News Analysis (04 Jul, 2020)

Economic Measures by India Against China

Why in News

India is considering a **range of economic measures** aimed at **Chinese firms <u>amid the border tensions between two countries</u>.**

- The **ban on 59 Chinese apps** is one of the economic measures taken by India, with other measures likely to follow if tensions along the **<u>Line of Actual Control (LAC)</u>** continue without disengagement.
- India wants to indicate that **China cannot continue trade and investment relations** as normal if China does not agree to return to the status quo of April before its incursions along the LAC began.

Key Points

- **Economic Measures Planned by India:**
  - The government is considering **trade and procurement curbs** targeting China.
  - It is also **increasing scrutiny of Chinese investments** in many sectors, and weighing a decision to **keep out Chinese companies** including **<u>5G trials</u>**.
  - Recently, the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways has announced that **Chinese companies** would **not be allowed** to take part in **road projects.**

- **Implications:**
  - **Overall India-China Trade:**
    - In the India-China economic relationship trade is lopsided in **China's favour as China's exports to India account for less than 3% of its overall exports.** Thus China **could inflict immediate economic pain** if it chose to.
    - In 2019-20, India's imports from China accounted for **$65 billion** out of two-way trade of $82 billion.
  - **Dependence on Chinese Goods:**
    - India remains deeply dependent on Chinese goods, **whether they are procured from China or through other countries.**
    - India also relies on China for **crucial imports for many of its industries** including auto components and **Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs).**
    - Between 70- 90% of APIs needed for the pharma industry of India come from China.
  - **Investments:**
    On the investment front, Chinese investment in Indian tech start-ups has **crossed $4 billion** spanning major investments in companies including Paytm, Swiggy, Ola and Flipkart.
  - **Possible Harm to Chinese Economy:**
    - The economic measures taken by India could **potentially cost Chinese companies billions of dollars** in contracts and future earnings.
    - For TikTok, one of the 59 apps banned, **India is the biggest overseas market with more than 100 million users.** Thus, the app is anticipating a **loss of more than $6 billion,** most likely more than the combined losses for all the other Chinese companies behind the other 58 apps banned in India.
    - A move to restrict Chinese companies from India's 5G rollout would also have the similar effect of **costing hundreds of millions of dollars** in potential revenue.
    - Moreover, losing Indian market would come at a time when the Chinese economy is facing its own challenges in the **wake of the pandemic** and facing increasing barriers in many Western countries.
- **China's Stand:**
  - China has asked India to **review its recent economic measures** taken against it.
  - It has also stated that these economic measures are selectively and discriminatorily aimed at certain Chinese apps, going **against the general trend of international trade and E-commerce.**
  - It has also stated that such measures are **not conducive to consumer interests and the market competition** in India.
  - Chinese State media have also **widely criticised** calls in India to boycott Chinese goods.

China's History in Trade and Procurement Curbs

- **Background:**
  - **Economic sanctions** have been one of the **key tools** of Chinese coercion.
  - China usually uses economic sanctions with the countries with whom China faces territorial claims where sanctions include **restrictions on trade, encouragement for boycotts, and cutting off tourism.**
    China used these measures to inflict **immediate economic pain.**
  - China's coercive actions are always **selective and focused** on targets where the **economic cost of coercing is low but the impact is high.**
- **Affected Countries:**
  - **South Korea:**
    - China had boycotted **South Korean goods in 2016 and 2017,** when South Korea had deployed the U.S. **Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD)** missile system. In October 2017, South Korea had issued a list of assurances meant to clarify to China that it would not expand the scope of THAAD.
    - China had also placed curbs on tourism to South Korea, costing the country millions of dollars in tourism revenue.
  - **Japan:**
    - In 2010, China had restricted the exports of rare earth elements to Japan – a key ingredient for many electronics industries – following a **collision near disputed East China Sea islands.**
    - Two years later, mass protests organised by China led to boycotts of Japanese brands and, in some instances, violence targeting Japanese branded-cars and stores.
  - **Philippines:**
    A dispute over the Scarborough Shoal in the **South China Sea** in 2012 led to China curbing imports on bananas and restricting tourism, costing the country millions of dollars in revenue.

