



News Analysis (15 May, 2021)

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Overcrowding of Prison

Why in News

The **Supreme Court (SC)** of India has ordered the **interim release of eligible prisoners** in view of the uncontrolled second surge in the raging Covid-19 pandemic.

The Court's order aims to decongest jails and a measure that **protects the right to life and health of the prisoners**.

Key Points

- **Important Points of Supreme Court Order:**

- Emphasised the need to adhere to the norms it had laid down in ***Arnesh Kumar vs State of Bihar (2014) case***.
Under this case, the police were asked not to effect unnecessary arrests, especially in cases that involve jail terms **less than seven years**.
- Authorities in all districts in the country to give effect to **Section 436A of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.P.C)**.
Under the Section 436A of the Cr.P.C, the undertrials who have **completed half of the maximum prison term** prescribed for the offence may be released on **personal bond**.
- Suggested the legislature to consider the idea of **placing convicts under house arrest** to avoid overcrowding of prisons.
The **occupancy rate in prisons** climbed to 118.5% in 2019. Moreover, a **very large sum of the budget** is used for the maintenance of prisons.
- Ordered all States to **take preventive steps** as well as **constitute high-powered committees** to determine the class of prisoners who could be released on bail or parole for a specified period.

- **Status of Indian Prisons:**

- Indian prisons face **three long-standing structural constraints:**
 - Overcrowding,
 - Understaffing and underfunding and
 - Violent clashes.

- The **Prison Statistics India 2016**, published by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** in 2019 highlights the plight of prisoners in India.
 - **Under-trial Population:** India's under-trial population remains among the highest in the world and more than half of all undertrials were detained for less than six months in 2016.
 - The report highlights that at the end of 2016, there were 4,33,033 people in prison, of whom **68% were undertrials**.
 - This suggests that the high proportion of undertrials in the overall prison population may be the result of **unnecessary arrests** and **ineffective legal aid** during remand hearings.
 - **People Held Under Preventive Detention:** There is the rise in the number of people held under **administrative (or 'prevention') detention laws** in Jammu and Kashmir.
 - A 300% increase, with 431 detainees in 2016, compared to 90 in 2015.
 - Administrative, or 'preventive', detention is used by authorities to detain persons without charge or trial and circumvent regular criminal justice procedures.
 - **Unawareness about Section 436A of C.R.P.C.:** There is a gap between the number of prisoners eligible to be released and actually released, under Section 436A of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
 - In 2016, out of 1,557 undertrials found eligible for release under Section 436A, only 929 were released.
 - Also, research by Amnesty India has found that prison officials are frequently unaware of this section and unwilling to apply it.
 - **Unnatural Deaths in Prison:** The number of "unnatural" deaths in prisons has doubled between 2015 and 2016, from 115 to 231.
 - The rate of suicide among prisoners also increased by 28%, from 77 suicides in 2015 to 102 in 2016.
 - The **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** in 2014 had stated that on average, a person is one-and-a-half times more likely to commit suicide in prison than outside. This is a possible indicator of the magnitude of **mental health concerns** within Indian prisons.

- **Lack of Mental Health Professional:** There was only one mental health professional for every 21,650 prisoners in 2016, with only six States and one Union Territory having psychologists /psychiatrists.
 - Also, the NCRB had said that about 6,013 individuals with mental illness were in jail in 2016.
 - As per the Prison Act, 1894 and Prisoner Act, 1900, there should be a **welfare officer and a law officer** in each jail but recruitment of these officers is still pending. This state explains the low political and budgetary priority which prisons have received during the preceding century.

