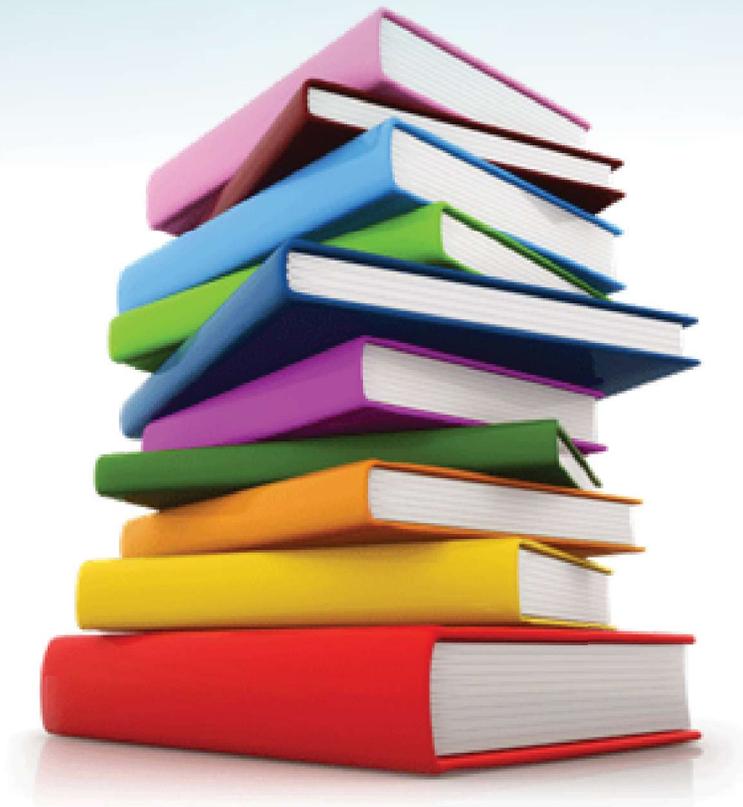




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CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY 2022

Biodiversity : The Fundamental of Indian culture

CONTENT :

- India celebrated 22nd May as International Day of Biodiversity. On this occasion, we again took the oath to protect biodiversity. We decided to protect biodiversity as an integral part of our culture for a long time. We repeated our commitment to nurture and protect all the many forms of life with which we share our planet.

INTRODUCTION :

- For Indian culture, the diversity is not new. For thousands of years biodiversity has been an integral part of our culture. The accommodation of various cultures and various plants, trees, animals, and creatures has been the fundamental characteristic of Indian culture for a long time. This is the reason for richness in biodiversity as well as cultural diversity in India. For Indian context the words 'diversity' and 'India' have become synonymous. Our ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity has been greatly influenced by the unique features of our land, climate and geography, as well as the forces of migration and evolution. All these forces have been enriching the biodiversity of India (Through the species of plants, animals, and other organisms).
- As human beings, we are also an integral part of such biodiversity. Our life is integrally dependent on such biodiversity. As the biodiversity would decline, it would inversely impact our own life. This biodiversity provides a unique cultural shape and specific customs, rituals, ceremonies, food habits, clothing habits, all are dependent on biodiversity. For the last several decades it has been observed that, because of climate change and global warming, biodiversity is continuously declining. One side, in northern India, excess

heat became the reason for the loss in biodiversity while another side flooded the biodiversity in northeast India (Assam and Meghalaya).

- However there are several solutions to protect biodiversity, but the nature based solution is the most appropriate solution. In this way , we could enrich biodiversity.

NATURE BASED SOLUTION

- Today , climate change is the big challenge to protect biodiversity. This climate change should be tackled through maximum forestation. This maximum forestation would protect the land from degradation . Once the land is protected from degradation , the life of the plants of various species would be protected easily . As per the Paris accord , it is the commitment of us to protect the land from degradation also . All the countries of the world have committed in Paris and in Glasgow to reduce climate change through rejuvenation of our soils and agriculture, elimination of hunger, and improvement of nutrition depending upon our prudent use of biodiversity in the prevailing agricultural systems. Fostering the return of biodiversity to degraded lands and enhancing blue carbon in oceans have immense environmental and considerable economic benefits. Definitely , once the land degradation would be reduced , it will create the thousands of the jobs in the agricultural field and in this way the problem of the hunger would be also tackled

CONCLUSION

- As per the above discussion it can be said that biodiversity is not essential only for the environment perspective and for sustainable development but also it is significant for economic benefits of the contemporary period . Environment is closely related to our culture, to our economy , to our survival. Hence the protection of the diversity , on side will enrich the endogenous characteristic of Indian culture on other side through it many other contemporary issues of economy would be tackled
- To conserve biodiversity , we should be aware of biodiversity science. Government has launched National Mission on Biodiversity and Human Well-Being conceived and planned by the Biodiversity Collaborative pulling together public and private institutions. This mission is associated with the various sectors of f agriculture, health, bioeconomic, ecosystem services, and

climate change mitigation and hence definitely this initiative of the government will enrich the biodiversity and the cultural diversity both as well as it will brimming the UN's Sustainable Development Goals closer to achieve.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Tax revenue boost or expenditure cuts can help meet fiscal deficit target

CONTEXT :

- With not even the first two months of FY23 over, it is becoming increasingly clear that unless there is a massive boost in tax revenue or major cuts in expenditure, the fiscal deficit target of 6.4 per cent of the GDP is unlikely to be met.

WHAT IS FISCAL DEFICIT ?

- A country's fiscal balance is measured by its government's revenue vis-à-vis its expenditure in a given financial year. Fiscal deficit, the condition when the expenditure of the government exceeds its revenue in a year, is the difference between the two. Fiscal deficit is calculated both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).
- The fiscal deficit of a country is calculated as a percentage of its GDP or simply as the total money spent by the government in excess of its income. In either case, the income figure includes only taxes and other revenues and excludes money borrowed to make up the shortfall.

HOW IS FISCAL DEFICIT CALCULATED?

- The fiscal deficit, in mathematical terms, is [total revenue generated — total expenditure]. The total revenue is the sum of revenue receipts, recovery of loans and other receipts of the government.
- While most countries continue to project a deficit in their economies, a surplus is a rare phenomenon. A high deficit at times also emerges if the government

is spending on developmental works like construction of highways, ports, roads, airports which will later generate revenue for the government.

WHAT ARE COMPONENTS OF THE FISCAL DEFICIT CALCULATION?

- The fiscal deficit calculations are based on two components — income and expenditure.
- Income component: The income component is made of two variables, revenue generated from taxes levied by the Centre and the income generated from non-tax variables. The taxable income consists of the amount generated from corporation tax, income tax, Customs duties, excise duties, GST, among others. Meanwhile, the non-taxable income comes from external grants, interest receipts, dividends and profits, receipts from Union Territories, among others.
- Expenditure component: The government in its Budget allocates funds for several works, including payments of salaries, pensions, emoluments, creation of assets, funds for infrastructure, development, health and numerous other sectors that form the expenditure component.

HOW IS FISCAL DEFICIT BALANCED OUT?

- While a rising deficit is a challenge for the government in the long term, to balance it out in short-term macroeconomics, the government looks at market borrowings by issuing bonds and selling them in through banks. Banks buy these bonds with currency deposits and then sell them to investors. Government bonds are considered an extremely safe investment instrument, so the interest rate paid on loans to the government represents risk-free investment.

