Prelim Bits 12-10-2019

Acting Chief Justice

- The Supreme Court has recently ruled that a judge who retired as an Acting Chief Justice of a High Court cannot claim the pension of a regular Chief Justice (CJ).
- SC held that an Acting CJ needs to be given the pension of a CJ only for the period for which he served as a CJ and not more.
- Only for the limited purpose of salary, such an Acting Chief Justice is treated on a par with the Chief Justice and not for any other purpose, more particularly pension.
- K.Sreedhar Rao, served in Gauhati High Court for 14 months as its Acting CJ.
- He appealed to SC demanding pension equivalent to CJ of a high court.
- But SC said he needs to be given a Chief Justice's pension only for the 14 months he was Acting CJ.

Mamallapuram

- Mamallapuram, or Mahabalipuram is in focus as the venue for the informal summit between Indian PM and Chinese President.
- It is the ancient Pallava port city which has its origins in the word Mamallan (great wrestler), title of a Pallava King Narasimhavarman II (3rd – 9th century).
- The king's story was immortalised by Tamil writer Kalki in the novel *Sivagamiyin Sapatham*.
- The heroine, Sivakami, is portrayed as the daughter of the chief sculptor, Ayanar. She is the lover of Narasimhavarman.
- The town was originally called Mamallai or Kadalmallai and Mallai means prosperity.
- The town got the name because it was enriched by the wealth brought through sea trade.
- Vaishnavite literature refers to the town and temple of Sthalasayana Perumal situated in the town is one among the 108 Vaishnavite shrines.
- The earliest literary reference could be attributed to Poothathazhwar, the second in the lineage of Azhwars, who was born in Mamallapuram.
- The temple would have predated the period of the Pallavas, who expanded the town and made it a cultural capital.

- The name of the town was changed to Jananthapuram by Chola king Raja Rajan.
- Mamallapuram became Mahabalipuram in modern times, and the latter is not the Sanskrit equivalent.

World Vision Report

- The first-ever world vision report was released by WHO.
- It highlighted that, more than a quarter of the world's population (2.2 billion people), suffer from vision impairment out of which 1 billion cases could have been prevented or have been left unaddressed.
- It warned that population ageing would lead to a dramatic increase in the number of people with vision impairment and blindness.
- **Presbyopia**, a condition in which it is difficult to see nearby objects, affects 1.8 billion people. This condition occurs with advancing age.
- **Myopia**, a condition in which it is difficult to see objects at a distance affects 2.6 billion, with 312 million being under the age of 19 years.
- Cataract, age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, corneal opacities, diabetic retinopathy, trachoma are other common vision impairments listed in the report.
- Trachoma is caused due to bacterial infection in the eye. Many countries have eliminated it, including India.
- **Region wise** - The prevalence of vision impairment in low- and middle-income regions is to be four times higher than in high-income regions.
- South Asia, East Asia and South-East Asia with 51% of the total population of the world, accounted for 62% of the total vision impairment.
- Myopia is the highest in high-income countries of the Asia-Pacific region.
- Glaucoma has hit Africa the most, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Incidence of a rural-urban divide does exist.
- The report said that accessibility to eye care services and high costs involved in accessing them, particularly for rural populations were major drivers of vision impairment.
- There was praise for India in the report for its National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB).
- NPCB provided cataract surgery to a total 6.5 million people in India, achieving a cataract surgical rate of over 6,000 per million population.

Elastocaloric Effect

- When rubbers bands are twisted and untwisted, it produces a cooling effect which is called the “elastocaloric” effect.
- When a rubber band is stretched, it absorbs heat from its environment, and

when it is released, it gradually cools down.

- Researchers have suggested that if it is harnessed, the need of fluid refrigerants used in fridges and air-conditioners can be done away.
- These fluids are susceptible to leakages and can contribute to global warming.
- In the elastocaloric effect, the transfer of heat works much the same way as when fluid refrigerants are compressed and expanded.
- In order to figure out how the twisting mechanism might be able to enable a fridge, the researchers compared the cooling power of rubber fibres, nylon and polyethylene fishing lines and nickel-titanium wires.
- They observed high cooling from twist changes in twisted, coiled and supercoiled fibres.

Kerala Bank

- RBI has given its final nod to the Kerala Government for the formation of the Kerala Bank which will be the largest banking network in the State.
- It would be formed amalgamating the District Co-operative Banks (DCBs) with Kerala State Co-operative Bank.
- The objective is to strengthen the cooperative sector but there is opposition that it would destroy the traditional cooperative sector.

Source: The Hindu, DownToEarth, The Indian Express

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