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ANALYSIS**



LAKSHYA ACADEMY®

15 NOVEMBER 2023

1 - The Chinese research ship Shiyan 6:

GS II

International Issues

- **Context:**

- A Chinese research vessel sets out off the coast of Sri Lanka, raising concerns in India.

- **Important information:**

- Off the coast of Sri Lanka, the Chinese research vessel Shiyan 6 is scheduled to start its two-day mission.
- In cooperation with the University of Ruhuna and Sri Lanka's National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA), the research will be conducted off the western coast of the country.

- **The type of study:**

- This scientific study is marine-related.
- The ship was at the Colombo port for resupply, according to an earlier statement from the Ministry.

- **About Shiyan 6:**

- Research ship Shiyan 6 was added to China's fleet of marine research vessels in 2020.
- It is purported to be the nation's first geophysically-focused scientific research vessel.

- **Research vessels of India:**

- **Some of the research vessels of India are:**

- INS Anvesh (A41)
- ORV Sagar Kanya
- ORV Sagar Nidhi
- FORV Sagar Sampada
- Sagardhwani, INS (A74)

- *Source* → *The Hindu*

2 – New Tiger Reserve in Goa:

GS III

Environmental Conservation related issues

- **Context:**

- The Goa government was recently ordered by the Bombay High Court's Goa bench to declare a tiger reserve in the Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) and other nearby parts of the state within three months.

- **Important information:**

- The court further asked the state to determine and resolve the rights and claims of Scheduled Tribes and other forest inhabitants within a year.
- The Goa government had petitioned the Supreme Court to suspend the ruling of the High Court.
- The Goa Foundation filed a contempt plea before the Bombay HC at Goa seeking action against the Goa government for not complying with the directions of the High Court to notify a tiger reserve within three months.

- **An Overview:**

- The presence of tigers in the area is discussed in the 2014 Status of Tigers (Co-predators & Prey) in India report published by the statutory organisation National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), established under the Wild Life (Protection) Act of 1972.
- According to the research, there are five protected areas in the Cotigao-Mhadei forest complex in Goa.
- The Wildlife Sanctuary of Mhadei
- Bhagwan Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary and Mollem National Park,
- Mahavir Bhagwan National Park
- The Wild Ife Sanctuary in Netravali and
- Cotigao Sanctuary for Wildlife
- Together, they occupy 750 square metres, creating a continuous belt that joins the woods of Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- It further noted that Goa has a constant tiger presence with roughly three to five tigers.

- **Current state of plans for a Goa tiger reserve:**

- In 2011 a proposal was made to establish the Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary into a tiger reserve.
 - The proposal noted that there is evidence to prove that tigers in Goa are not only temporary animals but are a resident population as well.
 - Mhadei is a contiguous tiger landscape that borders the Anshi Dandeli Tiger Reserve, which has about 35 tigers, to the south, and the Bhimgad Wildlife Sanctuary in Karnataka to the southeast.
 - A 2008 study carried out by the Wildlife Institute of India, claimed protected areas of Goa and their contiguous forests in Karnataka and Maharashtra were likely some of the best prospective tiger habitats in the Western Ghats region and deserved protection.
- **The NTCA's suggestions:**
 - State government to notify tiger reserve:
 - In 2016, the NTCA suggested that the state government should notify a tiger reserve in the Cotigao-Mhadei forest complex.
 - Over the next 18 months, the Forest Department created a provisional layout for the reserve — containing generally pristine landscapes with few human hamlets as the core zone, its most protected area.
- **Special Tiger Protection Force:**
 - Protections for the region would be reinforced and lead to stronger security measures, such as a 'Special Tiger Protection Force' for guarding purposes.
 - A map demarcating the protected zones:
 - A draft proposal in 2018 indicated that a map has been prepared to demarcate the contiguous forest habitat in existing protected areas in Western Ghats as the core zone.
 - Main villages and human population were to be kept outside this zone and placed in the suggested buffer zone, as far as practicable.
 - The suggested map showed that out of 745.18 square kilometres of protected areas, 578.33 sq km was proposed as core zone and 166.85 sq km as the buffer zone.
- **Goa government's contentions:**
 - WPA section is not required.
 - Referring to the suggestions by NTCA, the state administration claimed before the court that the requirements of section 38-V (1) of the Wildlife Protection Act were simply directory and not necessary.
 - **Rights of forest residents needs settlement first:**

