News: India and Sweden are likely to sign their first maritime cooperation agreement, Cooperation in Polar Science, during the visit to India of the Swedish royal couple and senior Ministers, including Foreign Minister Anne Linde.

Prelims and Mains focus: about the highlights of the visit, India-Sweden relations

- The Cooperation in Polar Science will encompass both Arctic and Antarctic.

- In the past few years, India has signed a series of maritime information exchange as well as military logistics support agreements, extending the reach of its armed forces. The pact with Russia, in advanced stages of discussion, will give India access to Russian bases in the Arctic for logistics and operational turnaround.

- The Swedish government made it clear that it saw defence as one important area “continually” between the two countries and the Swedish government was “behind Saab’s efforts” to pitch its Gripen fighter for the Indian Air Force’s tender for 114 jets. The company remains very interested.

Approvals needed

Observing that any aircraft today anywhere has components from different countries, Saab had offered to be a partner and obviously, the approvals needed, in this case from the American partners, have been discussed and acquired, otherwise they wouldn’t be a contender.

U.S. companies Boeing and Lockheed Martin are also in the race with their F18 and F16 fighter jets.

Note: For a detailed overview on India-Sweden relations click on the link below: