CONSTITUTION AND POLITY

Permanent Residence Certificate

Violence erupted in Arunachal Pradesh over the issue of Permanent Residence Certificate to six non-Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled Tribes (APSTs) living in the Namsai and Changlang districts and to the Gorkhas living in Vijaynagar. The protests spread despite a state government assurance that they had deferred the plan to give them PRC.

Background: Deoris, Sonowal Kacharis, Morans, Adivasis and Mishings were demanding Permanent Residence Certificate. Most of these communities are recognised as Scheduled Tribes in neighbouring Assam. According to reports, the demand by these communities for PRC, recognising them as residents of the state, is long-standing, but is opposed by powerful groups.

Permanent Residence Certificate:

- The State Government of Arunachal Pradesh issues the domicile certificate otherwise called as Permanent Residence Certificate (PRC) to the residents of the state who stayed therein over a period. Those citizens who are not currently residing in the state but are sure of permanently staying therein can also apply for it.
- Besides the permanent residence certificate, the State also offers Temporary Residence Certificate (TRC) for those who reside in the State on a temporary basis.

Purpose of the Certificate:

- Permanent Residence Certificate is a legal document that serves as an evidence of residence and thus must be submitted wherever a residence proof is required.
- Permanent Residence Certificate should be produced in many situations such as admission in educational organisations, job reservation under specific quotas especially for government jobs, etc. to get local preferences.
- To apply for ration card permanent residence certificate is a vital and mandate document.
- To avail the provisions of various schemes of the state or to claim scholarships of the State, permanent residence certificate is essential.

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

Sujalam Sufalam Jal Sanchay Abhiyan in Gujarat

The government of Gujarat has launched the second edition of the water conservation scheme Sujalam Sufalam Jal Sanchay Abhiyan.

Sujalam Sufalam Jal Sanchay Abhiyan:

- The scheme aims to deepen water bodies in the state before monsoon to increase storage of rainwater to be used during times of scarcity.
- It involves cleaning and desilting of riverfronts, sprucing up of Irrigation canals.

Background:

- During the first edition against its anticipated target of 16,616 works of deepening of ponds and lakes across the state, 18,220 works were accomplished. The first edition witnessed an increase in the water storage capacity of more than 11,000 lakh cubic feet rainwater through different sources like ponds, reservoirs, check dams, bori bandh and other.
- The desilting had also generated a huge amount of loose/soil or clay which can be used by farmers to increase agricultural productivity.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

Islamic Cooperation countries (OIC)

In a 1st, India has been invited to OIC meet as 'guest of honour'.

Background: India has never been invited to the OIC before and the latest development, coming at a time when the India-Pakistan tension is running high, is being seen as a diplomatic success.

OIC:

- Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is an international organization founded in 1969, consisting of 57 member states.
- It is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations.
- The organisation states that it is "the collective voice of the Muslim world" and works to "safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony".
- The OIC has permanent delegations to the United Nations and the European Union.

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Plot-1441, Opp. IOCL Petrol Pump, CRP Square, Bhubaneswar-751015
Ph.: 8984111101, 8093083555. Web: www.vanikias.com, E-mail: vaniksias@gmail.com

Slipping on Democracy

The Economist Intelligence Unit recently published its 11th report on the "State of Democracy in the World in 2018" titled "Me Too?Democracy Index confirms the paradox of India being the world's largest electoral wonder, but an increasingly flawed democracy.

About Survey

- The survey ranks 165 independent countries based on five parameters — namely, electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of the government, political participation and political culture.
- Index classifies countries into four types — Full Democracies, Flawed Democracies, Hybrid Democracies and Authoritarian Regimes.
- Most of the shift has taken place into flawed democracies, which constitute the largest group with 43 per cent of the world's population.
- A third of the world lives under authoritarian governments, the majority being in China.
- Nordic democracies continue to top the rankings year after year, with high political participation, robust welfare state and progressive workers' rights and environmental standards.

Findings of The Survey

- Voter turnout was on the rise in 2018, in expression of disillusionment.
- The culture of protest is on the rise, with a number of demonstrations around the world for a plethora of causes.
- The rise of social media has made public outreach quicker and easier, making lawful assembly an increasing trend.
- Quotas for women candidates have made parliaments more inclusive, pointing to the instrumental importance of positive political discrimination.
- Japan introduced women's quota legislation in 2018. In the subcontinent, Nepal already tops South Asia in women's representation, with 33 per cent of the seats reserved for women in Parliament and a record 40 per cent of women in local bodies.
- It is time the Indian Parliament also walks the talk on women's representation.
- Four out of five attributes of the Democracy Index either showed stagnation or improvement for the whole world, except for "civil liberties", which continues its decline since 2008, coming down from 6.3 to 5.7.
- "Functioning of the government" remains at the bottom of the score card, with hardly any improvement from a high of 5.0 since 2008.
- The score for perception of democracy as a sub-attribute suffered its biggest fall in the index since 2010, indicating that people are losing faith in the capability of democracy to deliver basic goods and utilities.

Situation in The South Asia

- Among the SAARC countries, India (41) and Sri Lanka (71) are classified as flawed democracies, followed by Bangladesh (88), Bhutan (94) and Nepal (97) which are hybrid regimes, with Pakistan (112) and Afghanistan (143) being authoritarian.
- This is the worst ranking ever on the index for India. It is a mid-range country among flawed democracies, with a high score of 9.17 in electoral process and pluralism but moderate record not crossing 7.5 on the rest of the parameters.