Recommendation for Prison Reforms

- The Supreme Court appointed **Justice Amitava Roy (retd.) Committee** has given the following recommendations to **reform prisons**.
 - **For Overcrowding:**
 - **Speedy Trial:** Speedy trial remains one of the best ways to remedy the unwarranted phenomenon of overcrowding.
 - **Lawyer to Prisoner Ratio:** There should be at least **one lawyer for every 30 prisoners**, which is not the case at present.
 - **Special Courts:** Special fast-track courts should be set up to deal exclusively with petty offences which have been pending for more than five years.
 - Further, accused persons who are charged with petty offences and those granted bail, but who are unable to arrange surety should be released on a **Personal Recognizance (PR) Bond**.
 - **Avoid Adjournment:** An adjournment should not be granted in cases where witnesses are present and the concept of plea bargaining, in which the accused admits guilt for a lesser sentence, should be promoted.
 - **For Prisoners:**
 - **Accommodative Transition:** Every new prisoner should be allowed a free phone call a day to his family members to see him through his first week in jail.
 - **Legal Aid:** Providing effective legal aid to prisoners and taking steps to provide vocational skills and education to prisoners.
 - **Use of ICT:** Use of video-conferencing for trial.
 - **Alternatives:** The courts may be asked to use their "discretionary powers" and award sentences like "fine and admonition" if possible instead of sending the offenders to jails.
 - Further, courts may be encouraged to release offenders on probation at pre-trial stage or after trial in deserving cases.
 - **Filling Vacancies:**
 - The Supreme Court should pass directions asking authorities to start the recruitment process against permanent vacancies within three months and the process should be completed in a year.
 - For Food: Modern cooking facilities and canteens to buy essential items.
- In 2017, the **Law Commission of India** had recommended that undertrials who have completed a third of their maximum sentence for offences attracting up to seven years of imprisonment be released on bail.

Constitutional Provisions

- **State Subject:** 'Prisons/persons detained therein' is a **State subject** under **Entry 4 of List II** of the **Seventh Schedule** to the Constitution of India.
 - Administration and management of prisons is the responsibility of respective State Governments.
 - However, the **Ministry of Home Affairs** provides regular guidance and advice to States and UTs on various issues concerning prisons and prison inmates.
- **Article 39A:** Article 39A of the Constitution directs the State to ensure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity and shall, in particular, **provide free legal aid by suitable legislation or schemes or in any other way**, to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities.
 - **Right to free legal aid or free legal service** is an essential fundamental right guaranteed by the Constitution.
 - It forms the basis of reasonable, fair and just liberty under **Article 21** of the Constitution of India, which says, **“No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law”**.

Key Terms

- **Undertrials:** These are the people who are yet to be found guilty of the crimes they have been accused of.
- **Preventive Detention:** The imprisonment of a person with the aim of preventing them from committing further offences or of maintaining public order.
 - **Article 22 (3) (b)** of the Constitution allows for preventive detention and restriction on personal liberty for reasons of state security and public order.
 - Further, **Article 22 (4)** states that no law providing for preventive detention shall authorise the detention of a person for a longer period than three months unless:
 - An Advisory Board reports sufficient cause for extended detention.
 - Such a person is detained in accordance with the provisions of any law made by the Parliament.
- **Personal Recognizance (PR) Bond:** It is also known as Own Recognizance (OR) bond, and sometimes referred to as “no cost bail”. With this type of bond, a person is released from custody and is not required to post bail.
 - They are, however, responsible for showing up on their specified court date, and must sign a release form stating this promise in writing.
 - The person is then released from custody based on their promise to appear in court and abide by any conditions of release set by the court.

Source: TH

Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

Why in News

Since **the coup in Myanmar**, the **United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID)** has received reports of **enforced disappearances from the family members of victims**.

Many Asian regimes are using **enforced disappearances as a tool to suppress the people**.

Key Points

- **About:**

Enforced disappearance occurs when a **person is secretly abducted or imprisoned** by a state or political organization, or by a third party with the authorization, support, of a state or political organization, **followed by a refusal to acknowledge the person's fate and whereabouts**, with the intent of **placing the victim outside the protection of the law**.

- Enforced disappearances became widely known to the world in the **1970s and the early 1980s during the 'Dirty War' in Argentina**.
- **Dirty War**, also called **Process of National Reorganization**, was a infamous **campaign waged by Argentina's military dictatorship against suspected left-wing political opponents**.

