

1. ISRAEL OFFERS AFRICAN MIGRANTS A CHOICE: TICKET OUT OR JAIL

- ❑ Israel is offering a stark choice to tens of thousands of African migrants in the country: Agree to leave voluntarily by the end of March, with a plane ticket and a grant of \$3,500, or face possible incarceration.
- ❑ It is the latest phase of Israel's long campaign to expel tens of thousands of African migrants and asylum seekers, mostly Eritrean and Sudanese, who entered the country illegally. At least 20,000 have already left Israel.
- ❑ The United Nations refugee agency has expressed concern over such proposals. The agency and Israeli rights groups, say they are concerned that people who have gone to Rwanda have not found adequate safety or a durable solution to their plight, and have continued on dangerous journeys within Africa or to Europe.

2. THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTION AND DEPOSIT INSURANCE BILL, 2017

Highlights of the Bill

- ❑ The Bill establishes a Resolution Corporation to monitor financial firms, anticipate risk of failure, take corrective action, and resolve them in case of such failure. The Corporation will also provide deposit insurance up to a certain limit, in case of bank failure.
- ❑ The Resolution Corporation or the appropriate financial sector regulator may classify financial firms under five categories, based on their risk of failure. These categories in the order of increasing risk are: (i) low, (ii) moderate, (iii) material, (iv) imminent, and (v) critical.
- ❑ The Resolution Corporation will take over the management of a financial firm once it is classified as 'critical'. It will resolve the firm within one year (may be extended by another year).
- ❑ Resolution may be undertaken using methods including: (i) merger or acquisition, (ii) transferring the assets, liabilities and management to a temporary firm, or (iii) liquidation. If resolution is not completed within a maximum period of two years, the firm will be liquidated. The Bill also specifies the order of distributing liquidation proceeds.

Key Issues and Analysis

- ❑ The Resolution Corporation will exercise certain powers including: (i) classification of firms based on risk, and (ii) directing the management of a firm to return their performance based incentive. However, the Bill does not specify a review or appeal mechanism for aggrieved persons to challenge the decision of the Resolution Corporation.

- ❑ A financial firm will have to be resolved within two years of being classified as 'critical'. However, the point at which the resolution process ends is not specified in the Bill.
- ❑ Under the Bill, the Resolution Corporation will take over a firm classified as 'critical'. However, it may choose to resolve the firm. It is unclear why the Corporation is given a choice to undertake resolution.
- ❑ The Bill specifies that the Corporation will take over the administration of a firm, and exercise the powers of the board of directors, as soon as the firm is classified as 'critical'.
- ❑ However, it also allows the Corporation to supersede the board of a firm if it is classified as 'critical'. The provision allowing the Corporation to supersede the board of a firm classified as 'critical' may be redundant.
- ❑ The Bill requires financial firms to pay fees to the Resolution Corporation, including those specified in Clause 33. However, Clause 33 does not specify fees that these firms will be required to pay.

3. PRADHAN MANTRI VAYA VANDANA YOJANA (PMVVY)

- ❑ Government has launched the 'Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY)' to provide social security during old age and to protect elderly persons aged 60 and above against a future fall in their interest income due to uncertain market conditions. The scheme enables old age income security for senior citizens through provision of assured pension/return linked to the subscription amount based on government guarantee to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC).
- ❑ The scheme provides an assured return of 8% per annum for 10 years. The differential return, i.e. the difference between return generated by LIC and the assured return of 8% per annum would be borne by Government of India as subsidy on an annual basis. Pension is payable at the end of each period during the policy tenure of 10 years as per the frequency of monthly/quarterly/ half-yearly/yearly as chosen by the subscriber at the time of purchase. Minimum purchase price under the scheme is Rs.1,50,000/- for a minimum pension of Rs. 1,000/- per month and the maximum purchase price is Rs.7,50,000/- for a maximum pension of Rs.5,000/- per month. The scheme is exempted from Goods and Services Tax (GST). The scheme is open for subscription till 3rd May 2018.

4. HUNAR HAAT

- ❑ The exhibition is being organised through National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) under **USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development)** scheme of Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- ❑ The USTTAD Scheme aims at preserving & promoting the rich heritage of the traditional arts & crafts of the Minority communities. These crafts have gradually lost their employability in the

light of globalisation & competitive market. This has demotivated the younger generation including the wards of Master Craft-persons to look for different avenues for livelihood. This Ministry is trying to preserve such art forms through inputs such as better marketing linkage, new designs, better packaging, training & credit linkage.

- ❑ Organizing Hunar Haat is part of the initiative of Ministry of Minority Affairs to provide marketing linkages.

5. NEW JALLIKATTU GUIDELINES ISSUED BY AWBI

The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) has reportedly issued **two new** Jallikattu guidelines for the upcoming events to be held in Tamil Nadu. The board has made it mandatory for all **Jallikattu bull-taming matches to be videotaped** and also has prohibited the participants from **holding the tail or horns of the bull, or restricting** its movement by holding its legs.

AWBI:

- ❑ The Animal Welfare Board of India is a **statutory advisory body** on Animal Welfare Laws and promotes animal welfare in the country.
- ❑ Established in **1962, headquarters is in Chennai, India.**
- ❑ The Animal Welfare Board of India was started under the stewardship of **Late Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale**, a well known humanitarian.
- ❑ The Board consists of **28 Members**. The term of office of Members is for a **period of 3 years**.
- ❑ The Board was **initially** within the jurisdiction of the Government of India's **Ministry of Food and Agriculture**. In 1990, the subject of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was **transferred** to the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate change**.

6. HABITAT RIGHTS DENIED

- ❑ Mankidia, one of the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) in Odisha, were denied habitat rights inside the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) under the historic Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.
- ❑ Mankidia, a marginalised group that critically depends on making rope with siali fibre that's richly available in Similipal, would now be deprived of the non-timber forest produce.

Questions:

1. Which one of the following statement(s) are true about AWBI:

1. The Animal Welfare Board of India is a statutory advisory body on Animal Welfare Laws and promotes animal welfare in the country.

2. The Animal Welfare Board of India was started under the stewardship of Late Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale, well known humanitarian.
3. Established in 1962, headquarters is in Kolkata, India.

A) 1 and 3 only B) 2 and 3only C) 1 and 2 only D) 1, 2, 3

2. Consider the following statements

1. Mankidia Tribes are particularly vulnerable tribal groups from Rajasthan.
2. Mankidia Tribes are semi-nomadic tribes who hunt monkeys for food.
3. These tribal groups depend on siali fibre from Similipal Biosphere Reserve for their livelihood.

Choose the correct Answer

A) 1 and 3 only B) 2 and 3only C) 1 and 2 only D) 1, 2, 3

3. Consider the following statements

1. Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana is a social security scheme to protect elderly persons aged 60 and above
2. The scheme will be operated by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Choose the correct Answer

A) 1 only B) 2 only C) Both D) None

4. Consider the following statements

1. **USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development)** scheme comes under ministry of Minority Affairs.
2. The scheme aims at preserving and promoting the rich heritage of the traditional arts & crafts of the Minority communities.

Choose the correct Answer

A) 1 only B) 2 only C) Both D) None