Prelim Bits 27-07-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Johar Greeting

The 15th President of India, Droupadi Murmu, assumed office with a 'Johar' greeting to the country.

- 'Johar' or 'Juhar' essentially means 'salutation and welcome' or 'paying respect'.
- Johar is the tribal equivalent of *namaste*. It is used within the tribal communities of Jharkhand, and in parts of Chhattisgarh and Odisha.
- Johar is predominantly used by Santhali, Munda and Ho communities.
- 'Johar' is also one of the rituals of Nuakhai, an agricultural festival celebrated to welcome the new crop.
- **Doboh Johar** - It is a type of Johar where the person with a tumbler full of water bows in front of the person of higher standing.
- The person who bows will touch the earth and in return the other person will wash their hand (using water in the tumbler) and let the water drop on the earth.
- **Related Links** - Nuakhai

Reference

1. https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/everyday-explainers/explained-what-is-the-meaning-of-johar-greeting-used-by-president-murmu-8053155/
2. https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/droupadi-murmu-president-of-india-johar-namaskar-5-points-on-president-murmus-greeting-3190802
3. https://www.telegraphindia.com/jharkhand/greetings-to-visitors-the-tribal-way/cid/783001

Kerala Fibre Optic Network

Having received both the Infrastructure Provider and Internet Service Provider (ISP) licenses from the Central government, the Kerala Fibre Optic Network (KFON) is just a few steps away from reaching its beneficiaries.

> *Kerala is the only State in India that has declared 'the right to Internet' as a basic right of its citizens.*

- The KFON is the flagship project of the Kerala government launched in 2021 that is aimed to provide **universal Internet access** and address the problem of digital divide.
- It aims to provide free high-speed internet connections to
    a. 20 lakh below-poverty-line (BPL) households in the State, and

    b. 30,000+ government institutions.
- However, KFON will also be offering its own Internet service. Hence the ISP license.
- The KFON Ltd is a venture of equal partnership between Kerala State Information Technology Infrastructure Ltd (KSITIL) and Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB).
- A consortium led by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) was selected to implement the project in 2019.
- The KFON Ltd is primarily an **infrastructure provider for other ISPs** operating in the State.
- Under the project, 30,000 km of fibre optic cable will be laid connecting all parts of the State.
- ISPs can lease the KFON network to provide Internet service to customers across the State at an affordable rate.
- The initiative also aims to augment the launch of 5G services in the state.
- The majority of the existing towers are connected via radio, which limits the bandwidth that can be provided to the public.
- KFON is expected to solve this issue by **connecting the mobile towers** in Kerala and significantly enhance the mobile call quality and accelerate the transition to 5G.
- **Objectives** - The KFON network will function as a strong foundation for all G2G, G2C, B2C interactions.
- The major objectives of KFON are the following,
    1. Create a core network infrastructure (information highway) with non-discriminatory access to all service providers so as they can augment their connectivity gap.
    2. Provide a reliable, secure and scalable intranet connecting all government offices, educational institutions, hospitals, etc.
    3. Partner with MSOs, TSPs, ISPs for providing free internet to economically backward households.
- **Working** - The network consists of 48 fibres. Out of which, KFON and KSEB will be using roughly half for their own operations.
- The rest will be leased out to generate money for funding the operational and upgrading costs.
- Once completed, the state will be divided into four regions and the operators will be selected via an open tender.
- These selectees will be provided with the required bandwidth at subsidised rates.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/explained-keralas-own-internet-network-and-service-kfon/article65653920.ece
2. https://kfon.kerala.gov.in/about-kfon/
3. https://www.livemint.com/news/india/kerala-launches-fibre-optic-network-to-provide-free-internet-to-20-lakh-families-1161339970532html

Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary

- Located in Southern Kerala, the Shendurney wildlife sanctuary owes its name to the endemic species, *Ghuta Travancorica*, locally known as ‘Chenkurunji’.
- The sanctuary was established in 1984 as a part of Agasthyamali Biosphere Reserve.

- It is a valley of green splendour acclaimed for its rich biodiversity lying on either side of the Shendurney River.
- Its altitude ranges from 100 m to 1550 m. The highest peak is Alwarkurichi (1550m).
- Its annual rainfall varies from 2600 to 3000mm.
- **Related Links** - Chenkurunji

Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve

- The Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve is located in the southernmost end of the Western Ghats and incorporates peaks towering 1,868 m above sea level.
- It covers 3,500 km2 and encompasses tropical forest ecosystems that fall within the Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts of Tamil Nadu and the Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts of Kerala.
- The Park has endemic medicinal plants and rich biodiversity.
- To know more about Agasthyamala or Agasthyarkoodam, click here.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/saving-chenkurinji-from-climate-change/article65592984.ece
2. https://forest.kerala.gov.in/index.php/wildlife/2015-03-16-09-50-24/2015-06-26-09-04-29/shendurney-wildlife-sanctuary
3. https://www.keralatourism.org/destination/shenduruney-wildlife-sanctuary-kollam/331