Way Forward

- Losing a contract to India may cause some pain to companies, but will have a **minimal impact on the scale they are operating.**
- Thus, India needs to be very **selective in its measures.** For example, India can curb Chinese firms' involvement in the telecom sector in India, especially 5G trials. But at the same time a large part of the infrastructure India already has in place in the 4G network is all Chinese, so India will still need China for maintenance and servicing.
- The problem for India is it cannot inflict serious pain on the five-times-larger Chinese economy as a whole, even if it could hurt individual companies.

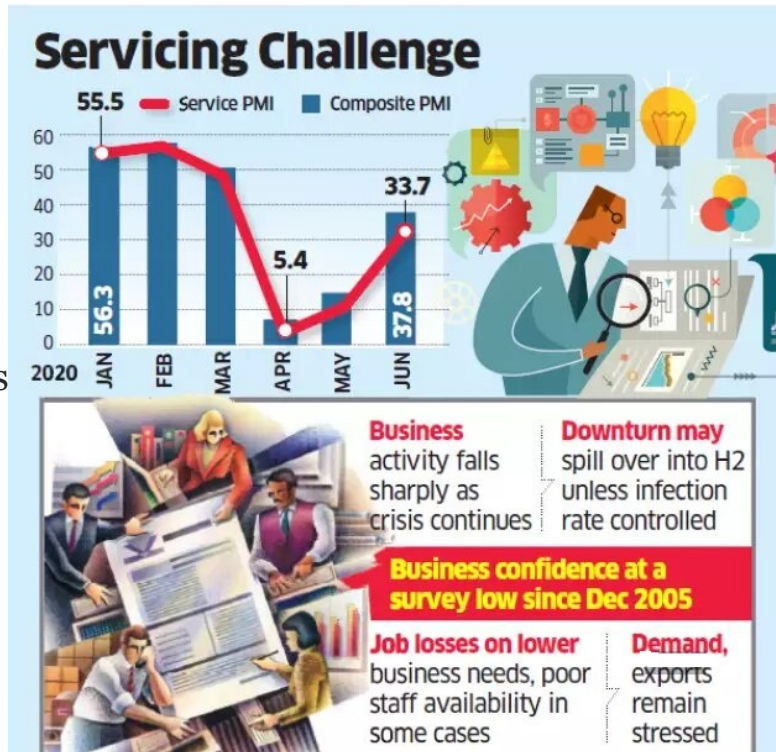**Source:TH**

Fall in Service Purchasing Managers' Index

Why in News

The IHS Markit India Services Business Activity Index (i.e Service **Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)**) has observed the **contraction of <u>services sector activity</u>** for the **fourth consecutive month** in June 2020.

- India's services sector activity remained in deep downturn in June as the **<u>Covid-19 pandemic</u> curtailed intakes of new work orders and disrupted business operations.**
- The Index is compiled by IHS Markit for **more than 40 economies worldwide.** IHS Markit is a **global leader in information,** analytics and solutions for the major industries and markets that drive economies worldwide.

Purchasing Managers' Index

- PMI is an index of the **prevailing direction of economic trends** in the **manufacturing and service sectors.**
- It consists of a diffusion index that summarizes whether market conditions, as viewed by purchasing managers, are expanding, staying the same, or contracting.
- The purpose of the PMI is to provide information about **current and future business conditions** to company decision makers, analysts, and investors.
- It is **different from the Index of Industrial Production (IIP),** which also gauges the level of activity in the economy.
    - IIP covers the **broader industrial sector** compared to PMI.
    - PMI is **more dynamic** compared to a standard industrial production index.

