

**INTERNAL SECURITY**

**Schism between Central government and the Mizoram on Myanmar refugees issue**

**CONTEXT:** India has taken a lot of the refugees from Myanmar since the coup .

**About**

- There has been an influx of people into Mizoram since the Myanmar Army seized power .
  - Many of them are democracy activists belonging to the Chin ethnic group.
  - In refugee terms, there is no real difference between Rohingya and these new arrivals.
  - Both have fled the Myanmar Army, although in different circumstances.
    - The only difference is that Myanmar accepts one lot as citizens while it rejects Rohingya, who are stateless.
- **Agreements related to free movements :**
  - Along the largely unfenced Mizoram-Myanmar border, people from both sides have traditionally moved in and out freely.
    - The Free Movement Regime (FMR) in 2018 between India and Myanmar legalised this practice.
      - It has facilitated ease of movement wherein a large number of borderlands routinely cross over on either side for work and to meet relatives.

**Response of Mizoram**

- Mizoram is caught between a humanitarian urge and India's policy on refugees.
- The Mizoram favours providing refuge to the Chins, who are ethnically related to the majority Mizos in the State.
- There is also a fairly long history of mutual empathy and solidarity between the Mizos and the Chins.
  - From the 1960s to the 1980s, the Chin people extended open support and sanctuary to the members of the Mizo National Front, who were fighting for secession from the Indian Union.
  - Similarly, when the Chins were subjected to brutal repression at the hands of the junta regime during the 1988 pro-democracy movement in Myanmar, the Mizos extended a helping hand.
- Recently ,The Myanmar government has started issuing identity cards to Myanmarese refugees who have taken shelter in the northeastern State .

**Governments Stand**

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has made it clear that "India is not a signatory to the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereon".
- Therefore it issues an advisory to stay alert and take appropriate action to prevent a possible influx into Indian territory" and further reminding the Northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, and Mizoram that share borders with Myanmar that they have no powers to grant "refugee status to any foreigner.

**Conclusions and Way Forward**

- The contrast in the responses of the two governments emanates from the security-centric approach of the Centre and the people-centred focus of the Mizoram government.
- It appears that the Centre has probably gauged the sensitivity of the issue from the vantage point of the Mizos and has somewhat softened its aggressive posture towards both the Mizoram government and the Chin refugees after more than one year of their stay in the state.
- It may do even better by owning up to the refugees and helping the state government sustain the relief work, which the latter might not be able to carry out on its own in the long run
- As the largest democracy in the world, India must reach out to the freedom fighters in Myanmar who are spearheading a civil disobedience movement to restore what was until recently a fledgling democracy.
- There is a need to ensure the continued economic development of Northeastern states.
- Myanmar is the gateway to Southeast Asia and as such, a vital trade partner for India and the only neighbour with which India shares both a land and sea border.
  - It is also an important ally in combating extremism and insurgency.
  - Crucially, India's approach to the situation in Myanmar needs to be understood through the lens of competition with China.

**PRELIMS**

**1. Wildfires in Europe**

**CONTEXT:** Recently, European countries like France, Greece, Portugal and Spain have been battling intense wildfires

**More about the news**

- Europe is battling intense wildfires with thousands of hectares of forest land burned to the ground amid a searing heatwave.
- The blaze forced thousands from their homes and killed several emergency personnel.
- It is the second heatwave engulfing parts of southwest Europe in weeks.

**Reasons behind these wildfires**

- **Wildfires require**
  - Right climatic conditions,
  - Burnable fuel and
  - A spark.
- **Climatic Conditions in Europe:**
  - As for Europe, the region has been hit by an early fire season due to an unusually dry, hot spring that left the soil parched.
  - Authorities attribute this to climate change.
    - They add that the fires are being fanned by earlier-than-usual extreme temperatures and drought conditions in some parts.
- **Burnable fuel:**
  - Rising temperatures suck moisture out of plants, creating an abundance of dry fuel.
  - Drought and high heat can kill plants and dry out dead grass, and other material on the forest floor that fuels the fire once it starts sweeping through a patch.
- **The spark:**
  - Spark is sometimes caused by lightning, at other times by accident or recklessness of the local population.
  - A 2018 fire in California in the US, for instance, was started when a truck blew out its tire and its rim scraped the pavement, sending out sparks.

