

**DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS
ANALYSIS**

LAKSHYA ACADEMY[®]

21 AUGUST 2023

1 – About Operation Jericho:

GS III

Internal Security

- **Context:**

- The deployment of air power in Mizoram has been a contentious topic ever since the Prime Minister brought it up in 1966 in response to a motion of no confidence.

- **Important details:**

- In 1966, the Mizo National Front (MNF) was leading a separatist struggle in Mizoram, which was then known as the Mizo Hills.
- Aizawl was taken by them in a matter of days.
- Once described as a "masterstroke" with "nearly complete military preparation," Operation Jericho represented a level of confidence and meticulous planning never previously seen in the Indian subcontinent. This writer was a military writer.

- **Government response**

- The Mizo rebels, who had also killed every prisoner from the nearby jail, had stormed the 1 Assam Rifles headquarters, where the Deputy Commissioner had sought refuge.
- Weapons and cash taken from public coffers were regularly pilfered.
- There were proclamations of independence and a call to abolish the Assam Rifles.
- In retaliation, the Mizo insurgents opened fire on attempts to use helicopters to resupply the Assam Rifles battalion.
- While the Army attempted to push the insurgents out, the Air Force was enlisted.
- Large regions that had been declared "independent" were recaptured by the Army as a result of the airstrike.
- By the end of the month, the air operations had helped the army restore control of Mizoram.

- **Source** → *The Hindu*

2 – Details of the Sulina Channel:

GS II

International Relations

- **Context:**

- Following Russia's withdrawal from the Black Sea grain accord, Ukraine may now use the Sulina Channel as a new trading route for grain transportation.

- **Important details:**

- Ukraine now had an alternative conduit for its food when Russia withdrew from the Black Sea grain agreement, thanks to the Danube delta.
- The deal, which was mediated by the UN and Turkey, was used to provide a safe path for grain cargo ships leaving the Ukrainian Black Sea ports of Odessa, Chornomorsk, and Pivdennyi.
- The new commercial route is the Sulina Channel, a 63 km long Danube distributary that connects the Black Sea to significant Ukrainian ports on the river and lies wholly inside Romania's borders as a NATO member.
- One of the world's leading grain exporters, Ukraine is often called the "breadbasket of Europe" and its economy is heavily reliant on agricultural exports.

- **About the channel:**

- **The Danube River:**

- The second-longest river in Europe, the Danube, has historically been important to the movement of commerce.
- Around 80 km from the sea, near Tulcea, Romania, the river starts to spread out into its delta, which is home to three major rivers: Chilia, Sulina, and St. George.
- After being dredged and straightened, the Sulina Channel remains the only one of them to be sufficiently wide and deep for the transportation of goods.
- It functions as a kind of riverine "motorway" that is therefore necessary for transporting goods from the interior to the Black Sea.

- **Issues:**

- Russia has not attacked NATO-controlled territory as of yet, but it might have severe consequences if it keeps attacking Ukrainian ports and grain storage facilities along the Danube.
- Historically, Ukraine has used its rail network and Black Sea ports to export grain rather than crossing the Danube.
- The capacity of the Ukrainian ports to manage the unplanned grain inflow is therefore limited.
- The amount of traffic at the mouth of the Channel has caused congestion.
- Shipping is suffering from severe delays as vessels have to wait days to enter the Channel.

- *Source* → *The Hindu*

3 – About the Bilateral Naval Maritime Partnership Exercise:

GS II

International Relations

- **Context:**

- In this framework, the Indian Navy and the UAE Navy engage in bilateral naval exercises.

- **Important details:**

- There will be a bilateral naval maritime partnership exercise between the UAE Navy and the Indian Navy's INS Trikan and INS Visakhapatnam.
- The Mazagaon Docks Limited built the INS Visakhapatnam, one of the biggest operational destroyers in the Indian Navy, wholly in the country.
- In 2013, NS Trikand, a cutting-edge stealth frigate, was launched.
- Every element of the ship's design has been updated with modern technology to make her more powerful, agile, stealthy, and stable.

- **Goal:**

- Through cross-training in tactics, techniques, and procedures, to deepen professional relationships while improving the two navies' cooperation and synergy.
- to cooperate in tackling the common problems of human trafficking, smuggling, and piracy,
- Bolster marine security and implement concerted measures to provide catastrophe and humanitarian relief.