WHAT IS TAX REVENUE?

- Taxation is the primary source of income for the government. The most important revenue receipts for the government, taxes are involuntary fees levied on individuals and corporations to finance government activities. Revenue receipts can be of two types — non-tax revenue and tax revenue. Tax revenue is the income gained by the government through taxation.
- Tax revenue forms a part of the Receipt Budget, which in turn is part of the Annual Financial Statement of the Union Budget.
- Tax revenue is the result of the application of a tax rate to a tax base. Total tax

revenue as a percentage of GDP indicates the share of the country's output collected by the government through taxes. Tax revenue can be regarded as one measure of the degree to which the government controls the economy's resources.

- Taxes collected from both direct tax and indirect tax are the government's tax revenue. It includes collections from income tax, corporation tax, customs, wealth tax, tax on land revenue, etc.
- Direct tax is the tax that is paid directly to the government by the person or company on whom it is levied. Income tax, wealth tax, corporation tax and property tax are some examples of direct tax. Indirect taxes are those that are collected by intermediaries from individuals and corporations who bear the burden of the tax and passed on to the government. Goods and Services Tax (GST) is an example of indirect tax. Corporation tax forms a large chunk of the government's tax revenue.

PLUTUS

IAS

Pradeep Kumar

Strengthening the Ayush Industry

- Ayush has always been sidelined and its integration into mainstream systems will give wider acceptance to traditional systems of the country.

WHAT IS THE SCOPE FOR HERBAL MEDICINE WORLDWIDE?

AYUSH refers to Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy systems of medicine.

- The global market for herbal medicine was valued at 657.5 billion dollar in 2020 and is expected to grow to 746.9 billion dollars in 2022.
- The Indian herbal medicine market is worth 18.1 billion dollars and the Indian Ayush sector has grown by 17% between 2014 and 2020.
- In China, the value of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) market was 37.41 billion dollars in 2018.
- In 1982, the Constitution of China gave full recognition to TCM.

- Since 2009, there has been continuous support for TCM in health policies.
- China has focused upon developing quality infrastructure for TCM to coexist with modern medicine under the same roof.

WHAT IS THE NAM SCHEME ABOUT?

- The National Ayush Mission (NAM) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme that was launched in 2014 by the Ministry of AYUSH.
- The basic objective of NAM is to
 - promote AYUSH medical systems through cost effective AYUSH services
 - strengthening of educational systems
 - facilitate the enforcement of quality control of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani & Homoeopathy (ASU &H) drugs
 - sustainable availability of ASU & H raw-materials
- Components of the Mission
 - Mandatory Components
 - AYUSH Services
 - AYUSH Educational Institutions
 - Quality Control of ASU &H Drugs
 - Medicinal Plants
 - Flexible Components
- Under the 'Medicinal Plants' component of the NAM scheme, the cultivation of prioritised medicinal plants in identified clusters/zones is being supported.
- For the cultivation of plants, subsidies at 30%, 50% and 75% of the cultivation cost for 140 medicinal plants are being provided.
- The National Medicinal Plant Board (NMPB) implements the medicinal plant component of Ayush through state bodies—State Medicinal Plant Boards (SMPBs).

WHAT EFFORTS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO PROMOTE AYUSH INDUSTRY?

- WHO-Global Centre for Traditional Medicine- The foundation of the WHO-

Global Centre for Traditional Medicine was laid in Jamnagar. This will be the first and only global outpost centre for traditional medicine across the world.

- Committees- NITI Aayog has constituted a committee and four working groups on integrative medicine to provide deeper insights and recommendations in the areas of education, research, clinical practice and public health and administration.
- Financial assistance- The Ministry of Finance has announced a Rs. 4000-crore package under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan for the promotion of herbal cultivation.
- Medicinal plant production- In 2021, Union Ayush Minister had announced that medicinal plants will be cultivated on 75,000 hectares of land.
- Yoga Certification Board (YCB) – YCB has been established to bring synergy, quality and uniformity in knowledge and skills of Yoga professionals across the world through certification programs.

WHAT IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR?

- Need for a thrust- The Ayush sector requires a multi-dimensional thrust, ranging from initiatives at the institutional level, massive awareness and promotion of cultivation of medicinal plants by farmers, to trade-related interventions and quality focus measures.
- Strengthening of SMPBs- The organisational structure of SMPBs should have experts for conservation, cultivation, R&D, herbal garden and nurseries, IEC and marketing and trade of medicinal plants.
- Comprehensive databases on Ayush trade, products and raw materials are needed.
- Expansion of HS (Harmonised system) codes to accommodate various features of traditional medicine and medicinal plant products based on existing requirements is required.
- Integration of Ayush- Integration of Ayush systems into mainstream systems will certainly give wider acceptance for traditional systems of the country.

Anshum Verma

Implications of Gyanvapi and Krishna Janmbhumi issues : An analysis

CONTEXT :

- The situation of India in May 2022 is now a replica of 1992, the time of demolition of Babri mosque . today , the issues are not just about the opening of Gyanvapi mosque and the dispute of Krishna Janam Bhumi, but the issues are related to its repercussions which are about to begin like the target of the demolition of the tomb of Aurangzeb etc. The opening up of Gyanvapi is not about history; it is about reclamation and is central to a larger supremacist project. And the present situation looks more dangerous than the situation of 1992 .

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION :

- The issues of Gyanvapi and the Krishna Janmbhumi are not the issue of religion but these issues are raised for political purposes. In both the cases it has been claimed that the mosque of Mathura and the Kashi were constructed after the demolition of the temples of both places . Therefore , it was demanded for further survey and excavation by the team of archaeologists so that the reality of the history could be known. The Hindu Analysis
- However there are many literary works on the grounds of which, it can be said clearly that the many temples of northern India were demolished during the time of Aurangzeb and on those places of the temples mosques were constructed. Most of the historians including Muslim historian like Irfan Habib are agree with this facts. But these issues are not only related to the extraction of the truth but these issues are related to creating the conflict atmosphere . Same situation had erupted in 1992 , and we have seen the consequences of the Babri mosque issue .

PLACES OF WORSHIP (SPECIAL PROVISIONS) ACT, 1991 : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- However, there is an act now through which the situation of the conflict can be avoided. The Supreme Court verdict in 2019 went on to underline the

importance of the 1991 Act in 10 pages (pages 116-125) and how it “protects and secures the fundamental values of the Constitution”. A five judges bench at that time explained the importance of such Act in these words – “The Places of Worship Act imposes a non-derogable obligation towards enforcing our commitment to secularism under the Indian Constitution.” The Hindu Analysis

- The place of worship act was brought by the government to protect India from such types of the conflict but by giving the permission for the survey of Gyanvapi is an act to open a Pandora’s box. Similar and multiple cases are bound to begin mushrooming; the plea to remove Mathura’s Shahi Idgah and dig around the Qutub Minar have reached the courts. Thirty years on, despite witnessing the ruptures that Babri led to, if Gyanvapi is allowed to fester, it would signal that India is re-opening issues that the Constitution had settled. That can only signal more upheaval.

