



# कौटिल्य एकेडमी

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# CURRENT AFFAIRS

03<sup>rd</sup> JULY 2023



1. Chennai-Vladivostok  
Sea Route

2. Debrigarh Wildlife  
Sanctuary

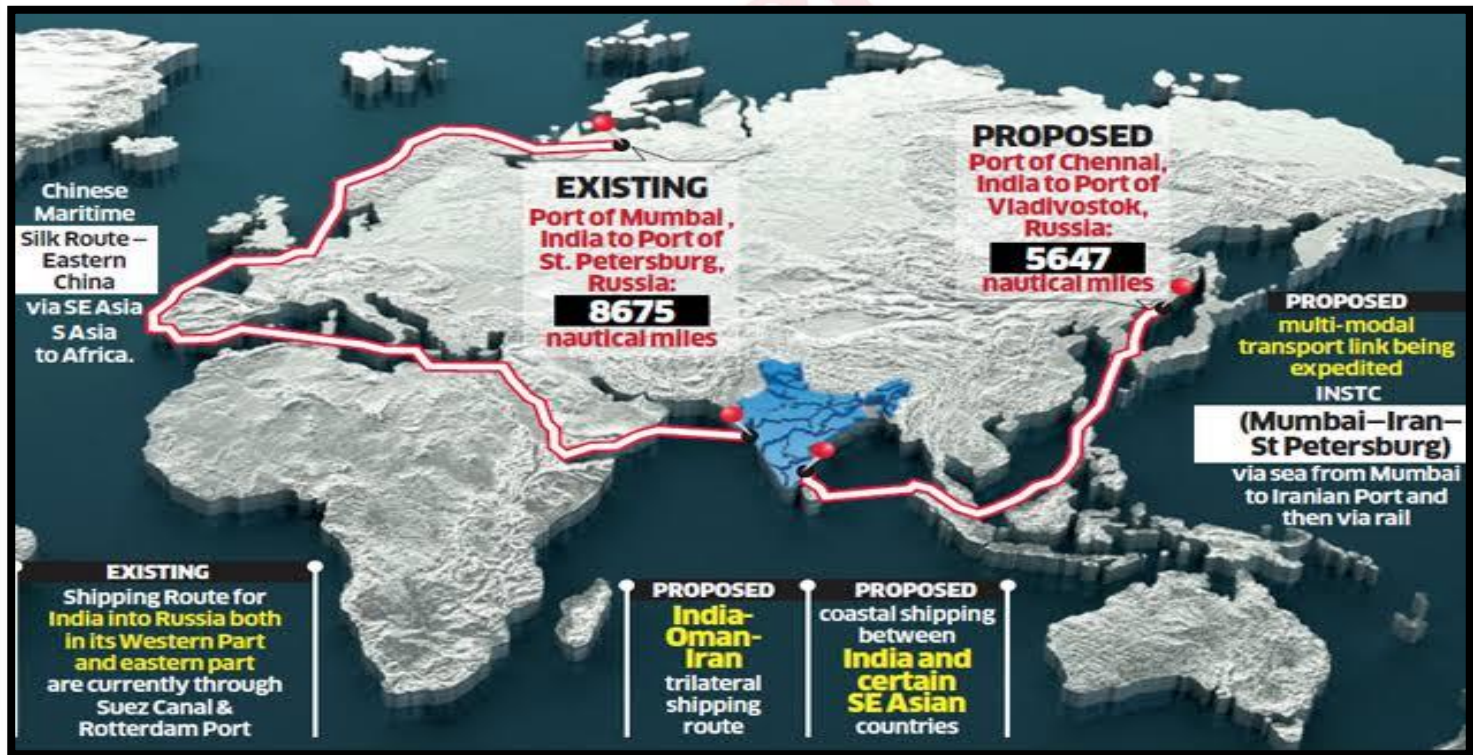
3. India is the country with  
the second-largest highway  
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4. India's Current  
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## Chennai-Vladivostok Sea Route

- ➔ Recently Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways **Sarbananda Sonowal** told BusinessLine that India and Russia are keen to operationalize the Chennai-Vladivostok sea route, and a stakeholder meeting has been scheduled in September to work out the details.
- ➔ The Vladivostok-Chennai route passes through the Sea of Japan, the South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca.



- ➔ During the **2019** visit, the Prime Minister of India signed a Memorandum of Intent (MoI) with the Russian President on 'Development of Maritime Communication between Vladivostok Port and Chennai Port'.
- ➔ The speciality of this route is that it will reduce the transport time to 10-12 days, which is about one-third of the transport time taken by the existing route from St. Petersburg to Mumbai.
- ➔ With the help of this route, the cost of transportation is expected to reduce significantly by 30%.
- ➔ It will also give India access to the Far East, including countries like Mongolia, and a core presence in the South East Asian region.
- ➔ The length of this sea route Will be about 5,600 nautical miles or about 10,300 km.
- ➔ A large ocean liner with a normal speed of about 20-25 knots or 37-46 km/h would cover this distance in about 10-12 days.

- ➔ It will also enhance India's presence in the Indo-Pacific and particularly in the South China Sea.
- ➔ Another objective of the move is also a response to China's ambitious Maritime Silk Route (MSR), which is part of the Belt and Road Initiative.
- ➔ **Vladivostok** - Vladivostok is the largest port on the Pacific Coast of Russia. It is also home to the famous Trans-Siberian Railway, which connects Russia's Far East to Moscow, the capital of Russia, and countries in Europe to the West.





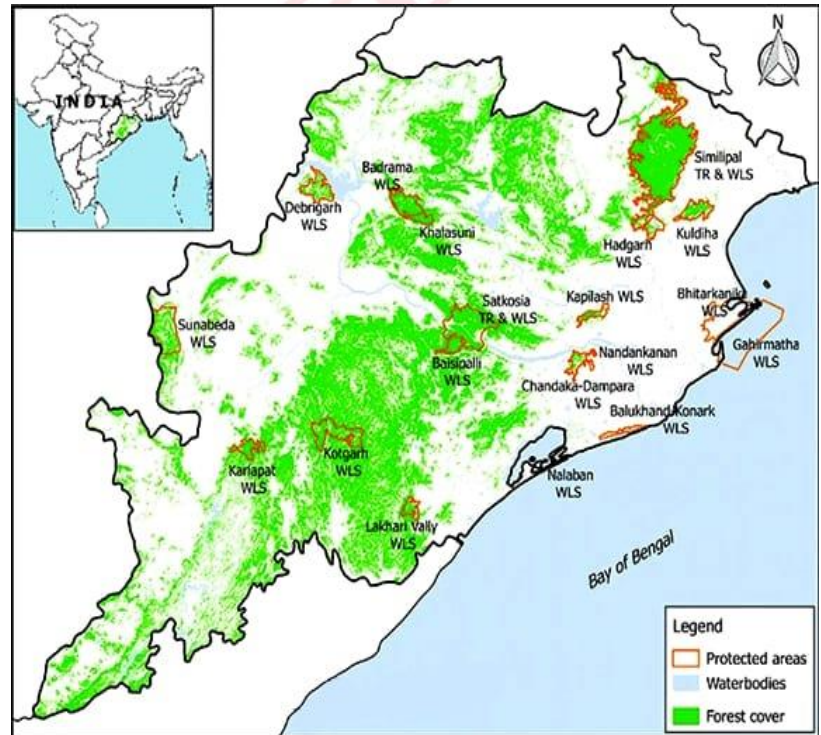
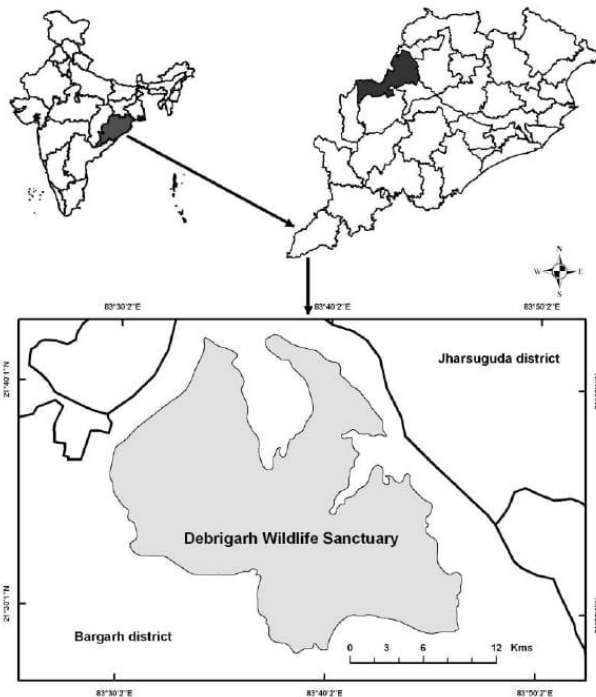
- **South China Sea** – An arm of the western Pacific Ocean that borders the Southeast Asian mainland. Brunei is surrounded by Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- It is connected to the East China Sea by the Taiwan Strait and to the Philippine Sea (both marginal seas of the Pacific Ocean) by the Luzon Strait.
  - It consists of three archipelagos, namely, the Spratly Islands, the Paracel Islands, the Pratas Islands and the Macclesfield Bank and Scarborough Shoal.



## Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary

- Debrigarh, a wildlife sanctuary located in the **Bargarh district** of Odisha, has achieved a significant milestone by being completely free from any human habitation.
- Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the Bargarh district of Odisha, near the city of Sambalpur and adjacent to the Hirakud Dam.
- The sanctuary covers a total area of **346.91sqkm**, which provides ample space for the conservation of wildlife and their natural habitats.
- According to the State Forest and Environment Department, the Debrigarh reserve, which is proposed to be a tiger reserve, is likely to have a high prey drive for large and carnivorous animals.
- The sanctuary is home to animals like Indian bison, wild boar, sambar and peacock.
- The **four-horned antelope (Chausingha)**, which is listed as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List, is also found in the sanctuary.

- ➔ Hirakud Reservoir a Ramsar site and International Bird Area is also located in the vicinity of this sanctuary.
- ➔ Another reason for the fame of this sanctuary is the famous freedom fighter **Veer Surendra Sai**, who during the rebellion against the British made his base at '**Barpathara**', located inside this sanctuary.



## India is the country with the second-largest highway network

- ➔ Recently, India has established its dominance in the road network by leaving China. After America, India has become the country with the largest road network in the world. In 9 years, **a road network of 1.45 lakh km** has been prepared in India. Nitin Gadkari gave this information through a press conference.
- ➔ India has built a huge road network in 9 years. Since the year 2014, a long road network of 1.45 lakh km has been prepared in India. In 9 years, the growing road network in India has given him great success.
- ➔ The National Highway network transports **64.5%** of all goods in the country.
- ➔ **90%** of the total passenger traffic of India is done through the National Highway network only.
- ➔ The 4-lane National Highway network has increased from 18,371 km in 2013-14 to 44,654 km at present.
- ➔ The use of **FASTags** has helped reduce the waiting time at toll plazas to 47 seconds, which is envisaged to be completely eliminated by 2047.



- ➔ The **Bharatmala Pariyojana** envisages the development of economic corridors of **about 26,000 km** in length with a view to developing road connectivity to border areas, the development of coastal roads including road connectivity to non-major ports.
- ➔ The National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) for the **financial year 2019-25** aims to provide world-class infrastructure to citizens and improve their quality of life. The road sector is expected to witness 18% capital expenditure in FY 2019-25.
- ➔ **National Monetization Pipeline (NMP):** The strategic objective of the program is to enhance the value of investments in brownfield public sector properties by harnessing institutional and long-term capital, which can then be used for public investment.
- ➔ National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has developed National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) which provides an interoperable nationwide toll payment framework including clearing house services for settlement and dispute management.

