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1. The rarely invoked 14th Amendment of the US Constitution, used to disqualify Trump from holding office

Why in news?

The Supreme Court in Colorado ruled that Trump stands "disqualified from holding the office of President under Section Three of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution".

The judgment was related to Trump's alleged role in the January 6, 2021 attacks on the US Capitol – the seat of the country's government. Trump supporters were protesting the election victory of Democratic candidate Joe Biden in 2020, claiming the polls were rigged. They rioted and entered the premises of government offices in Washington DC. At least five people died in the aftermath and some were injured.

Trump has said he will contest the ruling and the case is then likely to go to the US Supreme Court. But what is Section 3 of the 14th Amendment of the US Constitution, under which Trump has been disqualified?

Fourteenth Amendment

Section 3

No Person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

What is the 14th Amendment of the US Constitution?

According to the US government archives, the Amendment was passed and ratified by the US Congress between 1866 and 1868. It was brought in after the Civil War ended (1861-65) and "extended liberties and rights granted by the Bill of Rights to formerly enslaved people".

Section 3 of the amendment says:

"No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having

previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of

any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability."

Simply, it says that if any person previously elected to any government office took part in an insurrection or rebellion, they cannot hold office again.

How could it impact Trump's candidacy for 2024?

According to Reuters, Section 3 has "rarely been tested" in court. This marks the first time that it has been mentioned in relation to a former President.

The Supreme Court has a majority of conservative judges. In the US, Presidents appoint judges for a lifetime tenure and the appointments are largely based on party lines. The Reuters report added that even if the court agrees with the Colorado judgment, it would simply mean Trump cannot be voted for in that state in 2024. Traditionally, Colorado has seen the Democratic party's candidate win the state's electors, so the new ruling is not seen as particularly harmful to Trump's electoral prospects.

Relevance: GS Prelims; International Issues

Source: The Indian Express

2. Sisi's Recent Re-election in Egypt

Why in news?

Abdel Fattah El-Sisi secures victory in the December 10-12 elections with 89.6% of the votes.

Political Landscape and Media Influence

Sitting Presidents traditionally win by large margins in Egypt; State-affiliated media played a significant role in promoting Sisi's achievements. Mohamed

Return to Authoritarianism

Despite the military's justification for toppling Mohamed Morsi, Egypt experienced a regression to the Mubarak era under Sisi's rule.

Mohamed Morsi was an Egyptian politician served as the fifth president of Egypt, from 2012 to 2013, when General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi removed him from office in a coup after protests in June.