THE DEGRADATION OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF INDIA : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- It is very surprising that we are evaluating the two different incidents on the same frame of reference . what mistakes were done in the past , whether those mistakes were done in monarchy or in democracy we should think in this regard. There were many mistakes made in the monarchy and the mistakes of the monarchical period should not be reopened in democratic period , otherwise it will create the disaster in the country . There are several examples in ancient India where Buddhist supported kings had massacred hundreds of the Brhamanas and the vice versa. In the Monarchical period generally kings used to take revenge after getting power which should not be expected in democratic structure .
- For the last several years some institutions of India have been losing their significance continuously. This decline underlies India’s sharp democratic backslide. India is classified as an ‘electoral autocracy’ (V-Dem Institute), ‘partly free’ (Freedom House), scores ‘at the level of 1975’ when a formal Emergency was in place (International IDEA) and it is now among the 30 worst countries of 180, as far as freedom of the press goes (RSF). The World Values Survey and the Pew Research Center tell us that it is in India that support for civil rights as a feature of democracy and even democracy has fallen the most, since 2015. The Justice J.S. Verma’s report, (when he was National Human

Rights Commission chairman) about violence in 2002 is unimaginable today.
The Hindu Analysis

- The situation of the 1992 and the situation of 2022 is quite different. At that time we did not opt for liberalization and openness completely. The USSR has collapsed. but now we have opted for liberalization and globalization. We have approached every country of the world. Definitely such a type of the dispute emerged in India will fade the secular image of India at international level. Today India is facing several economic challenges, and these challenges can be tackled only through the collaboration of the world. If the secular and democratic image of India would be fed-up, our economy would definitely suffer. Therefore these national interest must be considered by the important institutions of India.

THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC OF INDIAN CULTURAL : AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The history of India is not mere the history of two religion Hindu and Muslim. There have been several belief systems residing in India for a long time. We have evidence of the peaceful coexistence of the various belief systems in the period of great kings like the Mauryan and the Gupta. but for the political benefits, however some kings took revenge from their enemies by destroying their religious place (Shunga demolished many Buddhist places and Harsh Vardhan killed Brahmans, Shashank cut the Bodhi tree). The Hindu Analysis
- The significance of history is only up to that extend when it would bring the positive element for the society

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

- Now as per the above analysis it can be concluded that the situation of 2022 is more dangerous in comparison to 1992. It would not hamper the communal harmony in India but this situation would push the Indian economy in the worst situation. Therefore it is the duty of all the responsible persons and the institution not to create such an atmosphere. However, the work of the survey of the Gyanvapi is going on. but it is expected from the responsible institution to limit this case up to the survey only. Other cases should not be

accepted for the debate and for the further discussion . We should resolve the contemporary problem including national and international problems(China issue) first.

IN THIS ARTICLE WE MENTION ALL INFORMATION ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF GYANVAPI AND KRISHNA JANMBHUMI ISSUES TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

India signs up for 13-nation Indo-Pacific economic framework

INDIA SIGNS UP FOR 13-NATION INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT

India, along with 12 other countries joined the Indo Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) that seeks to establish a trading bloc in the region led by the United States. This is the first plurilateral deal that India has agreed to join after exiting the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) deal at the last minute in 2019.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Members of Indo Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)

United States of America (USA), India, Australia and Japan Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam

WHAT DOES IPEF INTEND TO DO? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

IPEF proposes to have four pillars: Trade; supply chains; clean energy, decarbonization and infrastructure; and tax and anti-corruption. Under the trade pillar, IPEF seeks to build “high-standard, inclusive, free and fair trade commitments”. The supply chain pillar is meant to ensure access to key raw and

processed materials, semiconductors, critical minerals and clean energy technology for member countries. “Clean Energy, decarbonization and infrastructure” involves mobilizing finance, including concessional finance, and enhancing connectivity by supporting the development of sustainable and durable infrastructure. The tax and anti-corruption pillar seeks to promote fair competition by enacting and enforcing tax, anti-money laundering, and anti-bribery regimes in line with existing multilateral obligations to curb tax evasion and corruption in the Indo-Pacific region. The Hindu Analysis

IPEF will also be employed to curtail much needed efforts for digital industrialisation and sovereignty of countries, and herald a new era of digital colonialism.

“The IPEF cannot meet its claimed goals of improving workers’ rights and environmental standards without a far more transparent process with genuine involvement of unions, environment groups and other civil society groups. It will certainly not meet such goals if it is modelled on the TPP...”,

WHAT IS INDIA’S POSITION ON IPEF? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

On the face of it, India has welcomed IPEF. At the IPEF launch, Modi said India would work with other members to build an “inclusive and flexible” IPEF. “The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework is a declaration of our collective will to make the region an engine of global economic growth. I believe that there should be three main pillars of resilient supply chains: Trust, transparency and timeliness. I am confident that this framework will help strengthen these three pillars, and pave the way for development, peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region,” Modi said, without mentioning the other three pillars of the proposed trade deal.

WILL IPEF BE BENEFICIAL FOR INDIA? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

IPEF gives India an opportunity to be part of the value chain in the Asia-Pacific region after it exited the RCEP trade deal at the last minute. It also takes care of India’s concern of China being part of RCEP as IPEF by design excludes China. However, the agenda of IPEF poses significant challenges to India’s stated position. On issues like digital commerce, labour and environmental standards,

India and the US have diametrically opposite views. India strongly resists putting such standards in any of the free trade agreements it signs. India didn't join the Osaka Track on the digital economy at the G20 leaders' summit in 2019 as it remains reluctant on setting global rules on e-commerce, holding that this may deny policy space to developing countries to expand their nascent e-commerce sector. India has also been strongly advocating data localization because of its perceived economic benefits and protection of personal data for national security reasons and law enforcement purposes.

HERE WE MENTION ALL INFORMATION ABOUT INDIA SIGNS UP FOR 13-NATION INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS.

Pradeep Kumar

Significance of Section 153A IPC and Section 295A of IPC : An analysis in special context to its increasing charges and decreasing conviction rate

Context : recently a Dalit professor of Department of History of Delhi university was arrested with the charge of Significance of Section 153A IPC and Section 295A of IPC (objectionable' post on the Gyanvapi mosque row.). He was alleged to have promoted disharmony or enmity between religious groups (Section 153A in the Indian Penal Code) and intentionally and maliciously hurt religious sentiments (Section 295A in the IPC).

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

The Section 153A IPC and Section 295A of IPC are two important sections which are in consideration among the law experts and the intellectuals . As per the report provided by the National Crime Records Bureau. The use of these sections increased exponentially during some years (After 2014, the numbers of the book cases with such sections increased almost four times). But it does not mean that the incidents of hurtful comments increased at the same pace . In fact

it decreased. The conviction rate in those cases is below 21% (20.4%) as per the data provided by the National Crime Bureau . However there is no data available for the separate sections 295 .

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THESE SECTIONS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The objective of the Section 153 A is to punish persons who indulge in wanton vilification or attacks upon the religion, race, place of birth, residence, language etc of any particular group or class or upon the founders and prophets of a religion. The offense is a cognizable offense and the punishment for the same may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

This section of IPC was already there when in 1927, Section 295A was brought on the demand of a religious minority community . Actually , the objective of this section was to book any of the British opponents on the allegation of destruction of communal harmony . This section was introduced to appease Muslims so that British policy of Divide and Rule could be implemented easily during that time. However the Assembly members found it a temporary remedy for a temporary aberration. But this is serving that these colonial laws are still there in IPC and are being issued for political benefits .

