Prelim Bits 28-08-2019

How India protects its VIPs

- Recently, Central government has withdrawn Special Protection Group (**SPG**) security cover to former PM Dr.Manmohan Singh.
- The former Prime Minister will now be given **'Z-plus'** cover by the Central Armed Police Forces (**CAPF**).
- Decision to withdraw the security cover of these protectees was taken at a meeting of the Security Categorisation Committee.
- **CAPF**, the umbrella term for **7** security forces under the 'Ministry of Home Affairs',

    1. The Assam Rifles,
    2. The Border Security Force (**BSF**),
    3. The Central Reserve Police Force (**CRPF**),
    4. The Central Industrial Security Force (**CISF**),
    5. The National Security Guard (**NSG**),
    6. The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (**ITBP**), and
    7. The Sashastra Seema Bal (**SSB**).

- After Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her own security guards, the government decided to create a special cadre of security personnel for the Prime Minister.
- Following the recommendations of a committee set up by the Home Ministry, a special unit was created for this purpose under the Cabinet Secretariat.
- This unit, initially called the 'Special Protection Unit', was renamed as 'Special Protection Group' (**SPG**).
- Subsequently, the Parliament passed 'The Special Protection Group' (**SPG**) Act,

    1. To provide for the constitution and regulation of an armed force of the Union.
    2. For providing proximate security to the PM of India and for matters connected therewith.

- The SPG Act defined "proximate security" as,

    1. Protection provided from close quarters, during journey by road, rail, aircraft, watercraft or any other means of transport.

2. It also “includes the places of functions, engagements, residence or halt”.

- Then SPG protection was extended, apart from the PM, to former PMs of India and members of their immediate families.
- It was done through an amendment in the Act in the aftermath of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.
- Besides the **SPG**, VIPs in India are protected by other security forces as well.
- The levels of security cover are determined by the threat perception around the individual.
- The highest level of security cover is the **‘Z-plus’** category, followed by **Z**, **Y**, and **X** categories.
- The higher the level of cover, the larger the number of personnel protecting the individual.
- For **‘Z-plus’** category protectees, roughly 24-36 personnel with automatic weapons are deployed.
- For **‘Z’** category, roughly 16-20 personnel guard the protectees.
- The elite ‘**Black Cat**’ commandos of the **NSG** are deployed to protect VIPs for whom the threat perception is the highest.

Fedor the Robot

- Recently, the humanoid robot **‘Fedor’**, the first from Russia sent into orbit, reached the International Space Station (**ISS**).
- ‘**Fedor**’ short for ‘Final Experimental Demonstration Object Research’ can be operated manually by ISS astronauts wearing robotic exoskeleton suits.
- It copies human movements, which will enable it to perform tasks that are risky for astronauts strapped onto an exoskeleton.
- It is an anthropomorphic robot, ideal option for an assistant, and in some cases a complete replacement for a person.
- **Fedor** was sent in an unmanned Soyuz capsule to ISS.
- Fedor will spend 10 days on the International Space Station, learning tasks performed by astronauts.
- Other countries that have previously sent their robot’s are,
    1. In 2011, NASA sent up **‘Robonaut 2’**.
    2. In 2013, Japan sent up a small robot called **‘Kirobo’**.
- The International Space Station (**ISS**) has been orbiting Earth at about 28,000 kilometres per hour since 1998.

India Child Well-Being Report

- The report has been prepared by ‘World Vision India’ (child-focused

humanitarian organisation) and 'IFMR LEAD' (research organisation) based in India.

- Children are the happiest in Kerala and the least happy in Madhya Pradesh.
- Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh and Puducherry topped the charts while Meghalaya, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh featured at the bottom.
- Poor nutrition and low child survival rate has pushed Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh to the bottom of an index.
- Findings based on a study of 24 data indicators including,

1. The indicators are a mix of health, education, human rights, family income and so on.
2. Health indicators such as,
   - Stunting and Infant mortality, Under-five mortality rate,
   - Mental health/illnesses, Sex-ratio,
   - Adolescent pregnancy (women aged 15 to 19 years who were already mothers or pregnant),
3. Education indicators such as passing tenth grade,
   - The pupil-teacher ratio, basic reading and math skills, drop-out rates in secondary school,
4. Crime indicators such as juvenile crimes, suicide rates,
5. Economic indicators such as houselessness, households with income less than Rs 5,000 and
   - Labour indicators such as manual scavenging.
6. All indicators were brought to a common scale of measurement and normalised.

- Among the UTs, the National Capital Territories of Delhi scored 0.53, closely followed by Dadra Nagar Haveli at 0.52.

- The report is important considering that 40% of the country's population is made of children between the ages of 1 and 18.

Source: PIB, The Indian Express



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