Prelim Bits 30-01-2019

International Gandhi Prize

- The Government of India had announced the International Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018 to Nippon Foundation Chairman Sasakawa Yohei.
- The award is to honor the efforts of Sasakawa toward eradicating leprosy in India and elsewhere around the world.
- Sasakawa is the first Japanese to receive the Indian award.
- The award was conferred in 2014 to the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).
- Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari won the award for 2015 for rural development and education.
- The award for 2016 has been jointly given to Akshaya Patra Foundation for providing mid-day meals to children across the country and Sulabh International for its work towards emancipation of manual scavengers.
- For 2017, the award is given to Ekai Abhiyan Trust for their contribution to education for rural and tribal children.
- The International Gandhi Peace Prize was established in 1995 to mark the 125th birthday of the Indian human rights leader Mahatma Gandhi.
- The winners are selected by a jury headed by Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the Chief Justice of India and two other eminent persons.

Chin refugees

- Eight organizations of the Chakma community submitted a memorandum to the Ministry of Home Affairs seeking the inclusion of Chin refugees in India by amending the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.
- The bill currently allows illegal migrants who **are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis & Christians** from **Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan**, eligible for citizenship.
- They want to add Myanmar to the list.
- The Chins are one of the major ethnic groups in Myanmar, and are mostly Christians.
- They are ethnically related to Mizos of Mizoram and the Kuki-Zomi groups in Manipur.
- Buddhist-majority Myanmar was governed by a military junta since the

1960s, until recently.
- They carried out forced assimilation and repression of the Chin people.
- About 4,000 Chin refugees were registered with the UNHCR in New Delhi.
- But in June 2018, the UNHCR decided to cancel their 'refugee status' on the ground that Myanmar has now become "stable and secure" and they don't need "international protection".

Poll symbols

- Aam Aadmi Party moved the Delhi High Court, seeking to restrain another party named Aapki Apni Party from using the battery torch symbol.
- It is because the battery torch, with rays of light on top, is similar to AAP's broom symbol.
- This along with the similar name is likely to confuse voters.
- The Election Commission has two lists of symbols namely **reserved and free.**
- Reserved symbols are allotted to candidates sponsored by recognized state or national parties.
- Similarly a list of free symbols is prepared by ECI for independent candidates or those from unrecognized parties.
- These candidates have to choose three symbols from the list at the time of submission of nomination papers.
- One of the three will be allocated to him.
- Any choice other than from the list will be summarily rejected.
- Two or more recognized political parties can have the same symbol provided they are not contenders in the same State or Union Territory.

New Delhi metallo-beta-lactamase-1 in Arctic region

- A new study has found traces of antibiotic resistance (AR) genes in the High Arctic region (Svalvard).
- It includes the 'superbug' or the **New Delhi metallo-beta-lactamase-1** protein (coded by blaNDM-1 gene), which was first detected in urban India in 2008.
- The detection reinforces how rapidly AR can globalize.
- Bacteria with the NDM-1 gene are part of a larger group of superbug bacteria that are extremely hard to treat and can spread easily in hospitals.
- Most NDM-1 strains are resistant to all commonly used antibiotics.

Golden Langur

- Assam announced the success of the Golden Langur Conservation Breeding Program in the State.

- Gee’s golden langur is a leaf-eating monkey found only in northeastern India and Bhutan.
- It is currently marked endangered in the IUCN list.
- It inhabits evergreen and deciduous tropical forests.
- Like most fruit eating primates they play a vital role in forest repopulation i.e via seed dispersal, seed predation, and pollination.



Pong Dam Wetlands

- The State Forest Department is organizing the annual census of waterfowl species at Pong wetlands of Kangra Valley, Himachel Pradesh.
- Water fowls are the birds that depend on water bodies for roosting and feeding.
- Pong is a man-made wetland formed by the construction of Pong Dam during 1974 across the Beas River.
- The reservoir is also known Maha Rana Pratap Sagar.
- It was declared a Ramsar Site in the year 2002.
- It is the only place in the country after the Bharatpur sanctuary in Rajasthan where the red-necked grebe descends every year.
- Other visitors include White Fronted Goose, Whooper Swan, Indian Skimmer, White rumped Vultures, Black bellied Tern.

Source: PIB, The Hindu, Business Standard

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