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SECTION 295A : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

It is described in the way that through this section the spirit of tolerance amidst religious diversity can be safeguarded. But the reality is that this section has been misused by the police to stop the voice of honest interpretation of religious history , any historical data based on religion, historical research and the social reforms. IOf there are some antisocial elements in the religious practices, or if there are some evil religious practices which are not appropriate in the modern era should be evaluated , but in this case this section may be also used .

However , there must be the need of such provision in the IPC through which communal harmony can be enacted but there are some unnecessary sections in IPC made during colonial period to fulfill the interest of the British rule , those sections must be revives and removed. The Hindu Analysis

However these sections are significant because communal harmony can be protected through these sections but , our Judiciary must be more efficient in This regard . Judiciary should check whether the speech could create communal conflict or not, whether the speech hurts the majority of the people of a particular community or not . Then definitely the section 153 is relevant . but the significance of section 295 A lies in the careful evaluation of the offense.

Unlike other crimes, it is very difficult to check whether the speech would warm the sentiments of any community or any single person. The subjectivity of this section reduces its significance

A critical inquiry of orthodox practices and superstitious beliefs encourages social reforms. an intelligent evaluation is required much more amid the aggressive assertion of religious beliefs by the socio-political hegemon. Even the 1927 Joint Select Committee appreciated the argument that a religious insult inflicted in good faith, with the object of steering reform, would bring the follower's required attention to the critique. The Hindu Analysis

India is a diversified country and there is the guarantee of free speech in the Indian constitution but reliable restrictions are imposed on these rights. The use of this section would discourage the people /intellectuals to bring any rational inquiry

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above discussion , it can be said that , in a democratic and a plural country, everybody has the right to free speech and expression but those free speech should not hurt the sentiment of the minorities or any other community . In this regard several provisions are there in IPC through which any offender can be punished but the question is whether the use of such sections are not being done to crush the voice of any opponent . In fact , if in any section of the IPC , the conviction rate is less than 50 % , our legislature should revise all those sections ,

and such responsibilities must be fixed for the investigating agencies to increase the conviction rate. If the investigating agencies fail to prove the charges / sections imposed on the accused , must be fined at least .

IN THIS ARTICLE WE MENTION ALL INFORMATION ABOUT SIGNIFICANCE OF SECTION 153A IPC AND SECTION 295A OF IPC : AN ANALYSIS IN SPECIAL CONTEXT TO ITS INCREASING CHARGES AND DECREASING CONVICTION RATE TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Railways on the Right Track on Train Manufacture

- In the latest Budget, there was an announcement of 400 new-generation Vande Bharat trains to be built in three years.

WHAT ARE VANDE BHARAT TRAINS?

- Vande Bharat is a semi-high speed (maximum speed of 160 kmph), indigenously designed and manufactured train each of 16 coaches.
- The train is self-propelled as they do not require an engine.
- Also dubbed as Train 18, they operate without a locomotive and are based on a propulsion system called distributed traction power technology.
- Distributed power gives the train higher acceleration and deceleration compared to loco-hauled trains, which take a much longer time to reach top speed or to gradually come to a halt.
- The first Vande Bharat was manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, in about 18 months as part of the 'Make in India' programme, at a cost of about Rs. 100 crore.
- It has an intelligent braking system with power regeneration for better energy efficiency thereby making it cost, energy and environment efficient.

- The current Vande Bharat trains have seating only in two classes — chair car and executive chair car.
- It incorporates passenger amenities including on-board WiFi entertainment, GPS-based passenger information system, CCTVs, automatic doors, rotating chairs and bio-vacuum type toilets.
- Currently, two Vande Bharat Expresses are operational —one between New Delhi and Varanasi and the other from New Delhi to Katra.

WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT’S APPROACH TOWARDS THE RAILWAYS?

- The massive jump in investments in railway projects reflects the government’s resolve to invest in key sectors of the economy.
- It is clear that the government is betting strongly on Vande Bharat trains.
- While 104 rakes would be manufactured mainly at the ICF and its other factories, there is speculation that the 400 trains were to be manufactured by rolling stock majors of the world and their associates in India.
- However, the government is not following up on its recent radical projects like
- Operation of private trains
- Corporatisation of the Railways’ production units (PUs) into a corporation called Indian Railways Rolling Stock Company
- Also, efforts by the Railways to engage major rolling stock manufacturers through a tender for modern train sets under PPP at Kanchrapara had ended in vain.

WHAT BIG MOVES LIE AHEAD?

- Recently, there was news of tendering for a massive 90,000 freight wagons at a cost of Rs. 30,000 crore.
- This was followed by the notice to manufacture 1,200 locomotives at its Dahod factory in PPP mode.
- It has become increasingly clear that the government would pursue its vision to order 400 trains from the private sector at a cost of Rs. 52,000 crore.
- The Railways has floated a large tender of around Rs. 26,000 crore for the procurement of 200 upgraded equivalents of Vande Bharat trains to be built by

a contractor in ICF and at Latur factory.

- It is expected that bids would be called for another lot of 200 aluminium Vande Bharat trains since aluminium trains are lighter, aesthetically-superior and more energy-efficient.
- But, a judicious mix of government and private play for the manufacture of trains is necessary.

Anshum Verma

US Taiwan Relation : An Analysis in reference to recent changes in world politics

IUS TAIWAN RELATION – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT :

- Recently in the QUAD summit the American President clearly stated that America will continue to give aid to Taiwan militarily in case of an invasion by China. In fact , recently China is again moving towards Taiwan , therefore America had to declare in this regard .
- On the issue of Taiwan, America has declared her view that she would protect the sovereignty of Taiwan from the invasion of China. As per the 1979 communique, the U.S. recognized China, but stated that it merely “acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China”. India’s stand is clear in the matter of Taiwan that India will oppose every means of the Chinese aggression in Indo pacific region

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION :

- The issue of Taiwan had evolved with the declaration of independence of China. America did not recognize the People’s republic of China and on the issue of Taiwan , several meetings were held between Taiwan and China like the Shanghai Communique (1972), the Normalization Communique (1979) and the 1982 Communique. As per the 1979 communique, the U.S. recognized

China, but stated that it merely “acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China”. The Hindu Analysis

- During the Russo Ukrainian conflict indirect support of China to Russia gives a clear indication , that on the matter of Taiwan Russia may support China

WHAT IS TAIWAN ISSUE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Taiwan is a small country across a Taiwan strait and it disintegrated from the mainland of China during the process of the Chinese Civil war . The ruling Kuomintang Part (So called nationalist Party) in the leadership of Chiang kai Shek had to flee to Taiwan and formed a government in taiwan (Republic of China) and simultaneously the Communist Party of China under the leadership of Mao formed the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in the mainland.
- Since then, the PRC considers the island as a renegade province awaiting reunification by peaceful means, if possible. ROC retained its permanent seat in UNSC. But during the cold war , PRC was recognised as a member of UNSC , when US president Nixon visited China (PRC) and China was recognized as one China principle recognizing PRC and not the ROC as China. Taiwan transitioned from a single party state to a multi-party democracy. At the same time China reformed in economic policy and China became one of the leading economic country of the world to tackle for the worst possible scenario of international politics. The Hindu Analysis
- According to the 1972 communique, the U.S. agreed to the ‘one China principle’, with an understanding that it “acknowledges” and “does not challenge” that “all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain that there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China.”
- As per the 1979 communique, the U.S. recognized PRC, but simultaneously it recognised Taiwan , as the part of China and established unofficial relations with Taiwan through this communique in the name of the people of both the countries. In this way America continued to provide arms to Taiwan. China had to accuse in this regard in 1982 . and America convinced the world that she is giving arms only for the defensive purpose

WHAT IS THE ISSUE IN 21ST CENTURY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Democracy is flourishing everywhere in the world. And on the ground of democratic values America is justifying its support to Taiwan. The Democratic

People's Party (DPP) became the most powerful political force in Taiwan. The DPP government, led by Tsai Ing Wen has been bringing the drastic change in its international economic relations away from China . This made China worry.

