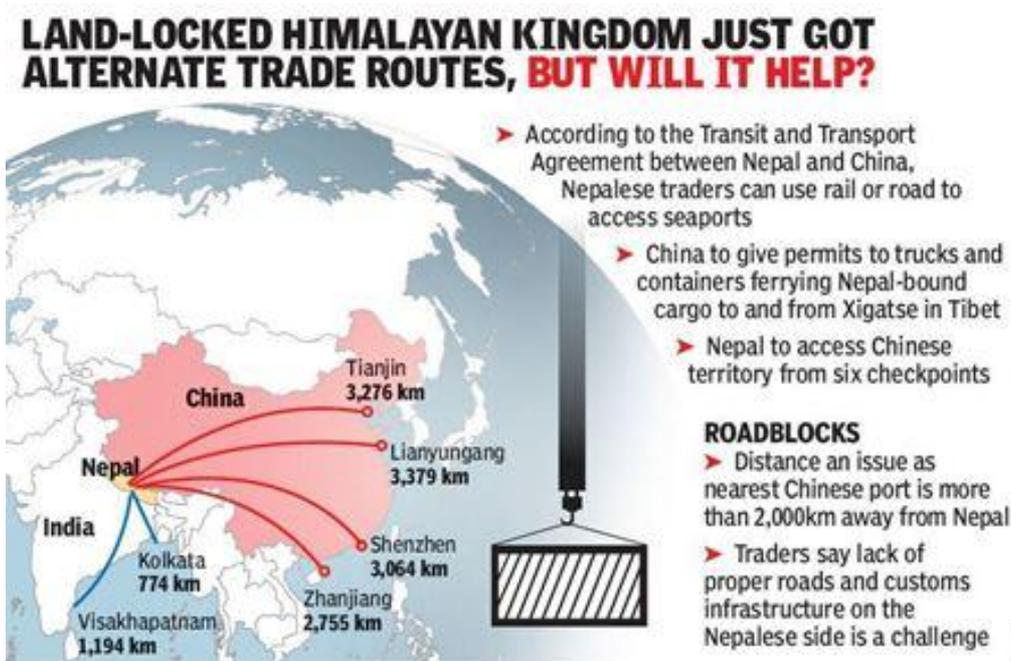


08 September 2018

Daily News Pedia

Nepal gets access to 4 China ports, ending Indian monopoly on transit

(GS Prelims and Mains 2 – International Relations, Infrastructure; Transportation)



Nepal and China finalised the protocol of Transit and Transport Agreement (TTA) during a meeting in Kathmandu on Friday giving Nepal access to the Chinese ports Nepal and China finalised the protocol of the Nepal-China Transit and Transportation Agreement.

It will give Kathmandu access to four Chinese ports.

TTA will allow Nepal to transport its imports and exports via its neighbour’s territory, China. Nepal will be able to access seaports like Shenzhen, Tianjin etc and land ports (dry ports) like Lhasa to conduct international trade. Both sides decided to access Chinese territory from six checkpoints.

Reasons to sign the TTA between two Nations.

- **Geographical reasons:** Nepal is wedged between China and India. So being a landlocked nation, Nepal is trying to diversify its trading routes.
- **Political reasons:** The Madhesi agitation in 2015 had forced Nepal to explore trade links with China and reduce its long term dependence on India.
- **Economic reasons:** India’s prolonged blockade across border crossings with Nepal in 2015 and 2016 left the country short of fuel and medicine for several months which impelled Nepal to sought alternatives.

- **External influences:** China is making fast inroads into Nepal with aid and investment, challenging India's long-held position as the dominant outside power.
- **Logistic issues:** Nepali cargo from Japan, South Korea and other north Asian countries if routed through China would cut shipping time and costs as overland trade through Kolkata port takes up to three months.

Source: The Hindu.

Bonnethead shark

(GS Prelims and Mains 3 – Ecology, Biodiversity)



The Bonnethead Shark (*Sphyrna tiburo*) is a very abundant, small hammerhead that is found in shallow estuaries and bays on the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean coasts of the Americas as well as in the Gulf of Mexico. Despite pressure from both target and by catch fisheries

Range Description:	This species occurs off the American continents only. In the western Atlantic Ocean it has been reported from southern Brazil to North Carolina, USA, and occasionally as far north as Rhode Island (Ebert <i>et al.</i> 2013). It is also common in the Gulf of Mexico and much of the Caribbean. In the eastern Pacific Ocean it is reported from southern California to Ecuador.
Red List Category & Criteria:	Least Concern

Source: The Hindu, Google.

