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News Analysis (31 Jan, 2019)

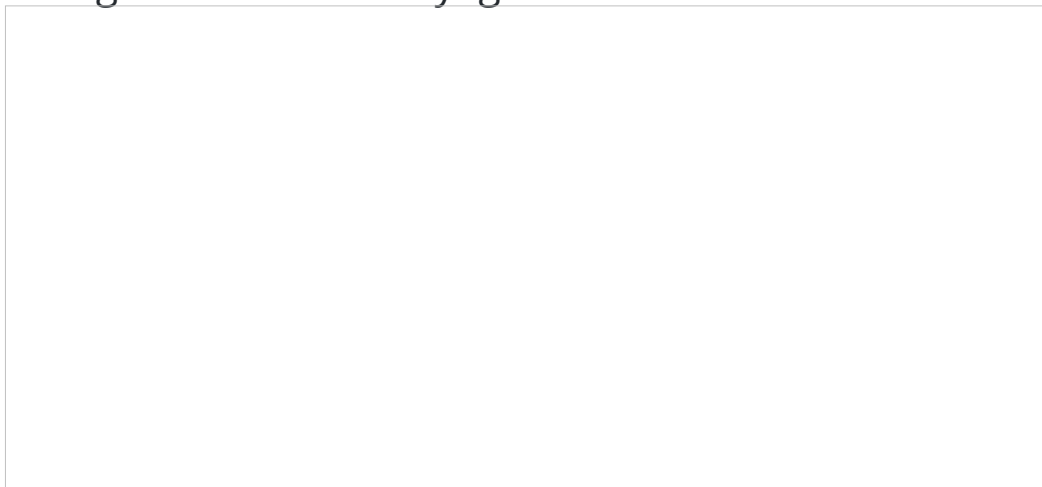
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PM Dedicates Salt Satyagraha Memorial to Nation

The Prime Minister dedicated the National Salt Satyagraha Memorial at Dandi in Navsari district, Gujarat to the nation on Mahatma Gandhi's 71st death anniversary.

At the memorial site, he also unveiled statues of Mahatma Gandhi and Satyagrahis who had marched with him during the historic Dandi Salt March in 1930.

Background of Salt Satyagraha



- For several years after the **Non-cooperation Movement(1920-22)** ended, Gandhiji focused on his social reform work.
- However in 1928, he began to think of re-entering politics. That year there was an all-India campaign in **opposition to the all-White Simon Commission**, sent from England to study constitutional reforms and make recommendations to the Government.
- Gandhiji did not himself participate in this movement, although he gave it his blessings, as he also did to a peasant satyagraha in Bardoli in the year 1928.
- In the end of **December 1929**, the Congress held its **annual session in the city of Lahore**. The meeting was significant for two things:

the election of **Jawaharlal Nehru** as President, signifying the passing of the baton of leadership to the younger generation; and the **proclamation of commitment to “Purna Swaraj”**, or complete independence.

- On **26 January 1930**, “**Independence Day**” was observed, with the national flag being hoisted in different venues, and patriotic songs being sung. Gandhiji himself issued precise instructions as to how the day should be observed.
- The **Lahore Congress of 1929 had authorized the Congress Working Committee (CWC) to launch a programme of civil disobedience** including non-payment of taxes.
- In February, 1930 CWC meeting at Sabarmati Ashram, invested Gandhiji with full powers to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement at a time and place of his choice.
- Gandhiji’s ultimatum to **Lord Irwin, the Viceroy of India (1926-31)**, stating the minimum demands had been ignored and there was only one way out-civil disobedience.

Salt Satyagraha

- On **March 12, 1930**, Gandhiji set out from Sabarmati with 78 followers on a 241-mile march to the coastal town of **Dandi on the Arabian Sea**. There, Gandhi and his supporters were to defy British policy by making salt from seawater.
- At Dandi, thousands more followed his lead, and in the coastal cities of Bombay and Karachi, Indian nationalists led crowds of citizens in making salt.
- Civil disobedience **broke out all across India**, soon involving millions of Indians, and British authorities arrested more than 60,000 people. Gandhiji himself was arrested on May 5, but the satyagraha continued without him.
- On May 21, the poet **Sarojini Naidu** led 2,500 marchers on the Dharasana Salt Works, some 150 miles north of Bombay. The incident, recorded by American journalist Webb Miller, prompted an international outcry against British policy in India.
- In January 1931, Gandhiji was released from prison. He later met with Lord Irwin, the viceroy of India, and agreed to call off the satyagraha in exchange for an equal negotiating role at a London conference on India’s future.
- In August 1931, Gandhiji traveled to the conference as the sole representative of the nationalist Indian National Congress. The meeting was a disappointment, but British leaders had acknowledged him as a force they could not suppress or ignore.

Why Gandhiji chose Salt Satyagraha to start the civil disobedience movement?

- In every Indian household, salt was indispensable, yet people were forbidden from making salt even for domestic use, compelling them to buy it from shops at a high price.
- The state monopoly over salt was deeply unpopular; by making it his target, Gandhiji hoped to mobilise a wider discontent against British rule.

- **Salt was chosen to symbolize the start of civil disobedience movement** because salt was deemed as something on which each Indian had the basic right.
- Mahatma Gandhi declared resistance to British salt policies to be the unifying theme for the civil disobedience movement and thus started Dandi March.