Key Points

Servicing Challenge

55.5 — Service PMI ■ Composite PMI

(chart showing Service PMI and Composite PMI from JAN to JUN 2020; values: JAN 56.3 / 55.5, APR 5.4, JUN 37.8 / 33.7)

Business activity falls sharply as crisis continues | **Downturn may** spill over into H2 unless infection rate controlled

Business confidence at a survey low since Dec 2005

Job losses on lower business needs, poor staff availability in some cases | **Demand,** exports remain stressed

- **Current Scenario of Service Sector:**
  - The IHS Markit Services PMI in June **rose to 33.7 from 12.6 in May (2020), indicating a pick-up from the previous month**, although **any reading below 50** on this survey-based index **shows contraction.**
    - The index stood at a **record low of 5.4** in April (2020).
  - India's services sector activity reported the **slower rate of decline** which is reflective of some **stabilisation** in activity levels.
    - However, the **closures and temporary suspensions** are responsible for the **stabilization in service** activities.
  - Additionally, **59%** of firms reported **no change in output** since May. Meanwhile, **only 4%** registered **growth,** while **37%** recorded a **reduction.**
- **Reasons :**
  - Sharp **fall in total new orders** due to reduced consumption habits.
  - **Closure of businesses** due to the unfavourable environment.
  - Steep **drop in export** sales.
  - **Job losses** due to lower business requirements.
  - Poor staff availability.
- **Significance of Service Sector:**
  - The performance of the service sector is **critical to measure the economic situation** of the country as it accounts for the **two-thirds of total foreign direct investment** inflows into India and about **38% of India's exports.**
  - The Service Sector has a **share of 57% in Gross Domestic Products (GDP),** which is **maximum** among all three sectors — services, industry and agriculture.

- **Composite PMI Output Index:**
    - The Composite PMI Output Index, which measures **combined services and manufacturing output, rose to 37.8 in June,** up from 14.8 in May.
        - But 37.8 is still below the crucial 50 level signifying contraction.
    - The PMI for manufacturing has also been released which is at **42.7** signifying **moderate fall** in **manufacturing** production.

Way Forward

- Although the deterioration was weaker than in April and May, owing to a stabilisation in output levels at some firms, the latest reduction was stronger than seen prior to the virus outbreak by a wide margin.
- Thus, business confidence needs to be developed to uplift expectations of service sector activities which will help to manage the risk of a protracted recession noted by the firms.

Source:IE

Increasing E-waste

Why in News

According to a recent **United Nations University** (UNU) report, **global e-waste** will **increase** by **38%** in the **decade between 2020 and 2030.**

> UNU is a **global think tank and postgraduate teaching organisation** headquartered in **Japan.**
>> **UNU's mission** is to resolve the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare that are the concern of the <u>United Nations</u>, its peoples and the member states.

E-Waste

- E-Waste is short for **Electronic-Waste** and the term used to describe old, end-of-life or discarded electronic appliances.
- It is categorised into **21 types under two broad categories:**
    - Information technology and communication equipment.
    - Consumer electrical and electronics.
- E-waste includes their components, consumables, parts and spares.

Key Points

- **Data Analysis of 2019:**
  - There was **53.6 million tonnes (MT) e-waste in 2019,** which is a nearly **21% increase** in just five years.
  - **Asia generated the greatest volume** (around 24.9 MT) followed by the Americas (13.1 MT) and Europe (12 MT). Africa and Oceania generated 2.9 MT and 0.7 MT respectively.
  - Most E-waste **consisted of small and large equipment** like screens and monitors, lamps, telecommunication equipment etc and temperature exchange equipment.
  - **Less than 18%** of the e-waste generated in 2019 was **collected and recycled.**
    - E-waste consisting of gold, silver, copper, platinum and other high-value, recoverable materials worth at least USD 57 billion was mostly dumped or burned rather than being collected for treatment and reuse.
  - The **number of countries that have adopted a national e-waste policy,** legislation or regulation has **increased from 61 to 78** and **includes India.**
    - It is far from the target set by the **International Telecommunication Union** to raise the percentage of countries with e-waste legislation to 50%.
- **Concerns:**
  - **Toxicity:** E-waste consists of **toxic elements** such as Lead, Mercury, Cadmium, Chromium, Polybrominated biphenyls and Polybrominated diphenyl.
  - **Effects on Humans:** Some of the major health effects include serious illnesses such as lung cancer, respiratory problems, bronchitis, brain damages, etc due to inhalation of toxic fumes, exposure to heavy metals and alike.
  - **Effects on Environment:** E-waste is an **environmental hazard** causing groundwater pollution, acidification of soil and contamination of groundwater and air pollution due to the burning of plastic and other remnants.

