

## Rebooting India-Bangladesh ties

### Why in news?

Recently a virtual summit was held between Indian Prime Minister and his Bangladesh counterpart.

### How was the existing relation between the countries?

- India played a major role in Bangladesh's liberation struggle in 1971.
- Bangladesh is seen as a major pillar in India's neighbourhood first policy.
- It is India's largest trading partner in South Asia & seen as all-weather friend for India.

### What are the current issues affecting the relations?

- There are frequent clashes at the borders of both the countries.
- As per the report of Rights Watchdog, in the first six months of this year, at least 25 Bangladeshis were killed in border clashes.
- The Teesta water dispute remains unresolved.
- The Citizenship (Amendment) Act & the proposed National Register of Citizens has created a negative impression about India.
- Moreover, China is making inroads into Bangladesh through infrastructure investments & expanding economic cooperation.

### What are the challenges Bangladesh PM faces?

- War crimes and corruption trials has weakened the traditional opposition parties.
- But she continues to face challenge from other Islamist factions.
- Recently, Hifazat-e-Islam (Islamist group) organised mass protests against French President for his support to depict Prophet in cartoons.
- They also opposed government's plan to build a statue for country's founding father-Bangabandhu Mujibur Rahman.
- They stated that installing statues is prohibited in Islam & it would be pulled down.
- But in the Victory Day speech, PM said that country should not be divided on religious lines in an indirect reference to Hifazat.

## How can India help Bangladesh in addressing these issues?

- India should support her to fight against the radical elements.
- It should also not allow ruling party Ideological inclinations to spoil the historical relationship between the countries.
- India should take a broader view of the changing scenario and growing competition in South Asia.
- It must reach out to Dhaka with an open mind.
- Bangladesh's golden jubilee celebration of its Independence can be used as an opportunity for India to strengthen ties.

**Source: The Hindu**

