CONSTITUTION AND POLITY

Statehood Day of Telangana

The Prime Minister of India greeted the people of Telangana on Statehood Day (2nd June).

Key Points

- On 2nd June, 2014 the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh was separated and 29th state Telangana was created with Hyderabad as its capital.
- The Andhra State Act (1953) formed the first linguistic state of India, known as the state of Andhra, by taking out the Telugu speaking areas from the State of Madras (now Tamil Nadu).
- The States Reorganisation Act (1956) merged the Telugu-speaking areas of Hyderabad state with the Andhra state to create the enlarged Andhra Pradesh state.
- The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act (2014) bifurcated Andhra Pradesh into two separate states, namely, the Andhra Pradesh (residuary) and the Telangana.

Related Information:

- Four icons of Telangana are:
  - State Bird - Palapitta (Indian Roller or Blue Jay).
  - State Animal - Jinka (Deer).
  - State Tree - Jammi Chettu (Prosopis Cineraria).
  - State Flower - Tangedu (Tanner's Cassia).
- These icons reflect the culture and tradition of Telangana state and three of them - Tangedu flowers, Palapitta and Jammi Chettu are associated with the popular festivals of Bathukamma and Dasara, while Jinka reflects the mindset of the people of Telangana as it is very sensitive and innocent.

GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.

J&K Media Policy-2020

Recently, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has approved a Media Policy-2020. The policy seeks to create a sustained narrative on the functioning of the government in the media and promote the highest standard of journalism in the Union Territory.

Key Points

- Standard Operating Procedure: The media policy aims to put in place a Standard Operating Procedure for reaching out to the people in situations of crisis like health issues and natural disasters.
- Control misinformation: It seeks to prevent misinformation, fake news and develop a mechanism that will raise alarm against any attempt to use the media to vitiate public peace, sovereignty and integrity of the country.
- Establishment of Media Academy: It includes establishment of a media academy/institute in reputable national institutes in Jammu and Kashmir such as IIMC, IIM that will promote the highest standard of journalism, and coordinate study and research in the field.
- Media and Administration: It lays down the guidelines for empanelment of audio-visual and electronic media such as FM, radio, satellite and cable TV channels so as to streamline their interface with the Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR).
- Nodal Officer: The policy envisages that all government departments will nominate a nodal officer to liaise with DIPR.
- Social Media Cell: To ensure healthy interaction with the public online and on social media, the policy lays down setting up of a Social Media Cell in all the government departments.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

A3i (Type Of Coronavirus)

Scientists at multiple CSIR laboratories have identified a type of coronavirus that may be the second most prevalent in India, and may comprise 3.5% of the genomes globally.

About:

- The most dominant coronavirus clade in India is the A2a, and of 213 genomes analysed by the group, 62% of them were A2a.
- The newly identified type, that the scientists have christened A3i, comprised 41% of those analysed. With this, there are 11 SARS-CoV-2 types identified globally, with at least six of them identified in India.

Related Info :

- The coronavirus type, or clade, is a cluster of SARS-CoV-2 viruses that share evolutionary similarities.

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- Such classifications are useful in establishing whether certain strains are particularly virulent, spread more easily, how they are likely to evolve over time and whether some could be less vulnerable to certain kinds of vaccines.

Antifa

Seeking to assign blame for the protests that have convulsed cities across the country, U.S. President Donald Trump said that the U.S. would designate Antifa a terrorist organisation.

About:

- History: Antifa has been around for several decades, with some dating it as far back as Nazi Germany.
- Etymology: Antifa is borrowed from German Antifa, short for antifaschistisch 'anti-fascist', in Antifaschistische Aktion (multiparty front initiated by the German Communist Party in 1932 to counter Nazism) and in other collocations.
- Global presence: While the movement has had a presence in several European countries and has now come into focus in the United States following the election of President Trump in 2016, with violence marking some of its protests and demonstrations.
- Membership: Antifa does not have a formal organisational structure. It draws its members from other movements such as Black Lives Matter and the Occupy movement.
- Functioning: Antifa members typically dress in black and often wear a mask at their demonstrations, and follow far-left ideologies such as anti-capitalism. They take up causes such as LGBTQ and indigenous rights. What makes them stand out is the violence.