- For the China, Taiwan is a significant island for geopolitical point of view also. This is due to its central location in the First Island Chain between Japan and the South China Sea, which is seen as the first benchmark or barrier for China's power projection. The Reunification of the China will give the birth to supremacy of China in world politics , mainly in Indo pacific region . Therefore, in past some days , China has been continually patrolling near Taiwan strat so that Taiwan could be merged peacefully

US STRATEGY TOWARDS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- US strategy is unclear .However US recognized the PRC but simultaneously it is stated that US will accept the peaceful resolution of the future of Taiwan . The US will not accept any aggression from China in the matter of Taiwan .Hence, there is no clear guarantee here that the U.S. will be militarily involved in a situation where China attempts to invade Taiwan, short of supplying “defensive weapons”.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion , the situation of the world is gradually worsening. Any Chinese aggression in the matter of Taiwan can provoke America for further reaction and direct support to Taiwan. Since in the Russian Ukrainian conflict, China supports Russia and hence Russia would also support in this matter . The American president has already declared in this regard in the meeting of the Quad. The situation in India is very specific . However , in the matter of Russian Ukrainian conflict India indirectly supported Russia but , in the Indo pacific region , India is making alliances with Japan, Australia and America (rivals of China) because India will also resist any type of Chinese aggression in the matter of LAC.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

China – A new bully in town

CHINA – A NEW BULLY IN TOWN – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Hollywood movie spiderman has a dialogue asserting that “with great powers comes great responsibility”. However, in real life it has been seen that “for a man with a hammer, everyone is a nail”. Keeping that in mind, we can see the same happening in international sphere, where who so ever is powerful violates international norms with impunity. For instance, the invasion of USA in Afghanistan and Iraq or Russia’s invasion in Ukraine.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

In this context it is being argued that the rise of China is a case of “New Bully in Town”. This article will try to dive into the question, look at various arguments in favour and against the proposal.

China’s megalomaniac attitude can be seen in its action in South China Sea and East China sea, where it has imposed air defence zone. In South China Sea particularly, China claims almost entire South China Sea defined by its Nine Dash Line. China even defied the Hague based Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling that the China has no legal basis to claim islands in the South China Seas on historical basis because such rights are extinguished to the extent of incompatibility with the exclusive economic zones provided in the UNCLOS. On the contrary, China Imposed the Air Defence Zone in South China Sea. Moreover, it is kept on making new islands with impunity to claim the Exclusive Economic Zone in the South China Sea and thereby ability to exploit the resources. Foreign Policy Analyst Brahma Chellaney, has put the blame on successive US governments, for Chinese expansionism and the substitution of a free, open, and democratic Indo-Pacific to an illiberal, repressive regional order. For example, USA did not take sides on Sankaku island issues and remained silent on China’s capture of Scarborough shoal. Both are islands in South China Sea. Basically he argues that by camouflaging offence as defence, China presents a targeted state with a Hobson’s choice, that is, to endure the territorial loss (salami slicing) or face a dangerous and costly war

with a great power.

Similarly, Chinese President Xi Jinping has ordered the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to be always ready for battle. China's Major focus has been on USA, as US has now categorically designated China as a strategic challenge. Moreover, the PLA is restructuring itself to prepare itself for the bigger war. At the heart of this lies the development of integrated command, control, communications, computer intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) structure which will enhance their joint operational capacity. Furthermore, the PLA's Strategic Support Force (PLASSF) has sought to integrate capabilities in space, cyberspace and the electro-magnetic spectrum into the PLA's combat arms to fight 'informationised' wars. The Hindu Analysis

Moreover, China has been expanding its military and politico-economic footprints around the world. A point in case the Chinese premier dream project of "Belt and Road Initiative". This project aims to increase Chinese presence around the world. Most importantly putting China as a "Net Security Provider" replacing USA in future. China is also using the BRI to put itself as the new super power in the world – a befitting competitor to USA. Richard N Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, has argued that BRI came as a counter to the Obama Administration "Pivot to Asia Policy". Furthermore, there are voices of concern on the possibility "Thucydidian Trap". Thucydides Trap is a situation of conflict in case of rise of one power which challenges the established power leading to wars. Here the rise of China is being seen as a challenge to the Pax Americana. It may lead to wars in future, a glimpse of which we saw in Trade Wars in recent past between USA and China.

It is not like China is sitting ideal. China is trying its best to convince the world that it is indeed not a threat to any nation. The rise of China would be useful for every other country in the world. China's deep pocket would help developing countries and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to develop. For Example, China argues that BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) is helpful for various countries around the world to get funds to develop themselves. Moreover, USA is doing nothing but carrying out a negative propaganda to defame the peaceful rise of China.

However, if recent events are to be believed, in which China has shown unapologetic use of forceful measures to achieve its goals, Chinese argument of Peaceful rise does not hold much water. This is what Indian foreign policy analyst Brahma Chellaney argues, emphasizing that China always camouflages its offence as defense. The Hindu Analysis

Thus, it is evident from above discussion that dialogue of Spider Man movie may appeals emotional and moral side of man; but in real life “Might always stays Right”. Keeping that in mind the world must make create new arrangements to deal with the Chinese threat. The evolution of QUAD (Quadrilateral grouping), JAI (Japan-Australia-India) grouping and US initiated Summit of Democracies are indeed good measure. Now they must be substituted with more assertive measures to make one thing clear in Chinese leadership that any aggressive expansion and assertive use of power will be resisted at any cost.

Vikas Gupta

Bharat Bill payment: RBI lowers networth bar for non-bank units

CONTEXT

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reduced the minimum networth requirement for non-bank Bharat Bill Payment Operating Units (BBPOUs) from Rs. 100 crore to Rs. 25 crore.

This move is aimed at facilitating more bill payments through Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) and to encourage participation of non-bank Bharat Bill Payment Operating Units (BBPOUs) in BBPS.

WHAT IS BBPS?

Bharat Bill Payments System is an integrated online platform which is being developed by the National Payments Corporation of India for all kinds of bill payments. The platform intends to build an interoperable service through a network of agents, enabling multiple payment modes along with instant generation of receipts of payments. It would connect the utility service companies on one end and all payments service providers on the other.

WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF BBPS?

