



News Analysis (19 Feb, 2020)

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ICRG Recommends Continuation of Pakistan in Grey List

Why in News

The **International Co-operation Review Group (ICRG) of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** has recommended that **Pakistan be retained on the "Grey List"**, given the country's failure to completely implement the 27-point action plan to check terror financing.

- It needs to be noted that a recommendation by the ICRG is a precursor to the final decision at the FATF plenary session, and is usually not overturned. Since **2007**, the ICRG has analysed high-risk jurisdiction and recommended specific action to address the money laundering/terror financing risks emanating from them.
- The **FATF Plenary is the decision making body of the FATF**. It meets three times per year. The latest meeting will conclude on 21st February, 2020 in which final decision with respect to Pakistan will be taken.
- The FATF meeting is being held a week after an anti-terrorism court in **Pakistan sentenced Hafiz Saeed**, the mastermind of the 2008 Mumbai attack and founder of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), to 11 years in two terror financing cases.

Background

- The **FATF plenary held in October 2019** had noted that Pakistan addressed only five out of the 27 tasks given to it in controlling funding to terror groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Hizbul Mujahideen, responsible for a series of attacks in India.

The FATF, then, strongly urged Pakistan to swiftly complete its full action plan by February, 2020.

- **Pakistan was placed on the grey list by the FATF in June 2018** and was given a plan of action to complete by October 2019, or face the risk of being placed on the black list with Iran and North Korea.

Current Scenario and India's Stand

- In the **FATF Asia Pacific Joint Group** meeting in Beijing in January 2020, **Pakistan was adjudged to have cleared 14 points.**

The Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering was established in 1997 as an autonomous regional anti-money laundering body by unanimous agreement among 13 original founding members. Presently, it has **41 active members including India.**

- **Pakistan's Current Stand**

- Since the 2019 meeting, it has taken all possible measures against terror financing.
- It has convicted an unprecedented number of persons, which includes Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) chief Hafiz Saeed.
- It has also recently informed the FATF that JeM founder Masood Azhar and his family are "missing".

- **India's Stand**

- India has been maintaining that Pakistan extends regular support to terror groups and has urged FATF to take action against Pakistan.
- India counters Pakistan's claims, saying the recent action taken by Islamabad against Saeed and others was an attempt to evade further FATF sanctions.
- India asserts that the terror funding operations are still on and outfits such as the LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammed, whose chief Masood Azhar's location as per Pakistan is "missing", are having a free run in Pakistan.

- **Pakistan's Status on Grey List**

- Pakistan needs 12 votes out of 39 (total members in the FATF) to exit the 'Grey List' and move to 'White List'. To avoid 'Black List', it needs the support of three countries.
- In the Beijing 2020 meeting, Pakistan got support from Malaysia and Turkey besides FATF current chair China.
- India has lobbied with several countries, from the US to Europe, Australia to West Asian countries, to make the case for blacklisting of Pakistan.

- **Impact on Pakistan**

If Pakistan continues on the grey list, it would be very difficult for the country to get financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the European Union, making its financial condition even more unsteady.

The Financial Action Task Force

- **Formation:** The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris.

- **Objectives:** To set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.
- **Secretariat:** Its Secretariat is located at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris.
- **Member Countries:** The FATF currently has 39 members including two regional organisations — the European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council. India is a member of the FATF.
- **Lists under FATF:**
 - **Grey List:** Countries that are considered safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put in the FATF grey list. This inclusion serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the blacklist.
 - **Black List:** Countries known as Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs) are put in the blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities. The FATF revises the blacklist regularly, adding or deleting entries.

Source: TH

Private Member Bill for Two-Child Policy Norm

Why in News

Recently, a **Private Member's Constitution Amendment Bill** has been introduced in the Rajya Sabha **proposing incentives in taxation, education and employment for people who limit their family size to two children.**

The Bill is likely to be discussed when Parliament meets for the second half of the Budget session.

Key Features of the Bill

- The Bill proposes for the incorporation of a **new provision — Article 47A(Duty of the State to promote small family norm) — in Part IV of the Constitution.**
Part IV of the Indian Constitution deals with **the Directive Principles of the State Policy.**
- The proposed insertion of **Article 47A** intends **to withdraw all concessions** from people who fail to adhere to the '**small-family-norm**'.

- The Bill also intends **to offer incentives** in taxes, employment, education and priority in social benefit schemes and school admissions etc to its people who keep their family limited to two children.