Effect of the movement

- Civil Disobedience in different forms continued in different provinces. Special stress was laid on boycott of foreign good.
- In eastern India, **payment of chowkidari tax was refused**. This **no-tax campaign became very popular in Bihar**.
- In Bengal, **J.N. Sengupta defied Government** laws by reading openly the books banned by the government.
- **Defiance of forest laws** assumed a mass character in Maharashtra.
- The movement had taken a firm hold in provinces of U.P., Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Assam.
- The **Gandhi-Irwin Pact (1931)** and the **Second Round Table Conference(1931)** having failed, the movement was resumed with new zeal.

Significance

- The movement marked an **important state in the progress of the freedom struggle**.
- **Imports from Britain had fallen considerably**. For example, imports of cloth from Britain had fallen by half.
- The movement was **more widespread than the previous one**. Mass participation including **women, peasants, workers, students, urban elements like merchants, shopkeepers** provided the Congress a new all-India status.
- The support that the movement had garnered from the **poor and the illiterate both in the town and countryside** was remarkable.
- For **Indian women**, the movement was the most liberating experience to date and can truly be said to have marked their entry into the public space.
- Although the Congress withdrew the Civil Disobedience in 1934 but the movement received **global attention** and marked a critically important stage in the progress of the anti-imperialist struggle.

Venezuela Crisis

- The leader of Venezuela's National Assembly, Juan Guaido has declared himself as president of Venezuela on January 23, challenging the power of current President Nicolas Maduro, who was recently sworn in as president of Venezuela for a second

consecutive term.



- The United States has officially recognized Juan Guaidó as the legitimate president of Venezuela. Several EU nations, including France, Britain, Germany, and Spain have said they would recognize Guaidó if President Maduro doesn't announce new elections.
- However, Russia, Turkey, Iran, and China have supported President Nicolás Maduro and called him as the legitimate president of Venezuela.
- The US has also imposed sanctions on Venezuela's state-run oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A (PDVSA).

Reasons for the crisis in Venezuela

- **Economic Reason**

- Venezuela has the highest proven oil reserves in the world. The economy of Venezuela is mainly oil-based.
- During the early 2000s, when oil prices were high, the Venezuelan government has used oil profits to reduce inequality and poverty, providing food subsidies.
- When oil prices dropped in 2014, the government suddenly had to make lots of cutbacks. This led many people to begin buying goods on the black market, causing inflation to rise.
- Currently, the annual inflation rate in Venezuela has reached 1.3 million%. This has led to the scarcity of basic items such as food and medicines and demonstrations against the government.

- **Political Crisis and Corruption**

- Current president Nicolás Maduro took charge after former president Hugo Chávez died in 2013.
- The government of President Maduro also faced the charges of corruption and mismanagement of the economy.
- Mr. Maduro was sworn in for a second term recently. But, his main opponents

either boycotted or were banned from running in the election.

- After the result of the election was announced, massive protests erupted in Venezuela.

Impact



- **Global**

- Crisis in Venezuela may lead to a rise in global oil prices as Venezuela is a major oil exporter and a member of OPEC.
- With US and Russia supporting opposite factions in Venezuela. Venezuela is likely to become a region for super-power rivalry as seen recently in Syria.

- **India**

- Rise in global oil prices is not good for India as it is the world's third-largest oil importer.
- Venezuela was also India's fourth-biggest crude supplier after Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Iran and accounts for about 12% of India's total oil imports. So sanctions against Venezuela along with US sanctions on Iran will impact oil availability in the country.
- Sanctions on Venezuela will also impact the payment of roughly \$520 million of backlog dividends that Venezuela's state-run oil firm PDVSA owes to ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL).

Important Facts for Prelims (31st January 2019)

International Stock Taking Conference on Tiger Conservation

- Recently the **3rd Stock Taking Conference on Tiger Conservation** relating to Global Tiger Recovery Program (GTRP) implementation was **held in New Delhi**.
- This is the second edition to be held in India after 2012 wherein progress against **resolution** adopted by tiger range countries in 2010 at **St. Petersburg, Russia**, was measured.
- The conference was hosted by the **National Tiger Conservation Authority**, Ministry

of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in close collaboration with the **Global Tiger Forum** which is an International, Intergovernmental Organization for conserving tigers in the world.

St. Petersburg Declaration on Tiger Conservation

- This resolution was adopted In **November 2010**, by the leaders of **13 tiger range countries (TRCs)** assembled at an International Tiger Forum in **St. Petersburg, Russia**.
- The resolution's **implementation mechanism** is called the **Global Tiger Recovery Program** whose overarching goal was to double the number of wild tigers from about 3,200 to more than 7,000 by 2022.
- 13 Tiger range countries are: **Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam**.

African Asian Rural Development Organisation (AARDO)

- An international workshop on fisheries and aquaculture has called for regional cooperation among member countries of the African Asian Rural Development Organisation (AARDO) to develop joint fisheries management plans.
- African - Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO), **headquartered in New Delhi, was formed in 1962**, is an autonomous inter-governmental organization comprising 33 members from Africa and Asia.
- It was earlier known as Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization.
- AARDO is one of the **earliest examples of South-South cooperation** in rural development in the Afro-Asian region. The Organization was set up with a view to promote coordinated efforts, exchange of experiences and cooperative action for furthering the objectives of development of the **rural areas**.
- India is one of the **Founder Members of the Organization** and is the largest contributor in terms of membership contribution.
- The first Afro-Asian Conference on Rural Reconstruction held its historic Session in New Delhi during 18-25 January 1961.

Human Space Flight Center

- Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has inaugurated Human Space Flight Center in **Bengaluru**.
- The center, a new management structure within the organization, will be in charge of all human-related programme at the ISRO, including the Gaganyaan project, that will send three astronauts to orbit the earth.
- Two unmanned flights are scheduled for December 2020 and July 2021, while manned flight is expected to take place by December 2021.