Social Justice

Transgender Community and Challenges

In News
- Petitions by transgender persons draw attention to the discrimination they face in employment avenues.

About
- Despite the government passing the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 for the empowerment and overall, the well-being of the transgender community, they still continue to face challenges in their daily walks of life.
- Though the Supreme Court recognised transgenders as ‘third gender’ but the existing structures in state apparatuses still work on the gender binary.

Challenges faced by Transgender Community
- Discrimination and ostracisation:
  - They face discrimination in employment, educational institutes, and within families which severely affects their overall wellbeing.
- Identity crisis:
  - They are often forced to identify with a gender with which they are not associated at the workplace despite the government passing the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 which allows the community the right to self-perceived gender identity.
- Social Stigma:
  - They often face difficulty in property inheritance or child adoption. Because of being socially ostracised they are compelled to take up menial jobs despite good qualifications or forced into sex work.
- Unemployment:
  - The community has limited avenues of employment and faces severe discrimination at work because of the associated social stigma.
- Lack of public amenities:
  - They face issues with the accessibility of public toilets and public spaces. They often face problems in prisons, hospitals and schools.
Initiatives for Transgender Persons

- **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019:**
  - The law passed by the Parliament aims to end discrimination against transgender persons in accessing education, employment and healthcare and recognise the right to self-perceived gender identity.

- **National Portal for Transgender Persons:**
  - It is a portal by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment which assists persons of the transgender community in applying for a Certificate and Identity card digitally from anywhere in the country.
  - The most important benefit is that it helps the transgender person to get the Certificate of Identity without any physical interface and without having to visit any office.
  - Through the Portal, they can monitor the status of their application which ensures transparency in the process.

- **Garima Greh:**
  - The scheme aims to provide shelter to Transgender persons, with basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and recreational facilities.
  - Besides, it will provide support for the capacity-building/skill development of persons in the Community, which will enable them to lead a life of dignity and respect.

- **National Council for Transgender Persons:** In pursuance of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, the National Council for Transgender Persons has been constituted to perform the following functions for the welfare of the transgender community:
  - to advise the Central Government on the formulation of policies, programmes, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons;
  - to monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and programmes designed for achieving equality and full participation of transgender persons;
  - to review and coordinate the activities of all the departments of Government and other Governmental and non-Governmental Organisations which are dealing with matters relating to transgender persons;
  - to redress the grievances of transgender persons; and
  - to perform such other functions as may be prescribed by the Central Government.

- **Reservation for the transgender community:** The Union government is planning to bring reservations for the community under the OBC category in employment.

- **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020:** It has been framed by the government to give effect to the provisions of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
2013: An expert committee was constituted to study the problems of transgenders and give recommendations for improvement in their wellbeing.

2014: Supreme Court in the National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India case declared transgender people as a 'third gender'. It further added that the fundamental rights will be equally applicable to transgender people and gave them the right to self-identify their gender.

2014: A bill by a private member was introduced namely, the Rights of Transgendered Persons in the Rajya Sabha. However, this Bill got lapsed.

2016: The Government introduced the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019 which went for scrutiny to a Standing Committee.

2019: The above-mentioned bill was passed by both the house and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 came into place.

2020: National Council for Transgender Persons was constituted in pursuance of the above act.
The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

Salient provision of the Act:

● **Defines transgender person:**
  ➢ The Bill defines a transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth. It includes trans-men and trans-women, persons with intersex variations, gender-queers, and persons with socio-cultural identities, such as kinnar and hijra.
  ➢ Intersex variations are defined to mean a person who at birth shows variation in his or her primary sexual characteristics, external genitalia, chromosomes, or hormones from the normative standard of male or female body.

