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Centre Extends Powers Related to Citizenship Application

Why in News

Recently, the Central Government issued a notification **granting powers related to citizenship applications** under existing rules to **authorities of five states.**

> The order has been **issued under the** <u>Citizenship Act, 1955</u> **and the Citizenship Rules, 2009** and not under the <u>Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019</u> **since its rules have not yet been framed.**

Key Points

- **The Notification:**
    - In accordance with **section 16 of the Citizenship Act, 1955** the central government directed that powers exercisable by it **for registration as a citizen of India,** or **for grant of certificate of naturalisation** shall also be exercisable by the collector (District Magistrate), within whose jurisdiction the applicant is ordinarily resident.
        - **Section 16 of the Citizenship Act 1955: The Central Government may, by order, direct that any power** which is conferred on it can **be exercisable also by such officer or authority as may be so specified.**
        - **Exceptions:** However powers mentioned in **section 10** (certificate of registration to be granted to persons registered) and **section 18** (form of certificate of naturalisation) can be **exercised by the central government only.**
    - It also granted **similar powers to the Home Secretaries of Haryana and Punjab, except for Faridabad and Jalandhar.**

- **States and Districts:**
  - Powers were extended to **13 districts office states which are:**
    - **Gujarat-** Morbi, Rajkot, Patan and Vadodara.
    - **Chhattisgarh-** Durg and Balodabazar.
    - **Rajasthan-** Jalore, Udaipur, Pali, Barmer and Sirohi.
    - **Haryana-** Faridabad.
    - **Punjab-** Jalandhar.
- **Extended Powers:**
  - It includes power to **accept, verify and approve citizenship applications** from members of **minority communities hailing from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.**
  - It lists **Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians as the communities that will be covered.**
    - In **2018, the Government had granted similar powers** to Collectors and Home Secretaries of states such as **Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi** with regard to certain districts.

Citizenship

- **About:**
  - Citizenship signifies the **relationship between individual and state.**
  - Like any other modern state, India has two kinds of people—**citizens and aliens. Citizens are full members of the Indian State** and owe allegiance to it. They enjoy all civil and political rights.
  - Citizenship is an **idea of exclusion as it excludes non-citizens.**
  - There are two well-known principles for the grant of citizenship:
    - While **'jus soli'** confers citizenship on the **basis of place of birth,** 'jus sanguinis' gives recognition to blood ties.
      - From the time of the **Motilal Nehru Committee (1928), the Indian leadership was in favour of the enlightened concept of jus soli.**
    - The **racial idea** of **jus sanguinis** was also **rejected by the Constituent Assembly as it was against the Indian ethos.**
- **Constitutional Provisions:**
  - Citizenship is **listed in the Union List** under the Constitution and thus is under the exclusive jurisdiction of Parliament.
  - The Constitution does not define the term 'citizen' but **details of various categories of persons who are entitled to citizenship** are given in **Part 2 (Articles 5 to 11).**
    - Unlike other provisions of the Constitution, which came into being on 26th January, 1950, **these articles were enforced on 26th November, 1949** itself, when the Constitution was adopted.

Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (Major Provisions)

- **Citizenship on the basis of religion:**
    - The Bill amends the Act to provide that the **Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians** from **Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan,** who entered India on or before **31st December, 2014,** will not be treated as illegal migrants.
- **Exclusion:**
    - The **migrants, who identify themselves with any group or community other than Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians**, from the above mentioned countries **won't be eligible for citizenship.**
- **Exceptions:**
    - The provisions on citizenship for illegal migrants will not apply to two categories - states protected by the **'Inner Line'**, and areas covered under the **Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.**
        - **Inner Line Permit (ILP):** This is a **special permit that citizens from other parts of India require to enter a state** protected by the ILP regime. Without an ILP granted by the state government, an Indian from another state cannot visit a state that is under the ILP regime.
        - **Sixth Schedule:** The <u>Sixth Schedule</u> relates to special provisions in administration of certain Northeastern states **(Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Tripura).** It provides **special powers for Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) in these states.**
- **Citizenship by Naturalization:**
    - Under The Citizenship Act, 1955, one of the requirements for citizenship by naturalisation is that the **applicant must have resided in India during the last 12 months, as well as for 11 of the previous 14 years.**
    - The **amendment relaxes the second requirement from 11 years to 5 years as a specific condition for applicants belonging to the specified six religions,** and the above-mentioned three countries.
- **Cancellation of registration of OCIs:**
    - The Act provides that the central government may cancel the registration of <u>Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs)</u> on certain grounds which are:
        - If the OCI has **registered through fraud.**
        - If, within five years of registration, the **OCI has been sentenced to imprisonment for two years or more.**
        - If it becomes necessary **in the interest of sovereignty and security of India.**
        - If the OCI has **violated the provisions of the Act** or of any other law as notified by the central government.
    - However the orders for cancellation of **OCI should not be passed till the OCI cardholder is given an opportunity to be heard.**

