

## Fireproofing of India

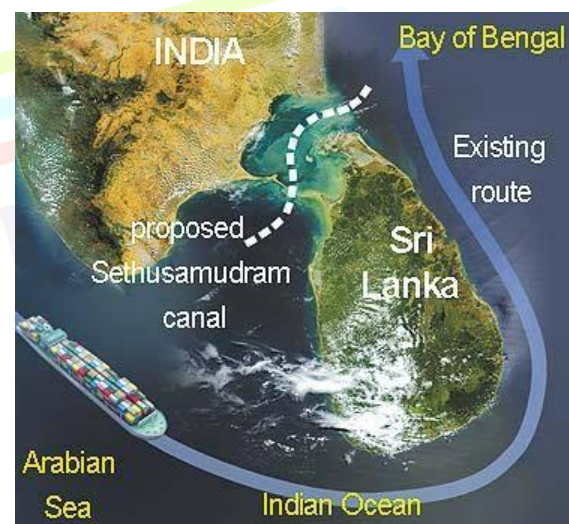
- While strategic autonomy in a multi-polar world may be an aspirational outcome, with balancing and hedging emerging as key Indian diplomatic strategies.
- The limits of Indian national power in the face of an exponential rise in China's national power cannot be hard to perceive.
- Fireproofing of the economy in the medium term must concentrate on poverty alleviation on a war footing;
- Universal education and health care; creation of jobs and raising the other parameters of the human development index.
- This is where India's economic insulation lies.
- Globalization to heightened securitization is where the world is headed.
- Deterrence has always been at the heart of India's fireproofing against both internal and external threats since Independence.
- Notwithstanding the resilience of the Indian people, significant fireproofing is needed within Indian society and the information domain to stand firm in the face of multiple fissiparous vulnerabilities.
- Evolving societies are subject to periodic churn, and in India's case,

this churn has coincided with several events on the global stage such as the weaponization of the information domain and social media.

- With its large and ethnically diverse population, and multi-religious, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual demographic profile, staying cohesive will present the biggest challenge to India's leaders.

### THE HINDU

#### Ram setu



- Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project (SSCP) proposed creating a channel to link the Palk Strait with the Gulf of Mannar, it was only in 2005 that the project was inaugurated. Separating the shallow sea consisting of the Gulf of Mannar in the south and Palk Bay in the north is a somewhat linear coral ridge called Adam's Bridge or Ram Setu.

- This runs between Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu and Talaimannar in Sri Lanka.
  - The SSCP, if completed, is expected to considerably reduce the navigation time between the east and west coasts of India.
  - . Computer models suggest that the central, eastern, and north-eastern parts of Palk Bay may be impacted by waves of higher energy.
  - This means that these areas also receive more sediment, rendering them more turbid
  - The area is also vulnerable to cyclonic storms.
  - Emissions from ships traversing the narrow channel will pollute the air and water
  - The coral reef platforms between Thoothukudi and Rameswaram in the Gulf of Mannar were notified as a marine biosphere reserve in 1989.
  - More than 36,000 species of flora and fauna reportedly live there, flanked by mangroves and sandy shores which are considered conducive for turtles to nest.
- greater transparency in political funding.
  - However, the concurrent introduction of electoral bonds brought a new form of anonymity to thousands of crores of donations.
  - It drastically reduced public and legislative oversight.
  - Only the ruling party via the State Bank of India (SBI) has a full account of all donations being made via electoral bonds, to itself and to Opposition parties
  - In March 2021, the Supreme Court refused to stay the sale of electoral bonds before the West Bengal elections.
  - Instead, the judgment listed several documents which supposedly establish a paper trail on donations “all that is required is a little more effort to cull out such information from both sides (purchaser of bond and political party) and do some ‘match the following’.
  - The Finance Bill of 2017 amended Section 182 of the Companies Act of 2013 to remove the requirement for declaring disaggregated donations to political parties.
  - At best, company statements might have a total aggregate amount of all donations, including philanthropic ones.

## **THE HINDU**

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### **Electoral Bonds**

- In 2017, the then Finance Minister said anonymous cash donations to political parties would be reduced from ₹20,000 to ₹2,000 to ensure

- Political parties do not need to disclose their electoral bond donors.

## **THE HINDU**

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### **The standard for e commerce review**

- The Centre is bringing out a standard for publishing product reviews on e-commerce platform the framework was meant to safeguard and protect consumer interest from fake and deceptive reviews on e-commerce platforms.
- If made mandatory, the violation of the standard, titled “Indian Standard (IS) 19000:2022 Online Consumer Reviews Principles and Requirements for their Collection, Moderation and Publication”, can invite punishment for unfair trade practice or violation of consumer rights.
- Once made mandatory, a consumer may submit grievances to the National Consumer Helpline, consumer commission or the CCPA, against misleading reviews.
- The guiding principles of the standard are integrity, accuracy, privacy, security, transparency, accessibility and responsiveness.
- “The standard prescribes specific responsibilities for the review author and the review administrator.