NOTE:

- **Entry 20-A in List III (Concurrent List) of the 7th Schedule** deals with population control and family planning. This provision was added through the **42nd Constitutional Amendment 1976**.
- The **National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution**, headed by **M.N. Venkatachaliah** had also recommended in 2002, that **Article 47A** to be inserted into the Constitution to **control population explosion**.

Current Status

- Presently, **six states including Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh** have made the **two-child norm mandatory** for all panchayat members.
In 2018, **412 panchayat members in Rajasthan** had been **removed** from their posts because they failed to comply with the two-child norm.
- The Supreme Court has **upheld the provision** in several states that **debars members with more than two children** from **contesting and holding** panchayat posts.

Need for Two-Child Policy Norm

- India's population has already **crossed 125 crores** and India is **expected to surpass the world's most populous nation-China** in the next couple of decades.
- Despite having the **National Population Control Policy (2000)**, India is the **second-most populous country in the world**.
- Thus, India's natural resources are extremely **over-burdened** and facing **over-exploitation**.

Criticism of the Two-Child Policy

- The restricted child policy will create a shortage of educated young people needed to carry on India's technological revolution.
- The problems like gender imbalance, undocumented children, etc. faced by China (as a result of the one-child policy) might be experienced by India.
- India's **birthrate is slowing down to sustainable levels**. In **2000**, the fertility rate was still relatively high at **3.2** children per woman. By **2016**, that number had already fallen to **2.3** children.

Private Member's Bill

- Any Member of Parliament (MP) who is **not a minister** is referred to as a private member.
- The purpose of the private member's bill is to draw the government's attention to what individual MPs see as issues and gaps in the existing legal framework, which require legislative intervention. Thus it **reflects the stand of the opposition party** on public matters.
- Its introduction in the House requires **one month's notice**.
- Its rejection by the House has **no implication on the parliamentary confidence** in the government or its resignation.
- The **last time** a private member's bill was passed by both Houses was in **1970**.
It was the Supreme Court (Enlargement of Criminal Appellate Jurisdiction) Bill, 1968.
- **14** private member's bills have **become law so far**.

Source: IE

India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy

Why in News

Recently, the **India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development** was inaugurated jointly by both the countries. This task force was launched during Norwegian Prime Minister's visit to India earlier in 2019.

The two countries also commenced a new collaboration on **Integrated Ocean Management & Research**.

Key Points

- The **bilateral collaboration** intends to **manage the resources in the oceans** in a **sustainable** manner.
- The India-Norway cooperation in the field of oceans is based on a shared interest in the **blue economy** and the sustainable use of marine resources.
- Both countries also desire to **advance scientific knowledge about oceans**.

India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development

- The purpose of the task force is to **develop and follow up joint initiatives** between the two countries.

- It also intends to mobilise relevant stakeholders from both Norway and India at the highest level, and ensure continued commitment and progress across ministries and agencies.

NOTE:

- Norway is an expert on the subject of the Ocean Economy as 70% of Norway's export is from Norway's maritime industry.
- Starting the bilateral ocean dialogue has added a new dimension in India-Norway relations and will help India to understand the know-how of the maritime industry.

India-Norway Relations



- India and Norway have been enjoying a cordial and friendly relationship since the establishment of relations in **1947**.
- The two countries respect each other for their commonly shared values such as democracy, human rights and rule of law. In recent years, both countries have been increasing their engagements in the field of trade and technology.
- Norway has supported India's membership to export control regimes the **Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) and the Australia Group (AG)**.
- India has signed a **Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA)** with Norway in 1986 which was revised in February 2011.
- **Total bilateral trade** between India and Norway stands around **\$1.1 billion in 2015-16**.
- Three Arctic Missions from India have so far visited Norway, in 2007, 2008 and 2009. India's Polar Research Station "Himadri" is located at Ny Alesund, Spitsbergen Island, Norway.

Blue Economy

- The concept was introduced by **Gunter Pauli** in his **2010** book- **"The Blue Economy: 10 years, 100 innovations, 100 million jobs"**.

- It is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health.
- It comprises renewable energy, fisheries, maritime transport, tourism, climate change, waste management.
- It is also reflected in **Sustainable Development Goal** (SDG 14), which calls to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- Blue Economy can help to generate livelihoods, to achieve energy security, to build ecological resilience and to improve living standards of coastal communities.
India has a long coastline of 7,517 km covering nine states and two union territories – with an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 2.02 mn. sq.km.