- **Constituents of Enforced Disappearances:**

- **Deprivation of liberty** against the will of the person.
- **Involvement of government officials**, at least by acquiescence.
- **Refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty** or concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person.

- **Recent Occurrences:**

- **Myanmar:**

The **military is committed to suppressing the people's movement**, and the police are carrying out unimaginable acts of violence and oppression against those demanding freedom of expression and the restoration of democracy.

- **China:**

Under the pretext of re-education to prevent terrorism, **Uyghur minority ethnic group members are forcibly sent to what Chinese authorities call 'vocational education and training centers'**, with no information on their whereabouts.

- **Sri Lanka:**

It has experienced more than three decades of **domestic conflict accompanied by various forms of enforced disappearances**.

- **Pakistan and Bangladesh:**

Enforced disappearances are **being committed in the name of counter-terrorism measures**.

- **Global Measures:**
 - **United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID):**
 - **About:**

In 1980, the UN Commission on Human Rights (now replaced with UN Human Rights Council) decided to "establish for a period of one year a working group consisting of five of its members, to serve as experts in their individual capacities, to examine questions relevant to enforced or involuntary disappearances of persons".
 - **Functions:**
 - **Assist Families:**

It **assists families in determining the fate or whereabouts** of their family members who have reportedly disappeared.
 - **Oblige States:**

It is **entrusted with monitoring the progress of States in fulfilling their obligations** deriving from the Declaration and to provide to Governments assistance in its implementation.
 - **Involves NGOs:**

It **draws the attention of Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to different aspects** of the Declaration and recommends ways of overcoming obstacles to the realization of its provisions.
 - **International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2006:**
 - To **protect the right to be free from enforced disappearances**, the international community adopted the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2006.
 - This became effective in 2010 and the **Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) was established.**
 - **CED and WGEID coexist side by side and seek to collaborate and coordinate** their activities with a view to strengthen the joint efforts to prevent and eradicate enforced disappearances.
 - The number of **participating states is still very low** compared to other treaties.
 - Among **63 member states** of the treaty, only eight states from the Asia-Pacific region have ratified or acceded to the treaty.
 - Only four East Asian states — Cambodia, Japan, Mongolia, and Sri Lanka have ratified it.
 - **India has signed but not ratified it.**

- **Relevant Indian Laws:**

In India there is **no specific legislation for enforced disappearances** but there are international, constitutional legal protections available for torture, extra judicial killings and forced disappearances such as the **Armed forces and special powers Act, 1958**, Prevention of torture bill, 2017, **Right to Information act 2005** etc.

Way Forward

- Enforced disappearance is a **serious crime that goes against humanity**. The pain and suffering of the family members do not end until they find out the fate or whereabouts of their loved ones.
- **Asian countries should consider their obligations and responsibilities** more seriously and reject a culture of impunity in order to eradicate enforced disappearances.
- The **domestic criminal law systems are not sufficient to deal with the crime of enforced disappearance**. It is a continuous crime that **needs a comprehensive approach to fight against it**.
- The **international community must strengthen its efforts** to eradicate enforced disappearances at the earliest.

Source:TH

New Approach for Post-Covid Education

Why in News

Due to a **surge in Covid-19 infections** in the **Second Wave** of infections, the education of students in the entire nation is affected.

Key Points

- **Concerns:**
 - **Availability of Online Education:**
 - Online education was envisioned as an alternative means of spreading education, but it too fails, given the Indian students' conditions.
 - **The availability and affordability of this system poses a barrier.**
 - **While e-education is a privilege for the students from an upper and middle class, it has proved to be a nuisance for students from the lower middle class and people living below the poverty line.**
 - **Long-Term Exposure to Internet:**
 - There are also implications of longer exposure to the internet for these young kids.
 - This may create **impediments to the development of the thinking process** in the younger generation.
 - **Decreasing Analytical Thinking:**
 - The other important question is about the **learning outcomes of online education.**
 - Google is the prominent and only platform to all queries, and as a result of that, **students are not thinking on their own.**
 - Scientific outlook was the key parameter stressed upon since the inception of modern education in India.
 - **Increasing Student Isolation:**
 - Due to the pandemic and lack of physical classroom teaching, a peculiar **feeling of isolation is developing in the minds of students.** That's a very serious issue. The trauma of the second wave will put a deep imprint on the student's mind.
 - **Physical interaction and activities have been entirely absent, and that may also be contributing to new problems.**

- **Possible Solutions:**

- **Use of Infrastructure:**

The whole **infrastructure should be fully utilised**, and if necessary, many **more facilities should be invested in** (and created) to impart education.

