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Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [Trump to become first foreign leader to dine in Forbidden City since founding of modern China](#)

- Donald Trump will receive an honor in Beijing not granted to any US President since the founding of the People's Republic of China: official dinner inside the Forbidden City.

Architecture

- Originally constructed in the early 1400s, the Forbidden City is considered to be among the most important architectural and cultural monuments inside China. Designed to reflect the majesty of the emperor, the vast walled complex consists of over 90 palaces and courtyards of varying significance.
- The Forbidden City is a palace complex in central Beijing
- The Forbidden City served as the home of emperors and their households as well as the ceremonial and political center of Chinese government for almost 500 years.
- The Forbidden City was declared a World Heritage Site in 1987, and is listed by UNESCO as the largest collection of preserved ancient wooden structures in the world.

Category: GOVERNANCE

1. [Tribal front IPFT to go it alone in Tripura polls](#)

- The Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) has long been campaigning for a separate Twipraland for tribals by carving out the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council.

Tipraland

- It is the name of a proposed state in India, **proposed by the Tipra people of Tripura**.
- The Twipra Kingdom is a former country which was ruled by 184 Tripuri/Tipra kings. The last king was **Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur Debbarma**. After his death in 1946, Twipra kingdom joined India as a Union Territory on 15 October 1949 under the name Tripura, and later achieved statehood.
- From that time onwards many **Bengali Hindus and Muslims immigrated to Tripura**, and slowly took political power from the Tipras. As the political and economic power shifted to the immigrants, the very existence of the Tipra people and their culture was jeopardized.
- The indigenous **Tipra people demanded an autonomous district**, which they finally achieved on 23 March 1979. However, the **Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC)** was unable to protect the rights of the indigenous Tipra and other tribal communities.
- The Tipra people feel it has become clear that without full governmental power, **the indigenous Tipra people cannot survive**. Thus the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura, a regional political party under the leadership of N.C. Debbarma, has advocated for converting the TTAADC area into a full-fledged state.

2. [High Court restrains Rajasthan government from increasing quota](#)

- The Rajasthan High Court restrained the government from implementing the provisions of a Bill passed in the State

- Assembly, by which it increased reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) from 21% to 26%.
- The Bill, passed created the **“most backward” category** within the OBCs for providing reservation to Gujjars and four other nomadic communities in government employment and educational institutions.
- The Backward Classes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions in the State and of Appointment and Posts in Services under the State) Bill, 2017, gave 5% reservation to the Gujjar, Banjara, Gadia-Lohar, Raika and Gadariya communities.
- With its passage, reservation in Rajasthan stood at 54%, exceeding the 50% ceiling mandated by the Supreme Court.

What does the government say about this?

- The State government has maintained that as per the Supreme Court’s ruling in the *Indra Sawhney* case, special circumstances exist in Rajasthan for giving reservation to the OBCs beyond the 50% ceiling.
- The State OBC Commission has recommended quota to the communities classified as OBCs, which comprise 52% of the State’s population.

What had SC commented in that case?

- The Supreme Court said, “the reservations contemplated in clause (4) of Article 16 should not exceed 50 per cent. While 50 per cent shall be the rule, it is necessary not to put off consideration of certain extra-ordinary situations inherent in the great diversity of this country and the people. It might happen that in far-flung and remote areas, the population inhabiting those areas might, on account of their **being out of the mainstream of national life and in view of the conditions peculiar** to and characteristic of them need to be treated in a different way; **some relaxation in this strict rule may become imperative**. In doing so, **extreme caution is to be exercised and a special case made out**.”

Category: HEALTH AND EDUCATION

1. On a mission to promote menstrual hygiene

Context

Two young medical professionals, pathologist Kadiyam Kavya and her friend gynaecologist Priti Dayal, are espousing a unique cause “going round rural schools not only educating the girls on menstrual hygiene, but also supplying them sanitary napkins free for one year.

Issue Area

- 80 per cent of the women do not use sanitary napkins, particularly those in rural parts, leading to severe health complications.
- Most of the girls, after attaining puberty, drop out of schools due to ignorance and lack of accessibility to sanitary napkins.

Category: ECONOMY

1. GST Council to tighten norms for Composition Scheme

Context

- The twenty-third meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council was held in Guwahati
- It is set to tighten the noose on players who, authorities believe, have started splitting their business operations into smaller entities to avoid higher tax liabilities.

What is expected out of meeting?

