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PM's visit to Europe



- The Prime Minister of India is on a visit to three European countries – Germany, Denmark and France. His foreign visit comes at a time when Europe is witnessing the Russo-Ukraine war.
- The visit of the Indian Prime Minister highlights the importance India attaches to its relations with Europe.

Importance of Travel:

India-Germany Relations:

Background:

- Germany is one of India's most important partners in Europe, with deep bilateral ties and an important role in the European Union.
- India was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany after World War II (WWII).

- India and Germany have a 'Strategic Partnership' since May 2000 and have been strengthened in 2011 with the launch of Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) at the level of Heads of Government.
- India is one of the few countries with which Germany has a dialogue system.

Importance:

- Germany has become an important strategic choice in the Russo-Ukraine War.
- It has decided to increase defense spending along with reducing its energy dependence on Russia, an important step in view of the situation after World War II.
- India is also dependent on Russia for defense supplies, so it will be important for India and Germany to exchange notes on strategic options and move away from Russia for their respective needs.

India-Denmark Relations:

Background:

- The bilateral ties were elevated to the level of "Green Strategic Partnership" during the virtual summit held in September 2020.
- The first India-Nordic summit to explore new areas of cooperation was held in April 2018.
- This cooperation is important because the Nordic countries – Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Iceland have such cooperation only with the US.

Importance:

- The Nordic countries are leaders in innovation, clean energy, green technology, education, health care, human rights and the rule of law. Cooperation with these countries presents a huge opportunity for India to expand its strength.
- Also India presents opportunities for these countries due to its large market.
- Several new flagship schemes have been launched by India in which Nordic countries can actively participate and provide their expertise. Like Make in India, Smart Cities Mission, Start-up India, Clean Ganga etc.

Indo-French Relations:

Background:

- India and France have traditionally had close ties.
- In 1998, the two launched a strategic partnership, which had pillars of defense and security cooperation, space cooperation and civil nuclear cooperation.
- India and France have a strong economic partnership and are increasingly engaging in new areas of cooperation.
- France was also one of the few western countries that did not condemn India after the Pokhran trials of 1998.
- It continues to support India's claim for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council.
- France's support was crucial in India's entry into the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group.
- France continues to support India to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group.
- France has also supported India's requests to block Pakistan's efforts to enlist Indian citizens under the UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee.

Importance:

- **Common interests in the Indian Ocean:** France needs to protect its colonial territorial assets, such as the Reunion Islands and the Indian Ocean being a sphere of influence for India.
- **Counter-terrorism:** France has supported India's proposal for a global conference on terrorism.
- Both countries also support the holding of a new "No Money for Terror"- An International Conference on Fighting Terrorist Financing.
- **India's support by France:** France has consistently supported India on Kashmir, while its relations with Pakistan have seen a decline in recent times and have skeptical relations with China.
- **Defense Cooperation:** India and France have entered a phase of close defense partnership. For example, recently the multi-role fighter class aircraft of France's Rafale has been inducted into the Indian Air Force (IAF).

India-Europe Relations:

Background:

- India was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community in 1962.
- A cooperation agreement signed in 1994 further broadened the relationship by including ministerial-level meetings and political dialogues.
- These ties have been expanded to include political and security issues, climate change and clean energy, information and communication technology, space and nuclear, health, agriculture and food security, education and culture.

Importance of Travel:

- The visit to Europe is expected to set the stage for the India-EU summit and boost free trade agreement talks, which have been going on for the past decade and a half.

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Citizen registration system



- According to the recently released Important Statistical Report based on the 2020 Civil Registration System Report (CRS), the highest sex ratio at birth in the country in the year 2020 was recorded in the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- The report was published by the Registrar General of India.
- Sex ratio at birth is the number of females born per thousand males. It is an important indicator in measuring the gender gap of the population.

Registrar General of India:

- The Registrar General of India was established in the year 1961 by the Government of India under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- It organizes, conducts and analyzes the results of demographic surveys of India, including the Census of India and the Language Survey of India.
- Often a civil servant is appointed to the post of Registrar, whose rank is similar to that of Joint Secretary.
- Registration of births and deaths in India is made mandatory with the enactment of the 'Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act' 1969 and is done according to the place of occurrence.
- According to the Ministry of Home Affairs' annual report for 2020-21, the central government is planning to reform the civil registration system to enable real-time registration of births and deaths with minimal human interface.