As classroom teaching gives us the opportunity to impart many more things apart from information.

- **New Content:**

- Institutions should **contemplate new content generation for each subject** to overcome the absence of classroom teaching within the framework of the existing syllabus.

- This content would be of a **new type, self-explanatory, and considering the lowest IQ of the class**, it has to be attractive.

- The content **should produce the same effect on the minds of the students that the best book imparts** on the thinking faculty.

- **Personal Supervision:**

- The teachers and non-teaching staff should **visit the locality of the students (in and around the school area) on a weekly basis** to supervise the whole work.

- They should **take notes on the problems faced by students** in understanding the reading material and also whether things are reaching them on time.

- **New Evaluation System:**

The evaluation should be **based on the capacity of analysis, and the questions** should be framed in such a way that **students need to apply their minds** to answer the questions on each subject.

- **Prioritizing Vaccination:**

In addition, the **government should take the responsibility to vaccinate the whole teaching community** as fast as possible to advance this learning process.

- **Related Government Initiatives for E-Learning:**

- **E-PG Pathshala:**

An initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development to provide e-content for studies.

- **SWAYAM:**

It provides for an integrated platform for online courses.

- **NEAT:**

It aims to use **Artificial Intelligence** to make learning more personalized and customized as per the requirements of the learner

- **PRAGYATA:**

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) released guidelines on **digital education** titled PRAGYATA.

- Under the PRAGYATA guidelines, only 30 minutes of screen time per day for interacting with parents is recommended for kindergarten, nursery and pre-school.

- **National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning:**

- The NPTEL is a project of MHRD initiated by seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), along with the Indian Institute of Science Bangalore.

- It was started in 2003 and its aim was to have **web and video courses in engineering, sciences, and management.**

Way Forward

- **Covid-19** has shown the extent to which the Indian system of education exploits inequalities.
- Thus, there is a **need for renewed commitments to the synergy between the private and public education sector.** In this context, there is a **need to make education a common good and digital innovation can help in achieving the feat.**

Source:IE

Spread of Covid Infection in Vulnerable Tribal Groups

Why in News

Many members of eight different **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** got infected in the second wave of **Covid-19** in Odisha.

The infected PVTGs include the **Bonda tribe** of Malkangiri hills and **Dongaria Kondh** tribe of Niyamgiri hills.

Key Points

- **Tribal Groups in Odisha:**

- According to the 2011 Census, Odisha's share of the **country's total tribal population was 9%**.
- The Tribals constitute 22.85% of the State's population.
- In terms of numbers of its tribal population, Odisha occupies the third position in India.
- Of the 62 tribal groups residing in Odisha, 13 are recognised as PVTGs.
The 13 PVTGs in Odisha are: Bonda, Birhor, Chuktia Bhunjia, Didayi, Dungaria Kandha, Hill Kharia, Juang, Kutia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Lodha, Mankirdia, Paudi Bhuyan and Saora.
- Tribal populations are found in the entire seven districts of Kandhamal, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Nabarangpur, Koraput, Malkangiri and Rayagada, and in parts of 6 other districts.

