



INDEX-October 2020(THE HINDU EDITORIALS)	
01 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Justice in ruins
• 2	Time to shift focus to the maritime sphere
• 3	On the Quad, define the idea, chart a path
02 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Undying embers
• 2	The Prime Minister India almost forgot
• 3	Constraining critique
• 4	The Mahatma as an intercultural Indian
03 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Pathways to diversity
• 2	Flagging cess non-transfer, its economic impact
• 3	Brawling in Cleveland
• 4	After the Ohio debate chaos, the essential politics
05 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Until vaccine
• 2	Lost in the border crisis — political ownership
• 3	Mixed signals
• 4	Transforming business and the insolvency system
06 Oct, 2020	
• 1	People's court
• 2	Farm Acts - unwanted constitutional adventurism
• 3	Pandemic peak
• 4	Reimagining education in an India at 100
07 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Grapes of wrath
• 2	The disintegration of the criminal justice system
• 3	Vanquishing viruses
• 4	Coming up trumps in the virus fight
08 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Four for one
• 2	Using facts to hide underlying truths
• 3	The hole in the middle
• 4	Playing catch up in flood forecasting technology
09 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Scissoring the DNA
• 2	Hathras, a new phase in the caste atrocity narrative



• 3	Avoidable uncertainty
• 4	Keeping vigil even during unusual times
10 Oct, 2020	
• 1	The right balance
• 2	The U.S. election just became more uncertain
• 3	Show of unity
• 4	Saving lives under the long shadow of the pandemic
12 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Signalling optimism
• 2	Pandemics and the collective consciousness
• 3	Food for peace
• 4	Vaccines with a global common good guarantee
13 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Equal stakes
• 2	Federalism, now a partisan internal dialogue
• 3	Feat of clay
• 4	Gene editing, the good first and then the worries
14 Oct, 2020	
• 1	A slim stimulus
• 2	The Arab World and the elusive two state solution
• 3	Crisis in Caucasus
• 4	Outline of a pandemic fight, by and for citizens
15 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Intemperate letter
• 2	A weak link in the elementary education chain
• 3	Unpleasant spectacle
• 4	Phased manufacturing policy that is hardly smart
16 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Dealing with a deluge
• 2	The message in the Peace Nobel — multilateralism
• 3	Showdown in Thailand
• 4	The road to zero hunger by 2030
17 Oct, 2020	
• 1	Valley's voice
• 2	A constitutional pickle of the Andhra kind
• 3	Hope amid uncertainty
• 4	China's rise and fall at the UN
19 Oct, 2020	
• 1	An incomplete solution
• 2	The Raj Bhavan's new role — taking centre stage
• 3	No great escape



• 4	The hues in the green tribunal's resilient journey
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20 Oct, 2020

• 1	A tool for thought
• 2	Love in the time of polarisation
• 3	The NEET challenge
• 4	The sorry plight of the Andhra Pradesh higher judiciary

21 Oct, 2020

• 1	Heckler's veto
• 2	Offset dilution in defence, a flawed policy turn
• 3	The triumph of hope
• 4	The many bright spots on India's innovation horizon

22 Oct, 2020

• 1	A crucial season
• 2	Potholes on the digital payment superhighway
• 3	Return of the socialists
• 4	In West Asia, it's a bleak future amid America fading

23 Oct, 2020

• 1	Unrest in Pakistan
• 2	Drive a harder bargain at the Delhi meet
• 3	Sooner, better
• 4	A compelling life story, lost in the fog of illogic

24 Oct, 2020

• 1	Taking on the Centre
• 2	India's UN journey, from outlier to the high table
• 3	Hitting where it hurts
• 4	Metrics of world happiness and the Muslims of India

26 Oct, 2020

• 1	Pak on grey list
• 2	Let's not waste a crisis
• 3	Truth must come out
• 4	Balancing China

27 Oct, 2020

• 1	The shade of grey
• 2	The President who called a spade a spade
• 3	Clearing the air
• 4	Contesting neighbours, revised geopolitical playbooks

28 Oct, 2020



• 1	Compound conundrum
• 2	GST and the complexity of political negotiations
• 3	Dead letter
• 4	India's DisCom stress is more than the sum of its past

29 Oct, 2020

• 1	Two together
• 2	The challenges of walking the Indo-Pacific talk
• 3	Real estate
• 4	Countering deepfakes, the most serious AI threat