**2. Blockchain and Crypto Assets Council(BACC)**

**CONTEXT:** Recently, the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), the industry body representing top Internet companies and tech platforms has dissolved a key unit set up four years ago to do public advocacy for the cryptocurrency and blockchain sector, citing regulatory uncertainty.

**About BACC**

- BACC acted as an umbrella entity for over a dozen crypto and blockchain companies to liaise with the government.
- **Aim:** It represents Indian crypto industry players such as CoinSwitch Kuber, WazirX, CoinDCX, Zebpay, BitBNS, Vault, Chingari, Mudrex, etc, to advocate the crypto industry's arguments to regulatory bodies such as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- **Code of conduct:** it introduced a code of conduct for all crypto platforms to follow which was likely to be updated to avoid run-ins with regulators.

**Issues**

- **The move is another blow to India's crypto industry:** which has been hit by stiff taxes, payment processors cutting off exchanges, trading volumes crashing and a global bear market.
- **Uncertainty:** the association would like to utilise its limited resources for other emerging digital sectors, which make a more immediate and direct contribution to digital India, notably, deepening financial inclusion and promoting Central Bank issued Digital Currency (CBDC).
- **Monetary stability:** The RBI has taken a view that private cryptocurrencies threaten the monetary stability of the country.
- **Tightening of norms:** The proposal to dismantle the BACC had been under consideration at the IAMAI for some time given the increasing tightening of norms for crypto players by the government and the stance taken by the RBI.
- **Celsius Network:** US crypto lender Celsius Network which froze withdrawals last month has filed for bankruptcy in New York, becoming the latest victim of the crypto winter.

**RBI and Digital Currency**

- RBI exploring DLT (Distributed Ledger Technology) based Central Bank Digital Currency.
  - Under DLT, details are recorded in multiple places at the same time.
  - For ex: Blockchain is just one type of distributed ledger.
- Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC): It will be a legal tender.
  - Can be converted/exchanged at par with similarly denominated cash.

**3. Initiatives for mainstreaming millets**

- **CONTEXT:** NITI Aayog and the World Food Programme (WFP), India, will launch the 'Mapping and Exchange of Good Practices' initiative for mainstreaming millets in Asia and Africa. They will prepare

a compendium of good practices for scaling up the production and consumption of millets in India and abroad.

#### **About Millet**

- It is a common term to categorise small-seeded grasses that are often termed Nutri-cereals or dryland-cereals and includes sorghum, pearl millet, ragi, small millet, foxtail millet, proso millet, barnyard millet and Kodo millet, among others.
- They are also hardier and drought-resistant crops.
- Millets can grow in poor soil conditions with less water, fertiliser and pesticides.
  - They can withstand higher temperatures, making them the perfect choice as 'climate-smart cereals'.

#### **Global Distribution of Millets**

- India, Nigeria and China are the largest producers of millets in the world, accounting for more than 55% of the global production.
- For many years, India was a major producer of millets.
  - However, in recent years, millet production has increased dramatically in Africa.
- In India, pearl millet is the fourth-most widely cultivated food crop after rice, wheat and maize.
  - Millets are available almost across India.

#### **Benefits of Millets**

- Millets can also help in tackling health challenges such as obesity, diabetes and lifestyle problems as they are gluten-free, have a low glycemic index and are high in dietary fibre and antioxidants.
- Millets are Nutri-cereals that are highly nutritious and known to have high nutrient content which includes protein, essential fatty acids, dietary fibre, B-Vitamins and minerals such as calcium, iron, zinc, potassium and magnesium.
- It can provide nutritional security and protect against nutritional deficiency, especially among children and women.
- It will also be critical for climate change measures in drylands and important for smallholder and marginal farmers.

