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Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS)

Context

- The Union Cabinet has approved the organizational restructuring of the railways through the **unification of the existing eight Group A services into one central service** – the Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS).
- The move was required as there was huge “departmentalism” that delayed many projects.

What is the present system like?

- The Indian Railways is governed by a pool of officers, among whom **engineers** are recruited through

the Indian Engineering Services Examination and **civil servants** through the Civil Services Examination.

- The **engineers are in five technical service cadres** – Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE), Indian Railway Service of Mechanical Engineers (IRSME), Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE), Indian Railway Service of Signal Engineers (IRSSE) and the Indian Railway Stores Service (IRSS).
- The **Civil Servants** are in the Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS), Indian Railway Accounts Service (IRAS) and Indian Railway Personnel Service (IRPS).

Why was the reform needed?

The government wants to end inter-departmental rivalries, which it says have been hindering growth for decades.

- Several committees including the Bibek Debroy Committee in 2015 have noted that “departmentalism” is a major problem in the system.
 - Most committees have said the merger of the services in some form would be a solution.
- The Debroy panel had recommended the merging of the eight services into two – the Indian Railway **Technical** Service (IRTechS) comprising five engineering services (IRSE, IRSSE, IRSEE, IRSME and IRSS), and the Indian Railway **Logistics** Service (IRLogS), comprising non-technical services (IRAS, IRPS and IRTS). The government has now collapsed all services into one.
- The government has followed the **Prakash Tandon Committee’s recommendations** of 1994 as it was apprehensive that even if there are two services, there would be infighting.

What will change with the restructure?

- The **Chairman along with four members** responsible for
 - Infrastructure,
 - Operations and Business development,
 - Rolling stock and
 - Finance respectively will form the Railway Board.
- The **Chairman shall be the cadre controlling officer** responsible for Human Resources (HR) with assistance from a DG (HR).
- Three apex level posts shall be surrendered from Railway Board and all its remaining posts shall be open to all officers regardless of the service to which they belonged.
- The **Board will also have some independent non-executive members**, who will be highly distinguished professionals with deep knowledge and 30 years of experience including at the top levels in industry, finance, economics and management fields.

Concerns

- People with a specific skill set might be pushed to perform other work about which there is no clarity.
- The merger is unscientific and against established norms, because it proposes to merge two fundamentally dissimilar entities, with multiple disparities.
- There is growing uncertainty over promotions and career progression of the officers who are currently employed in Railways.
- There could be misunderstanding between civil servants and engineers in Railways.
 - The civil servants come from all walks of life after clearing the Civil Services Examination.
 - The engineers usually sit for the Engineering Services Examination right after getting an engineering degree. Various studies have noted that engineers join the Railways around the

- age of 22-23, while the civil servants join when they are around 26, barring exceptions.
- The civil servants are saying that if all present cadres are merged and even higher departmental posts become open to all, engineers, being in larger numbers and of a certain age profile, may end up occupying most posts, if not all.

Future Course

- The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) will be conducting an exclusive examination for recruitment of officers to handle specialised services in the newly created Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS).
- Candidates aspiring to get into railways will have to appear for the prelims after which they will indicate their preference for IRMS under five specialities – four of them engineering specialities for **'technical'** operations comprising of civil, mechanical, telecom and electrical, and **one 'non-technical' speciality** which will recruit officers for accounts, personnel and traffic.
 - This means the Engineering Services Examination, which selects officers for five out of eight railway services, will become redundant.
 - Indian Railways will now provide the UPSC with its exact requirement of engineers, e.g. for electrical and mechanical. The UPSC, will, in turn, choose them from candidates having those as optional subjects.
- The first batch will be recruited in 2021, while the new five-member board with merged officers will be in place by mid-2021.
- The government, it's learnt, may also make it **mandatory to select non-engineers – e.g. for accounting, traffic and personnel** – from a few disciplines such as economics and commerce, restricting the entry of recruits with optional subjects such as history, political science, sociology, among others. However, this will have to wait until the GoM takes a final call.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Challakere to be ISRO's astronaut training hub

Context

- According to an update from the Indian Space Research Organisation (**ISRO**), a world-class facility for the training of astronauts will come up in Challakere in Chitradurga district of Karnataka.
 - Challakere, about 200 km from Bengaluru, is also where premier scientific establishments have set up adjoining and interactive campuses.
 - Called the Science City, it houses facilities of the ISRO, the Defence Research & Development Organisation's Advanced Aeronautical Test Range, the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and the Indian Institute of Science.