Depsang

Reports of a heavy Chinese presence at Depsang, an area at a crucial dip (called the Bulge) on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), have increased tensions between Indian and Chinese troops.

About:

The Depsang Plains are located at the Line of Actual Control (in the Western Sector) that separates the Indian and Chinese controlled regions.

India controls the western portion of the plains as part of Ladakh, whereas the eastern portion is part of the Aksai Chin region, which is controlled by China and claimed by India.

In April 2013, the Chinese PLA troops set up a temporary camp in the Depsang Bulge, but later withdrew as a result of a diplomatic agreement with India.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Real-Time Electricity Market (RTM)

The country's two power exchanges — Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) and Power Exchange India (PXIL) — commenced real-time electricity market (RTM) on their platforms.

About:

- The RTM enables consumers, including distribution companies (discoms) and captive users, to buy power on exchanges just an hour before delivery.RTM will help consumers purchase electricity just an hour in advance.
- With RTM, both sellers and buyers now get an opportunity to continuously manage their portfolio optimally through a transparent and efficient marketplace.
- In December 2019, the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) approved the framework for RTM trading by power exchanges. Till now, the exchanges had day-ahead, week-ahead, and season-ahead markets, as well as renewable energy certificates trading.
- There are two energy exchanges in India -- IEX and PXIL -- where electricity is traded.

Central Employment Guarantee Council

Union Minister of Rural Development chaired the 21st meeting of Central Employment Guarantee Council.

About:

- The Central Employment Guarantee Council was constituted under Section 10 of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Mahatma Gandhi NREGA), 2005.
- Addressing the participants, rural development minister said that for the Financial Year 2020-21, Rs.61,500 crore has been allocated for this programme which is an all-time high.
- Additional provision of Rs.40,000 crore has been made for this programme under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan to provide employment to the needy workers during this difficult period arising of COVID-19.

Bimal Julka Committee

An Expert Committees on Rationalisation of Film Media Units and Review of Autonomous Bodies submitted its report to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Committee was chaired by Bimal Julka.

About:

- The committee has found overlapping activities being undertaken by multiple institutes.
- It has suggested an umbrella configuration with 4 broad verticals under which institutes should work. They are - Production, Festival, Heritage and Knowledge. It has recommended that these verticals be headed by professionals.
- It has also recommended creation of Film Promotion Fund for independent filmmakers for making commercial films.

Mandatory Public Procurement Of Chemicals

Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers said that mandatory public procurement of chemicals and petrochemicals to boost manufacturing and production of goods and services will promote Make in India.

About:

- Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, DPIIT has recently revised the public procurement order to encourage Make in India initiative with an aim to enhance income and employment generation in the country.
- Subsequently, Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals prescribed minimum 60 per cent for 2020-21, 70 per cent for 2021-23 and 80 per cent local content for 2023-25 respectively of local chemicals and petrochemical contents in public procurement.

Import Cut to Become Self-Reliant

Recently, the Union Government has identified 10 promising sectors to cut "unnecessary" import.

Key Points

- Identified Sectors: The sectors include capital goods and machinery, mobile and electronics, gems and jewellery, pharmaceuticals, textiles and garments.
- Earlier, the government had asked the Indian industry to set new targets towards building self-reliance in furniture, footwear and air conditioners.

