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ANALYSIS**

 **LAKSHYA ACADEMY**®

24 OCTOBER 2023

1 - Australia's referendum on Indigenous Voice:

GS II

International Issues

- **Context:**

- In a referendum, Australians will determine whether or not official consultation with the nation's indigenous peoples is a requirement before laws are made.

- **The "First Peoples of Australia" are who are they?**

- The phrase, together with the term "aboriginal," designates the native people who live on the continent.
- Before the first European settlers arrived in Australia in the early 17th century, these people had been residing on the continent and the nearby islands for tens of thousands of years.
- The Torres Strait Islands, which are referenced in the referendum question, are a group of tiny islands in the Torres Strait, a thin body of water that separates Papua New Guinea's Ireland and Queensland's northernmost point.

- **What is the purpose of the referendum?**

- In the referendum, voters will be asked to decide whether or not the Constitution of Australia should recognise indigenous people and whether or not an indigenous "Voice to Parliament" should be established to advise policymakers on issues that affect their daily lives.
- There is no mention of Aboriginal people in Australia's 122-year-old Constitution.
- Approximately 3.2% of Australia's population is Aboriginal, and they perform worse than the country as a whole on the majority of socioeconomic indicators.

- **Native Australians possess:**

- eight years less in life expectancy than Australians who are not Indigenous;
- higher illness and infant death rates;
- twice as many suicides than Australians who are not Indigenous.

- **The history of Australia:**

- Based on prehistoric rock carvings, Australia may have been inhabited by humans 45,000 years ago.
- Dutch explorer Willem Janszoon made the first recorded arrival of a European in 1606 when he landed on the western side of the Cape York peninsula.
- There is no verified proof of previous reported landings, although the Europeans were aware of a huge mass in the southern hemisphere that they named Terra Australia Incognita, or Unknown South huge.
- The renowned expeditions of Captain James Cook occurred in the latter part of the eighteenth century.
- Criminals and ex-convicts serving prison terms were among the first British settlers on the continent.
- Over 162,000 prisoners convicted of crimes in Britain and Ireland between 1788 and 1868 were shipped to Australia.
- *Source → The Hindu*

2 – New Government in Israel:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- To manage the conflict with Hamas, Israel's prime minister established an emergency unity government.
- **What is the government of "unity"?**
- The primary goal of the 2021–22 administration was to prevent Netanyahu from taking office by uniting political rivals.
- Following the Hamas attack, the unity accord was approved by the Israeli Parliament.
- A war cabinet was constituted on short notice.
- **How will the government of unity operate?**
- The agreement states that the unity government will be in place for the length of the conflict.
- It is anticipated that the emergency war cabinet will make important choices about how the war is fought.
- No legislation unrelated to the war will be passed as long as it continues.

- *Source* → *The Hindu*

3 – India’s laws against abortion:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**

- A married lady is seeking to terminate her 26-week pregnancy before the Supreme Court.

- **Important information:**

- The case has reached two separate SC benches, posing significant issues about the legal framework and a woman's right to make her own abortion decisions.
- A two-judge SC bench approved the pregnancy termination.
- The court reasoned that an unintended pregnancy brought on by the ineffectiveness of contraceptive measures is equivalent to a forced pregnancy for whom a 24-week abortion is permitted.
- A three-judge panel led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud heard the case.
- In order to ascertain the woman's medical status and the health of the foetus, the Bench demanded a new medical report.

- **What is the abortion law?**

- Three phases of pregnancy termination are permitted under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act (MTP Act).
- On the recommendation of one doctor, a pregnancy may be terminated up to 20 weeks along.
- As an exception, and only in specific situations, the right to obtain an abortion is decided by two licenced medical professionals if a pregnancy is between 20 and 24 weeks along.

- Seven forms of forced pregnancies are listed in Section 3B of the Rules under the MTP Act. These include women with disabilities, statutory rape in cases of minors or sexual assault, and situations in which a woman's marital status changes during her pregnancy.
- After 24 weeks, "approved facilities" must establish up a medical board, which has the authority to approve or disapprove pregnancy termination based exclusively on the presence of a significant foetal abnormality.
- **What about an unborn child's rights?**
- Although courts have interpreted the MTP Act broadly, India is a new country where abortion is permitted only if the threshold of "foetal viability" is met.
- The Roe v. Wade decision, handed down by the US Supreme Court in 1973 and making abortion a constitutional right, permitted abortion up until the moment of foetal viability, or the point at which a foetus may survive outside the womb.
- In 1973, foetal viability was estimated to be 28 weeks (7 months), however with advances in science, this has been lowered to 23–24 weeks.
- **Disapproval of Indian law:**
- **The doctor makes the final decision:**
- The law in India is criticised for giving doctors, not the woman, the authority to decide whether to end a pregnancy after 20 weeks.
- **Ignoring the rights of unborn children:**
- The legal framework in India on reproductive rights leans more in favour of the woman's ability to make her own decisions than it does for the rights of the unborn child.
- In the 2005 case of Nand Kishore Sharma versus Union of India, the Rajasthan High Court dismissed an appeal against the constitutionality of the MTP Act, arguing that it infringes upon the unborn child's fundamental right to life.
- However, laws pertaining to succession and those prohibiting the sex-determination of a foetus have been based on the rights of the unborn child.
- Pregnant women may also be granted a reprieve from the death penalty under Section 416 of the CrPC.
- *Source → The Hindu*

