



Estd :1988

Daily Current Affairs – 2019

(14th May)

Resources: The Hindu / PIB

Topic: For Prelims and Mains

FCRA Licence:

Why in news? The Home Ministry has cancelled the **FCRA licence of Infosys Foundation** after a request was made by the **not-for-profit initiative of the IT major**.

What is FCRA?

- **It regulates the foreign contribution (money donation) and foreign hospitality (e.g. free airplane tickets and hotel lodging during videsh-yaatra)** given to various NGOs, institutes, judges, journalists, public servants etc.

What is the need of FCRA Act?

- To check that foreigners are not **affecting India's electoral politics, public servants, judges, journalists, NGOs etc.**
- for wrong purposes.
- If someone violates the FCRA act, he can be sent to jail for up to 5 years.

Who can accept Foreign Contribution?

1. Organizations working for definite **cultural, social, economic, educational or religious programs. But first, they've get permission** from the Ministry of Home Affairs AND
2. Second, they have to maintain separate account book listing the donation received from foreigners and get it audited by a Chartered Accountant and submit it to Home Ministry every year.

Who cannot accept Foreign Contribution?

1. Election candidate.
2. MP and MLAs.
3. Newspaper-walla: Correspondent, columnist, cartoonist, editor, owner, printer or publishers of a registered Newspaper.
4. Public Servents: Judge, government servant or employee of any Corporation or any other body controlled on owned by the Government.

Controversy:

- The Home Ministry had earlier made a **notification that if xyz organization's accounts are audited by CAG then it doesnot need to maintain FCRA accounts.**
- **Jamia Milia, JNU etc. = Central Universities = hence audited by CAG =** They don't need to maintain FCRA accounts in the first place.

Topic: For Prelims and Mains

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO):

Why in news? The executive secretary of the **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Lassina Zerbo**, has invited India to be an observer in the CTBT.

About the (CTBT):

- The **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** is a multilateral treaty that bans all nuclear explosions, for both **civilian and military** purposes, in all environments.
- It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 September **1996**, but has not entered into force, as eight specific states have not ratified the treaty.
- The CTBT is the last barrier on the way to develop nuclear weapons. It curbs the development of new nuclear weapons and the improvement of existing nuclear weapon designs.
- When the Treaty enters into force it provides a **legally binding** norm against nuclear testing. The Treaty also helps prevent human suffering and environmental damages caused by nuclear testing.
- India is a **non signatory** member to the treaty.

What is the difference between signature and ratification?

- The **signature** to a treaty indicates that the country accepts the treaty. It commits not to take any actions that would undermine the treaty's purposes. A treaty is signed by a senior representative of a country such as the president or the foreign minister.
- The **ratification** symbolizes the official sanction of a treaty to make it legally binding for the government of a country. This process involves the treaty's adoption by the legislature of a country such as **the parliament**.
- It also includes the submission of the so-called instrument of ratification to the treaty's depository, which for the CTBT is the **UN Secretary-General**. .
 - For the Treaty to enter into force, the following states need to ratify the CTBT: **China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic republic of), Israel, Pakistan and the United States of America**. Entry into force will occur **180 days** after these states ratify the Treaty.

Objective:

- **Its main purpose is twofold:** to promote the entry into force of the CTBT, and to **establish a global verification regime in preparation for the Treaty's entry into force**.

Facts for Prelims:

Water-hyacinth:

About the water-hyacinth

- The **water-hyacinth (Eichhornia crassipes)** is a true water plant and floats by means of spongy petioles. Of all the aquatic plants the water-hyacinth is **the most prolific and spectacular**.
- It was first introduced into the United States from Venezuela and **exhibited at the New Orleans Cotton Exposition in 1884**.
- **Garden-lovers** sought this botanical curiosity and set them **in pools and ponds**.

❖ **Thrissur Pooram:**

- **Thrissur Pooram is the most colourful of all the temple festivals of Kerala**.
- It is celebrated in Thrissur at **Vadakkunnathan temple** in the **month of Medam (April)**.
- Situated on a hillock right in the centre of the city, the spaciouly laid out temple attracts **thousands of devotees and tourists around the world during the festival**.

LUCKNOW

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