Syllabus subtopic: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora.

Prelims and Mains focus: about the Libya summit and its goal; about the Libya crisis and its consequences on regional stability

News: World leaders made a fresh push for peace in Libya at a summit in Berlin on Sunday, in a desperate bid to stop the conflict-wracked nation from turning into a “second Syria”.

About the summit and its goal

- The Presidents of Russia, Turkey and France joined other global chiefs at the talks hosted by Chancellor Angela Merkel and held under the auspices of the United Nations.

- The summit’s main goal is to get foreign powers wielding influence in the region to stop interfering in the war — be it through weapons, troops or financing.

About the warring factions in Libya

- Haftar in Leaders of both warring factions — strongman Khalifa Haftar and the head of Tripoli’s UN-recognised government Fayez al-Sarraj — were also in Berlin for the first such gathering since 2018.

- But pro-Haftar forces upped the ante ahead of the talks by blocking oil exports at Libya’s key ports, crippling the country’s main income source in protest at Turkey’s decision to send troops to shore up Mr. Sarraj’s Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA).

- Ahead of the talks, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan lashed out at Mr. Haftar, saying he needed to drop his “hostile attitude” if Libya is to have any chance at winning peace.
The flaring oil crisis underlined the devastating impact of foreign influence in the conflict, in which Mr. Sarraj’s GNA is backed by Turkey and Qatar while Mr. Haftar has the support of Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

Has Libya become the second Syria?

- Libya has been torn by fighting between rival armed factions since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising killed dictator Moamer Kadhafi.

- Most recently, Mr. Sarraj’s troops in Tripoli have been under attack since April from Haftar’s forces.

- Clashes killed more than 280 civilians and 2,000 fighters and displaced tens of thousands, until a fragile ceasefire backed by both Ankara and Moscow was put in place on January 12.

- At follow-up talks in Moscow, Sarraj agreed to a permanent truce but Haftar walked away without signing the deal.

- Although Mr. Sarraj’s government is recognised by the UN, powerful players have broken away to stand behind Haftar -- turning a domestic conflict into what some have described as a proxy war in which international powers jostle to secure their own interests.

- Alarm grew after Erdogan ordered troops to Libya early January to bolster Mr. Sarraj, while Russia has been accused of sending in mercenaries to help Haftar as Moscow seeks to extend its influence in the region.

Why is Turkey so concerned?

- Mr. Erdogan has repeatedly urged Europe to stand united behind Sarraj’s government, warning that Tripoli’s fall could allow jihadist groups like the Islamic State or Al-Qaeda to regroup.
• He has also cautioned that further unrest could prompt a new wave of migrants to head for Europe.

• For Turkey, a fall of Sarraj’s GNA could jeopardise a maritime boundary agreement the parties signed. It gives Ankara extensive rights over the eastern Mediterranean where the recent discovery of undersea gas reserves has triggered a scramble by littoral states.