→ **Public-Private-Partnership (PPP)** in the highway sector is promoted through FDI up to 100% in the road sector, provision of subsidy up to 40% of the project cost to make projects viable, continuous 100% tax exemption etc. for 20 years after the commissioning of the project.

→ **PM Gati Shakti - National Master Plan for Multi-Modal Connectivity**, a digital platform to bring together **16 ministries** including Railways and Roadways for integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure connectivity projects was launched.



## India's Current Account Deficit

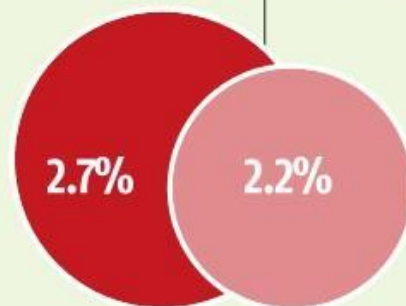
- India's current account deficit (CAD) narrowed to **0.2 per cent** of gross domestic product (GDP) in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2022-2023, from 2 per cent in the previous quarter.
- The current account deficit is a key indicator of a country's external sector.
- When the value of the goods and services that a country imports exceeds the value of the products it exports, it is known as a current account deficit.
- Together with the fiscal deficit, these two constitute the '**twin deficit**' which is considered the enemy of the stock market and investors.
- The current account deficit is basically the difference between investment and savings.
- If a country has a current account deficit, it needs foreign savings to cover the gap.
- When the current account deficit is low, less money is needed to cover the difference. It is also considered a sign of the resilience of the economy.

- The current account balance recorded a deficit of **2 per cent** of **GDP** in **2022-23**, compared to a deficit of **1.2 per cent** in **2021-22**.
- The trade deficit widened to \$265.3 billion from \$189.5 billion a year ago.
- The narrowing external imbalance in **Q4FY23** helped contain the current account deficit for **FY23** at **2 per cent of GDP**, as against the market expectation of a deficit of more than **3-3.5 per cent**.

## INDIA'S CAD PROFILE (IN \$ BN)

	Q3FY22	Q3FY23
Current account balance	-22.2	-18.2
Goods	-59.7	-72.7
Services	27.8	38.7
Primary income	-11.5	-12.7
Secondary income	21.3	28.5

Current account  
balance  
(deficit/surplus)  
as % of GDP)



Note: '-' denotes deficit  
Source: RBI



## Kosovo

→ **Capital** : Pristina

→ **NATO** peacekeepers have been attacked by ethnic Serbs in Kosovo. Dozens of peacekeepers have been injured in this attack. Attacks on peacekeepers are believed to be a rare occurrence. In such a situation, the question arises that why the ethnic Serbs are so angry and what is the reason for the dispute between Serbia-Kosovo.



- ➔ Kosovo is a landlocked country located in the Balkan region of Europe. It is surrounded by Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.
- ➔ Kosovo declared its unilateral independence from Serbia in 2008 after long years of strained relations between its Serb and predominantly Albanian residents.
- ➔ Geographically it is a mountainous region. It has steep mountain ranges and narrow valleys.
- ➔ The climate here is continental. Here the winters are very cold and dry and the summers are very hot and humid.
- ➔ Kosovo cannot become a UN member state without Serbia's approval because it has diplomatic allies in Russia and China who would veto such a decision.
- ➔ In 2013, the two reached a Brussels agreement mediated by the European Union.
- ➔ The agreement was not fully implemented on the ground, but the participation of Serbs in the elections was facilitated.

- **President** : Vjosa Osmani
- **Form of Government** : Unitary Parliamentary Republic
- **Currency** : Euro
- **Main River** : Ibar River

