

FREE MOVEMENT REGIME WITH MYANMAR

Why in news?

- The Manipur state government has requested the Centre to permanently wind up the **Free Movement Regime (FMR)** along the Indo-Myanmar border.
- Recently, at a press meet, CM of Manipur said that the FMR has been the biggest impediment in Manipur's efforts to curb the influx of illegal migrants from Myanmar through the unfenced border.

Indo-Myanmar border

- **About**
 - The Indo-Myanmar border runs for 1,643 km.
 - The States of Arunachal Pradesh (520 km), Nagaland (215 km), Manipur (398 km) and Mizoram (510 km) have common border with Myanmar.
- **Demarcation of Indo-Myanmar border**
 - Out of 1643 km, demarcation of 1472 km has been completed.
 - There are **only two un-demarcated portions** along Indo-Myanmar:
 - Lohit sub-sector of Arunachal Pradesh-136 km
 - Kabaw valley in Manipur – 35 km.

Free Movement Regime (FMR)

- **About**
 - The Free Movement Regime is a pact between India and Myanmar that allows tribes living along the border on either side to **travel up to 16 km inside the other country without a visa**.
 - FMR is being seen as a part of the India's Act East policy.
- **Rationale behind FMR**
 - Boundary between India & Myanmar was demarcated by the British in 1826.
 - This effectively divided people of the same ethnicity and culture into two nations without seeking their opinion.

- Hence, need was felt to enable ethnically similar communities living across the borders to move freely without the need of a visa.
- The FMR was supposed to provide impetus to local trade and business.
 - However, it has been criticised for unintentionally aiding illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and gun-running.
- **Current status**
 - However, the agreement has been defunct since 2020, first because of the Covid pandemic.
 - After the military coup in Myanmar in 2021 and the continued escalation of its refugee crisis, **India suspended the FMR in September 2022.**

News Summary: Free Movement Regime with Myanmar

Issues raised by CM of Manipur

- **Permanently freeze the Free Movement Regime (FMR)**
 - FMR has been the biggest impediment in Manipur's efforts to curb the influx of illegal migrants & drug trafficking from Myanmar through unfenced border.
- State is working towards **National Register of Citizens and fencing of the border with Myanmar**
- **On the issue of deployment of security forces**
 - CM said that the security forces instead of being deployed at zero point, were found guarding the border 14 to 15 km inside Indian territory.

KEY FACTS ON THE JHELUM RIVER

The water level of Jhelum and its tributaries have fallen drastically owing to dry weather conditions prevalent in Kashmir Valley.



About Jhelum River:

- It is a river that **flows in India and Pakistan.**
- It is a **tributary of the Indus River.**

- The Jhelum (Vyeth in Kashmiri, Vetesta in Sanskrit and Hydaspes in Greek) is the **main waterway of the Kashmir valley.**
- It is the **largest and most western of the five rivers of Punjab** and **passes through the Jhelum District** in the North of Punjab province, Pakistan.
- **Course:**
 - **Origin:** It originates at the **Verinag Spring at Anantnag**, at the foot of the **Pir Panjal range in the Kashmir Valley.**
 - It then flows via **Srinagar and Wular Lake** prior to entering Pakistan.
 - The river makes a **deep, narrow gorge** on its way to Pakistan.
 - It **joins the Chenab River near Trimmu, Pakistan.**
 - **Length:** It has a total length of about **725 km (450 mi).**
- **Major Tributaries:**
 - The **largest tributary of the Jhelum is the Kishenganga (Neelum) River**, which joins near **Muzaffarabad** and enters the Punjab province, Pakistan.
 - **Kunhar River is the second largest tributary of the river**, which connects **Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan on the Kohala Bridge of Kangan Valley.**
 - **Other tributaries include Sandran River, Bringi River, Arapath River, Watlara River, Lidder River and Veshaw River.**

NORMAN E. BORLAUG AWARD



Indian agriculture scientist Swati Nayak won the prestigious Norman E. Borlaug Award for 2023.