4 – President's Colours' Awards:

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- The Third Battalion of the Naga Regiment received the esteemed "President's Colours" from the Chief of Army Staff.
- **Concerning the President's Colours:**
- The greatest distinction that any Indian military unit may receive is the President's Colour Award.
- All unit officers wear an emblem on the left sleeve of their uniform, which goes by the name Nishaan.
- The President of India is the one who presents the award or standards.
- It is a recognition of the unit's deserving service.
- Even though it is no longer customary to take the colour into battle, the armed forces nevertheless receive, hold, and parade the colour today.
- The President's Colours are still very important today.
- If the unit loses its colours, it is a dishonour; conversely, if the unit captures the colours of the enemy, it is a tremendous honour.
- Light Cavalry is given the Guidons, and Heavy Cavalry is given the Standards.
- *Source → The Hindu*

5 - Ecomark programme and Green Credit Programme (GCP):

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- The Green Credit Programme (GCP) and the Ecomark scheme, which are part of the LiFE Initiative to promote sustainable living and environmental conservation, have been notified.
- **Important information:**
- **Vertical ministry:**
- Ministry of Climate Change, Forests, and Environment.

- It has unveiled two ground-breaking programmes that demonstrate the nation's proactive stance on sustainability, climate change, and the encouragement of environmentally friendly behaviours.
- The Ecomark Scheme and the Green Credit Programme (GCP) are two programmes that aim to promote eco-friendly behaviours that are based in tradition and conservation and are in line with the LiFE concept.

- **About Life on Mission:**

- A global mass movement called Mission LiFE is spearheaded by India and aims to encourage individual and community action to safeguard and preserve the environment.
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 26th session, held in Glasgow, India, adopted the motto LiFE, or Lifestyle for Environment, as a means of addressing climate change.
- LiFE is being included in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the first time by India.

- **The mission of LiFE is to:**

- It aims to convert LiFE's vision into quantifiable effect.
- Its goal is to mobilise one billion Indians and other people around the world to take individual and group action between 2022 and 2027 in order to preserve and protect the environment.
- By 2028, at least 80% of India's villages and urban local governments want to be environmentally friendly.
- It seeks to encourage people to live in harmony with nature and without causing harm to it, both as individuals and as communities.
- Individuals that follow this way of life are known as "Pro Planet People."
- LiFE's principles and goals will be carried out as a mission-mode, quantifiable, scientific plan.

- **About Green Credits Program (GCP):**

- It is a cutting-edge, market-based system intended to encourage voluntary environmental measures by a range of stakeholders, including people, communities, businesses, and private sector industries.
- An interministerial Steering Committee provides support for the governance framework of the GCP.
- As the GCP Administrator, the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) is in charge of the administration, operation, monitoring, and execution of the programme.

- **During its first phase, the GCP concentrates on two main tasks:**

- conserving water and
- planting of trees.

- ICFRE is working with specialists to establish a Green Credit Registry and trading platform that will make it easier to register and then purchase and sell Green Credits.
- Individuals and organisations must register their activities via the central government's app or website in order to receive Green Credits.
- For smaller projects, the Administrator may self-verify the activity instead of having it verified by a certified agency.
- The Administrator will issue a Green Credit certificate that can be traded on the Green Credit platform after verification is finished.
- **Ecomark Programme: Endorsing Eco-Friendly Goods:**
 - The tenet of LiFE, or "Lifestyle for Environment," is to encourage sustainable behaviour and personal choices.
 - In keeping with this strategy, the MoEF&CC has revised its Ecomark notice to give customers the ability to select items based on their preferences and choose those that have eco-friendly processes, designs, etc.
 - The Ecomark Scheme offers certification and marking for consumer and domestic goods that satisfy certain environmental requirements while upholding Indian standards for quality.
 - Goods certified by the Ecomark Scheme will follow strict environmental standards, guaranteeing low environmental effect.
 - It will raise consumer knowledge of environmental issues and promote environmentally friendly decisions.
 - Additionally, it will encourage producers to switch to more ecologically friendly methods of production.
 - The programme aims to prevent false information about products and guarantee correct labelling.
 - In collaboration with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the country's central authority for certification and standards, the Central Pollution Control Board oversees the Ecomark Scheme.
- *Source → The Hindu*