Prelim Bits 22-01-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Committee on Privileges

A BJP State President appeared before the Privileges Committee of Lok Sabha to explain how the police manhandled him.

- Privileges Committee is a Parliamentary Committee present in both the Houses of the Parliament.
- It is one of the Standing Committees to Inquire.
- The functions of the Committee of Privileges are semi-judicial in nature.
- It examines the cases of breach of privileges of the House and its members and recommends appropriate action.
- The Lok Sabha committee has 15 members, while the Rajya Sabha committee has 10 members.
- **Head** - The Speaker of the Lok Sabha heads the committee of privileges, and nominates the members as per respective party strengths.
- The Deputy Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha heads the committee in RS.
- A member of the House may, with the consent of the Chairman of the RS or Speaker of the LS, raise a question involving a breach of privilege either of a member or of the Council or of a Committee thereof.
- **Conditions of admissibility** - The right to raise a question of privilege shall be governed by the following conditions, namely:-
    1. The question shall be restricted to a specific matter of recent occurrence;
    2. The matter requires the intervention of the Council.

Parliamentary Privileges

- Each House of Parliament and its Committees collectively and members of each House individually enjoy certain rights, privileges and immunities.
- Without these rights, privileges and immunities, these members cannot perform their functions efficiently and effectively.
- The object of parliamentary privilege is to safeguard the freedom, the authority and the dignity of Parliament.
- But they do not exempt the members from the obligations to the society which apply to other citizens.

Parliamentary Committees

- Parliamentary Committees present in both the Houses of the Parliament.
- Broadly, parliamentary committees are of two kinds -

Standing Committees	Ad Hoc Committees
They are permanent, which is constituted every year or periodically.	They are temporary.

They work on a continuous basis.	They cease to exist on completion of the task assigned to them.
On the basis of the nature of functions performed by them, standing committees can be classified into 6 categories: 1. Financial Committees 2. Departmental Standing Committees (24) 3. Committees to Inquire 4. Committees to Scrutinise and Control 5. Committees Relating to the Day-to-Day Business of the House 6. House-Keeping Committees or Service Committees	Ad hoc committees can be divided into two categories, 1. Inquiry Committees and 2. Advisory Committees

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/bandi-appears-before-ls-panel/article38306554.ece
2. http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Committee/CommitteeInformation.aspx?comm_code=3&tab=2
3. https://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/committees/committ_privilege_rules.asp

Living Root Bridges of Meghalaya

The Zoological Survey of India has underlined some green rules for the living Root Bridges of Meghalaya to get the UNESCO World Heritage Site tag.

- A living root bridge is like an aerial suspension bridge formed by weaving and manipulating the pliable roots of the rubber fig tree (*Ficus elastica*) across a stream or river and allowing the roots to strengthen over time.
- Such a bridge is locally called jing kieng jri.
- Ficus elastica is conducive to the growth of bridges because of its three main properties:
    1. They are elastic,
    2. The roots easily combine and
    3. The plants grow in rough, rocky soils.
- There are no records to suggest when the War sub-tribe of the Khasi community started the root bridge tradition, but it highlights the symbiotic relationship between people and nature.
- These bridges support many birds, animals, lichens, mushrooms, flowers and trees and allow the humans to cross over for their living.
- **Related Links** - Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Site

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/unesco-tag-sought-for-root-bridges/article38306036.ece
2. https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/in-meghalaya-living-root-bridges-study-sees-global-potential-can-it-work-6132569/

National Single Window System

The Minister of Commerce and Industry wants to take the National Single Window System (NSWS) to large corporations and the Indian Missions abroad.

The Chief Information Security Officer will be nominated to work exclusively for the security and risk monitoring of the NSWS portal.

- NSWS for investors and businesses was developed by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- It is a digital platform for **guidance of entrepreneurs and investors** to identify and to apply for approvals as per their business requirements.
- The platform is built to serve as an advisory tool to identify approvals based on user input and is to be used for guidance purpose only.
- The NSWS portal has been designed to host approvals across 32 Central Departments & 14 States.
- This would bring Transparency, Accountability & Responsiveness in the ecosystem and all information will be available on a single dashboard.
- **Online Services** include Know Your Approval (KYA), Common Registration & State registration Form, Document repository & E-Communication.

