

29 July 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

President of India in Benin

Context

- The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, reached Cotonou, Benin on the first leg of his state visits to three West African nations – Benin, Gambia and Guinea.
- This visit is the first-ever visit of Head of State/Head of Government of India to each of the three countries.

India and Benin

- Benin and India share warm and friendly ties
- India is keen to strengthen economic partnership with Benin. India has emerged as the largest trading partner of Benin with two-way trade crossing US\$ 800 million.
- Around 100 Indian or Indian-owned companies are operating in Benin. More Indian companies are interested to enter the Benin market especially in mining. India seeks Benin's support to help them grow their business.
- President announced fresh Line of Credit worth US\$ 100 million for developmental projects in Benin. He also announced extension of e-visa facility to Benin.
- He expressed confidence that this facility will give a major boost to India-Benin business relations. India also offered to extend free tele-education courses to 15,000 Beninese students and tele-medicine courses to 1000 doctors and paramedics in Africa.
- In addition, the two sides discussed defence and security cooperation and India offered further training assistance to Benin to expand its anti-piracy capacity.
- India thanked Benin for its support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Both countries reiterated their commitment to stand together in the global fight against terrorism and piracy.

MOUs/agreements

- MOUs exchanged between India and Benin
 1. Cultural Exchange Programme between the two countries for the years 2019-2023
 2. MOU on Cooperation in the field of Export Credit and Investment Insurance
 3. MOU between Benin & Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) for participation in the e- VBAB Network Project (Technology upgradation of Pan Africa e- Network Project (PAeNP)- Phase-I) of Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India
 4. Agreement on mutual exemption from the visa requirement for holders of Diplomatic, Official/Service Passports

4th cycle of All India Tiger Estimation

Context

- On the occasion of Global Tiger Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi released the results of the fourth cycle of All India Tiger Estimation – 2018.

About the survey

- The count of tigers in India, has risen to 2967, in 2018, according to this survey.
- Survey brings great hope and reassurance about tiger habitats in many areas
- Their number stood at 2,967 at last count in 2018, a 33 per cent jump from 2,226 in 2014, according to the tiger census
- The report 'Status of Tigers in India – 2018', compiled by the Ministry of Environment and Forests.
- The report highlighted the importance of maintaining core habitats for breeding, expanding conservation interventions to include habitats beyond extant protected areas, maintaining connectivity and providing rigorous protection from poaching.
- Central India and Eastern Ghats have the highest number of tigers
- The survey was led by the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Wildlife Institute of India, in collaboration with State Forest Departments.

Civil List of IAS officers

Context

- The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh launched the e-Civil List-2019 of the IAS Officers.

What is IAS Civil List

- The IAS Civil list contains vital information in respect of officers in respect of their batch, cadre, present posting, pay scale, qualification and superannuation with their overall cadre strength with search features.
- The Civil list has been linked with the ER sheets. The List has been designed through DoPT, which gives multiple search options to the users.
- The Department of Personnel and Training is the cadre controlling authority of IAS officers and the Civil List is prepared with the help of inputs received from the States

Cadres.

- The e-IAS Civil list is available on the website of the Ministry

Significance

- The civil list is in line with citizen-centricity in working as it provides the information related to IAS officers in public domain which is accessible to the users from anywhere.
- It will facilitate the Information Commissions as the information demanded by RTI activists about the officers is already in public domain that too with multiple search options.
- DoPT being the HR wing of the government, it will also facilitate in research and comparative data analysis based on many parameters such as age, sex, educational qualifications etc
- It will also assist in the human resource management of the Government to ensure that the services of these officers are utilized to the best of their abilities.

Motor Vehicle Parts to be Affixed with Microdots

Context

- The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has issued a draft notification amending Central Motor Vehicle Rules, allowing motor vehicles and their parts, components, assemblies, sub-assemblies to be affixed with permanent and nearly invisible microdots.

What is Microdots

- Microdot technology involves spraying the body and parts of the vehicle or any other machine with microscopic dots, which give a unique identification.
- Use of this technology will help check theft of vehicles and also use of fake spare parts.
- These invisible microdots can be read physically with a microscope and identified with ultra violet light source.
- The microdots and adhesive will become permanent fixtures/affixation which cannot be removed without damaging the asset, that is the vehicle itself.