Prelim Bits 24-03-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Guillotine Closure

The Lok Sabha passed the demands for grants for ministries without any discussion due to disruptions in Parliamentary procedure.

- The Union budget after prepared is presented in the Parliament and goes through a process before its passage.
- The steps involved are -



- **Closure Motion** is a type of motion moved by a member to cut short the debate on a matter before the House.
- If the motion is approved by the House, the debate is stopped forthwith and the matter is put to vote.
- There are 4 kinds of closure motions. They are:
    1. Simple Closure
    2. Closure by Compartments
    3. Kangaroo Closure
    4. Guillotine Closure
- **Guillotine Closure** is a parliamentary procedure which refers to the passage of a legislation without debate or discussion.
- Once the House is done with these debates, the ***Speaker applies*** the 'guillotine', and all outstanding demands for grants are put to vote at once.
- This usually happens on the last day earmarked for the discussion on the Budget.
- It is to ensure timely passage of the Finance Bill.
- **Appropriation** - After the implantation of the guillotine during the Budget session, the government formally introduces the Appropriation Bill.
- The Appropriation Bill is passed to authorise the government to withdraw funds from the Consolidated Fund of India for the budgetary expenditure.

Other Types of Closure

- **Simple Closure:** It is one when a member moves that the 'matter has been sufficiently discussed be now put to vote.
- **Closure by Compartments**: In this case, the clauses of a bill or a lengthy resolution are grouped into parts before the commencement of the debate. The debate covers the part as a whole and the entire part is put to vote.
- **Kangaroo Closure:** Under this type, only important clauses are taken up for debate and voting and the intervening clauses are skipped over and taken as passed.

References

1. IE - What does ‘guillotine’ refer to in legislative parlance?
2. DNA - Union Budget 2023: What is Guillotine in Parliament?

Parvatmala Project

The detailed feasibility studies completed for 8 projects for implementation of Ropeways under Parvatmala program.

- The National Ropeway Development Programme is also known as ‘Parvatmala’ (Parvatmala means garlanding mountains).
- The project aims to decongest mountainous areas where road and train connectivity cannot be upgraded beyond a limit.
- 30 priority points or stretches will be constructed under phase-I of the project.
- The Parvatmala project was announced in the 2022-23 Union Budget.
- Parvatmala will construct ropeways in mountainous terrains of India under the Public Private Partnership (PPP).
- **Nodal Ministry** - The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways undertakes the project.
- The ministry will oversee all the affairs related to the ropeway construction, research, and policy-making.
- **Implementing Agency** - The National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML) has been mandated by the ministry to implement the project.
- NHLML is a 100% owned SPV of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).
- NHLML has aimed to complete construction of 8 ropeways in FY 2022-2023.
- **Advantages of Ropeways**
    1. Economical mode of transportation
    2. Faster mode of transportation
    3. Environmentally friendly
    4. Last mile connectivity
    5. Ability to handle large slopes
    6. Ideal for hilly and difficult terrain
    7. Low footprint - Low land use
- **Similar Initiatives** - Sagarmala, Bharatmala

References

1. PIB - Implementation of Ropeways under Parvatmala program
2. PIB - Parvatmala-An efficient and safe alternate transport network
3. News Nine - Parvatmala Project

Terminator Zones

A new study describes how extra-terrestrial life has the potential to exist on distant exoplanets inside a special area called the “terminator zone”.

- **Tidally locked planet** - ‘Tidally locked’ is a gravitational phenomenon in which one side of the planet always faces the star.

- Most of the exoplanets are tidally locked and have a permanent day side and a permanent night side.
- The dark sides of terminator planets could have perpetual night and freezing temperatures.
- The side facing the star could be too hot for water to remain liquid.
- Such planets are quite common as they exist around M-dwarf stars.

M-dwarf stars are relatively dimmer than our sun and make up about 70% of the stars seen in the night sky.

- Such planets can sustain habitable climates confined to the terminator region
- **Terminator Zone** - The 'terminator' is the dividing line between the 'day' and 'night' sides of the planet.
- Terminator zones are the border region between light and dark halves of an exoplanet.
- Terminator zones are the regions that could exist in that sweet spot between too hot and too cold.
- They are also known as ***'Twilight zones'.***

References

1. The Hindu - What are 'Terminator zones'?
2. Live Science - Aliens could be hiding in 'terminator zones'

Vedic Heritage Portal

The Union Home Minister inaugurated the Vedic Heritage portal and 'Kala Vaibhav' in New Delhi.

*The **'Kala Vaibhav'** inaugurated is a virtual museum based on 64 arts.*

- The 'Vedic Heritage Portal' was created by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) in New Delhi.
- It gives detailed information about oral traditions, textual tradition in form of published books/manuscripts, or implements.
- The portal aims to communicate message enshrined in the Vedas.
- The portal is a one-stop solution for common users and researchers seeking any information regarding 'Vedic' heritage.
- The Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts (IGNCA) is an autonomous institution of the Union Ministry of Culture

References

1. The Hindu - Technology to secure ancient scriptures for future
2. News On Air - HM Amit Shah inaugurates Vedic Heritage portal
3. Vedic Heritage - Portal

Evergreening of Patents

The Indian Patent Office rejected Johnson & Johnson's (J&J) attempt to extend its monopoly on manufacturing Bedaquiline in India beyond July 2023.

- J&J's primary patents on Bedaquiline will expire in July.
- This will pave the way for generic drug manufacturers to produce Bedaquiline ensuring cheaper and wider access to the drug.
- '**Evergreening**' is a strategy to extend the life of patent which is about to expire in order to retain revenues from them.
- Evergreening is sought filing for patent by making multiple claims in its applications for patent extensions.
- **Basis of Claim** - J&J had invented the method for making a derivative of quinoline in its salt form.
- **Basis of Rejection** - Section 3(d) of the Patents Act of 1970 states that salt forms and derivatives of known substances are not patentable.
- **Article 3(d) of the Indian Patent Act** - Section 3 and Section 3(d) deals with what does not qualify as an invention under the Act.
- The section acts as a safeguard against evergreening of patents and allows for generic competition by patenting only novel and genuine inventions.
- The *Novartis vs. Union of India case* upheld the validity of section 3(d) stating that it complies with the TRIPS agreement and the Doha Declaration.

Bedaquiline

- Bedaquiline is a crucial drug in the treatment of multi-drug resistant TB patients for whom the first-line drug treatment has stopped working.

Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR TB) is defined as resistance to isoniazid and rifampin, the two key first-line anti-TB drugs.

Extensively drug-resistant (XDR) TB refers to MDR-TB strains that are resistant to fluoroquinolones and second-line injectable drugs.

References

1. The Hindu - India rejects J&J's attempt to extend monopoly on Bedaquiline

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