Online Services

- KYA Service generates a list of approvals required by any business to commence operations. This service is only for guidance purposes and does not constitute any legal advice.
- A unified information capturing system and a common registration form have been introduced to ensure a single point of submission of information and documents across Ministries and States.
- State registration form enables investor to have seamless single click access to respective State Single Window System.
- An applicant Dashboard would be there to apply, track & respond to queries.
- Document repository is an online centralized storage service for investors to enable one-time document submission and use the same across multiple approvals.
- This eliminates the need to submit documents at multiple portals.
- E-Communication module enables online response to queries and clarification requests related to applications by Ministries and States.
- **Similar Links** - PARIVESH

Reference

1. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1791481
2. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1756966
3. https://www.nsws.gov.in/

Black Hole ignites Star Formation

NASA's Hubble Space Telescope finds a black hole igniting star formation in a dwarf galaxy.

- Often portrayed as destructive monsters that hold light captive, a black hole at the heart of the dwarf galaxy Henize 2-10 is creating stars rather than gobbling them up.
- [This dwarf galaxy lies 30 million light-years away, in the southern constellation Pyxis.]
- The black hole is apparently contributing to the firestorm of new star formation taking place in the galaxy.
- **Outflow of gas** - An outflow of gas from the black hole stretches across space like an umbilical cord to a bright stellar region that is located 230 light-years from the black hole.
- Hubble spectroscopy shows the outflow was moving about 1 million miles per hour, slamming

into the dense gas.
- Newborn star clusters dot the path of the outflow's spread, their ages also calculated by Hubble.
- This is the opposite effect of what's seen in larger galaxies.
- In larger galaxies, the material falling towards the black hole is whisked away by the surrounding magnetic fields, forming blazing jets of plasma moving at close to the speed of light.

Significance of Dwarf Galaxy Black Holes

- The black hole in Henize 2-10 is around 1 million solar masses.
- In larger galaxies, black holes can be more than 1 billion times our Sun's mass.

  More massive the host galaxy, more massive the black hole at its centre.

- Current theories on the origin of supermassive black holes break down into three categories:
  1. They formed just like smaller stellar-mass black holes, from the implosion of stars, and somehow gathered enough material to grow supermassive,
  2. Special conditions in the early universe allowed for the formation of supermassive stars, which collapsed to form massive black hole "seeds" right off the bat, or
  3. The seeds of future supermassive black holes were born in dense star clusters, where the cluster's overall mass would have been enough to somehow create them from gravitational collapse.
- So far, none of these black hole seeding theories has taken the lead.
- Dwarf galaxies like Henize 2-10 offer promising potential clues, because they have remained small over cosmic time, rather than undergoing the growth and mergers of large galaxies like the Milky Way.
- Astronomers think that dwarf galaxy black holes could **serve as an analog for black holes in the early universe**, when they were just beginning to form and grow.
- **Related Links** - Supermassive Black Hole

Reference

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2022/01/220119194144.htm

Puma

A new study has found that the pumas maintain relationships with an astounding 485 living species and play a critical role in holding ecosystems together throughout the Western Hemisphere.

- **Pumas** (*Puma concolor*), a member of the family Felidae, is also called mountain lion, cougar, or catamount (archaic).
- It is a large brownish New World cat comparable in size to the jaguar -the only other large cat of the Western Hemisphere.
- **Distribution** - Puma has the widest distribution of any New World mammal. They are found across 28 countries in the Americas.
- But, they are poorly understood and thought to be declining overall.
- **Habitats** - Pumas live in a variety of habitats, including desert scrub, chaparral, swamps, and forests.
- But, they avoid agricultural areas, flatlands, and other habitats lacking cover (vegetative or

topographic).

- The species is elusive and often mischaracterised as a vicious, solitary predator, leading to persecution and fuelling human-puma conflict.
- **Threats** - In the United States, pumas are threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation, road mortality and disease; some populations are further impacted by legal hunting as well.
- In Latin America, the species faces the same threats, along with illegal hunting, which is generally retaliatory killing by ranchers over livestock and loss of prey.
- **Findings** - The new study identified 203 species as puma prey, 281 species that feed upon puma prey in scavenger communities and 12 species as puma competitors.
- Pumas maintain a 'fear effect' on 40 species, such as vicuña and white-tailed deer. The presence of pumas frightens herbivores from certain landscapes, preventing them from overgrazing plant communities.
- Ecosystem services that pumas provide, defined as benefits supporting human economies, health and well-being, are often inconspicuous, according to the study.

Reference

1. https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/wildlife-biodiversity/web-of-relationships-how-pumas-hold-together-america-ecosystems-81194
2. https://www.britannica.com/animal/puma-mammal-species

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering