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Important Facts For Prelims (6th May 2019)

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National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) reviews relief measures

The National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) reviewed relief measures in the cyclone FANI affected areas of Odisha, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh with the States and Central Ministries/Agencies concerned.

About NCMC

- The Government of India, for effective implementation of relief measures in the wake of natural calamities, sets up a **Standing National Crisis Management Committee** with Cabinet Secretary as Chairman and Secretaries of all the concerned Ministries /Departments as well as other organizations, to meet the exigencies of such crisis. The committee has previously met during Cyclone Ockhi, Kerala floods etc.
- The NCMC gives direction to the Crisis Management Group as deemed necessary.

Crisis Management Group (CMG): The group deals with matters relating to relief in the wake of major natural calamities. The group consists of Relief Commissioner (Chairman) and other nodal officers from various concerned Ministries. Its functions are to review:

- contingency plans formulated by various Ministries, Departments and Organizations in their respective sectors.
- measures required for dealing with a natural disaster.
- coordinate the activities of the Central Ministries and the State Governments in relation to disaster preparedness and relief.

India-UK Naval Cooperation

India and the United Kingdom are in talks to build a new state-of-the-art aircraft carrier along the lines of UK's HMS Queen Elizabeth as a part of India's 'Make in India' programme.

- Indian Navy intends to buy detailed plan of the HMS Queen Elizabeth, a 65,000-tonne warship, and build a new version called INS Vishal in 2022.
- The design for UK aircraft carriers is owned by the British and French aerospace giants BAE and Thales.
- The design would be modified to meet Indian Navy and local industry requirements.
- For India, a new naval carrier would serve alongside INS Vikramaditya — bought from Russia in 2004 — and the currently under-construction INS Vikrant which could strengthen 'blue water' capability of Indian navy.

Note: A 'blue-water navy' is a maritime force capable of operating in the deep waters of the open oceans. The term is more colloquial than doctrinal and most sea-going states differ on its specifics. Broadly, however, most navies agree that a blue-water navy is capable of prolonged and sustained operations across the open oceans, and has a capacity to project "credible power" in the distant seas.

- The INS Vikramaditya, the Indian Navy's only in-service aircraft carrier, was a former Russian ship that was commissioned into service in 2013.
- Prior to the INS Vikramaditya, both of the Indian Navy's previous aircraft carriers—the Vikrant and Viraat—were ships that were formerly in service with the Royal Navy of Britain.
- INS Viraat was decommissioned two years ago, to be converted into Maritime Museum.
- INS Vikrant, also known as Indigenous Aircraft Carrier 1 (IAC-1), is the India's first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (currently being built at the Cochin Shipyard Limited) which will be delivered to the Indian Navy by 2021.

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Scientists Complete Genetic Sequencing of Chickpea

- Recently, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and other research institutions across the world successfully completed the sequencing of 429 chickpea lines from 45 countries.
- In 2011, scientists successfully sequenced the genome or most of the genetic make-up of the arhar (pigeon pea plant).
- In the context of the growing global population and threats posed by climate change there is a need to generate new varieties of chickpea (an important crop with high nutrient value) with better traits including heat, drought, pests and disease resistance, higher yield and productivity.
- The research helps understand domestication and post-domestication divergence of chickpea.
- It will enable breeders in developing improved climate-change ready varieties that will contribute significantly to increase in productivity and sustainability of agricultural

development in developing countries.

What is Genome Sequencing?

- Each plant cell contains the genome: a linear string of DNA base pairs (bp), which ultimately dictates that a corn seed will grow to become a corn plant, for instance, and not a banana or soybean plant.
- Determining the order of DNA bases, or sequencing, allows researchers to decode the first layer of genome features such as protein-coding genes, repetitive areas called “repeats,” and the elements that regulate how genes are expressed in cells. Together, all of these features provide the genetic instructions that make each plant species unique.

International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)

- ICRISAT is an international organization which conducts agricultural research for rural development.
- It was founded in 1972 by a consortium of organisations. Its charter was signed by the FAO and the UNDP.
- It is headquartered in Telangana, India and with several regional centers and research stations in other countries.

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