- The government stated that while it was not against declaring the region a tiger reserve, further research was required and the rights of the forest inhabitants had to be fully resolved before any action could be done.
- Proposing these regions as tiger reserves without settlement of rights and claims of the forest inhabitants may be premature and will adversely effect broader public interest and further worsen man-tiger conflict.
- **No separate protection for tiger necessary:**
- Another point put out by the state was that the protected regions enjoy the same level of protection for all flora and fauna as in a tiger reserve and no further protection was necessary for the tiger, because all wild species deserved equal protection.
- *Source → The Hindu*

3 – Views of Maldives Present on India:

GS II

International Issues

- **Context:**
- Since his success in the Maldivian presidential election in September 2023, President-elect Mohamed Muizzu has underlined his intention to send Indian troops out of the nation, while committing to maintain the Maldives's independence and sovereignty.
- **Maldives military presence of India:**
- 75 Indian military personnel stay in the Maldives to maintain and operate the Dornier aircraft and two helicopters handed to the Maldives by the Government of India.
- The Maldives has had helicopters for more than ten years.
- 2020 saw the delivery of the Dornier plane to the Maldives at Male's request.
- **The aeroplanes and helicopters are utilised for a variety of purposes, including:**
- medical transport,
- rescue and search efforts,
- training,
- monitoring, and
- patroll.

- **What makes Mr. Muizzu against them?**

- In the present context, there seem to be two clear reasons behind Mr. Muizzu's repeated promises to eliminate any Indian military presence in the Maldives.
- One is that, more than any other internal topic, the majority of the foreign media, which presented the Maldives elections as a referendum on China and India, frequently grills the new president on his views on the geopolitical rivalry.
- Secondly, by restating his stance about the exclusion of Indian boots from Maldivian territory, Mr. Muizzu exhibits coherence with his own pre-election commitment to his supporters.

- **Present Maldivian economic situation:**

- The Maldives are facing a significant financial hardship as they get ready to pay \$570 million in interest payments on their external debt in 2024 and 2025.
- The government of Mr. Muizzu will be responsible for paying off a record \$1.07 billion in foreign debt in 2026.
- Without the assistance of China and India, the Maldives' principal development partners and financiers, mitigating the impending financial problem may prove to be exceptionally difficult.

- **The interests of India:**

- **Investments made by India:**

- India has become the Maldives' principal economic and security ally over the last four years, contributing \$1.4 billion to the country's citizens' socioeconomic growth.

- **The security needs of India:**

- Amid mounting concerns over a growing Chinese presence in the region, the Indian establishment sees the island country of the Indian Ocean as tightly related to its own security objectives.
- The Maldives is a part of the "Colombo Security Conclave," a trilateral project for regional marine cooperation that started with India, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius.

- **Source → *The Hindu***

4 - Protest against the Mahatma Quota:

GS II

Constitution related issues

- **Context:**

- As Maratha quota protests escalate in Maharashtra, the state government has constituted a panel of three former High Court judges to assist it on the legal struggle over the matter in the Supreme Court.

- **An Overview:**

- The Marathas, who make up about 33% of the state's population, are a caste that includes, among others, landlords and peasants.
- Annasaheb Patil, the leader of the Mathadi Labour Union, staged the first demonstration against this in Mumbai thirty-two years ago.

- **Bombay High Court decision 2019:**

- A bill proposing a 16 percent reservation for the Maratha minority in government jobs and education was enacted by the Maharashtra government in 2018.
- A legal challenge was made to this.
- The Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) Act, 2018's Maratha quota was affirmed as constitutionally lawful by the Bombay High Court in 2019.
- The Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission suggested that the HC lower the 16 percent state-granted quota to 13 percent in government posts and 12 percent in education, even though the court found that the 16 percent quota was not "justifiable."
- The Human Rights Council stated that although the 50% reserve cap should not be exceeded, in extreme cases, this restriction may be exceeded if quantitative data demonstrating backwardness is made available.

- **GM Gaikwad Commission:**

- The 11-member Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission (MSBCC), led by retired Justice G M Gaikwad, produced findings that the High Court largely relied upon.