#### **4. Guidelines to facilitate Juvenile Justice Boards(JJBs)**

**CONTEXT:** Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) has asked the national and state child rights bodies to issue guidelines to facilitate Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) in making the preliminary assessment.

#### **About**

- This is to be done for determining whether a child of 16 years of age and above can be tried as an adult for a heinous offence.

#### **Law on trying a juvenile as an adult**

- According to Section 15 of The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (JJ Act), where a child of 16 years of age or above has committed a heinous offence, the JJB is required to "conduct a preliminary assessment before taking a decision whether the child needs to be tried as an adult. This is taken with regard:
  - To his mental and physical capacity to commit such offence,
  - Ability to understand the consequences of the offence and
  - The circumstances in which he allegedly committed the offence"
- Heinous offence is a crime for which the minimum punishment is seven years imprisonment.
- Time period: The assessment is required to be done within three months from the date of first production of the child before the JJB.
- Prior to the 2015 amendment in the original JJ Act, all children below the age of 18 years were treated as juveniles.
- The Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) is composed of a judicial officer and two social workers.
- The "consequences" mentioned in Section 15 of the Act would not just be confined to the immediate consequence, but it would also take within its ambit the consequences which may fall upon not only the victim as a result of the assault, but also on the family of the victim, on the child, his family, and that too not only immediate consequences but also the far reaching consequences in future.

#### **What happens when a juvenile is ordered to be treated as an adult?**

- As per Section 19 of the amended Act, the court can pass a decision on whether there is a need for trial of the child as an adult, or otherwise. The case is then transferred before the children's court.
- A children's court has to ensure that the child in conflict with the law is sent to a "place of safety" until he reaches the age of 21 years, and is only then transferred to jail.
- The court can also order the conditional release of the child after he attains the age of 21 years.
- Two important protections do not extend to a child who has been tried as an adult:

- Protection from disqualification, and
- Erasure of conviction record after a reasonable period
- If the child is tried as an adult, the sentence can go up to life imprisonment, but if the child is tried by the board as a juvenile, the maximum sentence can only be three years in a special home.

**Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children), Amendment Bill, 2021**

- Empowerment of District Magistrate :
- It authorises District Magistrate including Additional District Magistrate to issue adoption orders under Section 61 of the JJ Act, in order to ensure speedy disposal of cases and enhance accountability.
- The District Magistrates have been further empowered to ensure its smooth implementation, as well as garner synergized efforts in favour of children in distress conditions.
- Any Child Care Institutions shall be registered after considering the recommendations of the District Magistrate.
- The DM shall independently evaluate the functioning of District Child Protection Units; Child Welfare Committees (CWC), Juvenile Justice Boards, Specialised Juvenile Police Units, Child care Institutions etc.
- Child Welfare Committees (CWCs): The eligibility parameters for the appointment of CWC members have been redefined.
- Criteria for disqualification of the CWC members have also been introduced to ensure that only the persons capable of rendering quality service with requisite competence and integrity are appointed to CWC.
- Serious offences: Presently there are three categories (petty, serious and heinous) defined under the Act which are referred to while considering the cases of children in conflict with the law.
- However, it was observed that some of the offences do not strictly fall under any of these categories.
- It has been decided that offences where the maximum sentence is more than 7 years imprisonment but no minimum sentence has been prescribed or minimum sentence of fewer than 7 years is provided, shall be treated as serious offences within this Act.

**5. Eco-Sensitive Zones**

**CONTEXT:** Recently, the Kerala State Assembly passed a resolution regarding Supreme Court's directive regarding Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZ). The state of Karnataka is also opposing the Centre's draft eco-sensitive area norms for the Western Ghats.

**More about the news**

- **Kerala:**
  - The resolution passed by Kerala urged the Central government to exclude the State's human habitations, farmlands and public institutions from the purview of the Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZ).
  - The Assembly also called upon the Centre to notify the zones by considering the State government's proposals that marked the ESZ as zero around 10 protected areas of the State, urging the union government to enact laws for the purpose.
- **Karnataka:**
  - The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) had issued a draft notification that demarcated large parts of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra as eco-sensitive areas.
  - Among these states, Karnataka contains the lion share of the notified areas in the Western Ghats, at 20,668 sq km.