E-waste in India

- Structured management of e-waste in India is mandated under the **E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016**.
- Some of the salient features of the rules include **e-waste classification, extended producer responsibility** (EPR), **collection targets** and **restrictions on import of e-waste** containing hazardous materials.
- There are 312 authorised recyclers of e-waste in India, with the capacity for treating approximately 800 kilo tons annually. However, **formal recycling capacity remains underutilised** because **over 90%** of the e-waste is still **handled by the informal sector.**
- Almost over a million people in India are involved in **manual recycling operations.** Workers are not registered so it is hard to **track the issues of employment such as workers' rights, remunerations, safety measures,** etc.
- Labourers are from the **vulnerable sections** of the society and **lack any form of bargaining power** and are **not aware of their rights.** This has a serious impact on the environment since none of the procedures is followed by workers or local dealers.

Way Forward

- It is needed to come up with a strategy to engage with informal sector workers because doing so will not only go a long way in better e-waste management practices but also aid in environmental protection, improve the health and working conditions of labourers and provide better work opportunities to over a million people.
- This will make management environmentally sustainable and easy to monitor.
- The need of the hour is to generate employment, which can be done through identifying and promoting cooperatives and expanding the scope of the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016 to these cooperatives or the informal sector workers.
- Effective implementation of regulations is the way ahead to managing the e-waste that is yet to be regulated in at least 115 countries.

Source: DTE

Strength of CoM in Madhya Pradesh

Why in News

Recently, it has been alleged that the strength of the **Council of Ministers (CoM)** in Madhya Pradesh exceeds the prescribed Constitutional limit.

Key Points

- The recent expansion of the Ministry in Madhya Pradesh has increased the Council of Ministers strength to 34, which is **more than 15%** of the **effective strength** of the **legislators at 206.**
    - The effective strength of the House is calculated by **deducting the vacant seats** out of the total strength of the House.
- **Article 164 (1A)** of the Constitution prescribed that the **total number of Ministers, including the Chief Minister,** in the Council of Ministers in a State **shall not exceed 15% of the total number of members of the Legislative Assembly of that State.**
    - Provided that the number of Ministers, including the Chief Minister in a State **shall not be less than twelve.**
    - This provision was introduced through the **91st Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2003.**
- The Assembly strength of 228 dropped to 206 in March 2020, when 22 rebel Congress MLAs resigned, toppling the then government. Two seats fell vacant earlier owing to deaths.

Council of Ministers in State

- The Council of Ministers in the states is **constituted and function in the same way** as the Council of Ministers at the Centre.
- **Article 163 (1)** provides that **there shall be a Council of Ministers** with the **Chief Minister as the head** to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions.
    - However, the Constitution **does not specify** the size of the State Council of Ministers or the ranking of ministers. They are determined by the chief minister according to the exigencies of the time and requirements of the situation
- **Article 164 (1)** provides that the Chief Minister shall be **appointed by the Governor** and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister.
    - However, in the states of **Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha,** there shall be a **Minister in charge of tribal welfare** who may in addition be in charge of the welfare of the scheduled castes and backward classes or any other work.
- **Article 164 (2)** provides that the Council of Ministers shall be **collectively responsible to the State Legislative Assembly.**
- **Article 164 (4)** provides that a person can remain as Minister without being a member of the state legislature for a **period of six consecutive months.**
- **Article 164 (1B)** provides that a member of either House of state legislature **who is disqualified on the ground of defection shall also be disqualified** to be appointed as a Minister.

