

## **VINBAX**

### **What is it?**

It is a military exercise between India and Vietnam. VINBAX-2018 was Table Top Exercise to carry out training for Peace Keeping Operations under United Nations (UN) mandate. It is the first military exercise between the two countries. The exercise is being held in Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh.

### **Background:**

Defence ties between India and Vietnam have been on an upswing with the primary focus being cooperation in the maritime domain. India and Vietnam had signed a protocol on defence cooperation in 1994. The partnership was thereafter elevated to strategic level in 2007 and a pact on boosting bilateral defence cooperation was signed in 2009. The strategic partnership was elevated to a comprehensive strategic partnership in September 2016.

## **CPEC**

China has offered to open talks with India to resolve differences on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), opening the door for removing a major irritant in New Delhi-Beijing ties.

### **About CPEC:**

CPEC is clutch of projects valued at \$51 billion project which aims at rapidly expanding and upgrading Pakistan's infrastructure and strengthening the economic ties between the People's Republic of China (China) and Pakistan. It includes building roads, laying railway lines and pipelines to carry oil and gas. CPEC eventually aims at linking the city of Gwadar in South Western Pakistan to China's North Western region Xinjiang through a vast network of highways and railways.

### **Why is India Worried?**

India has objected to CPEC which passes through Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), as violation of its sovereignty.

### **Is the initiative a threat or an opportunity for India?**

The answer undoubtedly ticks both boxes. Chinese political expansion and economic ambitions are two sides of the same coin. To be firm while responding to one facet, while making use of the opportunities that become available from the other, will largely depend on the institutional agency and strategic imagination India is able to bring to the table.

India and China have made significant progress in their relationship but differences like the \$50 billion CPEC project and the trade imbalance need to be discussed. Any differences arising between the two countries can be resolved with sincerity and mutual respect.

### Super Blood Blue Moon

- “Super Blood Blue Moon” is a rare cosmic event that combines an extra big Super moon, a Blue moon and a total lunar eclipse.
- Super moon – It occurs when the full moon coincides with the Moon’s closest orbit point (perigee) to Earth.
- During a super moon, the moon appears 14% larger and 30% brighter.
- The farthest distance between the moon and the Earth is termed ‘apogee’, while the perigee is the nearest point.
- Lunar Eclipse – It occurs when the Sun, the Earth and the Moon are so aligned that the full moon passes through the shadow of Earth.
- The moon gliding into Earth’s shadow will gradually turn in to orange or red.
- This is because the sunlight passing through the Earth’s atmosphere breaks down and the red part gets scattered by the atmosphere and falls on the Moon’s surface.
- For this reason, a totally eclipsed moon is called a “Blood Moon”.
- Blue Moon – It refers to the second full moon (or second lunar eclipse) in a month.
- The Moon does not turn blue but historically the second full Moon of an English calendar month is termed as a Blue Moon.
- Typically, it happens every two years and eight months.
- The world is going to witness this event on Jan 31<sup>st</sup> in parts of western North America, Asia, the Middle East, Russia and Australia.

### VINBAX - 2018

- VINBAX is the military exercise between armies of India and Vietnam.
- It is the first ever such exercise boosting defence ties between the two countries.
- It is going to be held in Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh.
- The joint exercise has been especially designed to enable and train officers from Vietnam in United Nations Peace Keeping Operations.

### India – Vietnam relations

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- The partnership was thereafter elevated to strategic level in 2007.
- A pact on boosting bilateral defence cooperation was signed in 2009.
- The strategic partnership was elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in September 2016.

### Meghadootam

- Meghadootam (meaning cloud messenger) is a lyric love poem composed by Kalidasa about the 5th century AD.
- The poem recounts the expression of love by Yaksha to his wife at Alaka, Mt. Kailash through the cloud as a messenger.
- Most of the poem consists of a description of the landmarks, cities, and sights on the cloud’s journey to Alaka.
- Chhattisgarh state artistes performing dance based on Meghadootam in Republic day won prize in best tableau category.

### Kalidasa

- Kalidasa is a great Sanskrit poet who lived in the court of Chandragupta II around 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century AD.
- He wrote plays, poems such as
  - i. 3 plays - Malvikagnimitram, Abhijnanasakuntalam, vikramaorvasiyam
  - ii. 2 epic poems - Raghuvamsa, Kumarasambhava
  - iii. 2 minor poems – Ritusamhara, Meghadootam

#### Asia's largest drip irrigation project

- Ramthal Marola project in Karnataka is the Asia's largest drip irrigation project implemented with the help of technology from Israel firm.
- As a part of this drip irrigation scheme, every farmer will receive water through a cylinder installed in their respective farmlands.
- It also enables them to mix fertilisers and pesticides in the cylinder.
- The technology used in this project will also purify the wastage that flows in the backwaters of River Krishna.

Source: The Hindu, BusinessLine, Business Standard