75th Anniversary of Azad Hind Government

75th anniversary of the formation of Azad Hind Government was celebrated on 21st October, 2018, at the Red Fort, Delhi.

- On this day 75 years ago, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose had announced the establishment of the provisional government of Azad Hind (Known as Arzi Hukumat-e-Azad Hind) in occupied Singapore in 1943 which was once the bulwark of the British Empire.
- It was supported by the Axis powers of Imperial Japan, Nazi Germany, the Italian Social Republic, and their allies.
- The revered freedom fighter had launched a struggle to free India from British rule under the banner of the provisional government-in exile during the latter part of the Second World War.

Brief History

- Subhash Chandra Bose was convinced that armed struggle was the only way to achieve independence for India. He had been a leader of the radical wing of the Indian National Congress in the late 1920s and 1930s, rising to become Congress president in 1938 and 1939 but was ousted following differences with Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress leadership.
- Under his provisional government, the Indians living abroad had been united. The Indian National Army drew ex-prisoners and thousands of civilian volunteers from the Indian expatriate population in Malaya (present-day Malaysia) and Burma (now Myanmar).
- Under the provisional government, Bose was the head of the state, the prime minister and the minister for war and foreign affairs. Captain Lakshmi Sahgal headed the women's organisation while S A Ayer headed the publicity and propaganda wing. Revolutionary leader Rash Behari Bose was designated as the supreme advisor.

- The provisional government was also formed in the Japanese-occupied Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The islands were reoccupied by the British in 1945.
- Bose's death was seen as the end to the Azad Hind movement.The Second World War, also ended in 1945 with the defeat of the Axis powers.
- The existence of the Azad Hind Government gave a greater legitimacy to the independence struggle against the British. Pertinently, the role of Azad Hind Fauj or the Indian National Army (INA) had been crucial in bequeathing a much needed impetus to India's struggle for Independence.

NRC in Tripura

The Supreme Court recently issued a notice to the centre and the Election Commission of India on a plea seeking that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) be updated to include Tripura.

- The petitioners pleaded for a direction from the court to authorities concerned to update the NRC. They also sought fencing of the Tripura-Bangladesh border to prevent influx of illegal immigrants.
- As per the petition influx amounted to "external aggression" and that they have turned the tribal people into a minority in their own native land.
- The NRC is a list of Indian citizens of Assam. It was prepared in 1951, following the census of that year.
- Currently Assam is the only state where NRC is being updated under the Citizenship Act, 1955, and according to the rules framed in the Assam Accord, to wean out illegal migrants from Bangladesh following a Supreme Court order of 2013.

Background

- Much of the migration into Tripura occurred before the creation of Bangladesh. The petition takes recourse to the 1993 tripartite accord signed by the Government of India with the All Tripura Tribal Force that asked for the repatriation of all Bangladeshi nationals who had come to Tripura after March 25, 1971 and are not in possession of valid documents authorising their presence in the State.
- The petitioners are now demanding that the cut-off date for the recognition of migrants should be made July 1948, based on **Article 6 of the Constitution**.

Brief History of Tripura

- The princely state of Tripura was ruled by the Manikya dynasty, belonging to the Tripuri community, from the late 13th century until the signing of Instrument of Accession with the Indian government on October 15, 1949.

- The Tripuris are largest tribal group and also considered the aboriginals as they migrated first. Other groups migrated at various times include Reang and Jamatia (via the Chittagong Hill Tracts from parts of Burma), Bhil, Orang and Santal (from parts of central India and Bengal) etc.
- According to Language Census 2011, Bengali was the mother tongue of 2/3rd of the total population of around 37 lakhs, and almost three times the speakers of Kokborok, a language of the Tibeto-Burman family and the mother tongue of the largest tribal groups.
- The dominance of Bengali, however, cannot be attributed to recent migration alone. It was the official court language of princely Tripura at a time when English was the official language of Bengal. Manikya kings promoted Bengali.

