Prelim Bits 05-08-2019

Section 144 & Curfew

- Recently Jammu and Kashmir government imposed restrictions in Srinagar under Section 144 (Unlawful assembly) of CrPC.
- It is issued in urgent cases of security threat or riot.
- When there are apprehensions of breach of public peace and order by some people, it is put into effect.
- It will be issued by the District Magistrate of the area.
- It bars the assembly of 5 or more people in that particular imposed area.
- It also bans holding any kind of public meeting or rally until the order is withdrawn.
- The section also empowers the authorities to block internet access.
- It also bans all civilians from carrying of weapons including lathis, sharp-edged weapons or firearms in public places. (Exception for police or paramilitary or security forces).
- It can remain in force for not more than 2 months.
- However, if the state government considers it necessary for preventing danger, it can extend for not more than 6 months from the date of issuance of the initial order.
- It can be withdrawn at any point of time.
- If someone violates Section 144, the person can be booked for “engaging in rioting”.
- The maximum punishment for such act is three years.
- Difference between prohibitory orders under ‘Section 144’ and ‘curfew’, are
    - Curfew orders are issued in more severe situations where people are instructed to stay indoors for a specific period.
    - Establishments such as markets, schools, colleges, etc. are ordered to remain shut.
    - Only essential services are allowed to run on prior notice. There is a complete restriction on traffic as well.
    - The orders of curfew can be for a specific group or for the general public.

Area 51

- It is the secret U.S. Air Force military installation located at Groom Lake in southern Nevada.

- It is officially known as the 'Nevada Test and Training Range', Area 51 is part of it.
- According to CIA official documents, the area has been used to develop and test supersonic aircraft and stealth fighter jets.
- The installation has been the focus of numerous conspiracies involving extraterrestrial life (aliens).
- It is believed that, it is the location where the US government stores and hides alien bodies and UFOs.
- It was in 2013 that the CIA published declassified documents admitting that the Area 51 is a secret military site.
- A Facebook event titled "Storm Area 51, They Can't Stop All of us" was planned by around 2 million people plan to storm into Area 51.

QRSAM

- Recently 'Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air **(QRSAM)** Missile' was successfully test-fired.
- The state-of-the-art missile has been developed and tested by the 'Defence Research and Development Organisation' (**DRDO**).
- It uses solid-fuel propellant and has a range of 25-30 km, with the capability of engaging multiple targets.
- It is equipped with indigenously developed phased array radar, Inertial Navigation System, Data Link and RF seeker.
- It is also equipped with electronic countermeasures against jamming by aircraft radars.
- The entire mission was captured by various Electro Optical Tracking Systems, Radar Systems and Telemetry Systems.
- It is an all-weather missile that will help the Indian Navy in Inertial Navigation System.

Restricted Use of Pesticides for Basmati

- Punjab has over 40% of the total Basmati export of India.
- There is a huge demand of Punjab Basmati across the globe.
- So to meet the demand, farmers use the pesticide on the recommendation of pesticide dealers.
- It is against the instructions of the agricultural experts and are not recommended by Agriculture Department.
- In the past, Punjab Basmati has faced rejection due to detection of residue of such pesticides which are not permissible in Europe, US and other countries.
- So, the Punjab government restricted 9 pesticides, which are,
- Acephate, Carbendazim, Thiamethoxam, Triazofos, Tricyclazole, Buprofezin, Carbofuron, Propiconazole and Thiophanate Methyl.

- The use of these restricted pesticides makes the input cost go up Rs 2000 to Rs 4000 per season, with pesticide companies making a huge profit.
- Basmati is grown during a period (in July) when naturally there is no pest attack on the crop during the initial stage.
- But farmers in Punjab are known to use pesticides as a preventive measure which is not recommended.

Source: PIB, The Indian Express

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