

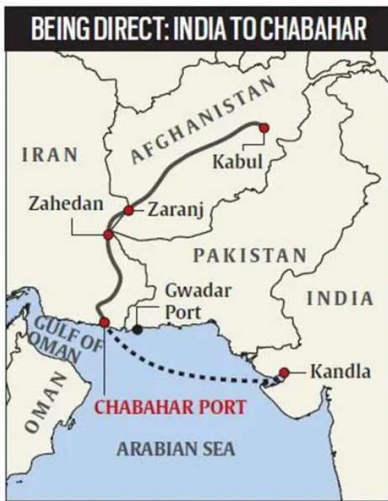


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14 May 2024

### National and International News

#### Chabahar port



#### Why in news?

- Eight years after the conclusion of the general framework of cooperation, **India and Iran signed a 10-year contract for the operation of the Chabahar port in Iran.**
- The **long-term agreement was signed** between **Indian Ports Global Ltd. (IPGL)** and the **Port and Maritime Organisation (PMO)** of Iran.

#### About Chabahar port:

- Chabahar Port, **situated in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan Province.**
- It is located on the **Gulf of Oman**, making it **Iran's only oceanic port.**
- It is **near Pakistan's Gwadar Port** and **offers India a strategic foothold in the region, allowing bypass of Pakistan for access to Afghanistan and Central Asia.**
- **India has been a key player in the development of Chabahar Port.**
- The **cooperation includes** investments in **infrastructure like the development of terminals and operational systems.**
- Chabahar is **part of India's strategy to counter Chinese influence in the region**, especially concerning the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).**



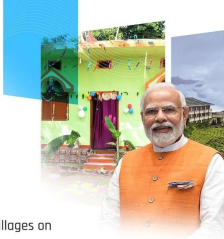
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### Vibrant Village Programme (VVP)



#### Benefits:

- Inclusive growth of villages on northern border
- Will improve the quality of life of people
- Will reverse the outmigration adding to improved security



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### Why in news?

- The government is planning to spend over **₹2 crore per kilometre of road construction**.
- The **roads will be constructed along the China border in Uttarakhand and Sikkim**.
- This initiative is **part of the Vibrant Village Programme (VVP)**.

### About VVP:

- The Vibrant Village Programme (VVP) is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** implemented over the **financial years 2022-23 to 2025-26**.
- **Objective:** The programme **aims for comprehensive development of villages and blocks on the northern border, improving the quality of life of people living in identified border villages**.
  - It also **aims to encourage people to stay in their native locations in border areas**, reversing the outmigration from these villages, and **improving the security of the border**.
- **Funding:** The programme will **provide funds for the development of essential infrastructure and the creation of livelihood opportunities** in 2967 villages in 19 Districts and 46 Border blocks of **4 states and 1 UT** along the **northern land border of the country: Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and the UT of Ladakh**.
- **Action Plans:** Vibrant Village Action Plans will be **created by the district administration with the help of Gram Panchayats**, and **100 % saturation of Central and state schemes will be ensured**. There will be **no overlap with the Border Area Development Programme**.



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**Indian Ocean basin-wide (IOBW) index**

**Why in news?**

- Researchers have discovered a potential link between anomalies in sea-surface temperatures in the Indian Ocean and the **intensity of global dengue epidemics**.
- This link could **potentially improve the prediction of dengue outbreaks**, giving countries more time to prepare and respond.

**Key points:**

- A new paper published in the journal Science **identified a specific indicator**, the **Indian Ocean basin-wide (IOBW) index**.
- According to the study, the **IOBW index exhibits a close association with dengue outbreaks** in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres.

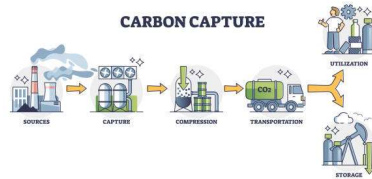
**About IOBW:**

- The **Indian Ocean basin-wide (IOBW) index represents the average sea-surface temperature variations** across the **tropical Indian Ocean**.
- The IOBW index has **emerged as a key indicator for predicting the magnitude and timing of dengue epidemics** in each country.
- The **IOBW index has a more pronounced impact on temperatures in tropical regions**. For **example**, Brazil, a country in the Southern Hemisphere, bears a higher burden of dengue.
- The **Northern Hemisphere witnesses a peak dengue epidemic period between July and October**, while the **Southern Hemisphere sees a peak in February and April**, both during their respective **summers**.
- The **amplitude of dengue incidence was high when the IOBW index was positive and low when it was negative**.



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### Mammoth carbon dioxide capture and storage facility



### Why in news?

- Swiss start-up **Climeworks** has launched **Mammoth**, the **largest carbon dioxide capture and storage facility of its kind**.
- The **captured CO2 is intended to be buried underground**.

### Key points:

- The **goal of this project** is to **prove that this technology can contribute to the fight against global warming**.
- Mammoth began operations this week and is **situated on a dormant volcano in Iceland**.

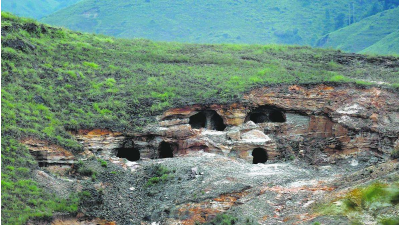
### About Mammoth:

- Mammoth is the **largest carbon dioxide capture and storage facility**.
- It is the **second commercial direct air capture (DAC) facility by Climeworks** in Iceland, significantly larger than its predecessor, **Orca**, which began operations in 2021.
- The **working principle** of this cutting-edge technology involves **drawing in air and chemically extracting carbon dioxide**.
- The **extracted CO2** can then be **stored underground, converted into stone, or reused**.
- The **process of carbon sequestration utilizes** Iceland's abundant **geothermal energy for power**.



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### Rat-hole coal mining



### Why in news?

- The **High Court of Meghalaya** appointed a one-member panel to **handle coal-related issues**.
- The panel has **raised concerns about the lack of progress in restoring the environment**.
- This environmental damage was caused by **rat-hole coal mining** in the State.

### About Rat-hole coal mining:

- Rat-hole mining is a **method of manual drilling most common in Meghalaya**, especially in the **West Jaintia Hills, East Jaintia Hills, and West Khasi Hills**.
- The term "rat hole" refers to the **narrow pits dug into the ground**, typically just **large enough for one person to descend and extract coal** using primitive tools such as pickaxes, shovels, and baskets.
- Rat-hole mining is broadly classified into **two categories: Side-cutting procedure and Box-cutting**.

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