● **Prohibition against discrimination:** The Bill prohibits the discrimination against a transgender person, including denial of service or unfair treatment in relation to:
  ➢ Education
  ➢ Employment
  ➢ Healthcare
  ➢ access to or enjoyment of goods, facilities, opportunities available to the public
  ➢ right to movement
  ➢ right to reside, rent, or otherwise occupy property
  ➢ opportunity to hold public or private office
  ➢ access to a government or private establishment in whose care or custody a transgender person is

● **Right of residence:**
  ➢ Every transgender person shall have a right to reside and be included in his household.
  ➢ If the immediate family is unable to care for the transgender person, the person may be placed in a rehabilitation centre, on the orders of a competent court.

● **Employment:**
  ➢ No government or private entity can discriminate against a transgender person in employment matters, including recruitment, and promotion.
  ➢ Every establishment is required to designate a person to be a complaint officer to deal with complaints in relation to the Act.

● **Education:** Educational institutions funded or recognised by the relevant government shall provide inclusive education, sports and recreational facilities for transgender persons, without discrimination.

● **Health care:**
  ➢ The government must take steps to provide health facilities to transgender persons including separate HIV surveillance centres, and sex reassignment surgeries.
  ➢ The government shall review medical curriculum to address health issues of transgender persons, and provide comprehensive medical insurance schemes for them.

● **Certificate of identity for a transgender person:**
➢ A transgender person may make an application to the District Magistrate for a certificate of identity, indicating the gender as ‘transgender’.
➢ A revised certificate may be obtained only if the individual undergoes surgery to change their gender either as a male or a female.

- **Welfare measures by the government:**
  ➢ The Bill states that the relevant government will take measures to ensure the full inclusion and participation of transgender persons in society.
  ➢ It must also take steps for their rescue and rehabilitation, vocational training and self-employment, create schemes that are transgender sensitive, and promote their participation in cultural activities.

- **Offences and penalties:** The Bill recognize the following offences against transgender persons:
  ➢ forced or bonded labour (excluding compulsory government service for public purposes)
  ➢ denial of use of public places
  ➢ removal from household and village
  ➢ physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic abuse.
  ➢ Penalties for these offences vary between six months and two years, and a fine.

- **National Council for Transgender persons:** The Act provides for National Council for Transgender persons (NCT). The NCT will consist of:
  ➢ **Union Minister for Social Justice** (Chairperson)
  ➢ **Minister of State for Social Justice** (Vice-Chairperson)
  ➢ Secretary of the Ministry of Social Justice
  ➢ one representative from ministries including Health, Home Affairs, and Human Resources Development.
  ➢ Other members include representatives of the NITI Aayog, and the National Human Rights Commission.
  ➢ State governments will also be represented. The Council will also consist of five members from the transgender community and five experts from non-governmental organisations.
Way Forward

- The establishment of National Council for Transgender Persons has been a welcome step to mainstream the community in the society and increase sense of respect for transgender community.
- **Effective functioning:** Though the state along with civil society must ensure the effective functioning of the council with respect to identifying the challenges faced by the community and redressing it.
- **Social engineering:** There is a need to sensitise the society that the community is a part of us and are co-equals.
- **Sensitising the law enforcement:** There is also a need to sensitise the legal and law enforcement systems towards the challenges of the community.
- **Rectifying The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019:** There are certain shortcomings in the act which should be rectified by the government. They are:
  - The Act does not say anything about granting reservations to transgender persons.
  - There is a provision for penalising organised begging which is coercive in nature as many of the community members don’t have avenues for livelihood.
  - There is no provision penalising rape or sexual assault of transgender person.

Source: TH

Art & Culture

Buddha Purnima

**Syllabus:** GS1/Art & Culture, Literature

**In News**

- The PM recently recalled the **principles of Lord Buddha** on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

About Buddha Purnima

- **Buddha Purnima,** also known as **Buddha Jayanti,** is an auspicious day to mark the **birth anniversary of Gautam Buddha (founder of Buddhism).**
  - Buddha is believed to be the **ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu,** as per **Vedic literature.**
- Buddha Purnima falls on ‘Purnima’ or **full moon night.**
- The **Mahabodhi temple at Bodhgaya** is embellished with decorations and special prayers are held under the Bodhi tree on this occasion.

