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Current Affairs

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Sources: THE HINDU and the Indian Express

1. INDIA HAS MADE A FORMAL REQUEST TO THE U.S. FOR PURCHASING 24 MH-60R MULTI-ROLE HELICOPTERS (MRH) FOR THE NAVY
 - The Government issued the Letter of Request (LoR) recently for procurement of 24 MRH from the U.S. government under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) route.
 - The deal is of \$2bn.



- The Navy is facing a critical shortage of helicopters and several frontline warships that are plying with empty helicopter decks in the present days.
- These helicopters are being procured as a **replacement** for 15 Sea King Anti-submarine warfare (ASW) helicopters de-inducted from service in the year 1991 and one Sea King 42B MRH lost in an accident.
- The current MRHs in service i.e. Sea King 42Bs, were inducted in the 1980s.
- All the helicopters would be delivered in a phased manner between 2020-24.
- **MH-60R:** It is also referred to as 'Romeo'. The helicopter is equipped for a range of missions i.e.
 - Anti-submarine warfare (ASW)
 - Anti-surface warfare (ASuW)
 - Search-and-rescue (SAR)
 - Naval gunfire support (NGFS)
 - Surveillance
 - Communications relay
 - Logistics support and
 - Personnel transfer and vertical replenishment (VERTREP).

Foreign Military Sales (FMS) route:

- The Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program is a form of security assistance authorized by the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) and a fundamental tool of U.S. foreign policy.
- Under Section 3, of the AECA, the U.S. may sell defence articles and services to foreign countries and international organizations when the President formally finds that to do so will strengthen the security of the U.S. and promote world peace.
- Under FMS, the U.S. Government and a foreign entity enter into a government-to-government agreement called a Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA).

- **The Secretary of State determines which countries will have programs. Secretary of Defence executes the program.**
 - **This may be funded by country national funds or U.S. Government funds.**
2. ANDHRA PRADESH GOVERNMENT WITHDREW THE "GENERAL CONSENT" GRANTED TO THE CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (CBI) AND WEST BENGAL FOLLOWED ANDHRA PRADESH GOVERNMENT.
- Can **States bar the CBI** from functioning in their territory?
 1. The CBI is a national agency with police powers and its primary jurisdiction is confined to Delhi and Union Territories.
 2. As policing (detecting crime and maintaining law and order) is a State subject, the law allows the agency to function outside only with the consent of the States.
 - Has it **happened before**? And why?
 - There are many examples of State governments withdrawing their consent. Example: Sikkim withdrew its consent after the CBI registered a case against former Chief Minister Nar Bahadur Bhandari before it could file a charge sheet.
 - **The most common reason for withdrawal of consent is a strain in Centre-State relations, and the oft-repeated allegation that the agency is being misused against Opposition parties.**
 - **So, the decision by Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal has come amid concerns being voiced by Opposition parties that Central agencies such as the CBI, Enforcement Directorate and Income Tax Department are being used against them.**
 - Under **what law** is it done?
 - The Home Ministry set up the CBI in April 1963 through a resolution.
 - It draws its power from the Delhi Special Police Establishment (**DSPE**) Act.
 - Under **Section 5 of the Act**, the Central government can extend its powers and jurisdiction to the States, for investigation of specified offences.
 - However, this **power is restricted by Section 6**, which says its powers and jurisdiction cannot be extended to any State without the consent of the government of that State.
 - **How does it impact on the States** taking back their consent?
 - The withdrawal of general consent **restricts the CBI from instituting new cases** in the State concerned as decided by the Supreme Court in **Kazi Lhendup Dorji (1994)**.
 - The withdrawal of consent **applies prospectively** and therefore, existing cases will be allowed to reach their logical conclusion.
 - The CBI can also seek or get specific consent in individual cases from the State government.
 - How has the **consent issue** played out?
 - In most cases, States have given **consent for a CBI probe against only Central government employees**.
 - The agency can also investigate a Member of Parliament.
 - Apart from Mizoram, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, the agency has consent in one form or the other for carrying out investigations across the country.
 - What happens to the cases in which there is a demand for a CBI probe?
 - The **Supreme Court** has made it clear that when it or a **High Court directs** that a particular investigation be handed over to the CBI, there is **no need for any consent** under the DSPE Act.
 - A landmark judgment in this regard was the **2010 Supreme Court decision** by which the killing of Trinomial Congress workers in West Bengal in 2001 was handed over to the CBI.