- **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs):**

- **Creation of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs):** In 1973, the **Dhebar Commission** created Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as a separate category, which are less developed among the tribal groups.
- In 2006, the Government of India renamed the PTGs as PVTGs.
 - In 1975, the Government of India initiated to identify the most vulnerable tribal groups as a separate category called PVTGs and declared 52 such groups. In 1993 an additional 23 groups were added to the category, making it a total of **75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes**.
 - Among the **75 listed PVTG's the highest number are found in Odisha**.
- **Characteristics of PVTGs:** The Government classifies PVTGs on their:
 - Relative physical isolation,
 - Stagnant or declining population,
 - Low levels of literacy,
 - Absence of written language,
 - Pre-agricultural stage of economy, such as hunting, food gathering, **shifting cultivation** and terrace cultivation.
- **Schemes for PVTGs:** PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups. Due to this factor, more developed and assertive tribal groups take a major chunk of the tribal development funds because of which PVTGs need more funds directed for their development.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has implemented the scheme of

"Development of PVTGs" which covers 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) for their comprehensive socio-economic development.

- Under the scheme, State Governments submit **Conservation-cum-Development (CCD)** plans on the basis of their requirement.
- 100% grants-in-aid are made available to States as per the provisions of the scheme.

Source: TH

Report On Global Remittances: World Bank

Why in News

According to the latest edition of the **World Bank's Migration and Development Brief**, despite **Covid-19**, **remittance flows** remained **resilient in 2020**, registering a smaller decline than previously projected.

Key Points

- **Remittance Inflow of India:**
 - India being at top, received over **USD 83 billion** in remittances in **2020**, a drop of just **0.2 per cent** from the **previous year**, despite a pandemic that devastated the world economy.
 - India's remittances **fell by just 0.2% in 2020**, with much of the decline due to a **17% drop in remittances from the United Arab Emirates**, which offset resilient flows from the United States and other host countries.
 - In **2019**, India had received **USD 83.3 billion** in remittances.
- **Global Remittances**
 - **China is second** in terms of global remittances in **2020**.
China received **USD 59.5 billion** in remittances in **2020**.
 - **India and China** are followed by **Mexico, the Philippines, Egypt, Pakistan, France and Bangladesh**.
- **Remittance outflow :**
 - Remittance outflow** was the maximum from the **United States (USD 68 billion)**, followed by **UAE, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Germany, and China**.
- **Reason for the Steady Flow of Remittances:**
 - **Fiscal stimulus** that resulted in **better-than-expected economic conditions** in host countries.
 - Shift in flows from **cash to digital** and from informal to formal channels.
 - **Cyclical movements in oil prices and currency exchange rates**.

Remittance

- **A remittance is money** sent to another party, usually one in another country.
- The sender is typically an **immigrant** and the **recipient a relative back home**.
- Remittances represent one of the **largest sources of income** for people in **low-income and developing nations**. It often exceeds the amount of **direct investment and official development assistance**.
- Remittances help families **afford food, healthcare, and basic needs**.
- **India is the world's biggest recipient of remittances**. Remittances bolsters India's **foreign exchange reserves** and helps fund its **current account deficit**.

World Bank

- **About**
 - **The Bretton Woods Conference** held in 1944, created the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** along with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**.
The IBRD later became the **World Bank**.
 - The **World Bank Group** is a unique global partnership of **five institutions working for sustainable solutions** that reduce poverty and build shared prosperity in developing countries.
- **Members:**
 - It has **189 member countries**.
 - **India** is also a **member country**.
- **Major reports:**
 - **Ease of Doing Business**.
 - **Human Capital Index**.
 - **World Development Report**.
- **Its Five development institutions:**
 - **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD):** provides loans, credits, and grants.
 - **International Development Association (IDA):** provides low- or no-interest loans to low-income countries.
 - **International Finance Corporation (IFC):** provides investment, advice, and asset management to companies and governments.
 - **Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA):** insures lenders and investors against political risk such as war.
 - **International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID):** settles investment-disputes between investors and countries.

World Bank's Migration and Development Brief

- This is prepared by the **Migration and Remittances Unit, Development Economics (DEC)**- the premier research and data arm of the **World Bank**.
- **The brief aims** to provide an update on key developments in the area of **migration** and **remittance flows** and related policies over the **past six months**.
- It also provides **medium-term projections of remittance flows** to developing countries..
- The brief is **produced twice a year**.