- The Council is also set to cut tax rates on a large number of product lines.
- The Council is expected to further liberalise the Composition Scheme for small businesses and traders to pay a flat and low tax on their turnover.
- The annual turnover eligibility threshold is likely to be raised to ₹1.5 crore from the Rs.1 crore limit, imposed at the Council’s October meeting.

Composition Scheme

- The composition levy is an alternative method of levy of tax designed for small taxpayers whose turnover is up to Rs. 75 lakhs (Rs. 50 lakhs in case of few States).
- The objective of composition scheme is to bring simplicity and to reduce the compliance cost for the small taxpayers. Moreover, it is optional and the eligible person opting to pay tax under this scheme can pay tax at a prescribed percentage of his turnover every quarter, instead of paying tax at normal rate.

The following people cannot opt for the scheme:

- Supplier of services other than restaurant related services
- Manufacturer of ice cream, pan masala, or tobacco
- Casual taxable person or a non-resident taxable person
- Businesses which supply goods through an e-commerce operator

The following conditions must be satisfied in order to opt for composition scheme:

- No Input Tax Credit can be claimed by a dealer opting for composition scheme
- The taxpayer can **only make intra-state supply (sell in the same state)** e. no inter-state supply of goods
- The dealer cannot supply GST exempted goods

- Taxpayer has to pay tax at normal rates for transactions under Reverse Charge Mechanism
- If a taxable person has different segments of businesses (such as textile, electronic accessories, groceries, etc.) under the same PAN, they must register all such businesses under the scheme collectively or opt out of the scheme
- The taxpayer has to mention the words “composition taxable person” on every notice or signboard displayed prominently at their place of business
- The taxpayer has to mention the words “composition taxable person” on every bill of supply issued by him.

The following are the advantages of registering under composition scheme:

- Lesser compliance (returns, maintaining books of record, issuance of invoices)
- Limited tax liability
- High liquidity as taxes are at a lower rate

Category:Â ENVIRONMENT

1. [Odd-even rule back in Delhi from Monday](#)

- The odd-even vehicle rationing scheme will be enforced in the capital for a five-day period, from Monday, as part of a graded response plan to tackle pollution in Delhi.

Who will be exempted?

- It will be in place from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Women drivers, two-wheelers and vehicles carrying children in school uniform, in addition to VVIPs, would be exempted from its provisions
- Vehicles driven or occupied by handicapped persons will also be exempt.
- According to the government, vehicles of the President, the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, Governors, the Chief Justice of India, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Union Ministers, Leaders of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, and SPG protectees, among others, will be exempt.
- Embassy vehicles do not come under odd-even rules and neither do commercial vehicles bearing yellow number plates.
- The Delhi government has not given any exemption to its Ministers, including the Chief Minister.

What is the Process?

- The policy mandates that private vehicles ply on the basis of the last number of their licence plates “ odd numbered cars on odd dates and even-numbered ones on even
- It has been enforced in Delhi twice earlier: from January 1 to 15 and April 15 to 30.

Penal action for violation

- Motorists will have to pay Rs.2,000 if they violate provisions of the scheme
- It will be enforced by teams of the Delhi police, the transport department and sub-divisional magistrates.

2. [Olive Ridleys keep date with Odisha coast, arrive in large numbers](#)

- Olive Ridley turtles have kept their date with **Gahirmatha beach in Odisha’s Kendrapara district** , known as **world’s largest rookery of this endangered species** , arriving just offshore for mating in large numbers.
- To ensure safe mating, day and night patrolling has been intensified so that fishing attempts can be checked

Olive Ridley Turtles

- The Olive ridley turtles are **the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles** found in the world, inhabiting warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans.
- These turtles, along with their cousin the **Kemps ridley turtle** , are best known for their unique mass nesting called **Arribada** , where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- Though found in abundance, their numbers have been declining over the past few years, and the species is recognized **as Vulnerable by the IUCN Red list** .

Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary

- It is a marine wildlife sanctuary located in Odisha
- It extends from Dhamra River mouth in the north to Brahmani river mouth in the south.
- It is very famous for its nesting beach for olive ridley sea turtles. It is the one of world’s most important nesting beach for turtles

Nothing here for Today!!!

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F. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

G. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

GS Paper I

- The new report show India’s seriousness and implementation level of environment protection programmes, which is comparatively better than developed countries. Despite such reports the Delhi government suffers with severe pollution levels. What policy changes are required to address the urban pollution?

GS Paper II

- Briefly discuss on the effects of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (RFCTLARR) Act, 2013.