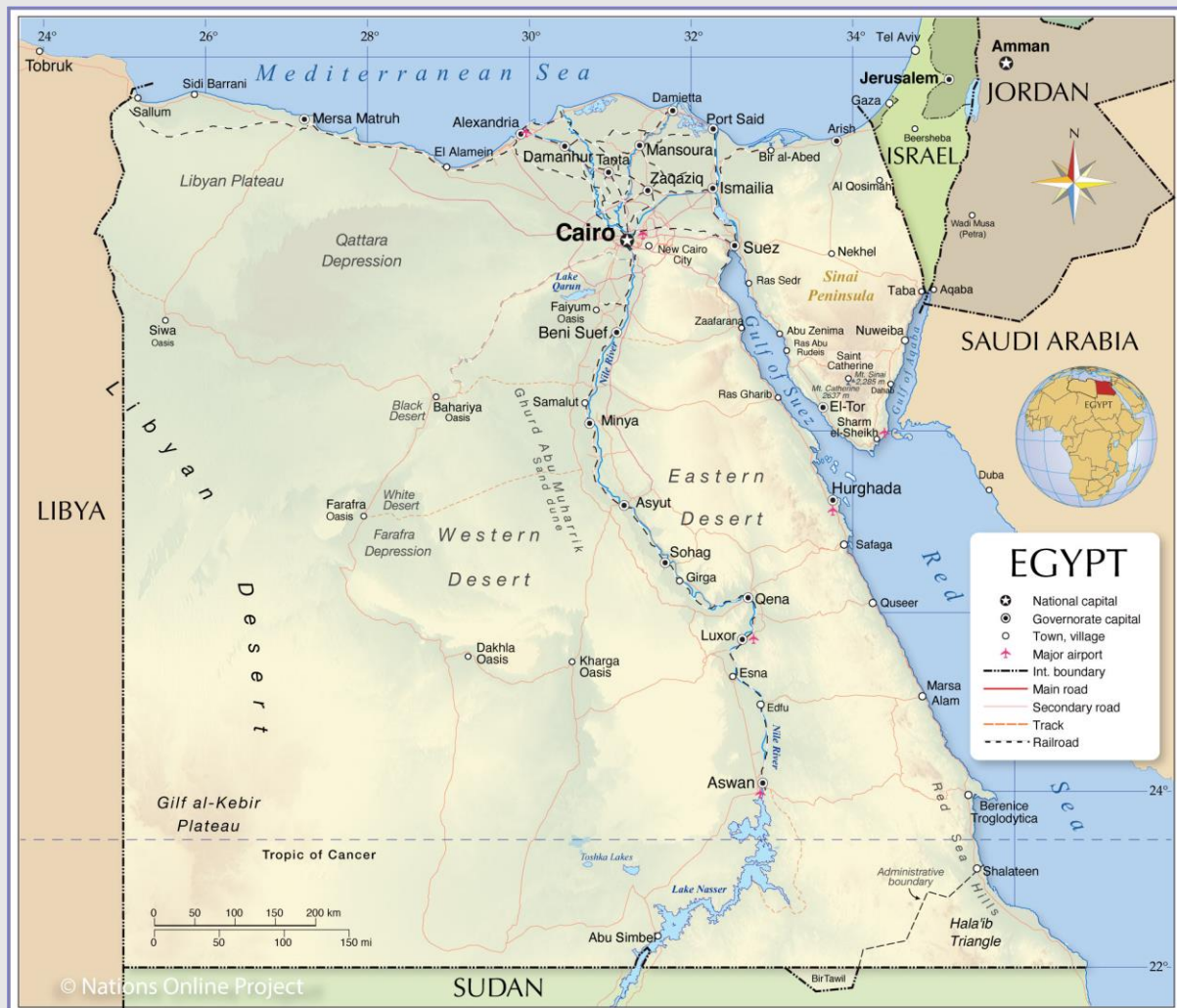
Muhammad Hosni El Sayed Mubarak was an Egyptian politician and military officer who served as the fourth president of Egypt from 1981 to 2011.

Stability Projection and Infrastructure Projects

Sisi presents himself as a stabilizing force, emphasizing his role in combating terrorism. Noteworthy infrastructure projects, including a new capital city, were launched.

Economic Challenges

Hyperinflation at 35% has led to increased poverty. Egypt faces a substantial external debt of \$162.9 billion, equivalent to 40% of the GDP, with talks underway for assistance from the IMF and other foreign creditors.



Geopolitical Pressures from Israel-Gaza Conflict

Israel's war on Gaza complicates matters for Sisi. Despite pro-Palestine sentiments in Egypt, Sisi treads carefully, condemning the bombardment but avoiding drastic measures that could strain relations with Israel.

If the conflict persists, Sisi may face pressure to allow Palestinian refugees into Egypt, posing economic and political challenges.

Relevance: GS Prelims

Source: The Hindu

3. Outcomes of the COP-28 climate summit

Why in news?

The 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) — an annual convening of countries signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) — happened in Dubai this year, with high expectations that countries would take concrete steps to address the climate crisis. The negotiations encompassed mitigation efforts, adaptation strategies, financing mechanisms, and the role of developed countries versus developing nations in climate action. The summit ended with progress on certain fronts but lingering challenges on others.

What happened with respect to the loss and damage fund?

Following the agreement reached at COP-27 to create a 'Loss and Damage' (L&D) fund, the last year was dedicated to negotiations on fund-management and financing. In a historic decision, the fund was operationalised at COP-28.