About Lord Buddha

- **Born:** 563 BC in Lumbini (modern-day Nepal) as **Prince Siddhartha Gautama.**
  - **Parents:** Suddhodana (father) was the chief of the Shakya clan and **Maya Devi (real mother)** and **Prajapati Gautami (foster mother).**
  - Buddha is considered as the ninth avatar of Lord Vishnu.
• He left his worldly possessions and princedom at the age of 30 to lead a life searching for the truth, seeking penance in the hopes of liberating himself from suffering (dukkha).
• He attained enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree in Bodh Gaya and gave his first sermon at Sarnath near Varanasi which is known as Dharma-Chakra-Pravartana (turning of the wheel of law).
• He taught in the area around Rajgir, where he was living in a forest monastery built by king Bimbisara of Magadha, and he lived the largest part of his life as The Buddha in Shravasti.
• He delivered his last sermon in Vaishali.
• Most people believe he died in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh, at the age of 80.

Buddha’s Teachings
• Gautama Buddha preached Dharma (duty), non-violence, harmony and kindness.
• **Four Noble Truths**: They comprise the essence of Buddha’s teachings, discovering the key to ending ‘suffering’.
  - Suffering (dukkha) is the essence of the world. The Buddha’s insight was that our lives are a struggle, and we do not find ultimate happiness or satisfaction in anything we experience. This is the problem of existence.
  - The cause of dukkha is craving. The natural human tendency is to blame our difficulties on things outside ourselves. But the Buddha says that their actual root is to be found in the mind itself.
  - The cessation of dukkha comes with the cessation of craving. As we are the ultimate cause of our difficulties, we are also the solution. We cannot change the things that happen to us, but we can change our responses.
  - There is a path that leads from dukkha. Although the Buddha throws responsibility back on to the individual he also taught methods through which we can change ourselves, for example the Noble Eightfold Path.

• **The Noble Eightfold Path**: The steps of the Noble Eightfold Path are:
  1. Right Understanding
  2. Right Thought
  3. Right Speech
  4. Right Action
  5. Right Livelihood
  6. Right Effort
  7. Right Mindfulness and
  8. Right Concentration.
  Moreover, there are three themes into which the Path is divided: good moral conduct (Understanding, Thought, Speech); meditation and mental development (Action, Livelihood, Effort), and wisdom or insight (Mindfulness and Concentration).
• The teachings were recorded around 25 B.C.E. in Pali language, into three Pitakas.
  ○ Vinaya Pitaka
Cryptocurrencies and Dollarisation of Economy

In News

- Recently, top officials of the RBI said that Cryptocurrencies can lead to "Dollarisation" of a part of the economy.

About the recent developments in Cryptocurrency sector

- **Tax on trading:** The Union Budget presented this year introduced a tax on trading in cryptocurrencies and related assets like non-fungible tokens (NFTs) at a flat 30 per cent and one per cent of the tax will be deducted at the source (TDS) when any such transaction takes place.

- **Data and Statistics:** There are an estimated 15 million to 20 million crypto investors in India, with total crypto holdings of around USD 5.34 billion.
  - No official data is available on the size of the Indian crypto market.

- **RBI and SEBI:** As statutory bodies, both RBI and SEBI report to Parliament and the panel has the parliamentary responsibility to call upon the officials of these regulators over the financial and economic issues of the country.

What do you mean by dollarisation of the economy?

- **Dollarisation is a form of currency substitution,** where dollars are used in addition to or instead of the local currency of a country.
  - Ideally, the extensive use of cryptos should cause ‘cryptorisation’.

- **Crypto currencies are dollar-denominated** and also issued by foreign private entities which could lead to dollarisation.

