official ceasefire without a Peace treaty.** Thus, the war officially never ended.
- This also led to the establishment of the Korean Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) a strip of land running across the Korean Peninsula to serve as a buffer zone between North Korea and South Korea.
- In December 1991, North and South Korea signed a **pact agreeing to refrain from** aggression.

US-North Korea Conflict:

- During the **Cold War era, (allegedly with the support of Russia and China)** North Korea accelerated its nuclear programme and developed nuclear capabilities.
 - During the same time, the **US extended its Nuclear Umbrella** (guarantee of support during a nuclear attack) to its allies i.e South Korea and Japan.
- North Korea withdrew from the <u>Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 2003</u> and afterwards, under present leader Kim Jong-un, it increased nuclear missile testing.
 - North Korea is barred from testing ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons under international law.

- In response to this, the US started deploying THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defence) in South Korea in March 2017.
- The territorial conflict which started between North and South Korea has **transformed into a tussle between the US and North Korea.**
- Following the failure of diplomatic efforts to improve relations with North Korea, the US has imposed sanctions.
- India's Stand:
 - India has **consistently voiced its opposition to North Korean nuclear and missile tests.** However, it has maintained a **neutral stance** regarding sanctions.

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