Government's Plan:

- The government is looking for increasing domestic manufacturing and exploring the export potential in these areas.
- For this, the government is bringing more investment and making India a major manufacturing destination for these sectors.
- The government is also focussing on raising quality controls to make India globally competitive.
- If necessary, the government can also raise the import duties on these sectors without violating the World Trade Organisation (WTO) bound rates.
- PM's Focus on AtmaNirbhar Bharat: Earlier, the Prime Minister had stressed on the need for self-reliance and a stronger focus on manufacturing locally by enterprises to strengthen the economy against the impact of coronavirus and get the country back on the growth track.
- He had emphasised on the need to build robust local supply chains and focus on Make In India.
- He called for creating strong enterprises in India that can become global forces and help in generating employment.
- He highlighted that India did not use to manufacture PPE kits earlier but the pandemic has shown that India can fulfill its own needs.

Schemes:

- The government has brought various schemes towards making India a major player in sectors like medical devices, Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs). For example: Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme.
- However, in some cases, the schemes are repackaged versions of older attempts of the previous government to promote domestic production in these areas.
- For instance, recently, the government invited applications from companies to invest in India under the second phase of the electronics manufacturing scheme.
- An earlier version of a similar electronics manufacturing scheme, called the Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme was notified by the previous government in July 2012.

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Issues

- Concerns related to India's dependence on imports e.g. over 30% Imports in the air conditioners sector.
- As per the Ministry of Commerce, India imported $467.2 billion worth of commodities between April, 2019 and March, 2020.
- With AtmaNirbhar Bharat, there is a danger of India going back to an import substitution framework.
- Taking this path would also be quite daunting, as the financial and technological resources required would be very high.

Way Forward

- The Prime Minister has talked about 5 Is to make India self-reliant. This includes intent, inclusion, investment, infrastructure, and innovation.
- There is a need to be strategic in terms of the choice of sectors in which the country wants to be self-reliant.
- India has a natural advantage in these 10 sectors and if work is done to strengthen these industries, these will support the country massively.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Q. Discuss whether the frequent viral outbreaks can be termed as man-made disasters.

The ongoing novel coronavirus outbreak has resulted in over 1300 mortality in China, surpassing the SARS outbreak. The 2018 Nipah virus outbreak in Kerala, frequent dengue, malaria in North-West India, Japanese Encephalitis cases in Bihar, Ebola in Western Africa substantiate these rising cases of viral outbreaks, especially in under-developed countries. A disaster is a sudden occurrence of an event resulting in huge losses – lives, resources.

Reasons for viral outbreaks as man-made disasters

- Inefficient health infrastructure results in high mortality: Lack of medicines, doctors etc. lead to inaccessibility to timely treatment as evident in the case of dengue mortality in India even with available treatment. This is mainly due to public health expenditure and income inequality.
- Lack of Research and Development: Currently, for such outbreaks, countries depend on international bodies like WHO to develop vacancies/treatments due to lack of internal capacities like in case of Ebola virus. This leads to the unavailability of the local and immediate response to the outbreak.
- Lack of effective monitoring and quarantine measures results in rapid and uncontrolled spread of virus. Knee-Jerk measures employed at times of public health emergencies result in mobilisation of huge quantum of resources in a short time, thus affecting other sectors of the economy.
- Social and economic reasons due to high-density urbanisation, increasing globalisation, changing lifestyle, increasing human-wildlife (fruit bats in case of Nipah) contact result in the transmission of zoonotic diseases.

Since most cases have underlying reasons emanate from man's changing role in the environment, they can be controlled by addressing such reasons.

- Following protocols with established capacity to tackle sudden outbreak like in case of Global Emergency declaration by WHO.
- Increasing investment in research and development – biotechnology like Human Genome Project, medical infrastructure, especially in public institutions in underdeveloped countries, aid and co-operation by developed countries.
- Effective monitoring: robust disease surveillance system – case of Delhi in bringing down dengue cases, implement laws strictly, especially related to wildlife, environment and health.
- Special resource allocation for handling emergency situations like Contingency Fund.

Conclusion: Though viral outbreaks can take the form of man-made disasters. Such situations can be managed given man's own ability to identify both point and nonpoint sources resulting in such disasters and since most of them accrue due to man's own created ecosystem, they can be mitigated.

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