Prelim Bits 03-09-2021 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Deputy Speaker

Delhi High Court has asked the central government to explain its stand on a petition that claims vacancy of Deputy Speaker's post is a violation of the constitution.

- Petitioner pointed out that position had been vacant for the last 830 days and the office is a constitutional mandated and not a ceremonial one.
- **Article 93** of the constitution provides for the election of both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker.
- Deputy Speaker is elected by the Lok Sabha from amongst its members.
- The date of election of the Deputy Speaker is fixed by the Speaker.

  For Speaker's election, the date of election is fixed by the President.

- He/She remains in the office during the life of Lok Sabha.
- He/She assumes the power of speaker when the office is vacant or speaker is absent.
- When he/she appointed as a member of the parliamentary committee, he/she automatically becomes its chairman.
- He/She can vote at the first instance. But when acts as the Speaker, he/she have the privilege of the Casting vote in case of tie.
- Deputy Speaker gives the resignation letter to the Speaker and can be removed in the same manner as Speaker.
- Upon the vacancy of the office, election should be held as soon as possible.

  The tradition for the post of the Deputy Speaker going to the Opposition party started during the term of Prime Minister Morarji Desai's government (1977-79)

Vehicle Scrappage Policy

The Delhi Transport Department has iterated that not all provisions of the Centre's vehicle scrapping policy will be applicable in Delhi-NCR.

- **Centre's scrapping policy** – It classifies vehicles as commercial and personal and not based on their fuel type.
- Commercial vehicles over 15 years old and personal vehicles over 20 years old will have to scrapped only if they fail an automated fitness test.
- It states that old vehicles clearing an automated fitness test are allowed to ply.

  A registration certificate for a passenger vehicle is valid for 15 years and for a commercial vehicle is 10 years.

  The vehicle will then have to undergo a mandatory fitness test after its expiry, which will have to be repeated for every 5 years from then.

- **Delhi Transport Department Policy** - It classifies vehicles based on type of fuel.
- It states diesel vehicles over 10 years old and petrol vehicles more than 15 years old "shall not ply" on the roads of Delhi-NCR.
- Those violate are liable to face penal action under Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.
- It clarified that though Registration Certificates are valid, renewal will not be allowed in Delhi-NCR once diesel vehicle crosses 10 years.
- But, no-objection certificates will be issued to diesel vehicles aged between 10-15 years old for re-registration in certain states.

Durand Line

The fence erected by Pakistan along the 2,640-km Durand Line which is opposed by Taliban is a potential flashpoint in relations between the Taliban and Pakistan

- In 19th century Afghanistan was used as a buffer by the British against the fear of Russian expansionism to its east
- Hence the British civil servant Sir Henry Mortimer Durand signed an agreement with Afghan ruler Amir Abdur Rahman on November 12, 1893 demarcating the Durand line
- The line stretches from the border with China to Afghanistan's border with Iran
- This line demarcated the limits of Afghanistan's and British India's "spheres of influence" on the Afghan "frontier" with India
- The line puts the strategic Khyber Pass on the British side
- It cuts through Pashtun tribal areas, leaving villages, families, and land divided between the two spheres of influence

- Some historians believe it was a part of British's divide and rule policy
- Hence, Pashtuns rejected the line after independence
- When the Taliban seized power in Kabul the first time, they also rejected the Durand Line

- The cross-border tensions peaked in 2017 with several attacks on Pakistani border posts by militants
- Pakistan accused Afghanistan of sheltering – while the Afghan government accused Pakistan of giving safe haven to Afghan Taliban and Haqqani Network
- So Pakistan began erecting a $500mn fence fitted with surveillance cameras and infrared detectors, and punctuated by 1,000 watchtowers along the Durand Line
- Cross-border movement will only be allowed through 16 formally designated points after the completion of the project
- The fence has been a source of more tensions and seen as a move by Pakistan to formalise the boundary, making their division permanent
- But Pakistan believes that the fence will help control any spillover from unrest and chaos there.

Source: The Hindu, The Indian Express

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