SAHI – India's future mobility

(GS Prelims and Mains III – Infrastructure; Transportation)

Safe, Adequate, Holistic Infrastructure or SAHI

“Safe, Adequate, Holistic Infrastructure or SAHI.” That is the recommendation of a report presented to Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Global Mobility Summit, Move, in New Delhi.

Transforming India's Mobility: A Perspective prepared by the NITI Aayog and Boston Consulting Group (BCG) calls for efficient and convenient public transport to answer the twin problems of

pollution and congestion. The report quickly attracted attention amid the rise in fuel prices. Public transport must be the cornerstone of our mobility initiatives.

The 7C's for the future of mobility — common, connected, convenient, congestion-free, charged, clean and cutting-edge.

Familiar travails

The Prime Minister touched upon the familiar travails that cities face: **personal vehicles requiring more roads, parking, and traffic.**

“While mobility is critical to preserving our planet, road transport accounts for one-fifth of global CO2 emissions. This threatens to choke cities and raise global temperatures,” he said. The number of **motor vehicles in India has grown 40-fold in 44 years, from 1981 to 2015**, the NITI Aayog-BCG report says. The reason: **absence of a public transport system**, leading to a rapid rise in private vehicle ownership. The four big metros in the **country lose over \$22 billion** every year on **congestion**, it says.

Source: The Hindu.

IMA moots ethics code overhaul.

(GS Mains 4 – Ethics)

Indian Medical Association redefining Medical Ethics Codes.

Indian Medical Association is in the process of redefining the code of Ethics and it has recommended advertisement by doctors and mandatory cadaver organ donation.

Cadaver Donation: An organ or part of an organ given at the time of donor's death. (Cadaver means corpse), Cadaver organ donations are currently carried out in India only when an individual has explicitly expressed a wish to donate or with the consent of immediate relatives in cases of brain death.

Why we need overhauling in Medical Ethics Codes

Medical ethics focused on the moral responsibility of a physician was not adequate to address the ethical, moral and societal issues such as:

- Unregulated mechanism for drug pricing.
- Unregulated cost of transplant surgeries; cost out of reach of poor people
- Increasing Cost of treatment, disease burden, and the poor public health care facilities, the moral and ethical discussion on the “right to live” assumes a greater significance in India.
- Religious beliefs hinder deceased organ donation.
- Today's in advancing world, rather than surgeons, robots are operating on people, so it was imperative that medical ethics should be redefine.
- Financial conflict between patient and private sector further deprive citizens and clearly visible area of ethical conflict.
- Failing Doctors and Hospital to make poor citizen aware of Insurance and other social benefit scheme which further deprive them to avail quality healthcare services.
- There is a need to expand the scope of the definition of ethics within the field of medicine due to increasing number of stakeholder's participation in the Industry.

Source: The Hindu.

COMCASA to help keep a watch over Indian Ocean.

(GS Prelims and Mains 2 - International Relations)

The foundational agreement Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) which India concluded with the U.S. at the 2+2 dialogue will enable Indian military to get a better picture of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) which is seeing increasing Chinese movements COMCASA is an India-specific version of CISMOA.

Benefits of COMCASA for India:

- Indian forces will get the U.S. military platforms like US satellites as well as heavy transporters and special operations platforms like C-17,C-130 J aircraft respectively and the US made long range maritime surveillance -P8I.
- Indian military will get a better picture of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) which is seeing increasing Chinese movements.
- It will help India to get in the top tier of countries entitled to U.S.'s Strategic Trade Authorisation (STA-1).
- India will get access to Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange System (CENTRIXS).
- India and US has decided to exchange personnel for coordination and understanding, under which, India will get to post its representative at Bahrain where the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) is located to coordinate with US.

Source: The Hindu.

EDITORIAL

Steps to stop the rot: on dangers of storing food grains in the open

In India, the height of the rainy season is a time that one prays will pass — flooded roads, wet clothes, masses of insects and mould. No place is safe from the growth of fungi that spring up overnight. With the humidity in the air and the warmth of summer, all that fungi need is something to feed on. To prevent fungal attack. we store food items at home in airtight containers with well-fitting lids or in sealed plastic bags.

If I were to suggest that instead of all the airtight containers and waterproof bags, you build a cement plinth on the roof of your house or in your yard and pile up your flour, bread, biscuits, rice and other cereals and pulses there in bags and then cover all this with a tarpaulin, assuring you that it would be perfectly safe through the rainy season, you would probably lose all faith in me and my suggestions. This would be based on your practical experience.