**The Court order**

- The Supreme court has directed all states to have a mandatory 1-km ESZ from the demarcated boundaries of every protected forest land, national park and wildlife sanctuary.
- It also stated that no new permanent structure or mining will be permitted within the ESZ.
  - The order will not affect farming.
  - Guidelines list the activities prohibited in an ESZ, such as commercial mining, saw mills, commercial use of wood, etc., apart from regulated activities like the felling of trees.
- If the existing ESZ goes beyond a 1-km buffer zone or if any statutory instrument prescribes a higher limit, then such extended boundary shall prevail.
- It held the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Home Secretaries of States responsible for compliance of the judgment.

**New draft notification for the Western Ghats**

- **About:**



- The draft notification demarcates 46,832 sq km in the five states Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa and Tamil Nadu as Eco-Sensitive Areas (ESA) in the Western Ghats.
- According to the notification, the concerned state governments are responsible for monitoring and enforcing the provisions of the notification.
- **Restrictions:**
  - The draft notification states there shall be a complete ban on mining, quarrying and sand mining in the ESA.
  - All existing mines are to be phased out within five years from the date of issue of the final notification or on the expiry of the existing mining lease.
  - It also bars the setting up of new thermal power projects and expansion of existing plants in the sensitive area.
  - Order bans all new 'Red' category industries.
    - These are activities that have a Pollution Index score of 60 and above, such as petrochemical manufacturing, and coal liquefaction.
  - The construction of new townships and area development projects will also be prohibited in the areas.
- **Activities that are not restricted:**
  - All existing health care establishments shall continue in ESA and so will new hydropower projects on the basis of the Environmental Impact Assessment notification.
  - 'Orange' category industries, with a pollution index score of 41-59, such as jute processing and 'White' industries that are considered non-polluting, like chalk making, will also be allowed with strict compliance of environmental regulation.

#### **ANSWER WRITING**

**Q. Early Buddhist Stupa-art, while depicting folk motifs and narratives successfully expounds Buddhist ideals. Elucidate.(150 words)**

After the death of the Buddha, Stupas were raised in his honor. The relics of the Buddha were distributed to different kingdoms and Stupas were erected over them. The Buddhist Stupa transcends its predecessor, the burial mound, by shifting the emphasis from a particular relic to a higher transcendental actuality as realized by the Buddha, i.e. the Buddha's enlightenment.

- The Jataka stories were depicted on the torans of Stupas. The Jataka stories are a method of teaching Buddhists the lessons of karma, samsara and dharma. The overall structure of the Jataka Tales is about the cycle of samsara that the Buddha had to experience before reaching enlightenment.
- The main structure of the Great Stupa consisted of a flattened hemispherical dome, called an anda, placed atop a cylindrical base. Anda, literally an egg, alluded not only to the shape, but to its deeper significance as a symbol of latent creative power.
- The anda was also intended as an architectural replica of the infinite dome of heaven, representing the cycle of death and rebirth.
- The harmika, located at the summit of the anda, symbolized the zenith beyond life and death (nirvana). Its resemblance to a sacrificial altar was of particular significance for the attainment of nirvana required the sacrifice of the self and the world (what was below needed to be sacrificed to reach the top).
- The parasol was always a distinguishing feature that implied royalty and dignity; it symbolized the sacred Tree of Life or enlightenment.
- The three elements of the chatra at Sanchi represented the Three Jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (the Law), and the Sangha (the community of monks).
- Vedikas were repeated around the stupa and on the terrace on which the anda rested (medhi level). They served to demarcate the boundary of the sacred precinct with the secular world.

In this way Buddhist stupa-art successfully expounds Buddhist ideals.

