Prelim Bits 08-01-2019

Vote on Account (VoA)

- The Union Budget is nothing but a projected income and expenditure statement for the coming year.
- As per the Constitution, all the revenue received and the loans raised by the Union government are parked in the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI).
- **Article 266** mandates that Parliamentary approval is required to draw money from the CFI
- So the Budget has to be approved by Parliament before the commencement of the new financial year.
- But the discussion and passing of Budget generally goes beyond the current financial year.
- So a special provision called "Vote on Account" is used, where the government obtains the vote of **Lok Sabha** to withdraw money from CFI to keep the money flowing for the government's day to day functions, until the Budget is passed. **(Article 116).**
- e.g Salary to government employees, loan interest payments, subsidies, pension payments etc.
- It is also used in the years where Lok Sabha elections are due.
- But here vote on account is also presented along with minor policy changes, as it would be improper for the outgoing government to impose major budgetary constraints on its successor.
- Such a measure that includes both short term expenditure and income part is called an Interim Budget.
- The vote-on-account is normally valid for **2 months** and is in operation till the full Budget is passed.
- But during an election year, it may be extended for more than **2 months**.
- VoA is usually passed without much discussion as it typically does not seek funds for major projects or new initiatives.
- It usually does not contain any direct tax proposals, as that requires amendments to the Finance Bill.
- On indirect taxes though, there could be clarifications or minor tweaks.
- On the downside, the country may lose crucial time on developmental projects during the hiatus after the vote on account.

Gandhi Circuit

- The Government commemorated centenary of Champaran Satyagrah during the period for April, 2017 to April, 2018.
- As a part of this, a project for "Development of Gandhi Circuit: Bhitiharwa-Chandrahia-Turkaulia under Rural Circuit theme of Swadesh Darshan Scheme" has been sanctioned in Bihar with central financial assistance.
- The most famous Gandhian site in Champaran, Bihar is Bhitiharwa.
- It is a place where Gandhi set up a school and ashram in 1917.
- Recently government has erected an ashram complex which includes a museum.
- On April 18, 1917, Mahatma Gandhi embarked on a journey from Motihari to Jasauli Patti in the then undivided Champaran district of Bihar.
- During the journey Mahatma Gandhi was served an order by the British rulers at Chandrahia village, prohibiting him from traveling any further.
- As a result, he had to return to Motihari to face trial.
- However, he continued to be in Champaran until the plight of the indigo farmers was addressed.

Champaran Satyagraha

- During British rule, many tenant farmers were forced to grow row indigo on part of their land, which was used to make dye.
- But the demand for indigo dropped when the Germans invented a cheaper artificial dye.
- However, during the First World War the German dye ceased to be available and indigo once more became profitable.
- So a tinkathia system was put in place by the British.
- According to it, a Champaran tenant was bound by law to plant 3/20th parts of his land.
- This led to anger and resentment among the tenants.
- A farmer named Raj Kumar Shukla appealed to Gandhiji to organize the struggle to save the plantation workers.
- Gandhi visited the district in April 1917.
- Gandhi's was charged with violating Section 144 of Cr. PC (creating unrest) and was ordered to leave the district.
- Gandhi refused, leading to India's first civil disobedience movement.
- He was arrested which lead to massive non-violent protests and rallies, which eventually led to his release.
- Further, the Collector wrote to Gandhi saying he was free to conduct the inquiry.
- 8,000 statements were taken from of *ryats* (tenants) by volunteers.
- The Bihar administration grew anxious and so the then Lieutenant Governor of Bihar declared the formation of a Champaran Inquiry Committee with

Gandhi aboard.

- The Government accepted almost all its recommendations, including complete abolition of Tinkathia system.
- During this time, Gandhi also

1. deliberately stayed away from INC
2. reiterated that he was there on humanitarian basis &
3. promoted primary education in the region

Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)

- It is implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for the welfare of PVTGs.
- It strives to retain the culture and heritage of the community by adopting habitat development approach.
- This is a **demand driven** scheme. i.e Conservation-cum-Development (CCD)/Annual Plans are prepared by each State/UT **based on their need assessment**, which are then appraised and approved by the Project Appraisal Committee of the Tribal Affairs Ministry.
- Activities under the scheme include housing, land distribution, land development, agricultural development, animal husbandry, and construction of link roads etc.
- Tribal communities generally have specific signs such as primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness to contact with the community at large and backwardness.
- But some tribal groups have some specific features such as dependency on hunting, gathering for food, having pre-agriculture level of technology, zero or negative growth of population and extremely low level of literacy.
- Due to this factor, these groups are more vulnerable and need more focussed approach for their development.
- So a separate categorization called PVTG was formed.
- Categorization of tribal groups as PVTGs is done by Ministry of Home Affairs.

Leadership development measures for youth

- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India has taken several initiatives towards increasing leadership skills among the youth of India.
- Some of the programmes include National Programme for Youth and Adolescent (NPYAD) Scheme
- The scheme has a component namely 'Youth Leadership Personality Development Training' to develop leadership qualities, national character and personality development among the rural youth.
- Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan conducts programmes such as Training on Youth Leadership and Community Developmen.

- It also conducts Nationwide contest on Patriotism and Nation Building to develop leadership and increase leadership skills amongst the youth and to make them responsible citizens.

X-Calibur telescope

- It is a telescope that has been successfully launched recently by US scientists from the McMurdo Station in Antarctica.
- It was launched on a helium balloon intended to reach an altitude of 130,000 feet i.e at nearly four times the cruising altitude of commercial airliners, and above 99 per cent of the Earth's atmosphere.
- It will analyse X-rays arriving from distant neutron stars, black holes and other exotic celestial bodies.
- The prime observation target will be Vela X-1, a neutron star in binary orbit with a supergiant star.
- Neutron stars are objects of very small radius (typically 30 km) and very high density, composed predominantly of closely packed neutrons.
- Neutron stars are thought to be formed by the gravitational collapse of the remnant of a massive star after a supernova explosion.
- It is the same process by which black holes are formed except that here the star is not massive enough to produce a black hole.
- Supergiant stars are the largest stars in the universe. They can be thousands of times bigger than our Sun and have a mass up to 100 times greater.
- The largest known supergiant star, **VY Canis Majoris**, is up to 2,100 times the size of the Sun**.**
- Binary stars are two stars orbiting a common center of mass.

Source: PIB, The Hindu, The Indian Express

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