Way Forward

- As early as in 1979, after years of struggle, the tribal people of the State had gained special autonomy provisions, the institution of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council and recognition of their spoken language, among other assurances.
- Since then, the empowerment of the council and the protection of tribal rights have steadily eroded the significant tribal versus non-tribal differences that once existed in the State.
- The judicial-bureaucratic process of hearing a petition to seek the deportation of long-settled migrants is fraught with problems, similar to those already being faced in Assam.
- In spite of the fact that the NRC process in Assam has an overall popular legitimacy across most political parties, the deportation has remained unclear till now.
- NRC and its deep humanitarian impact should be taken into account before its implementation in a state like Tripura where there is no such unanimity of views on the NRC process.
- Before taking a final view on NRC, other provisions like the Citizenship Act, Foreigners Act and the Passport Act which exist to detect and deport illegal immigrants in the country should be considered.
- The Executive and Judiciary should consider the negative impact that the process can have on years of reconciliation between Bengali-speaking and tribal people before laying out the roadmap for another NRC.

Tiger Attacks

Recently a tigress shifted to Satkosia Tiger Reserve (STR) claimed another human life.

- The tigress was brought from Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh to Odisha's Satkosia Tiger Reserve (STR) as part of a tiger re-introduction programme.

- The programme is being implemented by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest and its statutory body National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). It aims to shift six tigers — three males and three females.
- In 2004, Satkosia had 11 tigers, including four adult males and six adult females. The number went down to eight in 2010 and to two in 2014.
- Tiger conservationists say it is critical to identify and mitigate factors responsible for a decline in tiger population before trying to introduce new tigers in the area. Emphasis should be on protecting the forest, curbing illegal hunting, increasing prey numbers.

- The recent attacks in Odisha comes in the backdrop of an ongoing intensive operation to catch or shoot tigress T1 and catch her two cubs alive in Ralegaon area of Yavatmal district of Maharashtra, where 13 people have died in tiger attacks since June 2016.

Reasons for Attacks

- The depleting forest cover and growing human presence, in around 650 wildlife zones in the country. Reports by the Forest Survey of India since early 1990s indicate that around one-third of the dense forest cover has been lost and half the traditional wildlife corridors have disappeared, bringing animals and people dangerously close.
- Densely packed tiger forests often lead to young and old tigers wandering outside. Such wandering tigers are more likely to come into conflict with people.
- Many of these attacks on people are accidental. A tigress with cubs, a tiger protecting its kill, or a tiger startled by the appearance of people are prone to charge in self-defence.

Why Save Tigers?

- A 2015 report of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) titled: "Economic Evaluation of Tiger Reserves in India: A VALUE+ Approach" highlights why "large" areas are reserved for preserving fierce animals like the tiger, when we need more land for human use.
- It says that tigers are "umbrella" species. And by saving tigers, everything beneath their ecological umbrella - everything connected to them - including the world's last great forests, whose carbon storage mitigates climate change are saved.
- NTCA's recent paper called the "Making the Hidden Visible: Economic Valuation of Tiger Reserves in India" lists the benefits rising from tiger reserves. They include employment generation, agriculture, fishing, fuel wood, fodder and grazing, carbon storage and sequestration, water and its purification by filtering organic wastes, soil conservation, nutrient cycling, and moderation of extreme events such as cyclone storms, flash floods.

Project Tiger

Project Tiger is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change launched in 1973 to provide central assistance to the tiger States for tiger conservation in designated tiger reserves in India.

Killing a Man-Eater Tiger

- Conservation is about saving the species and not defending individual animals at the cost of the species. Letting a man-eater continue in the wild results in more attacks, turning locals against the Forest Department and making every tiger in the vicinity a potential target of reprisal.
- In the era of mass media, callous handling of conflict can shape the public perception of the tiger across the land and affect every community that lives in and around tiger forests. Prompt action sends the right message to local communities.
- Although, the 2013 Standard Operating Procedure of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) says an "aberrant tiger" (man-eater) must be caught and "sent to the nearest recognised zoo and NOT released in the wild", the conditions and circumstances makes trapping and tranquillisation difficult.
- Seasonal abundance of forest undergrowth may not allow clear vision or approach required for darting within a range of 15-25 metres. If live capture is not possible, the only option is to gun down the animal.
- Moreover, it does not make a difference to conservation whether a tiger is send to a zoo or killed. In both cases, it is one tiger less in the wild.

