Greater Male Connectivity project

Context:

- India announces $500 mn package for the Maldives
- India has announced its support in the implementation of the Greater Male Connectivity project (GMCP in the Maldives).
- The financial package comprises of a new Line of Credit (LoC) of USD 400 million and a grant of USD 100 million.
- New connectivity measures for the Maldives, including air, sea, intra-island and telecommunications, have been announced by India.
- It is an effort to help Maldives deal with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Among the initiatives announced are an air connectivity bubble for travel, a direct ferry service, a submarine cable for telecom connectivity and assistance for GMCP.
- GMCP would be the largest civilian infrastructure project in the Maldives.
- GMCP will consist of a number of bridges and causeways to connect Male to Villingili, Thilafushi and Gulhifahu islands.
- It will take much of the pressure off the main capital island of Male for commercial and residential purposes.

Significance:

- The President of Maldives, thanking India, termed the assistance, a landmark moment in Maldives-India cooperation.
- When completed, the project would render the Chinese-built Sinemale Friendship bridge connecting Male to two other islands insignificant in comparison.