BBPS aims to make regular bill payments for all utility services easy. That includes water, DTH and telecom. However, the plan is to expand its service area to include school fee, university fee, municipality taxes, mutual funds, insurance premiums etc., but as per clearances from the RBI.

BENEFITS OF USING BBPS?

Customer Benefits: The biggest advantage is that the bill can be paid anywhere and anytime. There would be retail points for bill payments across the country who would be able to accept all kinds of bills payments made through credit cards, debit cards, mobile wallets, net banking (IMPS, NEFT). The BBPS outlets would include banks, ATMs, business correspondents, kiosks etc. and payments would be made securely through the NPCI network with instant receipts getting generated.

Participants Benefits: Utility service providers would be able to get payments instantly, they would not need to maintain bill collection centres by themselves, value added services can be added by the operators, bills can be generated electronically and disbursement can also be electronic. Along with these, the BBPS platform would have fraud monitoring and risk mitigation systems in place in order to ensure smooth online transactions.

Instant Payment: Electronic payments are much faster than the traditional methods of payments such as cash or cheques. In the case of online payments,

you do not have any constraint of time or location. You can easily make payments at any time from anywhere across the globe.

E-payment systems have eliminated the need for going to the banks to make payments. Now your customers do not have to waste their time standing in the long lines at banks. They can easily pay you by using an electronic payment app.

Higher payment security: Despite its robust features, electronic payments systems has not become so popular among the merchants. They are still using the same old methods for accepting payments. Due to which, they are missing out the opportunity for serving more customers.

Electronic payment systems offer you multiple ways of securing your payments such as tokenization, encryption, SSL, etc. Now your customers do not have to enter their card details every time as they can save their card details or complete their transactions by using a One Time Password.

Better customer convenience: Electronic payments can help you to provide convenient payment experience to your customers. It allows your customer to purchase goods on credit by offering them with the pay later facility. Instead of sending constant reminders for payment to your customers, you can automatically collect money after a specific period.

Saves processing costs: If you want to provide payment services to your customers then you first need to tie up with a card processor. The processor will provide you with a payment gateway for processing and in exchange, it will charge a fixed cost from you. This cost is very high.

On the other hand, if you are using an electronic payment system in your business then you do not have to incur such high charges. You just have to pay a fixed subscription to your service provider.

Low risk of theft: The phrase 'Cash is the king' is popular in the business world, but this king has also had some limitations. If you are using cash for accepting

payments from customers, chances are there it can be stolen. Also, you need to take high safety measures in depositing cash into your bank account.

But this risk can be decreased if you are using a secure electronic payment system in your business. By using it, you do not have to worry about your payment record. You can easily get an accurate record of all your transactions at the end of the day.

Transparent: Transparency becomes an essential factor when it comes to payments. And when you are using the digital medium for accepting payments, then it becomes essential for you to maintain transparency in your transactions.

In the case of electronic payments, you do not have to worry about the record of your payment details. Also, you can provide the payment details to your customers beforehand. So that there will be fewer chances of confusion.

Contactless: In the times of the COVID-19 pandemic, people have started finding ways of avoiding human touch to save themselves from getting affected by the coronavirus. Due to this, the need for contactless payments has increased.

You can use contactless POS terminals in your business to avoid the human touch. In this system, the payee needs to hold his phone near the terminal and his payment will get automatically processed. Also, you can enable your customers to make payments by using QR codes or One Time Passwords (OTP).



CONCLUSION

The cash transactions have started decreasing after the integration of an electronic payment system in the markets. This means the small businesses need to start using the latest technology to prevent the risk of being overtaken by the competitors.

Pradeep Kumar

Jawaharlal Nehru : A Visionary leader of India

Context : its death anniversary of our first prime minister J. L Nehru. Entire country is paying a humble tribute to our visionary leader and his great statements.

INTRODUCTION:

The great freedom fighter, a great statesman and the maker of India as a Nation J. L Nehru took birth on 14 November 1889 in Allahabad (Modern Prayagraj). He was an eminent leader of congress, who sacrificed his entire life for the consolidation of India as a nation . He had to face many ups and downs in his life . His vision for modern India is still inspirable for us . His idea of democratic socialism is still relevant in Indian politics. He laid the foundation of Indian foreign policy . The NAM (Non alignment Movement) initiated by Nehru played an important role in world politics regarding decolonization during 20th century but also in 21st century , the NAM is leading all developing countries and successfully countering the economic monopoly of the capitalist countries

CONTRIBUTION OF NEHRU IN INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE :

- After completion of his study of law , Nehru returned India by 1912 and started his practice of law but very soon he left this practice , and joined home rule league of Annie Besant and demanded for the Swaraj . He participated in the Non Cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi also.
- He was the leader among those who criticize the act of Mahatma Gandhi of Withdrawing the Non Cooperation Movement after a small incident of Chauri Chaura in 1922 . In 1923, he became the general secretary of the congress.

Nehru demonstrated against the Simon commission from the land of Lucknow . With Subhash , Nehru also strongly condemned the Nehru report (A report introduced by Motilal Nehru, The father of J.L. Nehru ,) on the ground of the dominion state. Nehru rejected the demand of dominion state and sought for the Purna Swaraj (Complete freedom) in 1929.

- In the Lahore session of congress in 1929 the resolution of Purna Swaraj was passed . In his presidential address during this session Nehru declared his vision and stated – “ I am complete socialism and I do not have any faith in prince and princes ”
- Nehru led the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930-31 from Lucknow and Here he was arrested two times . In his entire life Nehru was arrested 9 times and for more than 3000 days , he was kept in jail during the freedom struggle . During the freedom struggle , Nehru had already declared the foreign policy of India .
- In his presidential address in 1936 Lucknow session he stated that _ “We see the world divided into two vast groups today – the imperialist and fascist on one side , the socialist and the nationalist on other . Inevitably , we take our stand with the progressive forces of the world which are ranged against fascism and imperialism” and after Independence , Nehru had declared the all the newly independent countries should maintain equidistant from the both poles of the world (Socialist- under the leadership of the USSR and the Capitalist under the leadership of the USA)Gandhi ji loved Nehru and hence he declared Nehru his political heir . Nehru was elected the prime minister of Interim government also

CONTRIBUTION OF NEHRU AS A PRIME MINISTER

When Nehru became prime minister , he had to face several challenges

- How to merge princely state in India at maximum extent
- How to consolidate India as a nation
- How to resolve the issue of language based demand of the state
- How to resolve the issue of tribals
- How to tackle the communal riots

- How to tackle the issue of Kashmir, Goa, Pondicherry and the North east state
 - How to tackle the Chinese aggression
 - How to develop India economically with the support of the big countries without compromising its own sovereignty
 - How to create the maximum unitary elements in the diversified culture
 - How to accommodate the tribal culture keeping their identities intact
 - How to conduct election peacefully
 - How to bring rapid economic growth without hampering the employment
-
- Nehru successfully tackled all those challenges and provided us a strong and consolidated India . It was only Nehru and his vision through which these challenges could tacked and India proved the prediction of all the big leaders of Britain as well as some intellectuals of the India that the democracy would not survive in India for long time
 - Nehru believed in dissent and diversity. Nehru appointed all his opponents in his cabinet. This type of tolerable political policy is inspirable for modern politics. Nehru appointed Syama Prasad Mukherjee from Jan Sangh, who was the staunch opponent of the Nehru

CONCLUSION

- As per the above discussion, it is almost clear that Nehru is the maker of new India . He not only consolidated India politically but also culturally and emotionally . He accommodated all the diversified cultures . Socialism and secularism were the fundamentals of Nehru's vision . Through the planning commission , Nehru tried to develop India economically in a justified way . However, Nehru was not also free from criticism .
- In his leadership , India lost the Indo China war and we had to lose some land and the stand of Nehru in the matter of Kashmir is still questionable thay why he raised the issue of referendum . But If we analyze both the elements of Nehru's failure , we conclude , in such failures up to certain extent the success is also hidden . During Indo China war , we showed the world his independent foreign policy and gave the shelter to Dalai lama and the issue of referendum

in Kashmir was raised with this hope that the people of Kashmir would be brought in India's favor and simultaneously, In world politics India was in upper hand, India's army was deployed there. So if Pakistan accepted the demand for a referendum, the situation may be in the favor of India .