Most grain in India, which is procured from farmers by the government, is stored using the CAP, or cover and plinth method. Very cheap and easy to make, it is described in the preceding paragraph. India stores about 30.52 million tonnes of rice, wheat, maize, gram and sorghum in such structures at Food Corporation of India godowns and hired spaces.

A comparison

In other parts of the world, grain is stored in silos. Here, stored grain is kept dry and aired so as to prevent fungal and insect attacks. When the North American mid-west came under the plough during the 19th and 20th centuries, the first thing that was done was to build large grain silos and a railway system to export the grain. Today, the U.S. has a permanent storage capacity nearly equivalent to its annual grain production. But in India, the government has considered only four silos to be sufficient for the nation's needs — one each in Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai and Hapur-Ghaziabad. The last one, in Uttar Pradesh, is the most modern with a storage capacity of 500 tonnes, according to a recent paper.

The remainder of government-procured grain is stored in conditions so shoddy that it is estimated that there is a 10% loss of harvested grain, of which 6% (around 1,800,000 tonnes) is lost in storage. This means that the grain is so damp and fungus-ridden that it cannot be ground and passed on to the public for consumption.

In order to export basmati rice, Punjab has, in a public-private partnership, built modern, temperature-controlled grain silos with a storage capacity of 50,000 tonnes — but this is not for the Indian market.

Invitation to illness

Eating mouldy grain causes a variety of illnesses. According to a World Health Organisation paper, titled "Mycotoxins", mycotoxins, which are found in mouldy grain/foods, are associated with human disease and produce aflatoxins (cancer-causing), trichothecenes, ochratoxins, citrinin and other toxins. The paper says: "Aflatoxicosis causes abdominal pain, vomiting, hepatitis and (sometimes) death after acute exposure to high concentrations in food. Chronic low dose exposure to aflatoxin can result in impaired growth in children."

This is why traditional wisdom ensured that mouldy food was discarded. Today, our grain, especially wheat and paddy, is stored outdoors under tarpaulins through the rainy season. After this, grain is converted to flour or flour-based products or de-husked, which we store in airtight containers and bins to prevent mould. However, this is shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted. The mycotoxins which we seek to prevent by keeping food dry are already present from the time the flour was stored in the form of grain.

The government is aware of the deadly consequences of grain with mycotoxins. Although there are regulations in place to prevent the purchase of mouldy grain from farmers, there do not seem to be any published studies on the extent of mould infection in grain stored using the CAP method. However, one does not need these studies. All one has to do is purchase flour from the market, make rotis, bread or biscuits and compare the taste with similar products from developed countries. The "nutty taste" of wheat is missing in what is available in the Indian market. If you get wheat from farmers and get it ground, you will find the "nutty taste".

Questions for planners

One needs to ask a pertinent question. When there is an abundance of steel, cement and other building materials, money and the technological know-how, why is the government not moving on a war footing to store food grains in the proper manner? Given the weather conditions during the monsoon months, how is it acceptable that our food grains, which the public pays to procure, are stored in the open under tarpaulins? How can we gloat about a growing economy when 30 million tonnes of food grain is stored outside under tarpaulins? Even though food grain production has been encouraged and increased, why is there no effort being made to ensure that grain being procured annually is stored properly? Are our planners unaware of what is going on even in their own kitchens?

Mains Question

Q: Poor Food grain storage and resultant food wastage has been a persistent problem in India. Discuss.

Prelims Questions

1. Global Mobility Summit was recently held in

- a. Singapore
- b. India
- c. Nepal
- d. Japan

Answer: B

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Global Mobility Summit - MOVE - which among other things will deliberate on steps to promote electric vehicles and shared mobility, according to an official statement. The two-day summit organised by NITI Aayog.

2. Choose the not correct statement related to Bonnethead Shark

- a. This species occurs off the American continents only.
- b. IUCN RED list Least Concern.
- c. It is also common in the Gulf of Mexico and much of the Caribbean.
- d. None.

Answer: A

Explanation: The Bonnethead Shark (*Sphyrna tiburo*) is a very abundant, small hammerhead that is found in shallow estuaries and bays on the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean coasts of the Americas as well as in the Gulf of Mexico. Despite pressure from both target and by catch fisheries.

3. Choose the correct statement related to SAHI

- a. It stands for Safe, Adequate, Holistic Infrastructure.
- b. It is the recommendation of a report presented to Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Global Mobility Summit, Move, in New Delhi.
- c. Both.
- d. None

Answer: C

Explanation: "Safe, Adequate, Holistic Infrastructure or SAHI." That is the recommendation of a report presented to Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Global Mobility Summit, Move, in New Delhi.