- They are also known to have said that cryptocurrencies have the potential to become a medium of exchange and replace the rupee in financial transactions both domestic and cross-border thereby replacing a part of the Indian monetary system.

- Apart from being used as payment for goods and services, cryptos can also be exchanged for fiat currencies and the US Dollar is the most preferred for this exchange.

- Most Indians who buy cryptos, convert rupees to dollars, in order to buy them.

Associated issues with dollarisation of economy

- It will seriously undermine the RBI's capacity to determine monetary policy and regulate the monetary system of the country.

- **These currencies can replace a part of the monetary system; it will also undermine the RBI's capacity to regulate the flow of money in the system.**

- **Besides being used for terror financing,** money laundering and drug trafficking, cryptos pose a bigger threat to the stability of the financial system of the country.
- It will also have a negative impact on the banking system as these being attractive assets people may invest their hard-earned savings in these currencies which may result in banks having lesser resources to lend.

**Dollarisation and its Implications on the economy**

- Though only tax havens like Liberia and Panama can be defined as ‘dollarized’ in a true sense, there are many economies dollarised to a large extent.
- Two-thirds of dollars are held outside the United States which issues it.
- Countries which have been victims of hyperinflation like Bolivia have become dollarised too, with over 80% of the currency in use being dollars.
- In spite of its current inflation troubles, India is far away from dollarisation to this extent.
  - However, there are research papers that suggest that Indian EXIM transactions are dominated by dollars.
  - 86% of both Indian imports and exports are invoiced in dollars.
  - Only 5% of India’s imports and 15% of exports are from and to the US showing that few countries use their own currencies for international transactions due to the popularity of the dollar abroad.

**Central banks versus cryptos/dollars**

- Central banks of economies with high dollarisation, become bodies with no power.
- Their monetary policies which govern the local currency will have no effect on an economy ruled by a foreign currency.
- This is one of the reasons why the Reserve Bank of India has been opposing it and the Indian finance ministry too backed their fears by imposing a 30% crypto tax on it without officially ‘allowing’ it in India.
  - This move aimed to stall Indian rupees going up into purchasing virtual assets which will then be owned by foreign entities - that cannot be tracked by tax authorities here.
- The tax does not apply to individuals who mine cryptos to earn them but only to those who spend Indian rupees to acquire or trade in it.
Way Forward
- **Extra vigilant**: The central bank is always worried about the movement of the Indian rupee and now more than ever it is extra vigilant with high inflation, devaluation and of course fears of possible stagflation looming large.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is a Cryptocurrency?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- It is a digital currency that can be used in place of conventional money.</td>
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<td>- In cryptocurrencies, cryptography is used to secure and verify transactions. It is also used to control the supply of cryptocurrencies.</td>
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<td>- It is supported by a decentralized peer-to-peer network called the blockchain.</td>
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<td>- First cryptocurrency: Bitcoin, was launched in 2009 by Satoshi Nakamoto.</td>
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Benefits of Cryptocurrency
- **Inherent security**: Use of pseudonyms and ledger systems conceals the identities.
- **Low transaction cost**: Very low fees and charges for transactions.
- **Lack of interference from the banking system**: Outside ambit of banking systems.
- **Lower Entry Barriers**: No entry barriers, unlike conventional banking systems.
- **Universal recognition**: Lots of cryptocurrencies and acceptable in many nations.

Concerns/Challenges with Cryptocurrency
- **Security risks**: Cyberattacks on wallets, exchange mechanism (Cryptojacking).
- **Shield to Crime**: Used for Illicit Trading, Criminal Activities, & organized crimes.
- **Threat to the Indian rupee**: If a large number of investors invest in digital coins rather than rupee-based savings like provident funds, the demand of the latter will fall.
- **Lack of Liquidity and Lower Acceptability**: Outside the traditional banking systems.
- **Price Volatility**: Prone to price fluctuations & waste of computing power.
- **Lack of Consumer Protection**: No Dispute Settlement Mechanisms and control of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
Indian Economy

Special Drawing Rights (SDR)
Syllabus: GS 2/ Important International Institutions, GS3/ Indian Economy & related issues

In News

- Recently, the IMF lifted the yuan’s weighting in the Special Drawing Rights currency basket.