However, only a meagre \$790 million has been pledged so far, by a few nations, despite the corpus requiring \$100 billion to more than \$400 billion a year. Notably, the U.S., the largest historical emitter, committed only \$17.5 million. Moreover, the World Bank was designated to oversee and administer the fund. However, there is also a prevailing sentiment among countries that the communities affected by climate-related disasters should be able to directly access funding. Moreover, the funds should be available in the form of grants and not loans.

What about the global stocktake?

This year's COP summit saw the first global stocktake (GST). According to the UNFCCC, the GST "enables countries and other stakeholders to see where they are collectively making progress towards meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement — and where they are not".

The decision of countries' at COP-28 to transition away from fossil fuels was coupled with the ambition to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030. More than 20 countries also pledged to triple their nuclear energy capacity. However, the transition from fossil fuels is restricted to energy systems alone; they can continue to be used in the plastics, transport, and agriculture sectors. The declaration also refers to 'transitional fuels', such as natural gas, for ensuring energy security. But this falls short of true climate justice as it allows industries to continue operating in the business-as-usual mode.

What about green finance?

The financial segment of the GST implementation framework explicitly recognises the responsibility of developed nations to take the lead in climate finance. There is also a reference to the private sector's role in addressing financial shortfalls and an imperative to supplement grant-oriented, concessional finance to enable equitable transition in developing countries. Nevertheless, specific information regarding the entities obligated to furnish this grant-based finance is lacking.

The COP-28 also witnessed the establishment of innovative global green-finance mechanisms to support developing nations in their transition to sustainable practices. The Green Climate Fund received fresh support of \$3.5 billion, allowing it to finance adaptation and mitigation projects in vulnerable regions. An additional \$188 million was pledged to the Adaptation Fund. New partnerships between public and private sectors were forged to mobilise investments in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and infrastructure. The COP-28 Presidency also introduced ALTÉRRRA, an investment initiative with an ambitious goal to globally mobilise an unprecedented sum of \$250 billion by 2030.

Despite these efforts, the available funds fall well short of the \$194-366 billion annual funding requirement for adaptation, as estimated by the United Nations.

How did India fare at COP-28?

The UAE declaration on climate and health came into being at COP-28 through a partnership of the COP-28 Presidency with the World Health Organization. It recognises the growing health impacts of climate change and acknowledges the benefits of climate action, including a reduction in air pollution and lowering the cost of healthcare. The declaration, signed by 123 countries, has collectively committed \$1 billion to address the growing climate-health crisis. However, India didn't sign this declaration because reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the health sector would mean reduction in emissions from gases used for cooling. As India's healthcare infrastructure is still growing, such a commitment could compromise the healthcare requirements of a growing population, particularly rural.

The Global Methane Pledge launched at COP-26 received renewed attention at COP-28, with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition becoming the new secretariat and partners of the pledge announcing more than \$1 billion in new grants for funding projects to reduce methane emissions from the agriculture, waste, and gas sectors. More than 150 countries signed the pledge to reduce methane pollution. India isn't a signatory to this pledge because it shifts focus from carbon dioxide to methane, a GHG with a lower lifetime.

Also, methane emissions in India are primarily from rice cultivation and enteric fermentation (livestock rearing), which support the livelihoods of small and marginal farmers.

What are the takeaways?

The COP-28 outcomes had a lot of firsts, such as the declaration on climate and health, acknowledgement of the role of nature-based solutions for biodiversity conservation and climate, and the need to transition away from fossil fuels. Some 134 countries also agreed to a landmark declaration to transition to sustainable and resilient food systems.

However, some challenges and differences between developed and developing countries remain to be addressed. One key issue of contention was fossil-fuel subsidies. While developed countries advocated for phasing them out, developing countries, including India, refused a phase-out over implications on economic growth and development.

Such a phase-out also has social implications: several communities rely on fossil fuels (coal, in India's case) for gainful employment. Moreover, emphasising the principle of common and differentiated responsibilities and the historical responsibility of developed countries for GHG emissions, developing countries argued for increasing the flow of climate finance and technologies to facilitate just job transitions and inclusive development.

In sum, COP-28 is a mixed bag of outcomes.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Environment

Source: The Hindu