- For the former, these include confirming acceptance of terms and conditions, and providing contact information, and for review administrators, these include safeguarding personal information and training of staff,”
- The standard also provides for methods for verification of the review author to check the traceability and genuineness of the review author.
- “The standard is expected to benefit all stakeholders in the e-commerce ecosystem that is, consumers, e-commerce platforms, sellers, etc.
- It will help usher in confidence among consumers to purchase goods online and help them take better purchase decisions,”

## **THE HINDU**

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### **First suicide policy**

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Monday announce a time-bound Suicide Prevention Strategy, the first of its kind in the country, with time-bound action plans and multi-sectoral collaborations to achieve a reduction in suicide mortality by 10% by 2030.
- The strategy broadly seeks to establish effective surveillance mechanisms for suicide within the

next three years, establish psychiatric outpatient departments that will provide suicide prevention services through the District Mental Health Programme in all districts within the next five years, and to integrate a mental well-being curriculum in all educational institutions within the next eight years.

- It envisages developing guidelines for responsible media reporting of suicides, and restricting access to means of suicide.
- The stress is on developing community resilience and societal support for suicide prevention.
- While the strategy is in line with the WHO's South East Asia Region Strategy for suicide prevention, it says it will remain true to India's cultural and social milieu.
- In India, more than one lakh lives are lost every year to suicide, and it is the top killer in the 15-29 year's category.
- In the past three years, the suicide rate has increased from 10.2 to 11.3 per 1,00,000 population, the document records.
- The most common reasons for suicide include family problems and illnesses, which account for 34% and 18% of all suicide related deaths.

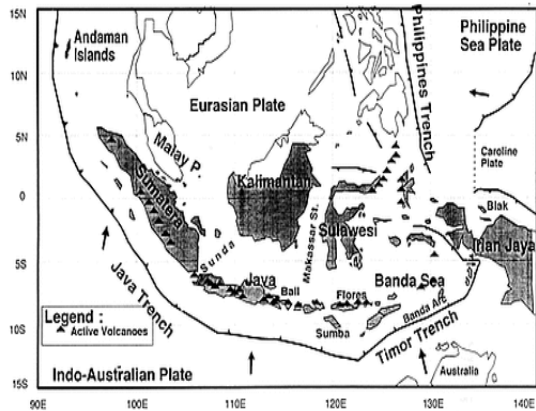
### **World's longest gas pipeline deal**

- Qatar Energy announced a 27-year natural gas supply deal with China,, calling it the "longest" ever seen as it strengthened ties with Asia at a time when Europe is scrambling for alternative sources.
- The state energy company will send four million tonnes of liquefied natural gas annually from its new North Field East project to China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec).
- The deal "marks the longest gas supply agreement in the history of the LNG industry.
- Asian countries led by China, Japan, and South Korea are the main market for Qatar's gas, which is increasingly being sought by European countries since Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- North Field is at the center of Qatar's expansion of its liquefied natural gas production by more than 60% to 126 million tonnes a year by 2027.
- China is the first country to seal a deal for North Field East.

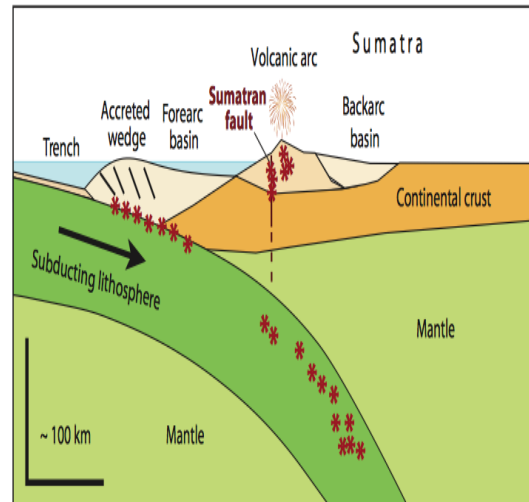
### **THE HINDU**

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## Why an earthquake in JAVA?



- The Indo-Australian Plate, which underlies the Indian Ocean to the west of Sumatra, is being subducted beneath the Sunda Plate, a breakaway part of the Eurasian Plate which underlies Sumatra and neighboring Java, along the Sunda Trench, passing under Sumatra, where friction between the two plates can cause Earthquakes.
- As the Indo-Australian Plate sinks further into the Earth it is partially melted and some of the melted material rises through the overlying Sunda Plate as magma, fueling the volcanoes of Sumatra.



\* Major source of earthquake activity



## What is subduction?

- Subduction happens when tectonic plates shift, and one plate is shoved under another.
- This movement of the ocean floor produces a "mineral transmutation," which leads to the melting and solidification of magma - that is, the formation of volcanoes.
- Basically, when a "down going" oceanic plate is shoved into a hotter mantle plate, it heats up, volatile elements mix, and this produces magma.
- The magma then rises up through the overlying plate and spurts out at the surface.

