Prelim Bits 03-03-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

FCRA

The Centre suspended the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) licence of the think tank Centre for Policy Research (CPR).

- The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) was enacted during the Emergency in 1976.
- The law sought to regulate foreign donations to individuals and associations.
- The act ensures them to function in a manner consistent with the values of a sovereign democratic republic.
- **2010 amendment** - It was to consolidate the law on utilisation of foreign funds, and to prohibit their use for any activities detrimental to national interest.
- **2020 Amendment** - The government was given tighter control and scrutiny over the receipt and utilisation of foreign funds by NGOs.
- **Registration** - FCRA registrations are granted to individuals or associations that have definite cultural, economic, educational, religious, and social programmes.
- NGOs that want to receive foreign funds must apply online and the ***Ministry of Home Affairs*** (MHA) makes inquiries through the Intelligence Bureau.
- The MHA is required to approve or reject the application within 90 days.
- **Criteria** - The FCRA requires every person or NGO seeking to receive foreign donations to be registered under the Act and open a bank account for it in State Bank of India, Delhi.
- NGO's should utilise those funds only for the purpose for which they have been received and as stipulated in the Act.
- They are also required to file annual returns, and they must not transfer the funds to another NGO.
- **Validity** - FCRA registration is valid for 5 years.
- **Renewal** - Can be renewed within six months of the date of expiry of registration.
- In case of failure to apply for renewal, the registration is deemed to have expired.
- **Cancellation** - For violation of the Act, defunct or misutilisation of foreign funds.
- Once the registration of an NGO is cancelled, it is not eligible for re-registration for 3 years.
- **Suspension** - The ministry also has powers to suspend an NGO's registration for 180 days pending inquiry, and can freeze its funds.
- All orders of the government can be challenged in the High Court.

References

1. IE - FCRA licence of think tank CPR suspended

Anti-defection Law

The Constitution Bench was hearing political dispute in Maharashtra held that Anti-defection law applies even if a faction splits from a party.

- The anti-defection law was added by ***52nd Constitutional Amendment*** Act as the ***Tenth Schedule*** in 1985.
- Its purpose was to bring stability to governments by discouraging legislators from switching parties.
- It was a response to the toppling of multiple state governments by party-hopping MLAs after the general elections of 1967.
- The anti-defection law punishes individual MPs/MLAs for leaving one party for another.
- **Deciding Authority** - The Presiding Officers of the Legislature (Speaker, Chairman).
- The decision can be challenged before the higher judiciary.
- The law contemplates two kinds of defection:
    1. by a member voluntarily giving up membership of the party on whose symbol he got elected
    2. by a member violating a direction (whip) issued by his party to vote in a particular way or to abstain from voting
- **Split** - If one-thirds of a legislature party leaves it or joins another party, it amounts to a 'split'.
- Originally, in the 10th Schedule a 'split' in a legislature party is an exception to the disqualification rule.
- This was deleted by the Constitution (***91st Amendment***) Act, 2003.
- **Exemption**- The law allows a group of ***two-third*** MP/MLAs to join (i.e. ***merger***) another political party.
- The merger has to take place between 2 parties and after that, two-third of the members, if they agree with the merger, then they are exempted from disqualification.
- **SC observation** - The anti-defection law applies even if a faction splits from a political party and manages to cobble up a majority within the party itself.
- Irrespective of the faction being majority or minority, anti-defection law applies.
- **Related topic** - The political crisis in Maharashtra, Kihoto Hollohan Judgment

References

1. The Hindu - Anti-defection law applies even if a faction splits from a party
2. The Hindu - Has the anti-defection law failed?

Pushpagiri Kshetram

13th-century Hindu temple ruins have been recently unearthed at Pushpagiri Kshetram in Kadapa district.

- The Pushpagiri Kshetram hillock is also known as Pushpachala.
- The hillock is famous for the chain of temples dedicated to the pantheon of Hindu gods and has over a hundred small and big temples in its vicinity.
- Chennakesava, Umamaheswara, Rudrapada, Vishnupada, Trikooteswara, Vaidyanatha,

Subrahmanya, Vighneswara and Durga Devi temples are found here.
- The ***Penna River*** flows in the southwest of the hills.
- Pushpagiri is referred to as Hari-Hara Kshetra, as there are a number of temples dedicated to both Shiva and Vishnu.
- **Temple ruins** - The architectural features of the ruins reveal a style which is contemporary to a temple at Vallur.
- The Vallur temple was built by the Kayastha rulers in the 13th Century AD.
- **Kayasthas** - The Kayasthas were subordinates to the rulers of the Kakatiya dynasty.
- They ruled the region with Vallur as the capital.

References

1. The Hindu - 13th century temple discovered at Pushpagiri Kshetram

Global Security Initiative

China has put forward the Global Security Initiative at the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (G20FMM).

- China's Foreign Minister Qin Gang took part and spoke at the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meet (G20FMM) event.
- The Chinese Foreign Minister put forward the Global Security Initiative (GSI).
- China also issued the concept paper on Global Security Initiative.
- He also put forward the Global Development Initiative proposed by the Chinese President Xi Jinping to make global development more inclusive, resilient and beneficial for all.
- **G20FMM** - The G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting took place in New Delhi under India's G20 Presidency.

References

1. Times Of India - China puts forward Global Security Initiative

Ornamental fish aquaculture and Agatti Island

Community-based ornamental fish aquaculture, using local resources, is expected to help women in the Lakshadweep islands.

- Women in the islands have limited resources to generate income, mostly in the form of coconut and tuna fish.
- To expand the activity and enhance the income of women, community-based breeding of marine ornamentals is done.
- **Aquaculture** - It is a first-of-its-kind experiment in community-based breeding and sale of ornamental fish, including shrimps.
- In addition to the 2 species of ornamental shrimps, captive-raised clownfish seeds were also supplied to the groups for further rearing.
- Islanders mostly women, were chosen for intensive training and have formed them into groups for ornamental fish aquaculture.
- **Support** - The ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR) maintains a

germplasm resource centre for marine ornamental organisms on Agatti Island for conservation.
- NBFGR provides the technical support for the clusters.
- NBFGR also gives capacity building and hand-holding community aquaculture units maintained by local women.
- The NBFGR project team on Agatti Island will monitor the units and provide technical inputs, till the organisms reach the marketable size.
- The aquaculture is done in an environment-friendly manner by using coconut fronds and leaves as well as deploying solar panels.

Agatti Island

- Agatti, a 5.6 km long island in Lakshadweep is in the Laccadive group.
- Agatti Island is the gateway to Lakshadweep.
- Agatti is a small chain of islands that lies about 459 km off Cochin from the mainland and the nearest island is Bangaram.

References

1. The Hindu - Ornamental fish aquaculture in Lakshadweep

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