- *Source → The Hindu*

4 – Details of the Government’s plan on merging Environmental organisations:

GS III

Environmental Conservation

- **Context:**
- In order to create integrated regional offices and bring them under the Ministry, the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) quietly reversed its decision to merge the offices of the Central Zoo Authority (CZA), the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), and the Forest Survey of India (FSI).
- **Important details:**
- The idea behind this restructure was made public during the COVID-19 outage.
- It was slammed by activism organisations for rendering significant environmental NGOs helpless.
- For example, the NTCA can protest against forest cutting for a project that takes area away from the Tiger Reserve under the current structure.
- "Ease of doing business" was the MoEFCC's rationale for the merger.
- It had been opposed by the NTCA, which stated that it might lead to uncertainty and disorder in the administrative process, a loss of independence, undue meddling in decision-making, and a lack of concentration in carrying out duties and responsibilities.
- **The latest warning:**
- The same notification also proposes to reorganise the regional offices that already exist. This idea has also come under fire because it doesn't appear to be based on any objective standards.
- The regional offices for Karnataka, Kerala, Goa, and Lakshadweep, for example, would have governed three States and a Union Territory with diverse topographical and ecological characteristics.
- An announcement was made by the Indian government to merge Project Elephant and Tiger.

- **Worries:**

- It might have made the NTCA less independent.
- It will also have consequences for endeavour Elephant, since we now lack legal backing for that endeavour.
- Tiger reserves are recognised by the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, while elephant reserves are not.
- The decision to merge the two projects was taken by the MoEFCC's wildlife branch without seeking input from other parties.

- **Going forward:**

- Dispersed and dedicated efforts are required everywhere, especially to support environmental monitoring functions.
- In recent years, the Ministry's regional offices have expanded their functions and responsibilities to include processing environmental approvals and monitoring whether legally mandated procedures are being followed during project development, operation, and closure.
- As a result, these increased responsibilities require additional funding and infrastructural support, although it's yet unclear if these have been provided.
- To determine whether the offices can focus their efforts without unfairly favouring certain regulatory outcomes and maintain environmental protection without compromising social justice, an internal framework is needed.

- *Source → The Hindu*

5 – About the Bihar's caste-based survey and the legal challenges:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**

- On August 18, the Patna High Court's ruling supporting the Bihar government's continuing caste census decision is expected to be appealed to the Supreme Court.
- **'Caste-based survey': what does that mean?**

- Claiming that detailed data on socioeconomic situations would contribute in the development of stronger public policies for underprivileged populations, the Bihar State government started a two-phase caste census.
- The survey is anticipated to collect socioeconomic data on a population of 12.70 crore people across the 38 districts of Bihar.
- The State was midway through the second phase of the survey when it was halted by an HC stay order.
- But after a recent High Court ruling invalidated every petition challenging the measure, the government recommenced work on the survey's second phase.
- In the second stage, information on castes, subcastes, and all people's faiths must be obtained.

- **A caste census is required:**

- The census, which is carried out at the beginning of every decade, does not record caste information, with the exception of those who are classified as Scheduled Castes (SCs).
- In the absence of such a census, there is no reliable estimate for the number of OBCs, other groups within the OBCs, and others.
- Notwithstanding this ambiguity, the Union government has categorically rejected the notion of carrying out a socioeconomic caste census, stating that it would be time-consuming, difficult to administer, and impracticable.
- Caste discrimination has been officially discouraged since the 1951 Census, when the government deliberately chose to exclude all castes except for the Scheduled Tribes and the SCs.
- The Union government carried out a caste census through the Socio-Economic and Caste Census of 2011.
- Nevertheless, the collected raw data of over 130 crore Indians was never released to the public due to data issues.

- **Why is it being disputed?**

- The Supreme Court has received petitions arguing that the Constitution only gives the Centre the exclusive right to conduct censuses, making the State's decision to conduct the survey illegal.
- They further point out that the State Government does not have the independent power to choose District Magistrates and local authorities for data collecting in the absence of a Centre notification issued under Section 3 of the Census Act of 1948.
- The Puttaswamy verdict is allegedly violated by the HC decision, which permits the State to obtain personal data via executive order, according to critics.
- Nonetheless, the HC had pointed out that the State is authorised to create the policy in order to improve administration and that it is not capricious.
- It further reassured respondents about their privacy rights by referring to the triple-test standards set forth in the Puttasamy ruling.

- *Source → The Hindu*



Лякшнугя Асядему®