Prelim Bits 08-10-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Scheduled Caste Status for Converted Dalits

The Centre has recently appointed a commission to examine the issue of whether Scheduled Caste (SC) status can be accorded to Dalits who have over the years converted to religions other than Sikhism or Buddhism.

- Click here to know about the issue of according the SC status to converted Dalits.
- The three-member commission is headed by former Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan, along with Professor Sushma Yadav from UGC and retired IAS officer Ravinder Kumar Jain.
- The committee has been given a **two-year** deadline to submit a report on the issue.
- The commission's inquiry will look into -
    - The implications of adding new persons to Scheduled Castes on the existing Scheduled Caste members.
    - The changes an SC person goes through after converting to another religion.
    - The changes they go through on converting to other religions in terms of customs, traditions, social and other discrimination, and deprivation.
- **Earlier Recommendations**
    - **Ranganath Misra Commission (2004)** – It recommended that SC status should be made fully religion-neutral like Scheduled Tribes.
    - The National Commission for Scheduled Castes and the National Commission for Minorities had also recommended providing SC status to Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians.

References

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Credit Guarantee Scheme for Start-ups

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry has recently notified the establishment of the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Start-ups (CGSS).

- CGSS is aimed at providing credit guarantee up to a specified limit against loans extended by Member Institutions (MIs) to finance start-ups.
- This scheme provides for the **collateral-free** debt funding to start-ups.

- The MIs include Scheduled Commercial Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFC) and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs).
- The exposure to individual cases would be capped at Rs. 10 crore per case or the actual outstanding credit amount, whichever is less.
- The credit guarantee cover under the Scheme would be transaction based and umbrella based.
    1. The transaction-based guarantee cover is obtained by the MIs on single eligible borrower basis.
    2. The umbrella-based guarantee cover will provide guarantee to Venture Debt Funds (VDF) registered under AIF regulations of SEBI.
- The Government will setup a trust or fund to guarantee payment against default in loans or debt extended to eligible borrowers.
- The fund is managed by the Board of National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd as the Trustee of the Fund.
- The scheme will be operated by the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC).
- DPIIT will be constituting a Management Committee (MC) and a Risk Evaluation Committee (REC) to oversee the scheme.

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Codeine Cough Drugs

The Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTBA) has recently recommended a ban on certain codeine-based formulations to curb their abuse following concerns about their misuse of narcotics and intoxicants.

- **Codeine** is a by-product of opium.
- Codeine is a painkiller, mostly used to treat coughs, colds, and pain.
- Codeine-based formulations are under the scanner for misuse of as a narcotic product.
- On the other hand, Pharma industries claims codeine as one of the best antitussive (cold medication) available.
- The final decision on its implementation lies with the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), an organ of the CDSCO.
- DCGI is responsible for approving and licensing of drugs and medical devices in India.

Codeine formulations contribute 8% to the total cough and cold market and a ban may lead to an impact of around Re 43 crore on this market

Drugs Technical Advisory Board

- Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTBA) is the apex body to decide on technical matters related to drugs in the country.
- It functions as part of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- To know more about Drugs Technical Advisory Board, click here.

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International Year of Glass 2022

The United Nations declared 2022 as the International Year of Glass to promote best practices and sustainability in the industry.

- Glass is an inorganic solid material that is usually transparent or translucent as well as hard and brittle.
- Glass is a poor conductor of heat and electricity and has no sharp melting point.
- Glass decompose very slowly but can be recycled.
- Commercial glass is usually made of sand, limestone, and sodium carbonate that is raised in temperature until it is molten and then cooled quickly.
- Types of glasses
    1. Everyday glass like sheet glass and bottle glass.
    2. Borosilicate glass - It is used for cookware and laboratory glassware.
    3. Specialized glasses include optical, photosensitive, metallic, and fibre-optic.

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Purse Seine Nets

Recently, fishermen of Tamil Nadu protested against the blanket ban of purse seine nets and demanded to regulate it in order to protect the interest of small and traditional fishermen.

> *Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Rules, 2020 enforced the ban of the use of purse seine nets.*

- Purse seine is a non-selective fishing method that captures everything that it surrounds.
- A purse seine net is a large net used in an entire area.
- The seine floats along the top line with a lead line threaded through rings along the bottom.
- Once a school of fish is located, a skiff encircles them.
- The lead line is then pulled in, pursing the net closed on the bottom, preventing fish from escaping.

Other Fishing Types

- **Gill nets** - They are set up to be a wall with holes in it. Fish unknowingly swim into it and get stuck.

- **Bull trawling** - In bull trawling or pair trawling, a net is tied between two mechanised boats and it is dragged for some kilometres to catch fish.

- **Bottom trawler** – This involves weighing a net down to the seafloor then dragging it across the bottom to scoop up fish.

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