About the recent changes

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LATEST WEIGHTING</th>
<th>PREVIOUS WEIGHTING</th>
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<tr>
<td>US dollar</td>
<td>43.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>29.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuan</td>
<td>12.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yen</td>
<td>7.59%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pound</td>
<td>7.44%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Recent change in Weightage:** The IMF raised the yuan’s weight to 12.28% from 10.92% in its first regular review of the SDR evaluation since the Chinese currency was included in the basket in 2016.
  - The weighting of the US dollar rose to 43.38% from 41.73%, while those of the euro, Japanese yen and British pound declined.
- **Implications:** It will prompt the Chinese central bank to pledge to push for a further opening of its financial markets.
  - The change came amid a sharp depreciation of the yuan.
  - The Chinese currency is expected to play a rising role in global payments, settlements and foreign exchange reserves over the long term.

**What are Special Drawing Right (SDR)?**

- This is a kind of reserve of foreign exchange assets comprising leading currencies globally and was created by the International Monetary Fund in the year 1969.
- SDR is often regarded as a 'basket of national currencies' comprising major currencies of the world - the US dollar, Euro, British Pound, Yen (Japan) & the Chinese renminbi (included in 2016).
- The composition of this basket of currencies is reviewed every five years wherein the weightage of currencies sometimes gets altered.
- SDR can be freely exchanged between the member countries instead of relying on the currency of any one particular country.

**Quotas**

- Quota (the amount contributed to the IMF) of a country is denominated in SDRs.
- Members’ voting power is related directly to their quotas.
• IMF makes the general SDR allocation to its members in proportion to their existing quotas in the IMF.
• India's foreign exchange reserves also incorporate SDR other than gold reserves, foreign currency assets and Reserve Tranche in the IMF.

**Reserve Tranche**
• It is a portion of the **required quota of currency each member country** must provide to the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** that can be utilized for its own purposes.

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**International Monetary Fund**
• It was established in **1944** in the aftermath of the **Great Depression of the 1930s**.
• **IMF and the World Bank** are also known as the **Bretton Woods twins** because both were agreed to be set up at a conference in **Bretton Woods in the US**.
• It is **governed by and accountable to the 190 countries** that make up its near-global membership.
  ○ **India** became a **member** in **December 1945**.
• **Aim:** To ensure the stability of the international monetary system (the system of exchange rates and international payments) which enables countries and their citizens) to transact with each other.
  ○ Its **mandate was updated in 2012** to include all macroeconomic and financial sector issues that bear on global stability.
• **Financing:** The IMF's resources mainly come from the **money that countries pay as their capital subscription** (quotas) when they **become members**.
  ○ Each member of the IMF is assigned a quota, based broadly on its relative position in the world economy.
  ○ Countries can then borrow from this pool when they fall into financial difficulty.
• **Publications:**
  ○ World Economic Outlook
  ○ Global Financial Stability Report
  ○ Fiscal Monitor
  ○ Global Policy Agenda
Recently, scientists mapped out more than a million cells across 33 organs in the human body which can provide unparalleled insights into health and diseases.

Researchers looked at single immune cells from deceased individuals to understand the function of immune cells in different tissues.

Foetal tissues were also studied to generate a map of the developing immune system across gestation stages — the period between conception and birth.

Mapping was also specifically undertaken about cells that host genes linked to diseases like muscular dystrophy or heart disease.

Study observed multiple tissues from human donors. The researchers named it the Tabula Sapiens cell atlas.

The Human Cell Atlas is an open global initiative, founded in 2016, that charts the cell types in the healthy body, across time from development to adulthood, and eventually to old age.