About Norman E. Borlaug Award:

- The award recognises **exceptional scientists under 40** and someone who works in the field of food and nutrition security and hunger eradication.
- It is given in memory of the Nobel awardee and Green Revolution's chief architect **Dr Norman Borlaug.**



CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



- The award will honour an individual who is working closely and directly “in the field” or at the **production or processing level with farmers, animal herders, fishers or others** in rural communities in any discipline or enterprise across the entire food production, processing, and distribution chain.
- The award diploma incorporates the image of Dr. Borlaug at work in the fields of Mexico **and a cash prize of \$10,000.**
- It is **endowed by the Rockefeller Foundation and will** be presented every October in Des Moines, Iowa, by the World Food Prize Foundation.
- **Other Indian recipients:** Aditi Mukherji (2012) and Mahalingam Govindaraj (2022).

Contributions of Swati Nayak

- She introduced **Sahbhagi Dhan**’, a drought-tolerant variety rice suitable for hilly uplands, and **‘BINA Dhan-11’**, which is flood-tolerant.
- **BINA-Dhan-11**’, which contains a **submergence-tolerant Sub1 gene** identified from an indigenous land race of Odisha.
- The Sub1 gene has been incorporated into many existing popular high-yielding varieties such as ‘Samba Mahsuri’, ‘Swarna’ and ‘Ranjit’.
- There are, likewise, other drought-tolerant varieties, such as ‘DRR Dhan 42’ and ‘DRR Dhan 44’.

NIA & ITS POWER TO CONFISCATE PROPERTIES

Why in News?

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) confiscated land and part of a house belonging to Gurpatwant Singh Pannu, the US-based founder and lawyer of the banned Sikhs for Justice, in Amritsar and Chandigarh.

Why Was the National Investigation Agency Set Up?

- Over the past several decades, India has been the victim of large-scale terrorism sponsored from across the borders.

- A large number of such attacks are found to have complex inter-state and international linkages, and possible connection with other activities like the smuggling of arms and drugs, circulation of fake Indian currency, etc.
- keeping all these in view, it was felt that there was a need for setting up of an Agency at the Central level for investigation of offences related to terrorism and certain other Acts, which have national ramifications.
- Several experts and Committees, including the Administrative Reforms Commission in its Report, had made recommendations for establishing such an Agency.

About National Investigation Agency:

- Accordingly, the **National Investigation Agency Act, 2008** was enacted and the National Investigation Agency was born.
- The Act gives the NIA powers to:
 - Take **Suo motu** cognisance of terror activities in any part of India and register a case,
 - Enter any state without permission from the state government, and
 - Investigate and arrest people.
- At present NIA is functioning as the **Central Counter-Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency** in India.
- **Objectives:**
 - To set the standards of excellence in counter terrorism and other national security related investigations at the national level by developing into a highly trained, partnership oriented workforce.
 - To create deterrence for existing and potential terrorist groups/individuals.
- **Jurisdiction:**
 - Provisions of the NIA Act extend to the whole of India and also applies to Indian citizens outside the country.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Home Affairs

Functions of NIA:

- In-depth professional investigation of scheduled offences using the latest scientific methods of investigation and setting up such standards as to ensure that all cases entrusted to the NIA are detected.
- Ensuring effective and speedy trial.
- Maintaining professional and cordial relations with the governments of States and Union Territories and other law enforcement agencies in compliance of the legal provisions of the NIA Act.
- Assist all States and other investigating agencies in investigation of terrorist cases.
- Build a data base on all terrorist related information and share the data base available with the States and other agencies.

Can NIA Conduct Raids & Seize Properties?

- The **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act (UAPA)**, also passed in 2019, allows an NIA officer to conduct raids, and seize properties that are suspected to be linked to terrorist activities.
- The NIA does not have to take permission of the Director General of Police of a state.
- The investigating officer only requires sanction from the Director General of NIA.

PERSONALITY RIGHTS OF CELEBRITIES

Why in news?