Details

- ISRO has proposed a ₹ 2,700-crore master plan to create top infrastructure that will house its young **Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC)**.
- Currently, **HSP [Human Spaceflight Programme]** work is split across various centres such as the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram and the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre in Bengaluru. The Institute of Aerospace Medicine of the Air Force has been roped in for the astronauts' selection, basic and final training in Bengaluru.

Significance

India pays a substantial sum to use such facilities abroad.

- The first set of four astronaut candidates for the first Gaganyaan mission of 2022 are to train at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre for 15 months as candidates for Gaganyaan, in Russia.
 - In Moscow, they will learn the skills of life and survival in a narrow capsule, before, during and after travelling away from earth's gravity while managing the travel around earth.
- With the establishment of **such facilities in India, future training could be done in India.**
- The centre is tasked with pursuing future human space missions, complete mission planning, developing engineering systems for survival and safe return of the crew from space, as also selecting and training the astronauts.

2. Global Drosophila Conference

Context

- The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) is organizing the fifth edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5).
- It is being organized in the country for the first time.

About the conference:

- This **biennial conference** aims to promote the interaction of Drosophila researchers in the Asia-Pacific region with their peers in the rest of the world.
- It will bring together scientists from all over the world who use the fruit fly, Drosophila, as a model organism to address basic and applied questions.

Drosophila

- Drosophila is one of the **most widely used and preferred model organisms in biological research.** They are ideal for the study of genetics and development.
- The relationship between fruit fly and human genes is so close that often the sequences of newly discovered human genes, including disease genes, can be matched with equivalent genes in the fly.

Category: ECONOMY

1. Need transparent UDAN: air passengers' association

Context

- The Air Passengers Association of India (APAI) wants the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) – to be fine-tuned and recalibrated with details of money spent by the government in airline subsidies, and the number of routes suspended.
- The air passengers' body said the details must be made public for the sake of transparency.

To read about UDAN: [Click here](#)

2. Saras Mk2

- It is the first indigenous light transport aircraft designed by the National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL).
- The 19-seater aircraft, developed with a target cost of ₹50 crores, is at least 20-25% lower in cost than other aircraft in a similar category.

Significance

- It is slated to be one of the biggest achievements under the **Make in India** mission.
- The CSIR-NAL, without prior experience, designed and developed the first prototype of Saras. Consequently, the first successful maiden flight took off in 2004, thus enabling India to join the elite club of nations to manufacture the light passenger transport aircraft.

Category: DEFENCE

1. AK-203 Assault Rifles

Context

- The Army is likely to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles, which are to be **manufactured locally by an India-Russia Joint Venture (JV)**.

Details

- The rifles will be manufactured by the Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) at Korwa, in the Amethi district of Uttar Pradesh.
- The facility is being set up by the Ordnance Factories Board (OFB) from the Indian side, and Rosoboron Exports and Kalashnikov from the Russian side.
 - 5 percent of its stakes will belong to the Indian Ordnance Factory Board, and the remainder to Russian entities: Rosoboron Exports (7.5 percent) and Kalashnikov Concern (42 percent; the concern, in turn, belongs to the Russian defense giant Rostec).
- The JV was formed following an inter-governmental agreement between India and Russia in 2019.

Significance

- Its introduction will allow New Delhi to phase out its own rifle, the INSAS (Indian National Small Arms System) rifles.
- INSAS was found to be an unreliable firearm, and in 2017 it was decided that it needs to be withdrawn.

SIG716

- The assault rifle will be supplied by US arms maker Sig Sauer.
- The SIG716 uses the powerful 7.62×51 mm cartridge.
- The Sig Sauer rifles will be used by soldiers deployed along the border with China.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Spotting an opportunity in changing fundamentals

Context:

The growing rivalry between the United States and China and the requisite Indian response.