- In Sum, we on behalf of India, today are remembering our great leader , and architect of the modern and consolidated India J. L Nehru

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

International Day of Action for Women's Health

The date 28th may is recognised as the International Day of Action for Women's Health by the united nation in the year of 1987. The Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network (LACWHN) and Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR) are working together to make this campaign successful.

INTRODUCTION

- Women in the world have been deprived for thousands of years and this has always been the issue of how to establish equality based on gender . Women are physically weak in comparison to men therefore they could not play more role in the production and therefore they were deprived from the several social , economica, religious , political and educational rights. Therefore the status of the women deteriorated continuously . Gradually several socio religious evil practices have evolved (Especially in India) like Sati, purdah etc. but in modern days , it is the need of the world to uplift the status of the women which could not be possible without improving their health. Once they would be healthy and educated they would be more economically self reliant . Once All Women will be aware and economically self reliant. They could easily raised there issue inform of the world and in this way they could protect themselves from any type of the harassment

THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS DAY

- The main objective of this day is to make the women aware regarding their sexual harassment. For this purpose this platform can be used. This is the platform which would continuously remind the governments of the world to make laws for the right of the women related to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).
- There are the following rights related to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), on which governments of the world should make the law
- Women should be aware regarding the sexual information. Many women can not get whether she is sexually harassed or because of the lack of sex education. In modern society, through the sex education, not only women but also children can also be protected from the sexual harassment
- Every Woman has the right to choose her partner. However in many orthodox societies of the world, parents are the decision makers in this regard. But if the woman is educated and economically self-reliant, she generally enjoys this right
- Generally, the right on the sexual activeness should also be taken by the woman. It must be decided by the woman whether she is ready for the sex or not. Generally in orthodox society, the wife is considered mere a lady to whom husband can have sex when he needs. In such sexual relationship the consent of the wife is generally ignored. However some progressive governments are making such laws and a significant debate on the marital rape is going on whether it should be a criminal offence or not
- Women should have the right to decide the numbers of the children and the time of having children. Generally, the husband has the right of the family planning. In most countries, without marriage, children can not have children
- Apart from it, there are many issues like the Safe abortion and post-abortion care must be resolved. In India like countries where the abortion is socially prohibited. There must be several laws in this regard

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion it is concluded that the countries of the world should have resolved all the health issues of women. In Indian context, many sex workers,

however are not having general fundamental right , however honorable supreme court has instructed to the police to respectfully behave with sex workers, They are also human and they cannot be deprived from the human rights .

Besides, society should also change their value system as per the needs of the world . Several progressive value systems should be evolved in society related to the health issues of women . On this occasion of 28 may, the entire world is discussing the issue of what should be done for women's health and what measures should be adopted by the countries of the world for the health of women .

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Dip in Forex Reserves

- India's foreign exchange reserves have now fallen below the \$600 billion mark amid capital outflows and strengthening dollar.

WHAT ARE FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES?

- Foreign exchange reserves are assets denominated in a foreign currency that are held by a central bank.
- These may include foreign currencies, bonds, treasury bills, and other government securities.
- These assets are held to ensure that a central government agency has backup funds if their national currency rapidly devalues or becomes all together insolvent.
- It helps to check the balance payments and influences the foreign exchange rate of its currency and maintains stability in financial markets.
- The two most popular foreign assets are US dollar-denominated assets and euro-denominated assets.
- China is the largest foreign currency reserve holder in the world.

WHAT ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF FCAs?

- The FCAs comprise multi-currency assets that are held in multi-asset portfolios as per the existing norms conforming to the best international practices.
- The forex reserves include
- Investments on foreign securities
- Investments on other central banks and the BIS
- Deposits with commercial banks overseas
- Gold holdings

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FOREX RESERVES OF INDIA?

- The foreign exchange reserves declined from \$642.45 billion (September, 2021) to \$597.72 billion (April 2022).
- The RBI's special drawing rights and reserve position in the International Monetary Fund also dipped by \$33 million and \$26 million.

REASONS FOR THE DECLINE

- Fall in foreign currency assets (FCAs) – The foreign currency assets also include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the reserves.
- Appreciation of the US dollar- The demand for dollars remained high as the Russia-Ukraine war led to a spike in oil and commodity prices.
- Capital outflows by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) – FPIs pulled out \$21.43 billion since September 2021 as the US Federal Reserve started monetary policy tightening and interest rate hikes.
- Effect of gold prices- Decline in gold prices has also played a part in the decline in foreign exchange reserves.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON THE RUPEE?

- The rupee depreciated 57 paise and touched a low of 76.96 just below the all-time low of 76.97 to close at 76.92 against the US dollar.

- If the rupee slides further, the RBI will be forced to intervene in the forex market by selling dollars from its forex reserves.
- If the RBI gives preference to sustain the forex reserves level, there could be some rupee depreciation in the horizon.

Anshum Verma

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act

THE MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY ACT – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

- Despite amendments, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act does not establish the prominence of the woman's right to decide.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

WHAT IS THE PROVISION AVAILABLE UNDER THE GENERAL CRIMINAL LAW?

- Under the Indian Penal Code, voluntarily causing a woman with child to miscarry is an offence attracting a jail term of up to 3 years or fine or both
- An exception has been provided when it was done in good faith where the purpose was to save the life of the pregnant woman.
- A pregnant woman causing herself to miscarry is also an offender apart from the person causing the miscarriage.

WHAT IS THE MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (MTP) ACT ABOUT? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The MTP law is an exception to the IPC provisions and allows abortion until 20 weeks of pregnancy.
- Accessing MTP- The MTP can be accessed
 - If the continuation of pregnancy would involve a risk to the life of the pregnant woman or result in grave injury to her physical or mental health.