Source: PIB

Aditya-L1 Mission

Why in News

The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** is preparing for its first scientific expedition to **study the Sun, Aditya-L1**. It would be placed into a point in space known as the **L1 Lagrange point**.

- Aditya L1 will be ISRO's **2nd space-based astronomy mission after AstroSat**, which was launched in 2015.
- **Aditya 1** was renamed as Aditya-L1. The Aditya 1 was meant to observe **only the solar corona**.

AstroSat

- AstroSat, was launched in September, 2015, by PSLV-C30 from Sriharikota (Andhra Pradesh).
- It is the **first dedicated Indian astronomy mission** aimed at studying celestial sources in **X-ray, optical and UV spectral bands simultaneously**.

Key Points

- **Launch Vehicle:** Aditya L1 will be launched using the **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) XL** with 7 payloads (instruments) on board.
- **Objective:** Aditya L1 will study the Sun's **corona** (Visible and Near infrared rays), Sun's **photosphere** (soft and hard X-ray), **chromosphere** (Ultra Violet), solar emissions, solar winds and flares, and **Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)**, and will carry out **round-the-clock imaging** of the Sun.

- **Challenges:** The distance of the Sun from Earth (approximately 15 crore kms on average, compared to the only 3.84 lakh kms to the Moon).This huge distance poses a scientific challenge.
 - Due to the risks involved, payloads in earlier ISRO missions have largely remained stationary in space; however, Aditya L1 will have **some moving components** which increases the risks of collision.
 - Other issues are the **super hot temperatures and radiation** in the solar atmosphere. However, **Aditya L1 will stay much farther away**, and the heat is not expected to be a major concern for the instruments on board.

Importance

- Evolution of every planet, including Earth and the exoplanets beyond the Solar System, is governed by its parent star i.e the Sun in our case. The Solar weather and environment affects the weather of the entire system. Therefore, it is important to study the Sun.
- **Effects of Variation in Solar Weather System:** Variations in this weather can **change the orbits of satellites or shorten their lives, interfere with or damage onboard electronics, and cause power blackouts and other disturbances on Earth.**
- Knowledge of solar events is key to **understanding space weather.**
- To learn about and **track Earth-directed storms**, and to predict their impact, continuous solar observations are needed.
- Many of the instruments and their components for this mission are being **manufactured for the first time in the country.**

Lagrange Point 1

- Lagrange Points, named after Italian-French mathematician Joseph-Louis Lagrange, are positions in space **where the gravitational forces of a two-body system (like the Sun and the Earth) produce enhanced regions of attraction and repulsion.**
- The L1 point is about 1.5 million km from Earth, or about 1/100th of the way to the Sun.
- L1 refers to Lagrangian/Lagrange Point 1, one of 5 points in the **orbital plane of the Earth-Sun system.**
- These can be used by spacecraft to **reduce fuel consumption** needed to remain in position.
- A Satellite placed in the halo orbit around the Lagrangian point 1 (L1) has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation/ eclipses.
- The L1 point is home to the **Solar and Heliospheric Observatory Satellite (SOHO)**, an international collaboration project of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the **European Space Agency (ESA).**

Other Missions to the Sun

- NASA's **Parker Solar Probe's** aim is to trace how energy and heat move through the Sun's corona and to study the source of the **solar wind's acceleration**.
It is part of NASA's '**Living With a Star**' programme that explores different aspects of the Sun-Earth system.
- The earlier **Helios 2** solar probe, a **joint venture** between **NASA** and space agency of erstwhile **West Germany**, went within 43 million km of the Sun's surface in **1976**.

Source: IE

Central Vigilance Commission

- There are 3 principal actors at the national level in the **fight against corruption**: the **Lokpal**, the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)**, and the **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)**.
- Central Vigilance Commission is the apex vigilance institution, **free of control from any executive authority, monitoring all vigilance activity under the Central Government** and advising various authorities in Central Government organizations in planning, executing, reviewing and reforming their vigilance work.
- **Background:** The CVC was set up by the Government in February, 1964 on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by **K. Santhanam**.
- The Parliament enacted **Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003 (CVC Act)** conferring **statutory status** on the CVC.
- It is an **independent** body which is **only responsible to the Parliament**.
- **Composition:** It is a **multi-member Commission** consisting of a Central Vigilance Commissioner (Chairperson) and not more than 2 Vigilance Commissioners (Member).
The Central Vigilance Commissioner and the Vigilance Commissioners are **appointed by the President** on the **recommendations of a Committee** consisting of the Prime Minister (Chairperson), the Minister of Home Affairs (Member) and the Leader of the Opposition in the House of the People (Member).
- **Tenure:** The term of office of the Central Vigilance Commissioner and the Vigilance Commissioners is **4 years** from the date on which they enter their office or till they attain the **age of 65 years**, whichever is earlier.