Background:

- The U.S.-China relation has been described by academics as the **world's most important bilateral relationship of the 21st century given the economic and military strength of the two countries.**
- It has been a relationship of **economic cooperation** with China being the second-largest foreign creditor of the United States after Japan, **hegemonic rivalry in the Pacific**, and **mutual suspicion** over the other's intentions.
- There has been a deterioration of the relations between the two countries of late.

Trade war:

- In the backdrop of a growing trade deficit with China, the U.S. in 2018 began **setting tariffs and other trade barriers on China** with the goal of forcing it to make changes to what the U.S. considers **China's "unfair trade practices"**.
- The U.S. claims that the trade practices of China have led to the theft of intellectual property, and the forced transfer of American technology to China.
- In response to the U.S. move, China too raised the tariffs on American goods. The Chinese claim that the U.S. move is in violation of the **World Trade Organization's principles.**
- There have been increasing tariffs on the goods being traded between the two countries. Repeated attempts to end the trade war have not yielded any tangible results.
- The U.S. has been accusing China of unfairly controlling its currency value in the forex market to aid its export policy. **The U.S. has designated China as a "currency manipulator"** further straining the relationship between the two countries.

The U.S.-China rivalry is not limited to the economic sphere and the differences between the two countries have been witnessed in many other domains as well.

Next-generation Technologies:

- A technology war has erupted in the **areas of artificial intelligence, digital space and 5G.** **Washington has blacklisted the Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei and urged governments not to work with it in developing 5G networks.** It accuses China of using Huawei to gather intelligence from other countries. The U.S. has cautioned its allies that using Huawei equipment will lead to less intelligence sharing from it.
- China has **blamed the U.S. for targeting the Chinese company** just to provide an opportunity for the American companies to expand in the lucrative and high potential technology domain. The Chinese view this development as a **U.S. move to counter the Chinese progress which threatens U.S. leadership in next-generation technologies.**
- The superpower showdown will likely **soon extend into the space economy**, another technology area of global importance given that China is making remarkable progress in the domain of space technology challenging the current U.S. hegemony in space technology.

Human Rights:

- Tensions between the two countries have risen following the **U.S.'s passing of the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act of 2019** and the proposed Uighur Act. The U.S. accuses China of cracking down on domestic dissent and **human rights violations.**
- China claims that the U.S. is behind the disturbances in Hong Kong. There is no sign of the protests abating.
- The present **U.S. administration's challenge to the "one China policy"** given the growing diplomatic

exchange between the U.S. and Taiwan is viewed with suspicion by China.

- **The Chinese have accused the U.S. of interfering in its internal affairs and thus challenging Chinese sovereignty.**

Power Play in the Pacific region:

- **China has asserted its military control over the South China Sea** by deploying more military assets to the region and occupying several man-made islands. This is viewed as an arm twisting tactic of the Chinese to resolve the **dispute over territorial issues in the South China Sea**. **The U.S. and its allies have called for freedom of navigation in the South China Sea.**
- **The U.S. has worked towards a military build-up in Asia** by its move to arm its allies like South Korea and Japan with American missile defence systems. The Chinese view this as a provocation to China.

Defence field:

- Despite the military advances made by China, U.S. defence spending is much larger than that of China's budget. With the creation of a **U.S. Space Force** as a separate arm under the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. is seeking to increase its superiority in network-centric warfare.
- **The Chinese have been increasing their defence budget year on year citing the increased military buildup in the pacific region.**

Concerns:

- In the United States and China, the **trade war has brought struggles for farmers and manufacturers and higher prices for consumers.**
- **The slowdown in the global economy is compounded by the U.S.-China trade war.** As more sectors get drawn in, costs are rising and disrupting global supply chains.
- China's economic rise has led to some **geopolitical friction between the US and China in the East Asian region**. There has been the formation of groups in the region with alignment to China and the U.S.
- Any **impact on clean energy targets in China due to U.S. technology restrictions in the nuclear field** could be a setback to efforts to reduce emissions and mitigate climate change in the entire region.
- For other countries, being squeezed between Washington and Beijing presents avoidable challenges. Acceding to U.S. pressure by **banning Huawei hurts competition, delays network rollouts and disrupts commerce**. In practice, Huawei is already too entrenched in many countries for bans to be feasible.
- If the **U.S.-China trade war develops into a broader cold war**, as some observers fear, it will have a devastating effect on the world at large.