Conclusion

- Public outcry over a spate of human killings should neither provoke forest officials to hastily declare a tiger a man-eater nor come in the way of promptly removing an identified man-eater.
- It is very important to find solutions that lead to mutually beneficial co-existence of animals and the local human communities.
- Ensuring that both humans and animals have the space by protecting key areas for wildlife, creating buffer zones and investing in alternative land uses are some of the solutions.
- Losing a handful of tigers that have become, for no fault of their own, a threat to local communities will not risk the future of the species. In fact, it will help the tiger retain local goodwill.

- Likewise, fighting poor communities and the disempowered forest departments on sporadic shoot-on-sight orders will not secure the big cat's future as well. That time and energy may be better spent saving the tiger against the powers of mindless development.

UN Report on Privatization and Human Rights

A new report by UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights has raised concern on the widespread privatization of public goods in many societies and its impact on human rights.

> Privatization is a process through which the private sector becomes increasingly, or entirely, responsible for activities traditionally performed by government, including many explicitly designed to ensure the realization of human rights.

Impact of Privatization on Human Rights

- Privatization is supported as the private sector is projected to be more efficient, more capable of mobilizing finance, more innovative and better able to capitalize on economies of scale (more units of a goods or a service are being delivered, with fewer input costs) and minimize running costs. However, the study conducted by the National Audit Office of the United Kingdom concluded that the private finance initiative model had proved to be more expensive and less efficient in providing hospitals, schools and other public infrastructure than public financing.
- Privatization is based on assumptions fundamentally different from those that underpin respect for human rights, such as dignity and equality.
- Profit is the overriding objective, and considerations such as equality and non-discrimination are sidelined.

- Privatization arrangements are rarely conducive to human rights. Those living in poverty or on low incomes can be negatively affected by privatization in the following ways:
    - As aspects of criminal justice systems are privatized, many different charges and penalties are levied with far greater impact on the poor, who then must borrow to pay them or face default. The quality of the services that they can afford diminishes, and their prospects of obtaining justice reduce.
    - The privatization of social protection often results in the poor being subjected to a new even more underfunded public sector. The model of training social workers to recognize the specific social, psychological, economic challenges faced by individuals is replaced by a model that is driven by economic efficiency concerns.
    - Infrastructure projects are most attractive to private providers where significant user fees can be charged and construction costs are relatively low. But the poor are not able to pay thus cannot afford to use many services like water, sanitation, electricity, roads, transport, education, health care, social services and financial services.
    - Social security systems are increasingly being privatized, which is leading to service outsourcing, social insurance marketization, commercializing administrative discretion and paying by results. These approaches empower private for-profit actors to make determinations about the needs and capacities of individuals, incentivize them to do so within a corporate rather than a public goods framework, and reward spending reductions rather than the achievement of positive human outcomes.

Recommendations

The report recommends that while privatization, in theory, is neither good nor bad, the ways in which it has occurred in recent decades need to be examined. The steps should be taken are:
    - Insist that appropriate standards be set by public and private actors involved with privatization to ensure that data on human rights impacts are collected and published.
    - Undertake systematic studies of privatization impact on human rights in specific areas, and on poor and marginalized communities.
    - Insist that arrangements for the privatization of public goods specifically address human rights implications.
    - Explore new ways in which treaty bodies, Special Procedures, regional mechanisms, and national institutions can meaningfully hold States and private actors accountable in privatization contexts.