CBI: Central Bureau of Investigation is the foremost investigative police agency in India. It is a non-constitutional and non-statutory body.

- It was established in 1941 as Special Police Establishment (SPE) and was renamed as Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 1963.
- It derives its power to investigate from Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.
- It is under administrative control of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) under the Ministry of personnel.

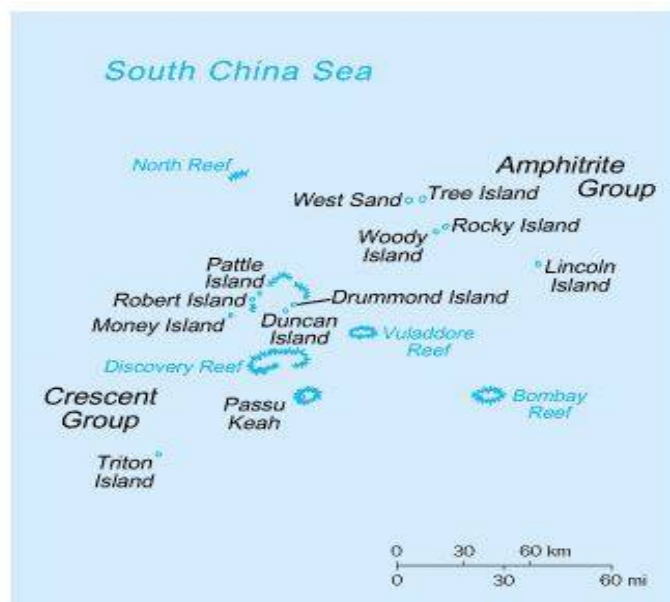
▪ General consent is the approval given by a State government concerned from time to time to the CBI (the agency originated from the Special Police Establishment) and other agencies covered by the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946 (Central Act No. 25 of 1946)



▪ The consent is necessary as the jurisdiction of these agencies is confined to Delhi and Union Territories under this Act

3. CHINA HAS INSTALLED A NEW PLATFORM ON BOMBAY REEF OF THE PARACEL ISLANDS IN THE DISPUTED SOUTH CHINA SEA

- Bombay Reef: Bombay reef is an atoll of the Parcel Islands in the South China Sea.



- Paracel Islands: The Paracel Islands are an archipelago in the South China Sea which is controlled by the People's Republic of China but claimed by Taiwan (Republic of China) and Vietnam.
 - Significance of Bombay Reef: The reef is directly adjacent to the major shipping lanes that run between the Paracels and the Spratly Islands.
4. WORLD LEADERS WILL PARTICIPATE IN AN INNOVATIVE ONLINE CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT
- The event will be the first of its kind global political meeting to be held online.
 - It will begin in the Marshalls' capital Majuro.
 - The Summit is the brainchild of Hilda Heine, the President of Marshall Islands. Marshall Island is a low-lying Pacific island nation which will drown beneath rising seas if global warming continues unabated.
 - Its main aim is to encourage the international community to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.
- A UN report warned recently that the threshold could be reached as early as 2030 unless there was unprecedented global action to rein in emissions.
 - 17 of the 18 hottest years on record had occurred since 2001 and that the cost of climate-related disasters in 2017 topped \$500 billion.
 - **Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF):** The Climate Vulnerable Forum(CVF) is an international Forum of countries that are highly vulnerable to global warming. The Forum serves as a South-South cooperation platform for participants to act together to deal with the concern.