#### **MCQs**

- 1) Consider the following statements about wildfires:
  1. Heatwaves don't play any role in wildfires.
  2. UNEP recently called on global governments to adopt a new 'Fire Ready Formula'.
  3. Approximately 22 percent area of forest cover in India falls under the highly and extremely fire-prone category.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

a. 1 and 2 only      **b. 2 and 3 only**      c. 1 and 3 only      d. 1, 2 and 3
- 2) Consider the following statements regarding Millets:
  1. It is a common term to categorise small-seeded grasses that are often termed Nutri-cereals or dryland-cereals

2. India, Nigeria and China are the largest producers of millets in the world, accounting for more than 55% of the global production.  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?  
a. 1 only                      b. 2 only                      c. **Both 1 and 2**                      d. Neither 1 nor 2
- 3) Consider the following statements regarding Juvenile Justice:  
1. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act) was introduced in the Parliament in 2015.  
2. It allows the trial of juveniles in conflict with the law in the age group of 16-18 years as adults  
3. The act had introduced foster care in India  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?  
a. 1 and 2 only                      b. 2 and 3 only                      c. 1 and 3 only                      d. **1, 2 and 3**
- 4) Consider the following statements about Eco-Sensitive Zones(ESZ):  
1. ESZs help in in-situ conservation, which deals with the conservation of endangered species in its natural habitat.  
2. These areas are meant to act as a transition zone from areas requiring higher protection to those requiring lesser protection.  
3. Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) or Ecologically Fragile Areas (EFAs) are areas in India notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC).  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?  
a. 1 and 2 only                      b. 1 and 3 only                      c. 3 only                      d. **All are correct.**
- 5) Consider the following statements about Kala Azar:  
1. It is a slow progressing indigenous disease caused by a protozoan parasite of genus Leishmania.  
2. Leishmania parasites are transmitted through the bites of infected female phlebotomine sandflies.  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?  
a. 1 only                      b. 2 only                      c. **Both 1 and 2**                      d. Neither 1 nor 2
- 6) With reference to cloud seeding, consider the following statements:  
1. Hygroscopic cloud seeding slows down the droplet coalescence in the gaseous clouds, leading to production of small droplets that start to condense.  
2. Glaciogenic cloud seeding trigger ice production in super cooled clouds, leading to precipitation.  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?  
a. 1 only                      b. **2 only**                      c. Both 1 and 2                      d. Neither 1 nor 2
- 7) With reference to Marburg virus, consider the following statements:  
1. Fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family, are considered to be natural hosts of Marburg virus.  
2. There is treatment to neutralize the virus, but a range of blood products and immune therapies are currently under development.  
3. The Marburg virus is transmitted to people from fruit bats and there is no possibility for human-to-human transmission.  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?  
a. **1 and 2 only**                      b. 1 and 3 only                      c. 2 and 3 only                      d. 1, 2 and 3
- 8) With reference to Shanghai Cooperation Organizational structure, consider the following statements:  
1. The SCO secretariat has two permanent bodies, located at Beijing and Tashkent.  
2. The Heads of State Council (HSC) considers issues pertaining to the day-to-day activities of the organization.  
3. The Foreign Ministers Council is the supreme decision-making body of the organization.  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?  
a. **1 only**                      b. 1 and 2 only                      c. 2 and 3 only                      d. 1, 2 and 3
- 9) With reference to extended fund facility, consider the following statements:  
1. The EFF was established to provide assistance to countries experiencing serious payment imbalances.  
2. The EFF can be availed when there is structural impediments or slow growth and an inherently weak balance-of-payments position.  
3. EFFs generally are formulated on a precautionary basis in anticipation of a future balance of payments problem.  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are **incorrect**?  
a. 1 only                      b. 2 only                      c. **3 only**                      d. 1, 2 and 3
- 10) Consider the following statements:  
1. Tele-Law mainstreams legal aid to the marginalized seeking legal help by connecting them with the Panel Lawyers.  
2. National Legal Services Authority will provide services of lawyers, in each district exclusively for Tele-Law program.  
Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?  
a. 1 only                      b. 2 only                      c. **Both 1 and 2**                      d. Neither 1 nor 2