In the Indian Context

There are many government projects in India which are based on Public-Private Partnership. Recently, NITI Aayog also released <u>Guidelines for Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for tackling Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)</u> in government-run district hospitals. This report by the UN can help Niti Aayog in reconsidering its guidelines.

Important Facts for Prelims (22nd October 2018)

BEPICOLOMBO: Mission to Mercury

- The **European Space Agency (ESA) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)** sent two probes on a joint mission called BepiColombo to Mercury, the closest planet to the Sun.
- The spacecraft is named after Italian scientist Giuseppe "Bepi" Colombo (1920-1984) who played an instrumental role in making NASA Mariner 10 mission (1973) to Mercury successful.
- The spacecraft will reach the Mercury by 2025.
- It is the first mission by the European and Japanese Space agency to Mercury.
- It is also the first mission to send two spacecraft to make complementary measurements of the planet and its environment at the same time.
- The spacecraft are ESA's Mercury Planetary Orbiter (MPO) and JAXA's Mercury Magnetospheric Orbiter (MMO, or 'Mio').
- The ESA-built Mercury Transfer Module (MTM) will carry the orbiters to Mercury using a combination of solar electric propulsion and gravity assisted flybys.
- The two orbiters will also collect data at Venus.
- The challenges to the mission include:
    - Sun's gravity makes it difficult to place a spacecraft into a stable orbit around the mercury.
    - The spacecraft also have to face extreme temperatures and solar radiations.
- With this mission researchers are hoping to learn about the formation of planets and the solar system.
- Past Missions to Mercury:
    - **Mariner 10** - NASA Flyby Mission (Flyby is a path spacecraft follows past a planet or other body in space) to Venus and Mercury (1973)
    - **MESSENGER** - NASA Orbiter to Mercury (2004)

Kumbh Mela

- Kumbh Mela is the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on earth, during which participants bathe or take a dip in a sacred river.
- **Kumbh Mela comes under the UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.**
- The festival is held at **Prayagraj** (at the **confluence of Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati**), **Haridwar** (on the **Ganges**), **Ujjain** (on the **Shipra**) and **Nasik** (on the **Godavari**) every four years by rotation and is attended by millions of people irrespective of caste, creed or gender.
- As it is held in four different cities in India, it involves different social and cultural activities, making this a culturally diverse festival.
- The event encapsulates the science of astronomy, astrology, spirituality, ritualistic traditions, and social and cultural customs and practices, making it extremely rich in knowledge.
- Knowledge and skills related to the tradition are transmitted through ancient religious manuscripts, oral traditions, historical travelogues and texts produced by eminent historians.
- The teacher-student relationship of the sadhus in the ashrams and akhadas remains the most important method of imparting and safeguarding knowledge and skills relating to Kumbh Mela.

Green Climate Fund

- A Green Climate Fund has approved more than $1 billion for 19 new projects.
- Green Climate Fund was set up under the UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention for Climate Change) at **Conference of Parties (COP-16) in Cancun, Mexico 2010.**
- The aim of GCF is to support developing countries in limiting or reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change impacts with resources to be generated from funding by developed countries and various public and private sources.
- **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** and **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** act as **National Implementing Entity (NIE)** of India for Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Similipal National Park

- The Similipal National Park in **Mayurbhanj district of Odisha** will be reopened for tourists after remaining closed for three months due to monsoon.
- Similipal National Park is also a Tiger Reserve. It is part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserve since 2009.
- It is part of the **Similipal-Kuldiha-Hadgarh Elephant Reserve** popularly known as Mayurbhanj Elephant Reserve, which includes 3 protected areas i.e. **Similipal Tiger Reserve, Hadgarh Wildlife sanctuary and Kuldiha wildlife sanctuary.**

- Similipal National Park derives its name from the abundance of Semul or red silk cotton trees that bloom abundantly in the locality.
- It was formally designated a tiger reserve in 1956 and brought under Project Tiger in the year of 1973. The Government of Odisha declared Similipal as a wildlife sanctuary in 1979.