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Tulip Garden

- Prime Minister asked people to visit tulip garden in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The Tulip garden is located at the foothills of Zaberwan range with an overview of Dal Lake and is the largest tulip garden in Asia.
- This garden, built on a sloping ground in a terraced fashion with seven terraces, was opened in 2007 with the aim to boost floriculture and tourism in Kashmir Valley by the then Chief Minister.
- **Tulip festival** is organised at the onset of spring season in the Valley.
- It is an annual celebration that aims to showcase the range of flowers in the garden as part of tourism efforts by the government of J&K.

Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure

- The 27-member European Union (EU) joins India-led Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) initiative.
- CDRI was launched by Indian Prime Minister at the UN Climate Change Summit (2019).
- It is a multi-stakeholder global partnership of country governments, UN agencies, multilateral banks, private sector and knowledge institutions.
- It promotes the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of Sustainable Development Goals' (SDG).
- With the CDRI Secretariat at New Delhi, the members are 22 countries and 7 organisations.
- CDRI's strategic priorities - Technical Support and Capacity-building, Research and Knowledge Management, Advocacy and Partnerships.

Medium-Range Surface to Air Missile

- Kalyani Rafael Advanced Systems (KRAS), a private manufacturer of advanced weapons systems, will deliver 1000 midsection Medium-Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM) to Indian Armed Forces.
- MRSAM of KRAS has a range of more than 70 km.
- It has the ability of direct hit, and its accuracy is so perfect that a flying aircraft on one or two or two max plus can be picked up and hit directly

rather than at a proximity distance as such.
- This is one of the most proven weapon systems with the Israeli defence forces, Indian forces, and many other countries.

SPICE-2000 Bombs

- SPICE-2000 bombs were the very first product of the Kalyani Rafael Advanced Systems (KRAS).
- It was used by Indian Air Force (IAF) to strike terror camps in Pakistan's Balakot in 2019.
- SPICE-2000 (big boy), SPICE 1000 and SPICE-250 (small boy) have an electro-optic seeker that makes it an intelligent weapons system.
- This bomb is already a proven technology and inducted in the Indian defence forces for the last few years.

Sachin Waze Case

- The special court in Mumbai allowed for Asst. police inspector Sachin Waze's lawyer to remain present during the National Investigation Agency (NIA) interrogation but separated by a glass partition.
- The safeguards available to a person in such circumstances enshrined in the Indian Constitution are,
    1. **Article 20(3)** states, "No person accused of any offence shall be compelled to be a witness against himself."
    2. **Article 22** states, "A person cannot be denied the right to consult and to be defended by a legal practitioner of his choice." This includes granting an accused the "Right to consult" a lawyer.
- **Section 41D** of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) states that an accused is entitled to meet an advocate of his choice during interrogation, though not throughout interrogation.
- **D K Basu case (1997)** - The Supreme Court states that an arrestee may be permitted to meet his lawyer during interrogation, though not throughout the interrogation.
- **Jugal Kishore Sharma case (2011)** - Accused's lawyer will be allowed to watch the proceedings from a distance or from beyond a glass partition.
- But, the lawyer won't be allowed within the hearing distance, and the respondent won't be open allowed to have consultations with him during the interrogation.
- In many criminal cases, it is left to the discretion of the court to decide on whether the lawyer can be permitted to meet the person for a stipulated time in private when interrogation is not in progress.

Amendments to Forest Conservation Act

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has proposed amendments to Section 1 and 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 (FCA).
- It proposes two changes to strengthen the applicability of the FCA,
    1. To complete the process of forest identification in a time-bound manner,
    2. To enable the creation of 'no-go' areas, where specific projects would not be allowed.
- The amendments propose to grant exemptions to infrastructure projects like railways, roads, tree plantations, oil exploration, wildlife tourism and 'strategic' projects in the forests areas.
- Exemption is subject to terms and conditions of the central government.
- A new explanation is added to the Section 2 that states 'survey, reconnaissance, prospecting, exploration or investigation' for a future activity in the forest will not be classified as a **Non-forestry Activity**.
- This means such survey works would not require any prior permission from the government. Only exception is if the activity falls within a wildlife sanctuary, national park or tiger reserve.
- The amendments aim to empower state governments to lease forest land to private individuals and corporations.
- If the proposed amendments come into force, they would dilute the provisions of the Supreme Court's decision in Godavarman case (1996).

Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

- Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is the principal legislation that regulates deforestation in the country. The FCA has only five sections.
    1. Section 1 defines the extent of coverage of the law,
    2. Section 2 restrictions of activities in forest areas, and
    3. The rest deals with the creation of advisory committees, powers of rule-making and penalties.
- It prohibits the felling of forests for any "non-forestry" use without prior clearance by the central government.
- The clearance process includes seeking consent from local forest rights-holders and from wildlife authorities. The Centre may reject such requests or allow them with legally binding conditions.

Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index

- Ministry of Labour and Employment said that the Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index 2020 lacked clarity and didn't take into account provisions of the 4 labour codes that are yet to be implemented.

- The Inequality Index 2020 placed India at rank 151 in terms of workers' rights and 129 overall out of 158 countries.
- It is released by the international charitable organisation 'Oxfam International' in partnership with Development Finance International.
- It monitors what the governments are doing through their policy commitments and actions to reduce inequality and tackle the gap between the rich and poor.
- The index is based upon three basic pillars: Public Services (health, education and social protection), Progressive Tax and Workers Rights.

Stop TB Partnership Board

- The Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare has been appointed Chairman of the 'Stop TB Partnership Board' for a three year term, commencing July 2021.
- The Partnership was conceived following the meeting of the First Session of the Ad Hoc Committee on the TB Epidemic held in London in 1998.
- Established in 2000, the 'Stop TB Partnership' is an international body with a mandate to eliminate Tuberculosis (TB) as a public health problem by aligning actors all over the world.
- Through **Amsterdam Declaration**, the Partnership gave a call for collaborative action from ministerial delegations from 20 countries that bear the highest burden of TB.
- It has 1500 partner organizations - International, non-governmental and governmental organizations and patient groups.
- Secretariat - Geneva, Switzerland.
- It launched the Global Plan to End TB 2018-2022.

Measures by India

- India's National Strategic Plan for TB Elimination 2017-2025 aims to eliminate TB in the country by 2025, five years ahead of the global deadline of 2030.
- In 2019, a new and aggressive 'TB HaregaDeshJeetega' Campaign, along with the National TB Prevalence Survey was launched.
- Patient forums have been established in over 95% of all districts within the first 100 days of the launch of the campaign.

Source: PIB, ANI, The Hindu, The Indian Express, Down To Earth



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