Source: TH

Prerak Dauur Samman: Swachh Survekshan 2021

Why in News

Recently, a new category of awards titled **'Prerak Dauur Samman'** has been announced as part of **Swachh Survekshan 2021.**

Key Points

- **Prerak Dauur Samman:**
    - The Prerak Dauur Samman has a total of **five additional subcategories** namely, *Divya* (Platinum), *Anupam* (Gold), *Ujjwal* (Silver), *Udit* (Bronze) and *Aarohi* (Aspiring).
    - In **Swachh Survekshan 2020**, cities are evaluated on the criteria of **'population category'** but for 2021, they will be categorised on the **basis of six select indicator wise performance criteria.**
        - Segregation of waste into Wet, Dry and Hazard categories.
        - Processing capacity against wet waste generated.
        - Processing and recycling of wet and dry waste.
        - Construction and Demolition waste processing.
        - Percentage of waste going to landfills.
        - Sanitation status of cities.
- **Integrated SBM-Urban MIS Portal:**
    - The **integrated Management Information System (MIS) portal** was also launched.
    - It aims to **bring the numerous digital initiatives on a single platform** and **ensure a unified and hassle-free experience** for states and cities.

Swachh Survekshan

- Launched as a part of the **Swachh Bharat Mission**, it is an **annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation** in cities and towns across India.
- The ranking exercise is taken up by the Government of India to **assess rural and urban areas** for their levels of cleanliness and active implementation of Swachhata mission initiatives in a timely and innovative manner.
    - **Swachh Survekshan-Urban** is conducted by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.**
    - **Swachh Survekshan-Rural** is conducted by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti.**
        - Earlier, it was conducted by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation which was merged with the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation to make a new Ministry of Jal Shakti in 2019.

- **Earlier Editions:**
  - **2016:** Ranked **73** cities.
  - **2017:** Ranked **434** cities.
  - **2018:** Ranked **4203** cities and became the **world's largest cleanliness survey** of that time.
  - **2019:** Ranked **4237** cities and was **first of its kind completely digital survey** completed in a record time of 28 days.
  - **2020:** It continues the momentum and has seen a huge participation of **1.87 crore citizens.** To ensure sustainability of on-ground performance of cities, the **Swachh Survekshan League** was also introduced in **2019.**
    - Swachh Survekshan League is a **quarterly cleanliness assessment** of cities and towns, to be done in three quarters and these quarterly assessments will hold **25% weightage** in the annual survey.
    - **Swachh Survekshan 2020** was evaluated for each quarter on the basis of monthly updation of **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban** (SBM-U) online **Management Information System** (MIS) by cities along with citizen's validation on the 12 service level progress indicators.
    - The results for Swachh Survekshan 2020 will be **announced shortly** by the Ministry.
- **Notable Rankings:**
  - **Mysuru** won the award for the **Cleanest City of India** in the Swachh Survekshan **2016.**
  - **Indore has retained the top position** in Swachh Survekshan for **three consecutive years (2017, 2018 and 2019).**

Source: PIB

Hagia Sophia Museum: Turkey

Why in News

Recently, the government of **Turkey** has decided to convert Istanbul's iconic **Hagia Sophia Museum** into a mosque.

Key Points

- **Turkey's Stand:**
  - **Superiority of the Islamic World:** For the President **Recep Tayyip Erdoğan** of Justice and Development Party (AKP), and his supporters who tend to have **nationalist-Islamist sympathies,** it symbolises the conquest of **Christian Constantinople by the Ottomans,** and the **superiority of the Islamic world.**
  - **Political Symbol:** Hagia Sophia is not only the symbol of Turkey's most popular tourist attraction but also acts as a **political symbol.**
    - The plan of conversion is also an attempt to **gain political support** as AKP has lost many municipal elections.
  - **USA Recognition of Jerusalem:** It also coincided with USA recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.
    - Jerusalem which has a significant population of Arab-muslims who are becoming more and more hostile because of the **USA's recent stand on Israel-Palestine issue.** This step of conversion of mosque would gain support of Arab countries for Turkey.
  - **Less Opposition:** It has also been believed that the government does not need the courts to decide on the fate of the Hagia Sophia as legal rulings will add legitimacy to his proposals.
    - Also, there has been less opposition within Turkey because religious minorities do not wish to be involved in such polarising subjects
  - **Domestic Matter:** Turkey considers the status of the Hagia Sophia as a domestic matter and interference of international players is not required as **Greece objected to the conversion** of the museum into a mosque.