Chief Secretary Transfer Issue

Why in News

The **Central Government may initiate disciplinary action against the West Bengal Chief Secretary** after he failed to report to the **Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)** in New Delhi as ordered earlier.

> The **<u>Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)</u>** has approved the "placement of services" of Chief Secretary, as per provisions **Rule 6(1)** of the **Indian Administrative Service (cadre) Rules, 1954.**
> > The ACC is headed by the Prime Minister, and the Home Minister is the other member.

Key Points

- **Chief Secretary of State:**
    - **Appointment:**
        - The Chief Secretary is **'chosen'** by the Chief Minister.
        - As the appointment of Chief Secretary is an executive action of the Chief Minister, it is taken in the name of the Governor of the State.
    - **Position:**
        - The post of Chief Secretary is the **senior-most position in the civil services** of the states and union territories of India.
        - The position is a cadre post for the **Indian Administrative Services.**
        - The Chief Secretary is the **chief advisor to the Chief Minister** in all matters of the cabinet.
    - **Tenure:**
        - The office of Chief Secretary has been excluded from the operation of the tenure system.
        - There is **no fixed tenure** for this post.

- **All India Services (AIS):**
  - **Pre Independence:**
    - The Indian Civil Service (ICS) was the senior most amongst the Services of the Crown in India.
    - Besides the ICS, there was also the Imperial Police.
  - **Post Independence:**
    - The need of All India Services for maintaining the unity, integrity and stability of the nation was felt after Independence.
    - **Constitutional Provisions:** Accordingly, a provision was made in **Article 312** of the Constitution for **creation of one or more All India Services common** to the Union and State.
    - The **Indian Administrative Service and the Indian Police Service** are deemed to be constituted by the Parliament in terms of **Article 312** of the Constitution.
    - After the promulgation of the Constitution, a **new All India Service,** namely, **the Indian Forest Service,** was created in 1966.
  - **Recruitment and Postings:**
    - The members of these services are recruited by the Centre, but their services are placed under various State cadres, and they have the **liability to serve both under the State and under the Centre.**
    - This aspect of the All India Services strengthens the **unitary character** of the **Indian federation.**
  - **Controlling Authority:**
    - The **Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions** is the cadre controlling authority for the IAS.
      - The Union Home Ministry is the cadre controlling authority of IPS officers.
    - The recruitment to all the three services is made by the **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).**
    - These officers are recruited and trained by the Central Government, and then allotted to different State cadres.
  - **IAS Cadre Rules:**
    - After the All India Services Act, 1951 came into existence, the IAS cadre rules were framed in 1954.
    - **Deputation of Cadre Officers:** A cadre officer may, with the concurrence of the State governments concerned and the Central government, be deputed for service under the Central government or another State government.
    - **Scenario of Disagreement:** In case of any disagreement, the matter shall be decided by the Central government.
      - The rule on deputation giving **more discretionary powers** to the Centre was added in May 1969.

