

## **1. CPI Inflation**

### **Why in News?**

- Retail inflation rose to a sixteen-month high of 4.62 per cent in October due to a spike in food prices.

### **About:**

- Inflation is defined as a situation where there is sustained, unchecked increase in the general price level and a fall in the purchasing power of money. Thus, inflation is a condition of price rise.
- The reason for price rise can be due to **Increase in demand** or **Reduced supply**.
- The **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** is a measure that examines the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services, such as transportation, food and medical care.
- It is calculated by taking price changes for each item in the predetermined basket of goods and averaging them. Inflation level in October has breached the 4% level. However it still remains within the upper limit of 6%.
- This rise is due to the demand during the festive season in October and partly due to the impact of scarcity of monsoon in few parts of the country.

## **2. Guru Nanak Dev**

### **Why in News?**

- Country has recently celebrated the 550<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism.

### **About:**

- Guru Nanak Dev Jayanti is observed to celebrate the birth of Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539), who is first of the 10 Sikh Gurus and the founder of Sikhism.
- He advocated the 'Nirguna' (devotion to and worship of formless divine) form of bhakti.
- He rejected sacrifices, ritual baths, image worship, austerities and the scriptures of both Hindus and Muslims.
- He organised his followers into a community. He set up rules for congregational worship (Sangat) involving collective recitation. The fifth preceptor, **Guru Arjan Dev**, compiled Guru Nanak Dev's hymns along with those of his four successors and other religious poets like Baba Farid, Ravidas (also known as Raidas) and Kabir in the **Adi Granth Sahib**.

- These hymns, called 'Gurbani', are composed in many languages.
- In the late seventeenth century the tenth preceptor, Guru Gobind Singh, included the compositions of the ninth guru, **Guru Tegh Bahadur**, and this scripture was called the **Guru Granth Sahib**.

### **3. Sunderbans**

#### **Why in News?**

- Sunderbans mangrove forest has reduced the damage caused by the severe cyclone 'Bulbul' which has recently hit West Bengal and Bangladesh.

#### **About:**

- The Sunderbans mangrove forest, one of the largest such forests in the world, lies across India and Bangladesh on the delta of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers on the Bay of Bengal.
- It is adjacent to the border of India's Sunderbans World Heritage site inscribed in 1987.
- The Indian Sunderbans, considered to be an area south of the **Dampier Hodges line**, is spread over 9,630 sq. km., of which the mangrove forests are spread over 4,263 sq. km.
- The site is intersected by a complex network of tidal waterways, mudflats and small islands of salt-tolerant mangrove forests, and presents an excellent example of ongoing ecological processes.
- The area is known for its wide range of fauna, including 260 bird species, the Bengal tiger and other threatened species such as the estuarine crocodile and the Indian python.
- It is home to many rare and globally threatened wildlife species such as the estuarine crocodile, Royal Bengal Tiger, Water monitor lizard, Gangetic dolphin, and olive ridley turtles.
- It is also home to one of the noted tiger reserves in India.
- A satellite image from the Indian Space Research Organisation pointed to a loss of 3.71% mangrove and non-mangrove forest cover along with massive erosion of the archipelago's landmass.
- The analysis, based on satellite data of February 2003 and February 2014, shows that while a 9,990-hectare landmass has been eroded, there has been an accretion (addition) of 216-hectare landmass in the Sunderbans during the period.

#### **4. Delhi's Odd-even scheme**

##### **Why in News?**

- Delhi's odd-even scheme has been resumed back after it was hold back on the occasion of 550<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev.

##### **About:**

- The capital city Delhi is facing worst phase of pollution and it could lead to devastating effect if it remains untreated or inadequately treated.
- To control the effects of pollution, Delhi government has initiated the car rationing scheme which is also called as odd-even scheme.
- Private vehicles will be allowed to run across the city based on their registration numbers. For example, if a vehicle's registration number ends with an odd digit, it will be allowed on the road on January 1, while that ending with an even number can be driven on the second, and so on.
- This system was implemented in Beijing in 2008 just before the summer Olympics. While the rule was initially said to be temporary, it turned out to be so effective the government made it permanent.
- Similar road-rationing rules are imposed in many places around the world like Paris, Mexico and Bogota to curb road jams and pollution.

#### **5. Collegium System**

##### **Why in News?**

- One of the Judge of the Supreme Court has stated that people should be aware of judicial appointments and the Collegium System.

##### **About Collegium:**

- The Collegium System is a system under which appointments/elevation of judges/lawyers to Supreme Court and transfers of judges of High Courts and Apex Court are decided by a forum of the Chief Justice of India and the four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court.'
- There is no mention of the Collegium either in the original Constitution of India or in successive amendments.
- The recommendations of the Collegium are binding on the Central Government; if the Collegium sends the names of the judges/lawyers to the government for the second time.

### **Working of Collegium System:**

- The Collegium sends the recommendations of the names of lawyers or judges to the Central Government.
- Similarly, the Central Government also sends some of its proposed names to the Collegium. The Central Government does the fact checking and investigates the names and resends the file to the Collegium. Collegium considers the names or suggestions made by the Central Government and resends the file to the government for final approval.
- If the Collegium resends the same name again then the government has to give its assent to the names. But time limit is not fixed to reply. This is the reason that appointment of judges takes a long time.

## **6. Tribunals**

### **Why in News?**

- The Supreme Court has struck down the entirety rules framed by the government under the Finance Act 2017 in altering the appointments of the key judicial tribunals including the Central Administrative Tribunal.

### **About:**

- A tribunal is a quasi-judicial body established in India by an Act of Parliament or State Legislature under Article 323A or 323B to resolve disputes that are brought before it.
- Articles 323-A and 323-B were inserted through the 42nd Amendment Act of 1976 on recommendation of Swaran Singh Committee.
- Article 323A deals with administrative tribunals.
- Article 323B deals with tribunals for other matters.

### **Administrative Tribunals:**

- An administrative Tribunal is a multimember body to hear on cases filed by the staff members alleging non-observation of their terms of service or any other related matters and to pass judgments on those cases.

### **Key Facts:**

- They play an important role and part in the sphere of the adjudication of disputes especially when the subject demands technical expertise.
- They do not have to follow any uniform procedure as laid down under the Civil Procedure Code and the Indian Evidence Act but they have to follow the principles of Natural Justice.

- They enjoy some of the powers of a civil court, viz., issuing summons and allowing witnesses to give evidence. Its decisions are legally binding on the parties, subject to appeal.

## **7. International Seed Treaty**

### **Why in News?**

- A session of the Governing Body of International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) better known as Seed Treaty is recently held.

### **Seed Treaty:**

- ITPGRFA also known as Seed Treaty is a comprehensive international agreement for ensuring food security through the conservation, exchange and sustainable use of the world's plant genetic resources. It aims for food and agriculture (PGRFA), as well as the fair and equitable benefit sharing arising from its use. The governing body meets biennially and India is a signatory to the treaty.

### **Objectives:**

- **Farmers' Contribution:** To recognize the contribution of farmers to the diversity of crops,
- **Access and Benefit Sharing:** Establish a global system to provide farmers, plant breeders and scientists with access to plant genetic materials,
- **Sustainability:** To conserve and sustainably use plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- **Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act:**
- The PPV&FR Act, 2001 was enacted to grant intellectual property rights to plant breeders, researchers and farmers who have developed any new or extant plant varieties.
- The rights granted under this Act are exclusive right to produce, sell, market, distribute, import and export the variety. According to the act, a farmer is entitled to save, use, sow, resow, exchange, share or sell his farm produce including seed of a variety protected under the PPV&FR Act, 2001 except the brand name. The Act is compliant to Article-9 of the Seed Treaty. A few months back in April 2019, PepsiCo sued Gujarati farmers by invoking the provisions of the act.
- The PPV&FR Authority has registered about 3631 plant varieties out of which 1597 (44%) belong to the farmers.

## **8. NASA's first electric plane - X-57 Maxwell**

### **Why in News?**

- NASA unveiled its first all-electric experimental aircraft X-57 Maxwell which was being developed since 2015.

### **Maxwell:**

- The Maxwell is the latest in a line of experimental aircraft the NASA.
- It has been developed over many decades for many purposes, including the bullet-shaped Bell X-1 that first broke the sound barrier and the X-15 rocket plane flown by Neil Armstrong before he joined the Apollo moon team.
- The two largest of 14 electric motors that will ultimately propel the plane are powered by specially designed lithium ion batteries.
- The Maxwell will be the agency's first crewed X-plane to be developed in two decades.
- The lift propellers will be activated for take-off and landings, but retract during the flight's cruise phase.
- Electric motor systems are more compact with fewer moving parts than internal-combustion engines, they are simpler to maintain and weigh much less, requiring less energy to fly.
- They also are quieter than conventional engines.