30 Oct, 2020

• 1	Grand collision
• 2	The India-U. S. defence partnership is deepening
• 3	Gaps in learning
• 4	An eviction in Sri Lanka, this day, that age

31 Oct, 2020

• 1	Terror in Nice
• 2	Time for a 'sponge cities' mission in India
• 3	Science of monsoons
• 4	The 'swing State' skew in the U.S. electoral framework



Editorial 1: Justice in ruins		01 Oct,2020
Paper-3	GS-2	
Subject	Polity	
Topic	Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary	
Why in news?	A Special CBI Court in Lucknow has now acquitted the proponents of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, headed by L.K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi and Uma Bharti among others, throwing to the winds the Supreme Court's observations on the Babri Masjid demolition, Ayodhya, while giving judicial legitimation to the 'Ram Janmabhoomi movement'. Its conclusions are drastic and defy logic and fact.	
Babri Masjid Demolition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In this case, on December 6, 1992, apart from the political mobilisation and the purported intent to assemble on a particular day, the court had with it sufficient evidence that there was studied inaction on the part of the State, whose Chief Minister was one of the accused, and the unambiguous and open threats to the structure voiced by many of the movement's protagonists. 2. The dissembling Kalyan Singh, as Chief Minister then, had given what, in hindsight, was an obviously false assurance to the highest court and the National Integration Council that nothing but a symbolic 'kar seva' would take place. 3. Specific instructions appeared to have been given to the security forces not to stop the 'kar sevaks' or hinder their plans. How else would one explain the events? 4. More than a hundred thousand volunteers entered into Ayodhya that day, armed with crowbars, spades, hoes and ropes and every implement needed to bring down a sturdy structure and clear the site. When the crowd went into a frenzy, goaded on by provocative speeches by the dignitaries, and vandals went up the dome, the accused would have the court believe that they were actually trying to restrain the mob and prevent the demolition! 5. The possibility of tampered audio and video evidence or even disavowals on record would not undo the cumulative effect of the logistical and financial preparation, besides the communal mobilisation. 	
Manmohan Singh Liberhan Commission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Manmohan Singh Liberhan Commission had laid bare the entire conspiracy in its damning report, but unfortunately, a probe under the Commission of Inquiry Act has no binding value, whereas the evidence adduced at the trial alone matters. 2. It is, of course, the responsibility of the CBI to prove the element of conspiracy, the details of the advance mobilisation, the "meeting of minds" that is required to prove a plot and its broad contours. That the agency failed is no surprise. 3. From the beginning, the police investigation has been marked by bungling. When the main events were covered by two FIRs, the U.P. government initially failed to notify both of them while designating courts for trial. 4. The Allahabad High Court quashed the flawed notification, and the State government's failure to rectify the irregularity resulted in separate proceedings in Lucknow and Rae Bareilly. The CBI, instead of challenging the State's rejection of its request for curing a technical defect, filed a supplementary charge sheet after omitting the 'conspiracy' charge. 	
Supreme Court's Stance	The Supreme Court later said this derailed the joint trial and resulted in separate proceedings in two places. In 2017, the Supreme Court revived the conspiracy charge, directed the trial court to resume day-to-day trial and sternly reminded the agency that it was because of its failure and that of the	



	State government that a crime that shook the secular fabric of the Constitution had not seen justice for 25 years.
Conclusion	Given this grisly background, and the grave implications that the exoneration of those who demolished a religious structure would have on public trust in the judicial system, it is imperative that the CBI goes on appeal . The cause of communal amity cannot afford successive judicial setbacks to both secular values and the rule of law.

Reference: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/justice-in-ruins-the-hindu-editorial-on-babri-masjid-demolition-case-verdict/article32735773.ece>

Editorial 2 : Time to shift focus to the maritime sphere 01 Oct,2020

Paper-3	GS-2
Subject	International Relations
Topic	India and its neighborhood- relations.
Introduction	For a country that has been traditionally obsessed with a continental approach to war and peace , India's continental 'grand' strategy is facing an existential crisis today.