- **Greece's Stand:**
    - **Diplomatic Tension:** There have been diplomatic tensions between Turkey and Greece over many issues related to Hagia Sophia.
        - According to Greece, the museum which has been designated a world cultural heritage is currently being used to promote other purposes.
        - Earlier, Greece objected to the reading of passages from the Quran inside the Hagia Sophia on the 567th anniversary of the Ottoman invasion of the former Byzantine capital.
- **Role of UNESCO:** Greece had appealed to the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**, objecting to Turkey's moves on grounds that the conversion is a violation of UNESCO's 'Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.
    - UNESCO too has objected to Turkey's plans.
- **USA's Stand:** It has expressed that by the conversion the Hagia Sophia would not be able to serve humanity as a bridge between those of differing faith and cultures.

Background

- **Hagia Sophia** is the former **Greek Orthodox Christian patriarchal cathedral,** later an Ottoman imperial mosque and now a museum located in Istanbul, Turkey.
- Built in AD 537 **(Byzantine architecture),** during the reign of **Justinian 1, the Eastern Roman emperor,** it is famous for its large dome.
- In 1453, when Constantinople (capital city of the Roman Empire) fell to Sultan Mehmet II's Ottoman forces, the Hagia Sophia was turned into a mosque.
- For a long time, the Hagia Sophia was Istanbul's most important mosque.
- In 1934, **Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey,** converted the **mosque into a museum** in an attempt to make the **country more secular.**
- The 1,500-year-old structure has been listed as a **UNESCO'S World Heritage site.**
    - A World Heritage Site is a place that is listed by UNESCO as of special cultural or physical significance.

Source: IE

Natanz: Underground Nuclear Facility of Iran

Why in News

Recently, a fire broke out at **Natanz,** an **Underground Nuclear Facility of Iran** used for enriching uranium.

Enriched uranium is a type of uranium in which the percent composition of uranium-235 is increased.

Key Points

Natanz:
- Located in Iran's central Isfahan province in Tehran, Natanz hosts the country's **main uranium enrichment facility.**
- It is known as the first **Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant** of Iran.
    - **Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP)** is Iran's second pilot enrichment plant.
- It is among the sites monitored by the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** after **Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers** i.e. the USA ,UK, France, China, Russia, and Germany.
- **Controversy:**
    - **IAEA Inspection:** Natanz became a point of controversy as **Iran refused to allow an IAEA inspector** into the facility in October 2019, after allegedly testing positive for suspected traces of **explosive nitrates.**
        - Nitrates are a common fertilizer, however, when mixed with proper amounts of fuel, the material can become an explosive as powerful as **Trinitrotoluene (TNT).**
        - TNT is also known as **2,4,6-Trinitrotoluene** and does not occur naturally in the environment.
        - It is an explosive used in military shells, bombs, and grenades, and in underwater blasting.
- **Stuxnet Computer Virus:** The Stuxnet computer virus, believed to be an **American and Israeli creation,** disrupted and destroyed centrifuges at Natanz amid the height of **Western concerns over Iran's nuclear program in 2010.**
- **USA's Response:** The USA has unilaterally withdrawn from the nuclear deal in May 2018 as Iran has continuously been breaking all the production limits set by the deal.
    - According to the IAEA Iran enriches uranium to about 4.5 % purity, above the terms of the nuclear deal.

International Atomic Energy Agency

- Widely known as the world's **"Atoms for Peace and Development"** organization within the **United Nations** family, the IAEA is the international centre for cooperation in the nuclear field.
- The IAEA was **created in 1957** in response to the deep fears and expectations generated by the discoveries and diverse uses of nuclear technology.
- **Headquarter: Vienna, Austria.**
- The Agency works with its Member States and multiple partners worldwide to promote safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies.
    - **In 2005** it was awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize** for their work for a safe and peaceful world.
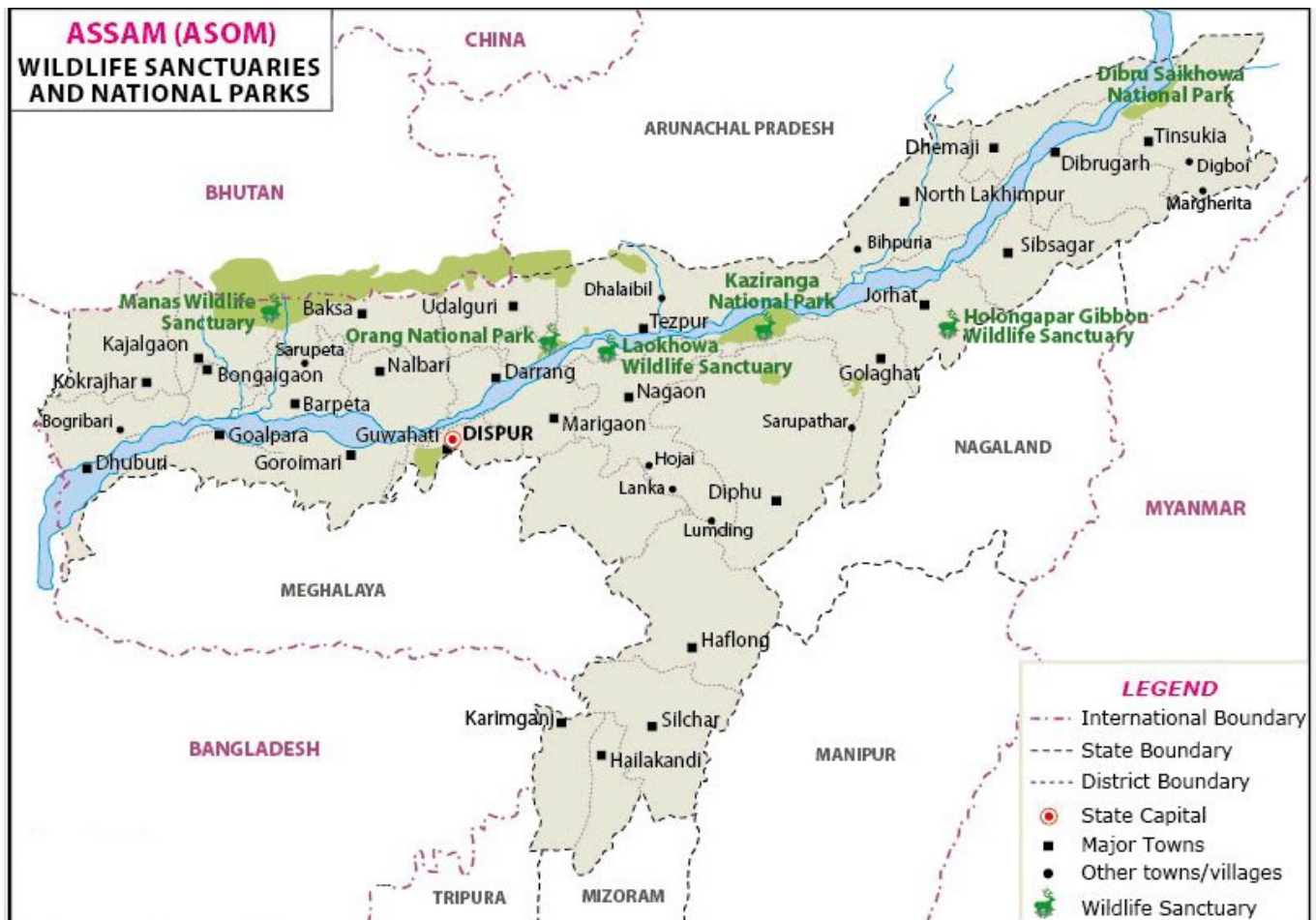
- **Functions:** It is an independent international organization that reports annually to the United Nation General Assembly. When necessary, the IAEA also reports to the UN Security Council in regards to instances of members' non-compliance with safeguards and security obligations.