- **Extension of Service:**
  - **Rule 16(1) of DCRB (Death-cum-Retirement Benefit) Rules** says that "a member of the Service dealing with budget work or working as a full-time member of a Committee which is to be wound up within a short period may be given extension of service for a period not exceeding three months in public interest, with the prior approval of the Central Government".
  - For an **officer posted as Chief Secretary of a state,** this extension can be for **six months.**
- **Precedence in Deputation:**
  - **Concurrence Required:** Before any officer of AIS is called for deputation to the Centre, his or her concurrence is required.
  - **Procedure:** The Establishment Officer in DoPT invites nominations from State governments.
    - Once the nomination is received, their eligibility is scrutinised by a panel and then an offer list is prepared, traditionally done with the State government on board.
    - Central Ministries and offices can then choose from the list of officers on offer.
  - **Course of Action on Refusal of Order:**
    - The **All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969** are not clear on the punishment in such cases.
    - **Penalising Authority:** Rule 7 says, the authority to institute proceedings and **to impose penalty will be the State government** while he or she was "serving in connection with the affairs of a State."

<u>Source: TH</u>

EAM's Visit to US

Why in News

Recently, India's **External Affairs Minister (EAM)** on his visit to the US met **American lawmakers, National Security Advisor, Defense Secretary, <u>U.S. Trade Representative</u> (<u>USTR</u>) and representatives from the private sector.**

- Earlier, the Prime Minister of India and US President **had a conversation** on issues **<u>related to supply chains</u>** for **<u>vaccines for Covid-19.</u>**
- India also participated in the **<u>Leaders' Summit on Climate</u>** which was convened by the US President virtually.

Key Points

- **Major Discussions:**
  - Regional (**Indo-Pacific**) or global issues, Afghanistan and on **further developing the India-US strategic and defence partnership.**
  - **Vaccine cooperation,** contemporary **security challenges,** support for efficient and robust **supply chains,** among others.
  - The **U.S. India Business Council (USIBC)** meeting included a discussion on how the private sector, working via a consortium of 40 companies called the **'Global Task Force for Pandemic Response',** could **"support India's health infrastructure and further ways to continue relief efforts.**
    - The USBIC was **formed in 1975** as a business advocacy organization to enlighten and encourage the private sectors of both **India and the US to enhance investment flows.**
- **India's Stand:**
  - The **US military has played a key role** in the US's efforts to **assist India as it battles a devastating wave of Covid-19.**
  - **Trade, technology & business cooperation are at the core** of strategic partnership which must be enhanced further for **post-Covid economic recovery.**
  - Welcomed US's **positive stance on Intellectual property rights (IPR) issues & support for efficient & robust supply chains.**
- **US' Stand:**
  - Both are **united in confronting Covid-19 together,** in dealing with the challenge posed by **climate change**, to partner together directly, through **QUAD (Quadrilateral Framework)** and other institutions in the **United Nations** in dealing with many of the challenges of the region and around the world.
- **Mutual Stand:**
  - **People-to-people ties and shared values are the foundation of the U.S.-India strategic partnership** that is helping to end the pandemic, supporting a **free and open Indo-Pacific,** and providing **global leadership on climate change.**
  - Welcomed **cooperation that has resulted in the delivery of over USD 500 million in relief materials** (state, federal and private sector sources) from the U.S. to India.

Current State of India-US Ties

- **Defence:**
  - India and US inked important defence pacts in the last few years and also **formalised the four nation alliance of QUAD.**
    - The alliance is seen as an **important counter to China in the Indo-Pacific.**
  - The **Malabar exercise in November 2020 portrayed a high point in Indo-US strategic ties,** it was the first time in 13 years that all four countries of QUAD came together sending a fir message to China.
  - India now has **access to american bases from Djibouti in Africa to Guam in the Pacific.** It can also access **advanced communication technology used in US defence.**
- **Trade:**
  - The previous US government ended India's special trade status and also imposed several bans, India also retaliated with bans on 28 US products.
  - Current **US government has allowed all the bans by the previous government to expire.**
- **Indian Diaspora:**
  - There is **a growing presence of Indian diaspora in all spheres** in the US. For example the current Vice-President (Kamala Harris) of the US has a strong Indian connection.
  - There are **several Indian origin people holding strong leadership positions** in the current US administration.
- **Covid-Cooperation:**
  - When the US was reeling under a deadly Covid wave last year, **India rushed important medical supplies and eased export restrictions** to help the country.
  - Initially the US showed hesitancy in returning the favour when India needed it, however the US quickly changed its stance and **rushed supplies to India.**