State of continental strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The current state of India's continental strategies is hardly flattering. China has begun to push the boundaries with India, quite literally so, and Beijing is neither keen on ending the ongoing border stalemate nor reinstating the status quo with India as of March 2020. 2. The peaceful India-China Line of Actual Control in the Northeast is now a thing of the past
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	<p>with China pushing back New Delhi’s claims on Aksai Chin and New Delhi defending against Beijing’s expansive territorial claims and their slow but aggressive implementation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. China has crossed the red line with India and India’s LAC with China is not going to be the same ever again: It is the beginning of a long, bitter winter in the Himalayan borders between the two Asian giants. 4. In the Northwest, the Pakistan front has also been heating up. Ceasefire violations on the Line of Control (LoC) have spiked since last year as has the infiltration of terrorists across the LoC. 5. With the change of the status of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) by New Delhi in 2019, and Pakistan altering its political map a few months ago to include all of J&K, the India-Pakistan contestation over Kashmir has become fiercer. 6. Equally important is the geopolitical collusion between Islamabad and Beijing to contain and pressure New Delhi from both sides. While this is not a new phenomenon, the intensity of the China-Pakistan containment strategy against India today is unprecedented. The extent and intent behind this collusion will determine the future of the high stakes game in the Himalayas for a long time to come.
<p>Changes in Afghanistan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ongoing withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan (the loss of a friend in the region for New Delhi, and the consequent reduction of India’s influence in Afghanistan) and the return of the Taliban, with whom India has very little contact, could turn the geopolitical tide against New Delhi — similar to the situation in the early 1990s. 2. But unlike in the 1990s, tables have turned in Afghanistan: the Taliban is no more an outcaste, and with the withdrawal of forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization from Afghanistan, the geopolitical interests of Pakistan, China and Russia would broadly converge in the region. 3. The change of the geopolitical landscape in Afghanistan and the frictions in Iran-India relations will further dampen India’s ‘Mission Central Asia’. 4. In sum, this is perhaps the end of the road for New Delhi’s northeastern and northwestern geopolitical forays. For sure, India needs to find a way out of this situation. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One key part of the solution is to creatively deal with its continental dilemmas. To begin with, New Delhi must seek ways to break up the ‘nut-cracker situation’ that the Pakistani and Chinese strategies have forced India into. 2. To do so, India would need to deal with the comparatively easier part first — the Pakistan front. Pressure from the Pakistan front could be eased by addressing the Kashmir question with Islamabad. 3. Creating a modicum of normalcy on the LoC by activating existing mechanisms such as the Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) hotline is another way to deal with the Pakistan front. However, there is little appetite in New Delhi to do so
<p>Maritime strategy explained</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is time for India to change its grand strategic approach — by shifting its almost exclusive focus from the continental sphere to the maritime sphere. Clearly, New Delhi has already begun to think in this direction with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) establishing a new division to deal with the Indo-Pacific in April 2019. 2. The work in this direction, both ideational and practical, needs to be fast tracked to keep pace with the emerging realities and to make use of new opportunities. 3. There are several reasons why a maritime grand strategy would work to India’s advantage while still struggling with a continental dilemma.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Visualise this: while India seems stuck between Pakistan and China from a continental perspective, the country is located right at the centre of the Indo-Pacific geopolitical imagination, in the midst of the oceanic space spanning “from the shores of Africa to that of the Americas”. ii) Second, unlike in the continental sphere, there is a growing great power interest in the maritime sphere, especially with the arrival of the concept of ‘Indo-Pacific’. The Euro-American interest in India’s land borders with Pakistan and China is negligible, and more so, there is little any country can do to help India in its continental contestations. The situation in the maritime sphere is the exact opposite: great powers remain ever more interested in the maritime sphere and this interest has grown substantially since the coinage of Indo-Pacific. For instance, Germany recently released its Indo-Pacific guidelines following the example of France which brought out its Indo-Pacific strategy last year. iii) Third, Beijing’s bullying behaviour in the South China Sea in particular and the region in general has generated a great deal of willingness among the Euro-American powers and the countries of the region, including Australia and Japan, to push back Chinese unilateralism. This provides New Delhi with a unique opportunity to enhance its influence and potentially checkmate the Chinese ambitions in the region. iv) Finally, the maritime space is a lot more important to China than engaging in opportunistic land grab attempts in the Himalayas, thanks to the massive Chinese trade that happens via the Oceanic routes and the complex geopolitics around the maritime chokepoints which can potentially disrupt that trade.
Think beyond a division	Therefore, it is high time New Delhi shifted its almost exclusive focus from the continental space to the maritime space , stitching together a maritime grand strategy. The MEA’s Indo-Pacific Division is a good beginning; so is the decision in 2019 to elevate the Quad meetings among India, Japan, the United States and Australia to the ministerial level. New Delhi would do well to ideate on the current and future maritime challenges, consolidate its military and nonmilitary tools, engage its strategic partners, and publish a comprehensive vision document on the Indo-Pacific; the current ‘Indo-Pacific Division Briefs’ document put out by the MEA does not make the cut. More so, New Delhi should consider appointing a special envoy for Indo-Pacific affairs.
Reference: https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/time-to-shift-focus-to-the-maritime-sphere/article32735777.ec	
Editorial 3: On the Quad, define the idea, chart a path 01 Oct,2020	
Paper-3	GS-2
Subject	International Relations
Topic	India and its neighborhood- relations.
Why in news?	It is reported that the second Ministerial meeting of the four countries under the Quad will be held in Japan. Sadly, the person who conceived this idea, Shinzō Abe , has stepped down as the Prime Minister of Japan.
An evolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The global financial crisis was still lurking in the shadows as America continued to enjoy its ‘unipolar moment’. The American establishment still believed that it could, somehow, persuade China to become a ‘responsible stakeholder’ and, in any case, required Chinese goodwill in dealing with America’s priorities — the nuclear issue with North Korea and Iran, and the War on Terror. 2) Japan and Australia were riding the China Boom to prosperity. Mr. Abe was a strategic thinker who thought beyond the limited time-frame of Japanese revolving door politics.