Indian Concerns:

Energy concerns:

- Given the slowdown in the global economy, there has been a slack demand for oil globally. The surplus production of oil and shale gas output mainly by the U.S. has further lowered oil prices.
- **Given the high dependence of India on imported oil**, the present slump in oil prices is a good development for India as it will help reduce its import bills and subsequently its current account deficit. Lower energy prices will also make India's export sector more competitive in the global markets.
- **The oil prices have increased more than 4% following the U.S. airstrike killing Iranian General Qassem Soleimani.** The present escalation may lead to an outbreak of hostilities in the region

between Iran and its regional proxies on one side and the U.S. and its allies on the other side. This would send oil prices soaring.

- **India has stopped its oil imports from Iran following the tightening of U.S. sanctions on Iran.** Unlike India, **China continues to buy Iranian crude oil and is its largest buyer.** Reports also suggest that China will invest \$280-billion in developing Iran's oil, gas and petrochemicals sectors. The Chinese have also enhanced their defence cooperation with Iran by the stationing of Chinese security personnel in Iran. **There has been the strengthening of China-Iran relations while the India-Iran relation has been on the downswing.**
- **India, to meet its oil demand has ramped up energy imports from the U.S. which are likely to amount to \$10-billion in 2019-2020.** China has been forging closer ties with oil producers in the west Asian region. This will help facilitate Chinese naval presence in the western Indian Ocean, including the Strait of Hormuz.

Trade:

- According to a State Bank of India "Ecowrap" report of July 2019, unlike the countries of Taiwan, Mexico, Vietnam and the European Union, **India has not benefited much from U.S.-China trade war.**
- Of the \$35-billion dip in China's exports to the U.S. market in the first half of 2019, about \$21-billion (or 62%) was diverted to other countries. The rest, \$14-billion, was made good largely by the U.S. producers.
- **Going by a UN Conference on Trade and Development report of November 2019, additional exports from India to the U.S. market in the first half of the year due to trade diversion amounted to only \$755-million.**
- **The U.S.-China high-tech war threatens India's strategic autonomy.**

Military:

- Given the "Pivot to Asia policy" of the U.S., the Chinese anxieties in the Asia-Pacific theatre have only grown over time. This may lead to a condition where India may have to contend with a **greater Chinese military presence on its periphery.**
- **The Western Theater Command created in 2016 is responsible for the border with India.** It is the largest of China's military regions, and the Tibet Military Command under it has been accorded a higher status than other provincial commands to widen its scope for combat preparedness. **This may lead to increased militarization on the Indo-China border.**

Lack of participation in multilateral forums:

- India's domestic concerns and the principle of maintaining equidistance from all powers have resulted in **India not being part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the Indo-Pacific Business Forum created by the U.S., Japan and Australia, as also from the Blue Dot Network.**
- This stand of India might **affect India's influence in the long run in the Indo-Pacific region.**

Way forward for India:

- Given that the U.S.-China tensions have driven supply chains out of China, India should come out with the **right policies and incentives to attract industries to invest in India.** This will not only help India come out of the current slowdown in growth rates but will also, in the long run, make India an important player in the global supply chains.
- The big three Chinese high-tech companies, Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent, together have poured in \$5-billion in Indian startups in 2018. India could use this opportunity to **try and force China to open**

- **its market to India's IT and other technology exports.**
- Though India has no role in negotiating the "Code of Conduct" for the South China Sea, India's **participation in the "Quad" dialogue on broader issues in the Indo-Pacific should be used as a leverage to protect India's interest in the region.** India reserves the right to sail and fly unhindered through the South China Sea in accordance with the principles of freedom of navigation and overflight.
- The U.S. criticism of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is in India's favour given that it traverses Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. The U.S.'s position is helpful to India. India would have to **reconcile its own regional connectivity initiatives with the BRI projects that have mushroomed in the neighbourhood.**
- **U.S.-China rivalry coincides with an upward trajectory in India-U.S. relations.** This could help India have some leverage over negotiations with the Chinese even as **India and China try and build the much-needed trust and cooperation** which will ensure equilibrium and multi-polarity in Asia.