Factors Affecting Indian ranking

- What has adversely affected Indian rankings, according to the report last year, is the rise of "conservative religious ideologies".
- Vigilantism, violence, narrowing scope for dissent, threat to minorities and marginalised groups has affected our ranking.
- Journalists are increasingly under attack, with murders taking place in several areas.
- As a result of limited scope for fair reportage, the Indian media is classified as only "partially free", a fact also corroborated by the "Freedom in the World Report, 2018".

Conclusion: This year's report maintains those concerns, and also warns of incumbents trying to further consolidate power: "In India, the ruling coalition has struggled to maintain its dominance in

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Ph.: 8984111101, 8093083555. Web: www.vanikias.com, E-mail: vaniksias@gmail.com

state elections. To some extent, this is in fact a reflection of the strength of the country's democratic institutions, which has yielded upsets for the government, despite various coercive tactics used by the ruling Party to consolidate power."

4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit

- Union Health Ministry has inaugurated the '4th Global Digital Health Partnership Summit' in New Delhi.
- The global intergovernmental meeting on digital health is hosted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with WHO and the Global Digital Health Partnership (GDHP).
- The Conclave discussed the implication of digital health interventions to health services accessibility, quality and affordability and explores ways of leveraging digital health technologies to strengthen the healthcare delivery systems globally.

Electronic Health Record (EHR) in India

- India has embraced digital health to achieve the targets of UHC.
- A "National Resource Centre for EHR Standards" has also been set up in order to augment facilitation for adoption of the notified EHR Standards.
- Indian government has notified health informatics standards and approved Metadata & Data Standards for enabling seamless exchange of information across care providers.
- It aims to make these systems interoperable and to build electronic health records of citizens.
- India took the world stage at the 71st World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland by successfully introducing and unanimous adoption of Resolution on Digital Health.

GDHP

- The Global Digital Health Partnership (GDHP) is an international collaboration of governments, government agencies and multinational organisations.
- It is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of their citizens through the best use of evidence-based digital technologies.
- Governments are making significant investments to harness the power of technology and foster innovation and public-private partnerships that support high quality, sustainable health and care for all.
- The GDHP facilitates global collaboration and co-operation in the implementation of digital health services.

INDIAN ECONOMY

Draft e-commerce policy

The Department of Industry and Internal Trade has released the draft National ecommerce Policy that sends a clear message that India and its citizens have a sovereign right to their data.

Key issues addressed:

- Data
- Infrastructure development.
- Ecommerce marketplaces.
- Regulatory issues.
- Stimulating domestic digital economy.
- Export promotion.

Key features of the draft:

- Indian Control Over Data: Govt to be given access to source code, algorithms of AI systems Impose custom duties on electronic transmissions to reduce revenue loss. It bars sharing of sensitive data of Indian users with third party entities, even with consent. A 'data authority' to look at community data.
- Local Presence For Apps & Websites: All ecommerce websites, apps available for downloading in India to have a registered business entity here. Non-compliant ecommerce app/website to be denied access here.
- Incentives For Data Localisation: Location of the computing facilities like data centres, server farms within India. Firms to get 3 years to comply with local data storage requirements. Data storage facilities to get 'infrastructure status'.

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- FDI In E-comm: FDI only in marketplace model. No FDI in inventory model.
- Ecommerce Trade: Curbs on Chinese ecommerce exports. Gifting route, often used by Chinese apps, websites, banned for all parcels except life-saving drugs. Integrating Customs, RBI and India Post to improve tacking of imports through ecommerce.
- Incentives & e-commerce export promotions.
- Ecommerce startups may get 'infant industry' status raising limit for courier shipments from Rs 25,000 to boost ecommerce export.
- Regualtion: No separate regulator for ecommerce sector. E-consumer courts to be developed.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES

Cheetah reintroduction project

The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) recently told a bench of the Supreme Court that African cheetahs would be translocated in India from Namibia and would be kept at Nauradehi wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has given a 'no objection' for the translocation.

Facts:

- The cheetah, Acinonyx jubatus, is one of the oldest of the big cat species, with ancestors that can be traced back more than five million years to the Miocene era.
- The cheetah is also the world's fastest land mammal, an icon of nature. With great speed and dexterity, the cheetah is known for being an excellent hunter, its kills feeding many other animals in its ecosystem—ensuring that multiple species survive.
- The country's last spotted feline died in Chhattisgarh in 1947. Later, the cheetah — which is the fastest land animal — was declared extinct in India in 1952.

Cheetah reintroduction programme in India:

- The Wildlife Institute of India at Dehradun had prepared a Rs.260-crore cheetah re-introduction project six years ago. It was estimated that an amount of Rs.25 crore to Rs.30 crore would be needed to build an enclosure in an area of 150 sq km for the cheetahs in Nauradehi. The proposal was to put the felines in the enclosure with huge boundary walls before being released in the wild, he said.
- Nauradehi was found to be the most suitable area for the cheetahs as its forests are not very dense to restrict the fast movement of the spotted cat. Besides, the prey base for cheetahs is also in abundance at the sanctuary.
- According to the earlier action plan, around 20 cheetahs were to be translocated to Nauradehi from Namibia in Africa. The Namibia Cheetah Conservation Fund had then showed its willingness to donate the felines to India. However, the State was not ready to finance the plan contending that it was the Centre's project.

Background: The reasons for extinction can all be traced to man's interference. Problems like human-wildlife conflict, loss of habitat and loss of prey, and illegal trafficking, have decimated their numbers. The advent of climate change and growing human populations have only made these problems worse. With less available land for wildlife, species that require vast home range like the cheetah are placed in competition with other animals and humans, all fighting over less space.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

It's supposed to be hard. If it were easy, everyone would do it.

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