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) In 2007, the Quad (the United States, Japan, India, and Australia) was an idea whose time had not yet come. China’s shrill reaction to the idea of four like-minded countries establishing a plurilateral platform was, <i>prima facie</i>, intriguing. 4) The Chinese, however, labelled it as an Asian version of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It became evident years later that the real reason for China’s hyper-reaction was out of concern that such a grouping would “out” China’s plans for naval expansion by focusing on the Indo-Pacific maritime space. 5) China was hoping that its naval buildup might slip under the radar because the Americans were distracted by continental challenges including Russia, Afghanistan and Iran, and would not look seaward. 6) Once the idea of Quad 1.0 had died down, China gained in confidence to reveal its hand. It advanced a new claim — the Nine Dash Line — in the South China Sea; it undertook the rapid kind of warship building activity reminiscent of Wilhelmine Germany before 1914; it built its first overseas base in Djibouti; and it started systematically to explore the surface and subsurface environment in the Indian Ocean beyond the Malacca Straits. 7) This entire activity was coordinated by a Central Leading Small Group for Protecting Maritime Rights and Interests, established in 2012. The manner of China’s dismissal of the Arbitral Award in the dispute with the Philippines on the South China Sea and its brazen militarisation of the islands after its President had publicly pronounced to the contrary, has once again brought the four countries onto the same page and given a second chance to the Quad.
A plurilateral mechanism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Chinese are skilled at obfuscation. They will, perhaps, endeavour to conflate the Quad with the Indo-Pacific vision, and link both to the so called China Containment Theory. 2) The Quad nations need to better explain that the Indo-Pacific Vision is an overarching framework that is being discussed in a transparent manner, with the objective of advancing everyone’s economic and security interests. There are other such mechanisms in the region. 3) In 2016, China itself established a Quadrilateral Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism with Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan and, more recently earlier this year, another one with Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nepal. The Quad is no exception.
The world today	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This time around, the four countries are navigating through more turbulent waters. The global pandemic and the faltering global economy are taking a toll on the region’s growth and prosperity. 2) The two major Pacific powers (China and America), are moving into a more adversarial phase of their relationship. 3) Public opinion about China in all four countries is different from what it used to be in 2007. The forthcoming Ministerial meeting will be an opportunity to define the idea and chart a future path. Needless provocation of China should be avoided. There is no gain in actions that anger the Chinese with no commensurate benefit to the others.
Reaching out	<p>A positive agenda built around collective action in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, monitoring shipping for search and rescue or antipiracy operations, infrastructure assistance to climatically vulnerable states, connectivity initiatives and similar activities, will reassure the littoral States that the Quad will be a factor for regional benefit, and a far cry from Chinese allegations that it is some sort of a military alliance. An outreach to the Indian Ocean littoral states is especially important since there are motivated reports from some quarters suggesting that India is, somehow, seeking to deny access, or to create infrastructure that impedes the legitimate movement of some extraregional countries through the Indian Ocean.</p>
<p>Reference: https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/on-the-quad-define-the-idea-chart-a-path/article32735780.ece</p>	



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