- **Role and Functions:** Exercise **superintendence** over the functioning of the **Delhi Special Police Establishment** (CBI) insofar as it relates to the investigation of offences under the **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988**.

The CVC **receives complaints** on corruption or misuse of office and **recommends appropriate action**. Following institutions, bodies, or a person can approach CVC: **Central government, Lokpal** and **Whistle blowers**.

- CVC has **no investigation wing of its own** as it **depends on the CBI and the Chief Vigilance Officers (CVO) of central organizations**, while CBI has its own investigation wing drawing its powers from Delhi Special Police Establishment Act.

Source: TH

National Statistical Commission

- Recently the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation** released the **draft National Statistical Commission (NSC) Bill** in public domain for feedback.
- The Bill seeks to establish NSC as the **nodal, autonomous** and **statutory body** for **all core statistical activities**. It also proposes the NSC to be a **body corporate**. The current body lacks statutory backing.
- **Formation:** The Government of India through a **resolution** dated 1st June, **2005** set up the National Statistical Commission (NSC), on the **recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission**, which **reviewed the Indian Statistical System** in **2001**.
- **Present Status of the NSC :**
 - **Composition :** It has a **part-time Chairperson, 4 part-time Members and an ex-officio Member**, each having specialization and experience in specified statistical fields.
 - The **Chief Statistician of India** is the Secretary of the Commission.
 - He is also the Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
 - **Mandate:** To **evolve policies, priorities** and **standards** in statistical matters.
 - To improve the data quality in the statistical products and processes and work closely with the statistical agencies in the central and state government to ensure its implementation.
 - The NSC is a **recommending body** that helps the national statistical system in **evolving better strategies to improve the functioning of the system**.

Source: PIB

Northern European Enclosure Dam

Why in News



Scientists have proposed the construction of the **Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED)** enclosing all of the North Sea to protect economic regions of 15 Northern European countries from **Sea-level Rise (SLR)** as a result of **climate change**.

Key Points

- The proposed NEED aims to construct two dams of a combined length of 637 km.
- The **first** between **northern Scotland and western Norway (476 km)** and the **second** between **France and southwestern England (161 km)**.
- The project intends **to separate the North and Baltic Seas from the Atlantic Ocean to protect Northern Europe** against **SLR**.
- The project classifies the **solutions to SLR** into **three categories** namely, **taking no action, protection, and managed retreat** — and categorises **NEED into the second category**.
- NEED is expected to have the **least direct impact** on people's daily lives and can be built at a **reasonable cost**.
- It can be implemented in other regions in the world including the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Irish Sea, and the Red Sea.

Source: IE

Kala Kumbh: Ministry of Textiles

Why in News

The **Ministry of Textiles** is organizing '**Kala Kumbh - Handicrafts Thematic Exhibition**' in various parts of the country from 14th - 23rd February, 2020.

- The objective is to **promote Geographical Indication (GI) crafts** and heritage of India.
The GI tag for goods correspond to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country). As of August 2019, 178 GI handicraft products were registered from all over India. These include Madhubani Painting (Bihar), Kondapalli Bommallu (Andhra Pradesh) etc.
- The exhibition is being **organized through the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts)** under the Ministry of Textiles.
- It is sponsored by the **Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH)**.
The EPCH was established under Companies Act in the year 1986-87 and is a non-profit organisation, with an object to promote, support, protect, maintain and increase the export of handicrafts.

Source: PIB

Paparva Island

- Paparva Island is **located between Kandla port and Navlakha port**, in the **Gulf of Kutch** (Gujarat). The island is **uninhabited** but local fishermen go there to dry their fish.
- The Gulf of Kutch is the northeastern arm of the Arabian Sea, extending between the Rann of Kachchh (a saline mudflat) and the Kāthiāwār Peninsula of west-central India.
- **Kandla**, also known as the **Deendayal Port Trust** is a seaport in Kutch District of Gujarat, near the city of Gandhidham. It is **one of the major ports** on the west coast.

Source: IE
