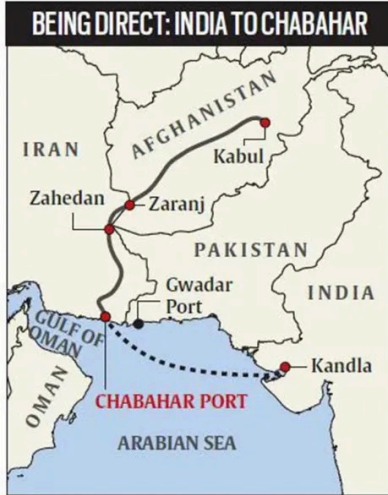




14 May 2024

National and International News

Chabahar port



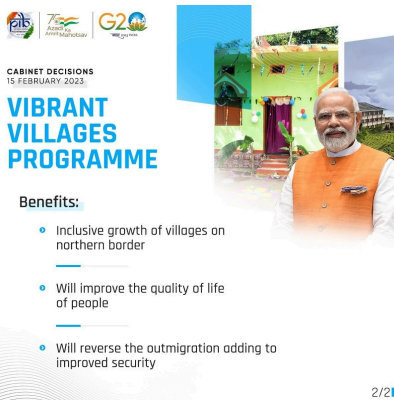
Why in news?

- 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).**

Vibrant Village Programme (VVP)



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.

United Nations Forum on Forests



Why in news?

- The 19th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF19) took place from May 6-10, 2024 in New York, United States.
- By the end of the forum on May 10, the declaration aimed to achieve agreement on a high-level political commitment to forest protection.
- The declaration included specific actions for effective implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) by UNFF and its stakeholders.

About United Nations Forum on Forests:

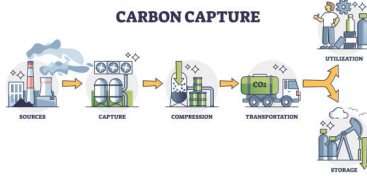
- The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) was established in 2000 by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- The UNFF promotes the management, conservation, and sustainable development of all types of forests.
- The forum has universal membership and is composed of all Member States of the United Nations and specialized agencies.
- The UNFF meets annually at the UN Headquarters in New York for high-level dialogue on technical matters in odd years and policy matters in even years.
- India is a founding member of UNFF.

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:

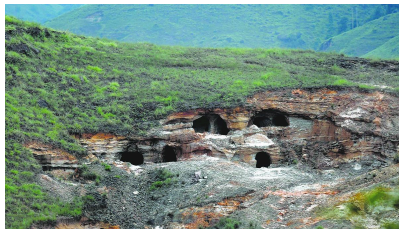


- The goal of this project is to prove that this technology can contribute to the fight against global warming.
- Mammoth began operations this week and is situated on a dormant volcano in Iceland.

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.

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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