By using cutting-edge single cell and spatial genomics and computational techniques, HCA researchers are creating a unique “ID card” for each cell type.

Atlas will facilitate the development of better drugs and more accurate predictions of unintended toxicity.

It will also aid regenerative medicine — the process of replacing, engineering or regenerating human cells, tissues or organs to establish normal function.

The atlas will help researchers to answer key questions in diverse biological fields.

- In cellular taxonomy, it might enable the discovery and identification of cell types and molecular markers or signatures (a collection of genes, say, that characterise a specific cell type).
- In histology, it should enable researchers to relate tissue structure to the position of cells and molecules.
- Developmental biologists will be able to use it to track cell fate and lineage.
- Physiologists could characterise dynamic states, such as the cell cycle, and transient responses such as a T cell’s reaction to a pathogen.

Project Manav:

- Department of Biotechnology’s (DBT) MANAV : Human Atlas Initiative aims at creating a database network of all tissues in the human body from the available scientific literature.
○ The programme will involve gaining better biological insights through **physiological and molecular mapping**, develop **disease models** through predictive computing and have a holistic analysis and finally **drug discovery**.
○ Such a database on individual tissues, once ready, can come handy in **tracing the causes of a disease**, understanding specific pathways and ultimately decode the body’s disease stage linked to tissues and cells.

**IndiGen Project:**
○ This programme, an initiative of the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research’s (CSIR)**, is about undertaking whole genome sequencing of thousands of individuals representing diverse ethnic groups from India.
○ The project aims to help researchers **develop therapies** for various diseases, including cancer.
What is a Human Cell?
- The cell is the smallest unit that can live on its own and that makes up all living organisms and the tissues of the body.
  - The human body has more than 30 trillion cells.
- A cell has three main parts: the cell membrane, the nucleus, and the cytoplasm. These all have specific functions in the cell.
  - The cell membrane surrounds the cell and controls the substances that go into and out of the cell.
  - The nucleus is a structure inside the cell that contains the nucleolus and most of the cell’s DNA. It is also where most RNA is made.
  - The cytoplasm is the fluid inside the cell. It contains other tiny cell parts that have specific functions, including the Golgi complex, the mitochondria, and the endoplasmic reticulum. The cytoplasm is where most chemical reactions take place and where most proteins are made.
Devasahayam Pillai
Syllabus: GS1/ Important Personalities

In Context
● Recently, Devasahayam Pillai became the first Indian layman to be declared a saint by Pope Francis (Catholic Church) Vatican City.

Who was Devasahayam Pillai?
● About:
  ○ He was born on 23 April 1712, as Neelakanta Pillai into a Hindu upper-caste family, at Nattalam in Kanyakumari district, which was part of the erstwhile Travancore kingdom.
  ○ He was an official in the court of Travancore’s Maharaja Marthanda Varma. It was during his service in the court that he met Captain De Lannoy, a Dutch naval officer and was introduced to Christianity.
  ○ He had converted to Christianity in the 18th century in the then Kingdom of Travancore.
  ○ He was inspired by the teachings of Jesus Christ, he was baptised in 1745 and assumed the name of ‘Lazarus’ or ‘Devasahayam’, meaning ‘God is my Help’.
  ○ His conversion did not go well with the heads of his native religion. False charges of treason and espionage were brought against him and he was divested of his post in the royal administration.
● His Teachings:
  ○ He particularly insisted on the equality of all people, despite caste differences.
  ○ Devasahayam always fought against casteism and communalism and stood for equality and what is right.
● Sainthood road:
  ○ In 2004, the diocese of Kottar along with the Tamil Nadu Bishops’ Council and the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India recommended Devasahayam for beatification. He was declared Blessed by the Kottar diocese in 2012, 300 years after his birth.
  ○ In 2014, Pope Francis recognised a miracle attributed to Devasahayam, clearing the path to his canonisation. He was approved for sainthood in February 2020 for “enduring increasing hardships” after he decided to embrace Christianity.
● Death:
  ○ He fought against Caste discrimination prevalent in the country and was persecuted and then killed.
○ On 14th January 1752, Devasahayam was shot dead in the Aralvaimozhy forest. He is widely considered a martyr, and his mortal remains were interred inside what is now Saint Francis Xavier’s Cathedral in Kottar, Nagercoil.
○ The Vatican 2012 recognised his martyrdom after a rigorous process.