Way Forward

- There is a **huge potential to boost bilateral trade** between the countries especially on account of **increasing anti-China sentiment in both the nations.**
- Thus, the **negotiation should focus on the resolution of various non-tariff barriers** and other market access improvements as early as possible.
- In **order to counter China in the maritime domain, India needs to fully engage with the US** and other partners in the Indo-pacific region, in order to preserve the freedom of navigation and the rules-based order.
- In international politics, **there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests.** In such a scenario India must continue to pursue its foreign policy of **strategic hedging.**

Source: TH

Launching Baby Squids and Tardigrades into Space

Why in News

NASA will send **baby squids** and **tardigrades (also called water bears)** to the **International Space Station** for conducting various scientific studies.

Key Points

- **The Study:** These animals are part of **two separate scientific studies.**
    - **Behavior of Tardigrades (water bears) in a spaceflight environment.**
      Tardigrades can adapt to extreme conditions on Earth, including high pressure, temperature and radiation.
    - **Impact of microgravity conditions** on the relationship between bobtail squids and beneficial microbes.
      The squids are a part of the **UMAMI (Understanding of Microgravity on Animal-Microbe Interactions) study** which examines the effects of spaceflight on interactions between beneficial microbes and their animal hosts.
- **Importance of the Study:**
    - **Host-microbe Relationship:**
        - **On Earth,** it will help to find ways to **protect and even enhance the complex relationship between animals and beneficial microbes,** ensuring better human health and well being.
        - **In space,** the findings will help space agencies **develop better measures to protect astronauts from adverse host-microbe alterations** on long-duration missions.
    - **Longer Spacefights:**
        - **The study on Tardigrades** will allow researchers to study their hardiness close up, and possibly identify the genes that allow them to become so resilient. This will help in safer and longer spaceflights.
        - **Similarly, a recent research in zebrafish** has demonstrated how **induced hibernation (torpor)** may protect humans from the elements of space, especially radiation, during space flight.

International Space Station

- ISS is a **habitable artificial satellite -** the single largest man-made structure in low earth orbit. Its first component was launched into orbit in 1998.
- It circles the Earth in roughly 92 minutes and completes 15.5 orbits per day.

- The ISS programme is a **joint project between five participating space agencies:** NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada) but its ownership and use has been established by intergovernmental treaties and agreements.
- It serves as a microgravity and space environment research laboratory in which crew members conduct experiments in biology, human biology, physics, astronomy, meteorology, and other fields.
- Continuous presence at ISS has resulted in the longest continuous human presence in low earth orbit.
- It is **expected to operate until 2030.**
- Recently, China **launched an <u>unmanned module of its permanent space station</u>** that it plans to complete by the end of 2022.
    - The module, named **"Tianhe", or "Harmony of the Heavens",** was launched on the **<u>Long March 5B</u>**, China's largest carrier rocket.
- India has also set its eye on **<u>building its own space station</u>** in **<u>low earth orbit</u>** to conduct microgravity experiments in space in 5 to 7 years.

<u>Source: IE</u>

Statehood Day of Goa

Why in News

On the **<u>Statehood Day of Goa</u> (30th May)**, the Prime Minister greeted the people of the state.
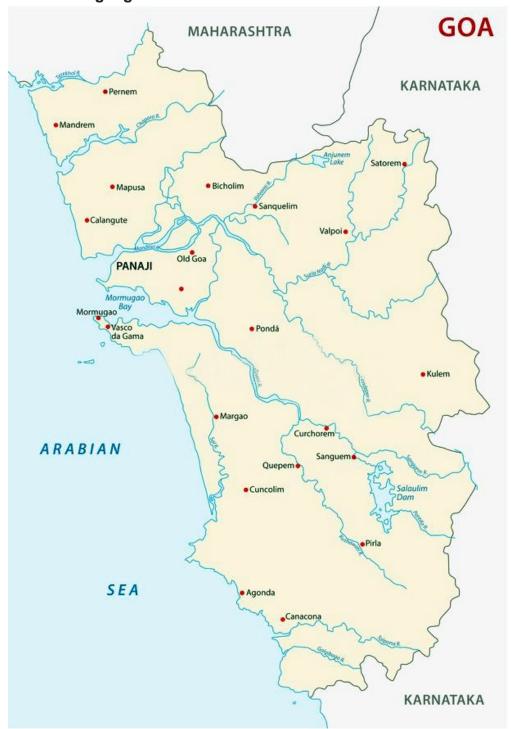
Key Points