- **The count of Marathas:**

- About 45,000 families from two villages in each of the 355 talukas with a population that was above 50% Maratha were surveyed by the Committee.
- **Degree of retrogression:**
 - The Maratha group was considered to be educationally, economically, and socially backward in the November 2015 assessment.
- **Regarding social regression, the Commission discovered that:**
 - The primary source of income for 768.86% of Maratha families is agriculture and agricultural labour.
 - About 70% of people live in Kachha homes.
 - Just 35–39% of people have access to a personal tap for water.
- **Suicide of farmers:**
 - The survey stated that out of 13, 368 farmer suicides in total between 2013 and 2018, 2,152 Maratha farmers (23.56%) died by suicide.
- **Maratha women:**
 - In addition to the physical household work that Maratha women undertake for their families, the Commission discovered that 88.81% of them engage in physical employment to support their families.
- **Educational regression:**
 - **About educational regression, it was discovered that:**
 - Of Marathas, 13.42% lack literacy.
 - 35.31% of those with only a primary education
 - 43.79 percent HSC and SSC
 - 6.71% of graduate students, undergraduates, and
 - 0.77 percent are professionally and technically qualified.
- **Why was the Maratha reservation abolished by the Supreme Court?**
 - The Supreme Court's five-judge Constitution bench overturned the Maratha quota in 2021, raising the state's overall reservation percentage above the 50% threshold established by the court in its 1992 Indra Sawhney (Mandal) ruling.

- The Apex court declared that although the court's 1992 decision was arbitrary, the 50% ceiling is now accepted by the constitution.
- It said that Marathas were a powerful forward class and part of the mainstream of national life, saying there was no exceptional condition to surpass the 50% mark.
- Following the Supreme Court's 2022 upholding of the 10% quota for Economically Weaker Sections, the Maharashtra government declared that economically disadvantaged members of the community will continue to get benefits under the EWS quota until the Maratha reservation dispute was settled.
- The state administration announced that it would file a curative appeal and establish a fresh panel to conduct a thorough assessment of the community's "backwardness" after the SC denied its review request.

- **The Maharashtra government's most recent move:**

- Under the direction of Justice (retired) Sandeep K. Shinde, the state established a five-member committee to examine the process for awarding Kunbi (OBC) certificates to Marathas on the basis of data from the Nizam era, including income statements.
- The Bombay High Court's Nagpur bench rejected a challenge contesting the panel's composition.
- The panel's initial report was just approved by the state Cabinet.

- **Maharashtra's current reservation system:**

- 52 percent of the state is reserved in accordance with the 2001 State Reservation Act.

- **Among the quotas for this were:**

- Caste on Schedule (13%),
- Tribes Scheduled (7%),
- Other Underprivileged Groups (19%),
- Particularly Reversed Class (2%),
- Jati Vimukta (3%),
- Tribe B, Nomadic (2.5%),
- C-Dhangar, a nomadic tribe (3.5%) and
- D-Vanjari Nomadic Tribe (2%).

- The entire reserve in the state had increased to 64–65% with the inclusion of the Maratha quota, which was 12–13 percent.
- In the state, the 10% EWS quota is likewise in effect.
- In addition to Marathas, other communities that have called for reservations include Muslims, Dhangar, and Lingayats.

- **Source → The Hindu**

5 - Single Country, Single Registration System:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**

- The "one nation, one registration platform" will soon be launched by the National Medical Commission (NMC).

- **Important information:**

- Physicians nationwide will be able to use this platform to cut down on red tape and duplication while also giving the public access to information on any physician practising in India.
- In the next six months, the NMC will launch a patch pilot programme for the National Medical Register (NMR), in which physicians would receive a unique identification number and, based on their location, be able to apply for a licence to practise in any State.
- The NMR will receive the data of around 14 lakh doctors who have registered with the system.
- The Quality Council of India and the panel have inked a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the rating of medical facilities.
- Beginning with the 2024–2025 academic year, medical colleges—both public and private—will be ranked according to the calibre of education they offer.

- **About the National Medical Commission:**

- The National Medical Commission (NMC) is an authority that oversees medical practitioners and medical education.
- In 2020, it took the place of the Medical Council of India.

- **The Committee:**

- acknowledges a doctor's qualifications,
- ensures that medical schools are accredited
- permits medical professionals to register,
- keeps an eye on medical practise and
- evaluates India's medical infrastructure.

- *Source* → *The Hindu*



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