Source: IE

Dengue: Prevention And Identification

Why in News

With multiple cities recording a high number of dengue-related cases every year, it is important to know about the disease.

Key Points

- **Dengue:**

- Dengue is a **mosquito-borne tropical disease** caused by **the dengue virus (Genus Flavivirus)**, transmitted by several species of mosquito within the **genus Aedes**, principally **Aedes aegypti**.

This mosquito also transmits **chikungunya**, **yellow fever** and **Zika infection**.

- There are 4 distinct, but closely related, serotypes (separate groups within a species of microorganisms that all share a similar characteristic) of the virus that cause dengue (**DEN-1, DEN-2, DEN-3 and DEN-4**).

- **Symptoms:**

Sudden high fever, severe headaches, pain behind the eyes, severe bone, joint, and muscle pain, etc.

- **Diagnosis and Treatment:**

- Diagnosis of dengue infection is done with a blood test.
- There is no specific medicine to treat dengue infection.

- **Status of Dengue:**

- Incidence of dengue has **grown dramatically around the world** in recent decades, with a vast majority of cases under-reported, according to the **World Health Organization (WHO)**.
- WHO estimates 39 crore dengue virus infections per year, of which 9.6 crore show symptoms.
- India registered over 1 lakh dengue cases in 2018 and over 1.5 lakh cases in 2019, according to the **National Vector-Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP)**.

NVBDCP is the central nodal agency for prevention and control of **six vector borne diseases** i.e. Malaria, Dengue, Lymphatic Filariasis, Kala-azar, Japanese Encephalitis and Chikungunya in India. It works under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

- **Controlling Dengue Using Bacteria:**

- Recently researchers from the **World Mosquito Program** have used mosquitoes infected with **Wolbachia bacteria** to **successfully control dengue** in Indonesia.

- **Method:**

- The scientists infected some mosquitoes with Wolbachia and then released them in the city where they bred with local mosquitoes, until nearly all mosquitoes in the area were carrying Wolbachia bacteria. This is called the **Population Replacement Strategy**.
- At the end of 27 months, the researchers found that the incidence of dengue was 77% lower in areas where Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes had been released, as compared to areas without such deployments.

- **Dengue Vaccine:**

The dengue vaccine CYD-TDV or **Dengvaxia** was approved by the US Food & Drug Administration in 2019, the **first dengue vaccine** to get the regulatory nod in the US.

Dengvaxia is basically a **live, attenuated dengue virus** which has to be administered in people of ages 9 to 16 who have laboratory-confirmed previous dengue infection and who live in endemic areas.

Source IE

Red-Eared Slider Turtle

Why in News

The invasive red-eared slider can become a **major threat** to the biodiversity of water bodies across the Northeast region of India.

The Northeast region of India is home to more than 72% of the turtle and tortoise species in the country.



Key Points

- **About:**

- **Scientific Name:** Trachemys scripta elegans
- **Habitat:** U.S. and northern Mexico
- **Description:** The red-eared slider derives its name from red stripes around the part where its ears would be and from its ability to slide quickly off any surface into the water.
- **Popular Pet:** This turtle is an extremely popular pet due to its small size, easy maintenance, and relatively low cost.

- **Reason for Concerns:**

- **Invasive Species:** Since it is an invasive species they grow fast and virtually leave nothing for the native species to eat and have a negative impact on the areas and the species living in the areas they invade.
- **Catch-22 Situation:** People who keep the turtle as pets become sensitive about turtle conservation but endanger the local ecosystem, probably unknowingly, by releasing them in natural water bodies after they outgrow an aquarium, tank or pool at home.
- **Impact on Human Health:** They can impact human health when these species may accumulate toxins in their tissues which pass on with the food chain upto humans.

Invasive Species of India

International Instruments and Programmes on Invasive Species

- **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000):**

The Protocol seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by Living Modified Organisms resulting from modern biotechnology.

- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):**

- It was one of the key agreements adopted at the **1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro**.

The **Rio de Janeiro Convention on Biodiversity (1992)** had also recognised the **biological invasion of alien species of plants** as the **second-worst threat** to the environment after habitat destruction.

