Prelim Bits 09-07-2019

Utkarsh 2022

- It is a three-year **road map of RBI** to improve regulation, supervision and other functions of the central bank.
- This is a medium term strategy in line with the global central banks.
- It was formulated by an internal committee.
- The committee identified the issues that needs to be addressed over the next three years.
- It is for the central bank to play a proactive role and to take preemptive action to avoid any crisis.

Buyback tax

- Union Budget has proposed to **tax buyback of shares** by companies at **20%**.
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- Currently buyback tax is applicable only for unlisted companies.
- A buyback is essentially a scheme by which a company repurchases a certain amount of its outstanding shares.
- It was felt that many companies were avoiding dividend payouts because of the 'dividend distribution tax' (DDT).
- So, the companies were returning cash to shareholders through share buybacks.
- The proposed tax on share buybacks is aimed at plugging this loophole.
- Instead of declaring dividends, the promoters were using the buyback route to enhance their wealth and effectively increasing their shareholding in the company.
- In this process, the government loses, as it was not getting paid the DDT.
- So the proposed tax may nudge companies to payout surpluses through dividends rather than resort to buybacks.
- This would plug the loophole and promoters now have to pay tax whichever way they go, be it dividend payout or the buyback.

Foreigners' Tribunal in Assam

- Between 1985 and 2019, more number of people in Assam have been declared foreigners by '**ex parte orders'**(in the absence of these persons) in Foreigners' Tribunals.

- Foreigners' Tribunals declared 1,03,764 persons as foreigners (1985-2019) of which 63,959 were decided by ex parte orders.
- These tribumals are a key player in the exercise to identify illegal immigrants in Assam.
- There are 100 existing and 200 more tribunal to be functional by September 2019.
- They are **quasi-judicial bodies** meant to decide whether a person is a foreigner or not within the meaning of **Foreigners Act, 1946**.
- They get two kinds of cases –

    1. those against whom a "reference" has been made by border police, and
    2. those whose names in the electoral rolls have a "**D" (Doubtful)** against them.

- According to the **Section 9 of the Foreigners Act,** the accused has to prove he or she is an Indian.
- Since the onus is on the person, if he or she is absconding and doesn't appear before the tribunal, the member can pass an ex- parte order.
- Previously, under the **Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983,** the onus of proving one's nationality lay on the complainant.
- The Supreme Court struck down the IMDT Act stated that, it created the biggest hurdle in the identification illegal migrants.
- The suspected foreigner has to appear before the Tribunals on receipt of the notice to prove his citizenship status.
- But most of the people are moving continuously to work at different site in another district, so they are not getting the notice and do not know that, they has to appear at the Tribunal.
- If they remains absent for quite a long period, the cases are disposed of ex parte orders.
- In a majority of cases, police are not serving the notice of the Tribunal upon the accused, as a result these persons are declared foreigners without their knowledge.
- In some cases, despite receiving the notice, many don't appear because of poverty, illiteracy and complexity of the procedure.
- According to the **Rule 3A of the Foreigners' (Tribunal) Order**, **1964**,

    a. if a Tribunal has passed an ex parte order and if the person has "sufficient cause" for non-appearance, then the person has to file an application within 30 days of the order.
    b. If that happens, the tribumal can set aside the ex parte order and decide the case accordingly.

- The person will be arrested and put into a detention camp, if police track the

person after the ex- parte order.
- If not able to track, the person will be an ‘Untraced foreigner’.
- They can appeal in the High Court and then the Supreme Court against an order.
- There are many in detention camps as a result of ex-parte order whose appeals are pending in higher courts.

Prosecco hills

- **Italy’s Prosecco hills** join UNESCO World Heritage list.
- The hills of **Conegliano** and **Valdobbiadene** are the home to the **grapes** that produce **world-famous sparkling Wine ‘Prosecco’.**
- The landscape is characterized by ciglioni**,** a small plots of vines on narrow grassy terraces, forests, small villages and farmland.
- Its the ancient tradition of wine-making and the territory is known for its well-preserved early settlements.

Philistine town

- It is an ancient town of **Israel** mentioned in the biblical tale.
- Recently the researchers pinpointed the site of an ancient town.
- It is a biblical City of **Ziklag** Where Philistines gave refuge to David. Ziklag was a town under the rule of a Philistine king.
- Researchers also excavated the finds typical of the Philistine civilisation.
- The pottery vessels, stones and metal artifacts found are in connect with the historical era identified with the biblical tale.
- The Philistines are believed to have arrived in the region in the 12th century BC.
- They ruled what is today part of central and southern Israel and the Gaza Strip and were a feared enemy of the Israelites.

Source: Indian Express, Business Line, The Hindu

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