2. Scoring a foreign policy self-goal

Context:

- The article analyzes the **implications of the Citizenship Act (Amendment), 2019 for India's foreign policy.**

Details:

- Apart from the domestic opposition to the provisions of the Act from some sections of the society, CAA would have **long-term implications for India's foreign policy.**
- There are some concerns that the government's expediency over the Citizenship Act has landed India in an unenviable diplomatic spot.

Regional fallout:

- CAA envisages providing citizenship to those facing persecution in the neighbouring countries. The government has been **citing human rights violations in the neighbourhood and illegal immigration from the neighbouring countries** as the reason for the present amendment. This would **appear as anti-neighbour rhetoric** to the neighbouring countries.
- This move **risks damaging India's relation with two of India's closest allies in the region – Bangladesh and Afghanistan** at a time when India does not have many friends in the neighbourhood.
- This would lead to serious **loss of diplomatic capital** with these countries and decrease India's leverage over the affairs of the region and adversely affect India's regional influence and standing.
- **India is being challenged by growing Chinese influence in the region.** India is losing its traditional influence in the region given the Chinese state's engulfment of the Indian neighbourhood. China has increased its interactions with Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Reputational costs:

- The recent moves of the central government like the abrogation of **Article 370** and the subsequent clampdown in Kashmir and the CAA have been **questioned in international forums.** India has lost some goodwill of the international community.
- **In December 2019, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called the CAA "fundamentally discriminatory".** The UN had also voiced concern over violence in India against CAA and urged respect for freedom of expression.
- In December 2019, in the backdrop of the CAA, **the United States, considered India's ally,** urged India to "protect the rights of its religious minorities in keeping with India's Constitution and

- democratic values”.
- **The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)** has referred to CAA as being not only “highly discriminatory and arbitrary” but also contrary to New Delhi’s “obligations under international human rights laws”.
- The recent incidents have brought **damage to the country’s reputation**. India’s attempts to reach out to the international community, have not met with much success.

Break from the traditional path:

- **India has traditionally shied away from internationalizing domestic issues**, but the recent actions of the government have brought international attention to India’s domestic matters. This will only complicate India’s ability to deal with domestic decisions given increased international attention.
- **India’s traditional foreign policy pursuit has been a careful mix of soft power and material capability with the balance often tilting in favour of soft power**. India has been looked at as a leading light of inclusiveness, democracy, and a major pole of stability in the comity of nations. The concerns against CAA are against the above principles.

Hurdles to India’s dreams:

- Reputation, among other things, is critical in aiding India’s quest for a place at the high table of international politics, such as acquiring a **United Nations Security Council (UNSC) seat**.
- India has been the region’s typical status quo power that the countries loved to engage and promote to higher positions in the global associations. This characteristic of India may be undergoing a dramatic change, with many viewing India as an irresponsible power.

Great power equations:

- There **are concerns that the CAA is based purely on domestic calculations**.
- India is a major power with great power ambitions and may even be an indispensable power in some respects. **But if India decides to shape its foreign policy based purely on domestic calculations, its indispensability and system-shaping abilities will take a serious hit**.
- Great powers have traditionally been supportive of India’s rise in the global order and have more or less stood by India in its pursuit of power and reputation. This is bound to change thanks to the **government’s domestic preoccupations**.
- Moscow’s unequivocal support for New Delhi is now a thing of the past given the increasing India-U.S. ties and this is playing out to the **advantage of China**.

Diverted Focus:

- Much of India’s diplomatic capital is being spent on clarifying India’s moves and convincing allies.
- **The focus on crucial regional and global issues has been decreasing in India’s diplomatic pursuits**. Important issues like renegotiating of the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership**, the Afghan peace process, increasing complexity in the Indian Ocean’s geopolitics have not received the requisite attention.

