Andhra Pradesh's Capital Conundrum

Why in news?

Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020, sets to replace earlier plan of building Amaravati as a capital to developing 3 capital cities.

What is 3 Capital Plan?

- The bill states that the State will have Visakhapatnam, Amaravati and Kurnool as the executive, legislative and judicial capitals of the State respectively.
- The plan is similar to that in South Africa.
- The Sribagh pact, which happened between **Rayalaseema and coastal Andhra in 1937,** decided that if high court is in coastal Andhra, capital should be in Rayalaseema
- K.C. Sivaramakrishnan (KCS) Committee has also made recommendations along similar lines
- Even Maharashtra has two capitals, **Mumbai** & **Nagpur**, with the latter being the winter capital of the state.

What are the benefits of the plan?

- It helps to promote Even development in the state as north-coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema districts are the backward compared to the central coastal districts.
- A secretariat in Vizag can help in the development of regions ***like Vizianagaram and Srikakulam*** which consists of tribal and rural areas and are the most backward regions of the state.
- It helps to promote decentralised governance to spatially de-concentrate executive power, driven by region-specific economic activities.
- Eg: KCS Committee recommends that for Vizag region's suitability, it should have government offices relevant to local economic potential, such as for ports, shipping, fisheries and industry.

What are the challenges in it?

- Running legislative business with most of the secretariat located 400 km

away can lead to high logistical costs and inefficiencies.
- There is lack of well-developed infrastructural network linking the growth centres.
- Visakhapatnam, in spite of its excellent and natural advantages, is lacking in in infrastructure.
- It might unfold new problems as uncontrolled real estate interests can compromise the environmental interests.
- The recent environmental disasters, including the LG Polymers gas leak also expose the city’s vulnerabilities.
- The bill also lacks appropriate details for the distributed development.

Source: The Hindu

