

## 1. Special Protection Group (SPG)

**Context:** The Union Government has withdrawn SPG security cover to former PM Manmohan Singh.

### About SPG:

- » It was **formed in 1988 by an act of the Parliament of India**
- » It is an armed force of the Union for providing proximate security to
  - ✓ The Prime Minister of India
  - ✓ Former Prime Ministers of India and
  - ✓ Members of their immediate families wherever in the world they are
- » It is **governed by Cabinet secretariat of India.**
- » SPG chief is an officer of the rank of Inspector-General.

### Background:

- » The SPG was **set up in 1985 after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi**, and Parliament passed the SPG Act in 1988 dedicating the group to protecting the Prime Minister of India.
- » At the time, the Act did not include former Prime Ministers, and in 1989 the government withdrew SPG protection to the outgoing PM Rajiv Gandhi.
- » After Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in 1991 the SPG Act was amended, offering SPG protection to all former Prime Ministers and their families for a period of at least 10 years.
- » In 2003, the Union government also amended the SPG Act to bring the period of automatic protection down from 10 years to “a period of one year from the date on which the former Prime Minister ceased to hold office and beyond one year based on the level of threat as decided by the Central Government.”

## **2. Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana**

**Context:** Supreme Court slams government for denying pension to freedom fighter under the Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana (SSSY).

### **About Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana (SSSY):**

► **Objective:** To provide **pension to freedom fighters** & their eligible dependents in India as a token of respect for their contribution in the national freedom struggle and on their demise, to their eligible dependents viz.

- ✓ Spouses and thereafter,
- ✓ Unmarried and Unemployed Daughters and
- ✓ Dependent Parents, as per prescribed Eligibility Norms and Procedure.

► It is implemented by **Ministry of Home Affairs**.

► As of March 2019, a total of 1.7 lakh freedom fighters and their eligible dependents have been sanctioned.

## **3. White Rhino**

**Context:** A proposal by Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) to reopen legal international trade in white rhino horn was rejected at the ongoing 18th Conference of Parties (CoP) to the Convention on Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Geneva.

### **About White Rhino:**

- The white rhinoceros or square-lipped rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum*) is the largest extant species of rhinoceros.
- It has a wide mouth used for grazing and is the most social of all rhino species.
- The white rhinoceros consists of two subspecies:
- ✓ Southern white rhinoceros
  - ✓ Northern white rhinoceros

IUCN Red List	Near Threatened
CITES	Appendix I

## **4. Mitra Crater**

**Context:** Chandrayaan-2 captured images of various craters on the moon while passing over its north polar region of the various craters, it spotted one called 'Mitra'- an impact-based crater named after noted Indian physicist Sisir Kumar Mitra.

- The name was given by Working Group for Planetary System Nomenclature (WGPSN), part of International Astronomical Union (IAU)

### About IAU:

- It is an international association of professional astronomers, at the PhD level and beyond, active in professional research and education in astronomy
- Among other activities, it acts as the internationally recognized authority for assigning designations and names to celestial bodies (stars, planets, asteroids, etc.) and any surface features on them.
- The IAU is a member of the International Science Council (ISC).
- Its main objective is to promote and safeguard the science of astronomy in all its aspects through international cooperation

### Why Mitra:

- Awarded Padma Bhushan in 1962
- He was a doyen of Indian science, who led the research in ionosphere--the upper region of the atmosphere--and radiophysics.
- He was the first to introduce the teaching of radio communication in India.
- He transmitted radio programmes from his laboratory at the University College of Science at Calcutta as early as 1926.