The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989

- This Act, 1989 is in force to check and deter crimes against the members of the SCs and the STs. It extends to the whole of India.
- Financial assistance is provided to the States/ UTs for implementation of these Acts, by way of
    1. Relief to atrocity victims,
    2. Incentive for inter-caste marriages,
    3. Awareness generation,
    4. Setting up of exclusive Special courts, etc.
- The Act provides for **Special Courts** for the trial of such offences and for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of such offences and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- It provides for the delineation of "**Identified Areas**" (Atrocity Prone Areas) where members of SC/ST are vulnerable to being subjected to atrocities and adoption of necessary measures to ensure their safety.
- The SC and the ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995, requires the State Government to set up a **SC/ST Protection Cell**, at the State headquarters, under the charge of a DGP, ADGP/IGP.
- **NHAA** - National Helpline against Atrocities (NHAA) on the members of the SC and the ST has been also launched by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- The objective of the helpline ('14566') is to generate awareness about the provisions of the Law that are aimed at ending discrimination and provide protection.
- **Implementation** - The primary responsibility for implementation of the 1989 Act rests

with the State Governments/UT Administrations.

- But, the Government of India issues advisories to the State Governments/ UT Administrations from time to time for effective implementation of the Act and Rules.

Constitutional Provisions	**Purpose**
Article 15(4)	Special provisions for the advancement of the SC and the ST
Article 16(4A)	Reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of posts in the services under the State in favour of SCs/STs, which are not adequately represented in the services under the State
Article 17	Abolishes Untouchability
Article 46	Requires the State 'to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the SC and the ST, and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation
Article 335	The claims of the members of the SC and the ST shall be taken into consideration in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State
Article 330	Provide for reservation of seats in favour of the SC in the House of the People and in the legislative assemblies of the States
Article 332	Provide for reservation of seats in favour of the ST in the House of the People and in the legislative assemblies of the States
Article 338	National Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

Under Part IX relating to the Panchayats and Part IXA of the Constitution relating to the Municipalities, reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in local bodies has been envisaged and provided.

Reference

1. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1844972
2. https://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/scheduled-caste-welfare-1/scheduled-caste-welfare-in-india
3. https://indiankanoon.org/doc/25085007/

FCRA Amendment Rules 2022

The Central government has made seven amendments to existing rules of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) rules 2011.

- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act 2010 aims at prohibiting acceptance and

utilization of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality for any activities detrimental to the national interest.
- The Act extends across India and also applies to the citizens of India outside India.

- In exercise of the powers conferred by section 48 of the FCRA Act, 2010, the Central Government hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Rules, 2011.
- The 2011 Rules were subsequently amended in 2012, 2015, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. The following are the Rules amended in 2022.

Rule No	Changes made through FCRA Rules 2022	Impact of changes
6	Threshold limit raised from Rs. 1 Lakh to Rs. 10 Lakh	Receipt of foreign contribution from foreign relatives to be intimated in FC-1 if it exceeds Rs. 10 Lakh
	Time Limit extended from 30 days to 3 months	Such intimation in FC-1 shall be made within 3 months
9	Time Limit extended from 15 days to 45 days	Filing of Form FC-6D within 45 days instead of 15 days for FCRA registered entities and for entities with prior FCRA permission
13 (b)	Omitted	Requiremnt of Quarterly publication of FC receipts on website dispensed with
17A	Time Limit extended to 45 days	Time limit for filing Forms FC-6A to FC-6E increased
20	Form for application for Revision of orders	Instead of making on a plain paper, it shall be in the prescribed form to be filed electronically.

Impacts of FCRA Amendments

- Indian NGOs need an FCRA clearance for using foreign funds for developmental work.
- The FCRA amended in 2010 gave discretionary powers to the state to deal with NGOs. NGOs now needed to renew their licenses every 5 years.
- However, the current government has cancelled an unprecedented number of FCRA licences using the 2010 law.
- After the FCRA amendment in 2020, NGOs could spend less on administrative costs.
- Finally, all the NGOs were required to operate their foreign accounts through the SBI's branch located at Parliament Street in New Delhi.
- The period after the 2020 amendment was characterised by the demonstration effect of punishing a few significant players that worked either for the minority rights or the poor.
- **Related Links -** Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 2010, Amendments to FCRA

Reference

1. https://www.livemint.com/news/india/govt-amends-foreign-donation-act-fcra-act-check-latest-rules-11656744023470.html
2. https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/seeking-to-destroy-indias-civil-society/article6568481ece
3. https://www.taxcorner.co.in/2022/07/foreign-contribution-regulation-amendment-rules-

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