Source: IE

Kaziranga National Park

Why in News

According to **Kaziranga National Park** authorities around **80%** of its area has been inundated due to floods.

Key Points

- **Location:** It is located in the **State of Assam** and **covers 42,996 Hectare (ha).** It is the single largest undisturbed and representative area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain.

- **Legal Status:**
  - It was declared as a **National Park in 1974.**
  - It has been declared a **tiger reserve** since 2007. It has a total tiger reserve area of 1,030 sq km with a core area of 430 sq. km.
- **International Status:**
  - It was declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** in **1985.**
  - It is recognized as an **Important Bird Area** by **BirdLife International.**
- **Important Species Found:**
  - It is the home of the world's most **one-horned rhinos**. **Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary** has the **highest density of one-horned rhinos in the world** and second highest number of Rhinos in Assam after Kaziranga National Park.
  - Much of the focus of conservation efforts in Kaziranga are focused on the **'big four'** species— **Rhino, Elephant, Royal Bengal tiger and Asiatic water buffalo.**
  - The 2018 census had yielded 2,413 rhinos and approximately 1,100 elephants.
  - As per the figures of **tiger census** conducted in 2014, Kaziranga had an estimated 103 tigers, the third highest population in India after **Jim Corbett National Park (215) in Uttarakhand** and **Bandipur National Park (120) in Karnataka.**
  - Kaziranga is also home to 9 of the 14 species of **primates found** in the Indian subcontinent.
- **Rivers and Highways:**
  - The National Highway 37 passes through the park area.
  - The park also has more than 250 seasonal water bodies, besides the **Diphlu River** running through it.
- Other **national parks in Assam are:**
  - Dibru-Saikhowa National Park,
  - **Manas National Park,**
  - Nameri National Park,
  - Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park.

Source: TH

Nagarahole National Park: Karnataka

Why in News

Recently, the Karnataka Forest Department has decided to put in place a **traffic monitoring mechanism** along the roads adjacent to **Nagarahole National Park.**

Key Points

- **Time-stamped Card System:**
  - The forest department will introduce a **time-stamped card system** for vehicles passing through the roads, adjacent to **Nagarahole National Park,** which have high traffic density 24x7.
  - The time stamped card will have complete details on the **speed limit** to be maintained and the **exit time** at the next check post.
  - Such a system is already in place on the road cutting through **Nagarahole Tiger Reserve.**
- **Issues Involved:**
  - **Pollution:** In the absence of any monitoring mechanism, **littering along the road** is high as many motorists stop midway on the road adjacent to the forests for lunch break and leave behind plastic water bottles and liquor bottles.
  - **Road Kills:** The heavy vehicle movement along the stretch also causes <u>road kills</u> some of which come to light if the animal dies on the road. But in most cases the injured animals tend to drag themselves into the forests and their subsequent deaths do not come to light.
  - **Man-made Forest Fires:** The forests adjacent to the highway also witness **forest fires and illegal tree felling.**
- **Benefit of Road Monitoring**
  - It will help ensure that motorists don't stop midway and litter the area or cause disturbance to wildlife.
  - It will also ensure better compliance of forest laws by motorists and will also minimise road kills.

Nagarhole National Park

- It is also known as **'Rajiv Gandhi National Park.**
- It was established as a **wildlife sanctuary in 1955** and was upgraded into a national **park in 1988.** It was declared as the **37th Tiger reserve** under **Project Tiger** in 1999.
- The Park lies in the **Western Ghats** and is a part of the **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.**
- The **Nagarahole River** flows through the park, which joins the **Kabini River** which also is a boundary between **Nagarahole and Bandipur Ntional Park.**
- **Flora:** The vegetation consists mainly of **moist deciduous forests** with predominating trees of teak and rosewood.
- **Fauna:** Asian elephants, chital (spotted deer), Indian mouse deer, gaur, stripe-necked and ruddy mongooses, grey langur, bonnet macaque, Asian wild dog, leopard, tiger, sloth bear among others.

Source: TH