- The Delhi High Court passed an interim order protecting the personality rights of Bollywood actor Anil Kapoor.
- The judgement restrained various entities from misusing his image, name, voice or other elements of his persona for monetary gains without his consent.

The personality rights:

- **About**
 - The name, voice, signature, images or any other feature easily identified by the public are markers of a celebrity's personality and are **referred loosely as personality rights**.

- These could include a pose, a mannerism or any aspect of their personality.
- Many celebrities even register some aspects as a trademark to use them commercially.
 - For example, Usain Bolt's "bolting" or lightning pose is a registered trademark.
- The idea is that only the owner or creator of these distinct features has the right to derive any commercial benefit from it.
- **Legal/Constitutional basis**
 - Personality rights or their protection are not expressly mentioned in a statute in India.
 - However, these rights are traced to fall under the **right to privacy and the right to property**.
 - Even as the Delhi High Court and the Madras High Court have passed interim orders, the law is at a nascent stage in India.
- **Types of personality rights**
 - Personality rights are divided into two categories:
 - **The right of publicity**, or the right to keep one's image and likeness from being commercially exploited without permission. It is similar (but not identical) to the use of a trademark.
 - **The right to privacy** or the right to **not** having one's personality represented publicly without permission.

Existing Legal/constitutional provisions

- In India, the publicity rights are governed by statutes like **the Trademarks Act 1999 and the Copyright Act 1957**.
- With the 2017 judgment (**Justice K. S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) v. Union of India**), the personality rights were elevated to the position of constitutional rights.
 - The ruling formally recognised the **right to privacy** as a fundamental right derived from the right to life and personal liberty, as provided by **Article 21** of the Indian Constitution.
 - The court ruled that an individual may be permitted to prevent others from using his/her image, name and other aspects of his/her personal life and identity for commercial purposes without his/her consent.

Personal rights vs consumer rights

- While celebrities are protected from commercial misuse of their name and personality, there have also been instances where the consumers are misled owing to false advertisements or endorsements by such personalities.
 - Due to such cases, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs has made a notification - **Guidelines on Prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements for Misleading Advertisements, 2022**, by imposing a penalty on the endorser.
-

REASONS FOR RISE IN GLOBAL DEBT

Why in News?

- According to the Institute of International Finance (IIF), global debt rose to an all-time high of \$307 trillion in the 2nd quarter (April-June 2023), rising by about \$100 trillion over the last decade.

What is Global Debt?

- Global debt refers to the **borrowings of governments as well as private businesses** and individuals.
- **Governments borrow to meet various expenditures** that they are unable to meet through tax and other revenues.
- Governments may also borrow **to pay interest on the money** that they have already borrowed to fund past expenditures. **The private sector borrows predominantly to make investments.**
- Both global debt in nominal terms and global debt as a share of GDP **have been rising steadily over the decades.**
- **The rise came to a halt during the pandemic** as economic activity turned sluggish and lending slowed down.
- But global debt levels have started to rise again in the last few quarters. During the first half of 2023, total global debt rose by \$10 trillion.
- **Most (over 80%) of the rise in global debt** in the first half of the year **has come from advanced economies** such as the US, UK, Japan, and France.

- Among emerging market economies, China, India and Brazil have seen the most growth in debt.

Why is Global Debt Rising?

- **This has happened amid rising interest rates**, which was expected to adversely affect demand for loans.
 - What is more interesting than rising debt levels is the **drop in global debt as a share of GDP over seven consecutive quarters prior to 2023**.
 - **The IIF attributes this to the rise in price inflation**, which it claims has helped governments to inflate away the debts denominated in their local currencies.
 - **Inflating away of debt refers** to the phenomenon wherein the central bank of a country either directly or indirectly uses freshly created currency to effectively pay off outstanding government debt.
 - **But the creation of fresh money causes prices to rise**, thus imposing an **indirect tax on the wider economy** to pay the government's debt.
 - A further rise in debt levels over time is to be expected **since the total money supply usually steadily rises** each year in countries across the globe.
-