Prelim Bits 29-04-2019

Khasi Tribes

- Khasi people are an indigenous ethnic group of Meghalaya in north-eastern India.
- They are found in the bordering state of Assam, and in certain parts of Bangladesh.
- Their language, Khasi, is categorized as the northernmost Austroasiatic language.
- The word Khasi is derived from shankaradevas Baghavata purna an Indo Aryan literature.
- Though around 85% of the Khasi populace have embraced Christianity, a substantial minority of the Khasi people still follow and practice their age old indigenous religion, which is known as Ka Niam Khasi.
- The main crops produced by the Khasi people are betel leaf, areca nut, oranges, local Khasi rice, vegetables, etc.
- The War sub-tribe of the Khasi community designed and built the famous living root bridges of the Cherrapunji region.
- Under the Constitution of India, the Khasis have been granted the status of Scheduled Tribe.

Khasi Accord

- During British rule, the Khasi domain was divided into the Khasi states and British territories.
- At that time, the British government had no territorial right on the Khasi states and they had to approach the chiefs of these states if they needed land for any purpose.
- After independence, the British territories became part of the Indian dominion but the Khasi states had to sign documents beginning with the Standstill Agreement that provided a few rights to the states.
- The 25 Khasi states had signed the Instrument of Accession and Annexed Agreement with the Dominion of India between 1947-1948.
- The Khasi states did not sign the Instrument of Merger unlike most other states in India.

National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC)

- A National Crisis Management Committee is a temporary committee set up by the Government of India in the wake of a natural calamity for effective coordination and implementation of relief measures and operations.
- On the constitution of such a committee, the Agriculture Secretary shall provide all necessary information to and seek directions.
- The Committee consists of Cabinet Secretary of various departments as stakeholders.
- Crisis Management Group (CMG) will deal with matters relating to relief in the wake of major natural calamities.
- The Resident Commissioners of the States affected by a major natural calamity may be coopted on the CMG during the period of crisis.
- The CMG will meet at least twice in a year and as often as may be required by the Relief Commissioner.

USTR Watch List

- Priority Watch List and Watch List countries are identified by the annual Special 301 Report.
- **Priority Watch list countries -** are judged by the United States Trade Representative (USTR) as having "serious intellectual property rights deficiencies" that require increased USTR attention.
- **Watch List countries -** have been identified by the USTR as having "serious intellectual property rights deficiencies" but are not yet placed on the "Priority Watch list".
- The USTR can move countries from one list to the other, or remove them from the lists, throughout the year.
- India has been on the priority watch list reportedly for over 25 years, for "lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its IP framework that have negatively affected US right holders".
- The Priority Watch List is topped by China also includes Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.
- Countries under the priority watch list will be the subject of increased bilateral engagement with the USTR to address Intellectual Property (IP) concerns.

UN Arms Trade Treaty

- United Nations Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is aimed at regulating the global arms trade.
- ATT has the ambitious aim of responding to the international concern that

the $70 billion a year trade in conventional weapons leaves a trail of atrocities in its wake.

- The treaty calls for the international sale of weapons to be linked to the human rights records of buyers.
- It requires countries to establish regulations for selling conventional weapons.
- Conventional weapons covered by the UN Arms Trade Treaty include tanks and other armoured combat vehicles, artillery, attack helicopters, naval warships, missiles and missile launchers, and small arms.
- The treaty does not regulate the domestic sale or use of weapons in any country.
- The treaty also seeks to prevent conventional military weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists or organized criminal groups and to stop deals that would violate UN arms embargos.
- India has not signed the treaty, recently the US has pulled out itself from the treaty.

Source: PIB, the Hindu