- **About:**
    - Goa is located on the **southwestern coast of India** within the **region known as the Konkan,** and geographically **separated from the Deccan highlands by the <u>Western Ghats</u>.**
- **Capital:**
    - Panji.

- **Official Language:**

  Konkani which is one of the 22 languages from the **Eight Schedule**.
- **Borders:**

  It is surrounded by **Maharashtra** to the north and **Karnataka** to the east and south, with the **Arabian Sea** forming its western coast.

- **History:**
    - As India gained independence on **15ᵗʰ August, 1947,** it requested the Portugese to cede their territories. However, Portuguese refused.
    - In 1961, Indian Government launched **Operation Vijay** and **annexed Daman and Diu islands and Goa** with the Indian mainland.
        - **Goa Liberation Day** is observed on **19ᵗʰ December** every year in India.
        - It can be noted that the **Portuguese were the first Europeans to come to India (1498)** and were also the **last to leave this land (1961).**
    - On **30ᵗʰ May, 1987, the territory was split and Goa was formed.** Daman and Diu remained Union Territory.
- **Geography:**
    - The **highest point of Goa is Sonsogor.**
    - Goa's seven **major rivers** are the **Zuari, Mandovi, Terekhol, Chapora, Galgibag, Kumbarjua canal, Talpona and the Sal.**
    - Most of Goa's **soil cover is made up of laterites.**
- **Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks:**

Source:PIB

OPV Sajag

Why in News

Recently, the **Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) Sajag** got commissioned into the **Indian Coast Guard (ICG).**

Key Points

- **About Sajag:**
  - It is **third out of five OPV** indigenously designed and built by the Goa Shipyard Limited. It is built under the **Make in India** policy.

    Other four **OPVs** are Indian Coast Guard Ship **(ICGS) Saksham, ICGS Sachet, ICGS Sujeet, and ICGS Sarthak.**
  - It is **fitted with advanced technology equipment, weapons and sensors** capable of carrying a twin engine helicopter and four high speed boats.

    OPVs are **long-range surface ships** capable of coastal and offshore patrolling, policing maritime zones, control & surveillance, anti-smuggling & anti-piracy operations with limited wartime roles.
  - It will **help to manage greater responsibilities** in the years to come and will strengthen ICGs concurrent **multiple operations' capability** towards ensuring safe, secure and clean seas as also **responding promptly to maritime emergencies in neighbourhood.**
- **Indian Coast Guard:**
  - **About:**
    - It is an **Armed Force, Search and Rescue and Maritime Law Enforcement agency** under the Ministry of Defence.
    - It has a wide range of task capabilities for both surface and air operations. **It is one of the largest coast guards in the world.**
  - **Establishment:**
    - It was established on **18th August 1978** by the Coast Guard Act, 1978. It performs non-military functions.
    - The concept of forming ICG came into being after the **1971 war** the blueprint for a multidimensional Coast Guard was **conceived by the visionary Rustamji Committee.**
  - **Head and Headquarter:**

    The organization is headed by the **Director General Indian Coast Guard (DGICG)** exercising his overall command and superintendence from the **Coast Guard Headquarters** (CGHQ) located at **New Delhi.**
  - **Jurisdiction:**

    It has jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India including **contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone.**
  - **Function:**
    - Responsible for **marine environment protection** in maritime zones of India.
    - Acts as a **coordinating authority for responding to oil spills** in Indian waters.
    - Protects India's **maritime interests** and enforces its **maritime law.**

Source:TH