F. Tidbits

1. Iran dumps nuclear pact, says it won’t respect limits

Context

- Iran’s state television has recently reported that Iran will not meet the terms of the nuclear deal

signed with six major powers in 2015.

Details

- The station cited a government spokesman as saying that Iran would not respect any limits set in the pact on the number of uranium enrichment centrifuges it could use, which meant there would be no limits on its enrichment capacity, the level to which uranium could be enriched, or Iran's nuclear research and development.
- It did not elaborate on what levels it would immediately reach in its programme.
 - However, Iran said that its cooperation with the IAEA "will continue as before."
 - The statement said Iran's steps could be reversed if Washington lifted its sanctions on Tehran.

G. PRELIMS FACTS

1. Bibi Ka Maqbara

- The tomb is located in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- It is known as the 'Taj of the Deccan' because of its striking resemblance to the Taj Mahal.
- It was commissioned by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1660 in memory of his wife Dilras Banu Begum (posthumously known as Rabia-ud-Daurani).

2. Papagni River

- The Papagni originates in the Nandi Hills of Chikkaballapur district in Karnataka.
- It is a non-perennial river that is rainfed which flows through the states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- It is a right-bank tributary of the Pennar River.

Environmental issues

- Human activities in this region have led to deterioration in the quality of groundwater as there is excessive sand mining in the riverbed.

3. Angel Falls (Salto Ángel)

- It is a waterfall in Venezuela.
- It is the world's highest uninterrupted waterfall.



H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. India is a member of which of these?

1. Belt and Road Initiative
2. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
3. The Indo-Pacific Business Forum
4. The Blue Dot Network
5. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

Options:

1. 3, 4 and 5
2. 2, 3 and 5
3. 4 only
4. None of the above

Answer: d

Explanation:

- India is not part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China citing sovereignty concerns over the passing of CPEC through PoK.
- India decided against signing onto the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership fearing that it would affect the domestic producers.
- The Indo-Pacific Business Forum (IPBF), was created by the U.S., Japan and Australia as also the Blue Dot network.
- The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), an inter-governmental forum for 21 member economies in the Pacific Rim, promotes free trade throughout the Asia-Pacific region. It includes both China and the U.S.

Q2. "The Blue Dot Network" is associated with:

1. The international protocol for internet connectivity
2. The network of countries involved in the blue flag certification of their beaches
3. Infrastructure development in the Indo-Pacific region
4. A group of countries working towards enhancing port infrastructure

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The United States, along with Japan and Australia, have started the "Blue Dot" network, which has been described as "promoting global, multi-stakeholder sustainable infrastructure development in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world.
- Officially, it is a joint project of the US Overseas Private Investment Corporation, in partnership with Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

Q3. which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Bibi Ka Maqbara was commissioned by Mughal Emperor Jahangir.
2. It is located in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.

Options:

1. 1 only
2. 2 only
3. Both 1 and 2
4. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Bibi ka Maqbara was commissioned by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1660 in memory of his wife Dilras Banu Begum (posthumously known as Rabia-ud-Daurani).
- It is known as the 'Taj of the Deccan' because of its resemblance to the Taj Mahal.

Q4. The term *Drosophila* is associated with which of the following?

1. Bacteria
2. Fungi
3. Flies
4. Fish

Answer: c

Explanation:

- *Drosophila* is a genus of flies, belonging to the family Drosophilidae, whose members are often called “small fruit flies”.
- *Drosophila* is one of the most widely used and preferred model organisms in biological research. They are ideal for the study of genetics and development given the close relationship between fruit fly and human genes.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. There has been a deterioration of the relationship between the U.S. and China in recent times which spells serious concerns for the world. Comment. Discuss what the specific concerns to India are and suggest suitable steps to be taken by India. (15 marks, 250 words)
2. The Citizenship Amendment Act could have landed India in an unenviable diplomatic spot and have long-term implications for India’s foreign policy. Comment. (10 marks, 150 words)