Birth and Death Registration (RBD) Act:

- The Birth and Death Registration Act was enacted in the year 1969 for uniformity in registration of births and deaths across the country and for compilation of important data on its basis.
- With the enactment of the Act, registration of births, deaths and stillbirths has become mandatory in India.
- The registration of births and deaths in the country is done by the officials appointed by the state governments.
- Directorate of Census Operations is a subordinate office of the Office of the Registrar General and this office is responsible for monitoring the working of the Act in their respective State and Union Territory.

Key points of the report:

- **High sex ratio at birth:** It is recorded in the year 2020 in Ladakh (1104) followed by Arunachal Pradesh (1011), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (984), Tripura (974) and Kerala (969).
- The highest sex ratio at birth in the year 2019 was recorded in Arunachal Pradesh (1024) followed by Nagaland (1001), Mizoram (975) and Andaman and Nicobar Islands (965).
- Information on sex ratio at birth was “not available” from Maharashtra, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.
- **Lowest Sex Ratio at Birth:** Manipur (880), Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu (898), Gujarat (909), Haryana (916) and Madhya Pradesh (921).
- The lowest sex ratio in the year 2019 was recorded in Gujarat (901), Assam (903), Madhya Pradesh (905) and Jammu and Kashmir (909).
- **Birth rate:** in registered birth rates in states like Nagaland, Puducherry, Telangana, Manipur, Delhi, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala, Gujarat, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Mizoram and Chandigarh a decline was recorded.
- Increase in registered birth rate has been recorded in Lakshadweep, Bihar, Haryana, Sikkim, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
- **Mortality:** Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Nagaland, Haryana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Sikkim, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Andaman and Nicobar and Assam in the

year 2020 as compared to the year 2019 There has been an increase in the rate.

- Bihar has the highest mortality rate at 18.3% followed by Maharashtra with 16.6% and Assam with 14.7%.
- Meanwhile, states like Manipur, Chandigarh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Puducherry, Arunachal Pradesh and Kerala have seen a decrease in the death rate in 2020 as compared to 2019.
- **Infant Mortality:** The report states that in the year 2020, 1,43,379 infant deaths were registered in which the share of rural area was only 23.4%, while 76.6% of the total registered infant deaths have been registered in the urban area.
- Non-registration of infant deaths in rural areas due to non-reporting of infant deaths to the registrars was a matter of concern, especially in the case of domestic events.

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Mercy petition



- Recently, the 'Supreme Court' has advised the central government to release the convict convicted in the assassination case of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, as he has already served more than three decades.

Further actions:

- The Supreme Court has also advised the Central Government to take action against the Governor of Tamil Nadu, as the Governor has decided to "ignore" the binding advice of the 'State Cabinet' regarding the release of the 'convict'.

Related case:

- The Governor of Tamil Nadu, ignoring the advice of the 'State Cabinet', has said that the President has the right to decide on the 'Mercy Plea' petition.

About Article 161:

- Under Article 161 of the Constitution, the Governor of a State shall, in relation to the matter to which the executive power of that State extend, pardon, suspend, the punishment of any person convicted of an offense against any law, Power to suspend or remit or to suspend, remit or commute a sentence is given.

Article 72 vs. Article 161:

- The extent of the pardoning power of the President under Article 72 of the Constitution of India is wider than the pardoning power of the Governor under Article 161.

This power differs in the following two ways:

- The pardoning power of the President under Article 72 extends to the punishment or punishment awarded by the Court Martial, whereas, under Article 161 no such power has been conferred on the Governor.
- The President has the power to grant pardon in all cases of capital punishment, but the pardoning power of the Governor does not extend to the death penalty.

Importance of Pardoning Power:

- The pardoning power of the executive is very important as it corrects the errors committed by the judiciary. It removes the effect of conviction of the accused without considering his guilt or innocence.
- Pardoning power is very helpful in saving an innocent person from being punished in case of error or doubtful conviction of the judiciary.
- The purpose of pardoning power is to correct judicial errors. Because no judicial administration related human system can be free from flaws.

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