- **Article 8 (h) of the Convention** calls on Parties to prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species.

- **Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) or Bonn Convention (1979):**

- It is an intergovernmental treaty that aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their range.
- It also aims to control or to eliminate already present invasive alien species.

- **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):**
 - It is an international agreement **adopted in 1975** that aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.
 - It also considers the problems of invasive species when it is involved in trade and threatens the survival of live animals or plants.
- **Ramsar Convention (1971):**
 - The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.
 - It also addresses the environmental, economic and social impact of invasive species on wetlands within their jurisdictions and to take account of the methods of control and solutions for combating invasive species.

Source:TH

PM-KISAN

Why in News

Recently, the Prime Minister released the **8th instalment** of financial benefit under **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)**.

Key Points

- **About:**

Under the scheme, the Centre **transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal instalments**, directly into the bank accounts of **all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings**.

It was launched in **February 2019**.
- **Funding and Implementation:**
 - It is a **Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India**.
 - It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- **Identification of Beneficiaries:**

The entire responsibility of **identification of beneficiary farmer families rests with the State / UT Governments**.

- **Objective:**
 - To **supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers** in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of each crop cycle.
 - To **protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders** for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.
- **PM-KISAN Mobile App:**
 - The PM-KISAN Mobile App developed and designed by the **National Informatics Centre** in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has been launched.
 - The **farmers can view the status of their application, update or carry out corrections** of their **Aadhaar cards** and also check the history of credits to their bank accounts.

Source:PIB

Basava Jayanti: Birth Anniversary of Guru Basaveshwara

Why in News

The Prime Minister of India paid tribute to **Jagadguru Basaveshwara** on the occasion of Basava Jayanthi.

In November 2015, the Prime Minister of India inaugurated the **statue of Basaveshwara** along the **bank of the river Thames** at Lambeth in London.



Key Points

- **Birth**
 - He was born in Karnataka in 1131 CE.

- **About:**

- He was an Indian 12th-century Philosopher, Statesman and a social reformer.
- He was **Lingayat saint** in the Shiva-focussed **Bhakti movement**, and Hindu Shaivite social reformer during the reign of the **Kalyani Chalukya/Kalachuri dynasty**.

The Lingayats are a Hindu sect with a wide following in southern India that worships **Shiva as the only deity**.

- He is also known as **Bhakti Bhandari (literally, the treasurer of devotion), or Basaveswara (Lord Basava)**.

- **Contribution:**

- Basavanna spread social awareness through his poetry known as **Vachanaas**.
- Several important Lingayat works are credited to Basavanna, including Vachana such as the **Shat-sthala-vachana, Kala-jnana-vachana, Mantra-gopya, Ghatna Chakra-vachana and Raja-yoga-vachana**.
- Basavanna, like **Gautama Buddha**, taught people how to live happily in a rational social order which later came to be known as the **Sharana movement**.

The Sharana movement attracted people from all castes, and like most strands of the Bhakti movement, produced a corpus of literature, the vachanas, that unveiled the spiritual universe of the Veerashaiva saints.

- Basava fought against the inhuman practice of the **caste system**, which discriminated against people based on their birth.
- The **Anubhava Mantapa** established by Basava laid down the foundation of social democracy.
- Basava believed that man becomes great not by his birth but by **his conduct** in the society.
- He taught the dignity of manual labour by insisting on work as worship.

- **Death:**

He died in 1167 CE.

Bhakti movement

- The movement probably began in the Tamil region around the **6th and 7th century AD** and achieved a great deal of popularity through the poems of the **Alvars (devotees of Vishnu) and Nayanars (devotees of Shiva)**, the Vaishnavite and Shaivite poets.
- These saints looked upon religion not as a cold formal worship but as a loving bond based upon love between the worshipped and worshipper.
- Originally began in South India in the 9th century with **Shankaracharya** spread over all parts of India and by the 16th century was a great spiritual force to reckon with, especially after the great wave made by Kabir, Nanak and Shri Chaitanya.

Source: PIB
