Prelim Bits 03-08-2021 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

National Commission for Minorities

- It is a forum for appeal, set up by the Government to safeguard the rights and interests of India's minority communities.
- It was set up under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 as the first Statutory NCM was set up in 1993.
- Section 2 (c) of NCM Act, 1992 stipulates that 'Minority' for the purposes of the Act, means a community notified as such by the Central Government.
- NCM consists of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and five members and all of them shall be from amongst the minority communities.
- **Functions** of the Commission as laid down in Section 9(1) of the Act are related to the six notified minority communities i.e. Jain, Parsi, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist and Muslim.
- The functions of NCM broadly include
    1. Evaluate the progress of the development of minorities under the Union and States;
    2. Monitor the working of the safeguards provided in the Constitution and in laws enacted by Parliament and the State Legislatures;
    3. Make recommendations for effective implementation of safeguards for the protection of the interests of minorities by the Central Government or the State Governments;
    4. Look into complaints on deprivation of rights and safeguards of minorities and take up such matters with appropriate authorities;
    5. Cause studies to be undertaken into problems arising out of any discrimination against minorities and recommend measures for their removal;
    6. Conduct studies, research and analysis on the issues relating to socio-economic and educational development of minorities;
    7. Suggest appropriate measures in respect of any minority to be undertaken by the Central Government or the State Governments;
    8. Make periodical or special reports to the Central Government on any matter pertaining to minorities and in particular difficulties confronted by them; and
    9. Any other matter which may be referred to it by the Central Government.

India-Sweden Collaborative Industrial Research & Development Programme

- There is a call for Global Scientific Collaboration for bringing “Ease of Living” for common man.
- Recently, Prime Ministers of India and Sweden signed the India-Sweden Collaborative Industrial Research & Development Programme.
- The program aims to foster and support the development of collaborative R&D projects that bring together companies, and other collaborators from both countries for the joint development of innovative products or processes in the following technology sectors:
    1. Smart and sustainable cities and transport systems
    2. Clean technologies, IoT and digitalization
- This may include, but is not limited to:
    1. Transport & Mobility; Electrical vehicles, Autonomous vehicles, Traffic safety, Mobility as a service, Reduction in traffic congestion, Digital solutions, etc.
    2. Environmental technologies (Eco–system services, clean water and air, Waste management, Renewable energy, etc.)
    3. Circular and bio-based economy (Bio-based materials, Bio-fuels, Resource efficiency in consumption and production, Waste-to-wealth, etc.)
    4. Energy (Reduced energy consumption and CO2 emissions, Alternative fuels, Renewable energy, Energy storage, etc.)
    5. City planning (ICT for urban technical supply, Geodata, tools for dialogue with citizens, etc.)

Eutelsat Quantum Satellite

- This is the world's first commercial fully reprogrammable satellite launched by the European Space Agency (ESA) from French Guiana.
- Eutelsat Quantum, developed under an ESA partnership project with satellite operator Eutelsat and prime manufacturer Airbus, is the world’s first commercial fully flexible software-defined satellite.
- Eutelsat Quantum weighs 3.5 tonnes and consists of eight communication beams. Each of the beams can be modified to make changes to the coverage area and its telecommunications signal.
- **Benefits** - As the changes can be done in minutes, this satellite can be used in providing mobile coverage in moving objects successfully.
- Satellite can detect and characterise any rogue emission, enabling it to respond dynamically to accidental interference or intentional jamming.
- The Eutelsat Quantum will be covering the geographical area from West

Africa to Asia in a 15 years period of time.

Reprogrammable Satellite

- These satellites allow the user to change the communications as per need, in real time.
- Even while orbiting in a fixed position at 35,000 kms above Earth, the satellite can be reprogrammed.
- Because it can be reprogrammed in orbit, it can respond to changing demands for data transmission and secure communications during its 15-year lifetime.

Kandla SEZ

- Situated on the Gulf of Kutch on the west coast of Gujarat, it is Asia's first Export Processing Zone (EPZ) and it is India's largest multi-product functional SEZ.
- It is the first Green SEZ to achieve the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) Green Cities Platinum Rating for Existing Cities.
- To know more about Indian Green Building Council, click here.

Tigers in the Mountains

- Uttarakhand government highlighted the expanse of the state's tiger map from Corbett National Park to Kedarnath Wildlife Sanctuary.
- **Range** - Between the terai and the mountains, the tiger range is from an elevation of 1,181 ft (360 m) to 12,073 ft (3680 m) - a testimony of Uttarakhand's success in tiger conservation.
- Because, tiger's usual range is less than 6,000 ft. That makes its presence above 12,000 ft rare. But tigers have shown up before a strategically placed motion-triggered camera at higher altitudes.
- Since 2016, multiple records of tigers above 10,000 feet have been recorded in India.
- **Causes for concern** - Records of high-altitude tigers getting somewhat routine is alarming, as it signifies that warming induced by climate change is making the higher mountains tolerable for tigers.
- But the fact that tigers are found roaming the snow indicates that their upward movement is not deterred by the cold.
- Like Siberian tigers do not actually live in Siberia (but in temperate broadleaf-mixed-pine and pure deciduous forests), it is unlikely that tigers spotted in the snow have settled down there.
- Their survival still depends on the forests below. There can be no trade-off

between traditional tiger habitat and these new heights of feline interest.

Source: PIB, The Indian Express, Deccan Herald

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