Source: IE

Indian Polity

Sikkim Statehood Day
Syllabus: GS2/Indian Constitution

In News
● Sikkim recently observed its 47th statehood day. It became the 22nd state of India on 16 May 1975.

About Sikkim State (Gangtok)
● History:
○ The Kingdom of Sikkim was founded by the Namgyal dynasty in the 17th century. It was ruled by Buddhist priest-kings known as the Chogyal.
○ It became a princely state of British India in 1890.
○ In 1950, three years after India's independence, a treaty was signed between Sikkim and the Republic of India. Under which the former continued its status as a ‘protectorate' state within the Union of India.
  ■ A protectorate state is a smaller country which is protected by a larger, sovereign nation. Such a state has autonomy over its internal affairs, while the larger country controls policies such as foreign affairs, defence, communications etc.
○ In September 1974, the Chogyals, Sikkim's ruler, called for a referendum, as demands, seeking the now-former kingdom's integration with India, had begun to rise.
○ In April 1975, after an appeal by the Prime Minister of Sikkim, the Indian Army entered and took control of the kingdom.
○ In the subsequent referendum, as many as 97.5 per cent of participants voted in favour of joining India, while 2.45 per cent voted against the proposal.
○ On May 15, 1975, then-President of India, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, signed a constitutional amendment, and, a day later, Sikkim became the 22nd state of India; the position of the Chogyal was abolished as well.

● Location:
○ Situated in Eastern Himalayas, Sikkim is the least populous and second smallest among the Indian states.
○ It borders the Tibet Autonomous Region of China in the north and northeast, Bhutan in the east, Nepal in the west, and West Bengal in the south.

● Geography:
○ **Mount Kanchenjunga** (India’s highest peak and the world’s third-highest mountain) is situated here.

○ **Kanchenjunga National Park (KNP)** is India’s high-elevation conservation area.

○ In 2016, UNESCO declared KNP as a **World Heritage Site** under the ‘mixed’ category (sites containing elements of both natural and cultural significance).

○ **Major Rivers**: Teesta River and its tributaries such as the Rangit, Lhonak, Talung, and Lachung.

○ Sikkim is the world's **first 100 per cent organic state**. The state also bagged the prestigious **Future Policy Gold Award from the UN Food and Agriculture (FAO)**.

Source: [Print](#)
● Increased surveillance after cases of Tomato Flu has been reported from the states of Kerala.

**What is Tomato Flu?**

● **About:**
  ○ Tomato fever is a *rare contagious disease of viral nature in humans* whose origins are not yet known.
  ○ However, medical experts have opined that it might be an *aftereffect of dengue or chikungunya*.
  ○ It gets its name from the *tomato-shaped red rashes* that it causes on the body of infected individuals.
  ○ The flu is said to affect *children below five years of age*.

● **Symptoms:**
  ○ Major symptoms include:
    ■ Rashes
    ■ Diarrhoea
    ■ Dehydration
  ○ In certain cases, *discolouration of hands and knees* has also been observed.

● **Treatment:**
  ○ This flu is a *self-limiting one* and so far, there is *no specific drug for its cure*.
  ○ *Symptoms vanish over time* on their own with medicinal support.
  ○ *Utensils, clothes and other items used by the infected persons must be sanitised* to prevent the flu from spreading.
  ○ *Fluid intake should be increased* to counter dehydration.

● **Preventive Measures by the states:**
  ○ *Proper screening by the health authorities*.
  ○ *Increased surveillance*

Source: [IE](#)

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