- If the pregnancy is as a result of rape or failure of contraceptive used by the pregnant woman or her partner to limit the number of children or to prevent a pregnancy. The Hindu Analysis
- If there is a substantial risk that if the child was born, it would suffer from serious physical or mental abnormality
- Also, the medical opinion of the medical practitioner registered under the MTP Act is required.
- Gestational limitation– The pregnancy can be terminated for any of the above reasons, in the opinion of a single registered medical practitioner up to 20 weeks of the gestational age.
- From 20 weeks up to 24 weeks, the opinion of two registered medical practitioners is required. The Hindu Analysis
- This extended gestational limit is applicable to certain categories of women – survivor of sexual assault or rape, minors, change of marital status during the ongoing pregnancy, major physical disabilities, mentally-ill, pregnancy in humanitarian settings or disaster.
- Any decision for termination of pregnancy beyond 24 weeks gestational age, only on the ground of foetal abnormalities can be taken by a Medical Board as set up in each State. The Hindu Analysis
- Consent– The termination of pregnancy cannot be done in the absence of the consent of the pregnant person, irrespective of age and mental health.
- Exception– The law provides that where it is immediately necessary to save the life of the pregnant woman, the pregnancy can be terminated at any time by a single registered medical practitioner.

WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS DESPITE LEGALISING ACCESS TO ABORTION IN CERTAIN CASES? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Increased cases- Just before the lockdown following the COVID pandemic, courts across the country over the preceding four years had seen close to 500 cases of pregnant women seeking permission to terminate their pregnancy.
- In a number of these cases, the courts had articulated the right of a pregnant woman to decide on the continuation of her pregnancy as a part of her right to health and right to life. The Hindu Analysis
- Right to privacy and life– The landmark right to privacy judgement of the Supreme Court even held that the decision making by a pregnant person on

whether to continue a pregnancy or not is part of such a person's right to privacy as well and, therefore, the right to life.

- The standards set out in this judgement were also not incorporated in the amendments being drafted. The Hindu Analysis
- Non-sync with other laws– The new law is not in sync with other central laws such as the laws on persons with disabilities, on mental health and on transgender persons.
- Conflation of laws-The amendments did not make any attempts to remove the confluences between the MTP Act and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act or the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

Anshum Verma

Internal security threats : An analysis in context to changing paradigm in past years

INTERNAL SECURITY THREATS – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT :

- For the last two months , everywhere in print media and the electronic media the main headlines are related to the Russia – Ukraine conflict . India is facing several challenges for internal and external securities. These are completely ignored by mainstream media . Apart From it , the increasing economic crisis that evolved during several months is also ignored . Recently , several killings in J&K and Punjab and increasing Maoist activities are the most prominent incidents related to threats for internal security

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

- It has been observed that incidents of personal killings have increased for the last several months. Almost daily such types of incidents are happening in Jammu and Kashmir. However the militant activities have been continuing in Kashmir ever since 1947, but after the dilution of 370, the trend and the nature

of militant activities had changed during the last 2 years . Most of the militants are locally supported , however the across border support is also continuing . but the increasing local support of the militant definitely must be analyzed . One reason behind this may be the absence of any representative governments.

- Similarly the Maoist activities are also increasing for several months. Recently , in Chhattisgarh Maoist killed many leaders of the congress as well as security personals .Another shocking challenge for the internal security are the incidents of the individual killings in Punjab in past one month .

WHAT ARE SHORTCOMINGS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE SECURITY VIGILS IN INDIA : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

There are several limitations of the security vigils in India which should be shorted out

- Security agencies can keep a close eye on the security of the country but these agencies must be in proper coordination with the police (Security forces) of the particular states . These forces can only deal with the immediate threat. If these forces have led to any security threat on time, it could be stopped . Therefore proper coordination is required. The Hindu Analysis
- A permanent measure and plan must be adopted by the state. But it can tackle the forthcoming incidents. To tackle immediate incidents , the state government should also develop such efficient information channels coordinating with central agencies
- All agencies should not think that priority must be given to border security challenges . Internal and external, both securities are equally needed . For internal security, agencies must be more efficient and professional , because the forces threatening the state have lately become nimbler in adopting new technologies and modes of warfare. The Hindu Analysis
- Both the authorities and security agencies should acknowledge the importance of resorting to statecraft as a vital adjunct to the role played by the security agencies. Because statecraft involves fine-grained comprehension of inherent problems; also an ability to quickly respond to political challenges.
- Equal emphasis on implementation of policies and programmes must be given. Everything should not leave on the security agencies

A SECURITY THREAT IN SOUTH : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Apart from the security threat in J and K, intelligence and police officials appear concerned about a likely revival of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)-sponsored activities in Tamil Nadu. a possible revival of LTTE-sponsored militancy in Sri Lanka following the recent economic crises is also observed . It is also observed that an attempt could be made to reach out to elements in Tamil Nadu to revive the spirit of the 1980s.This situation again needs deft statecraft to prevent a resurgence of the past.

SECURITY THREAT IN PUNJAB : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Recently it has also been observed that some incidents of the pro Khalistan movement and the individual killings have increased which is the result of the failure of the cooperation of state security agencies and the central agencies. These pro Khalistani incidents are the acts of the sleeper cells .pro-Khalistan sentiment is present in pockets in the United Kingdom and in Europe, it has not been in evidence in India for some time.

THE SECURITY THREAT IN NORTHEAST REGION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- In Northeast regions, however, up to maximum extent we have successfully settled the issues of the tribal , but this is some evidence of the revival of the ULFA (United Liberation Front of Asom–Independent) again in Assam . Currently all the militant operations in northeast regions are being operated from Myanmar with the support of China or Pakistan. Latest report of the security agencies is more dangerous in which it is stated that ULFA had started the recruitment of the soldiers . Similarly, the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (I-M) again started shouting for the resolution of their issue . Both instances merit the use of statecraft so that the situation does not get out of hand.

THE MAOIST SECURITY THREATS IN TRIBAL AREAS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- After a long gap , the Maoist activities again restarted in the tribal regions of Chhattisgarh. Generally Maoist never believed in the killings of the civilians , they are inspired from the Charu Majumdar who demanded for their rights. But after the observation of the trends of the killing in tribal regions by the Nuclides it is almost clear that they are now being influenced with the foreign

countries

SECURITY THREATS IN KASHMIR : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- If we observe the style of the individual killings in Kashmir , we clearly point out the changing trends before the dilution of the art 370. Before the dilution of article 370, however militant activities were there but generally militants were not supported by the local people. Earlier culprits were either army personnel or politicians or any loyal to the government of India . But recently it has been observed that the killings are the targeted and done individually supported by the locals . Evidently, the doctrine of containment pursued by the Jammu and Kashmir police and security agencies is not having the desired effect. Security analysts believe that a sizable segment of the new cadres fall into what they perceive as 'unpredictable', and this further aggravates the situation. In Jammu and Kashmir today, as also elsewhere, there is no all-in-one grand strategy to deal with the situation. The missing ingredient is statecraft which alone can walk in step with the changing contours of a long-standing problem.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION :

- As per the above discussion , it is almost clear that India is facing several challenges of internal security as well. Our main concern is that those organizations (militant) which had been crushed before 2-3 decades are again trying to revive . This situation can be only tackled by the strategy of statecraft. A multi tier security strategy is needed with the coordination of state security forces and the state security agencies , central security forces and the agencies and some other new institutions, if needed should be constituted. Because, internal security is more essential in comparison to border security. Our Armed forces are ready to counter any external threat but the internal threats can be countered only with the coordination of all agencies and the political parties as well as the public irrespective of any caste, religion etc. Increasing communalism is also a big threat for the internal security. These security challenges are the by product of the communalism.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai