

01 JULY 2024

TOPICS COVERED

1. New criminal laws in effect; amendments soon (GS Paper II: Justice System)
2. Indian diplomat summoned over sailor's death (GS Paper II: India-Sri Lanka)
3. Veteran Sri Lankan Tamil leader R. Sampanthan dead (PCS)
4. Commemorate Santhal rebellion; (GS Paper I: Tribal Movement)
5. Meningoencephalitis due to amoebic infection claims two lives in Kerala (GS Paper III: Basic Science)
6. India identified 641 fauna species and 339 taxa of plants last year (GS Paper III: Environment)
7. General Dwivedi assumes charge as the 30th Chief of the Army Staff (PCS)
8. Modi releases books on Venkaiah Naidu, says he is an 'inspiration' (PCS)
9. Court on climate right and how India can enforce it (GS Paper III: Environment)
10. The Indian cricket team finally did justice to the 'favourite' tag (PCS)
11. On Tamil Nadu's financial distress (GS Paper II: Center-State Relations)
12. Should education be brought back to the State list? (GS II: Education)

New criminal laws in effect; amendments soon

GS Paper II: Justice System

Till the BNS gets a new section on sexual crimes against men and transgender persons, police can invoke allied charges such as wrongful confinement and physical hurt if they receive such complaints. Union government officials say the States are free to bring in their own amendments to some provisions of the BNSS that replace the Cr.PC.

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

As three new criminal laws come into effect across the country from Monday despite objections from States ruled by non-BJP parties, Union government officials said here on Sunday that the States were free to bring in their own amendments to some provisions of the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) that replaces the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.PC). The BNSS prescribes the procedure and conditions for arrest, bail, and custody, among other things.

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which replaces the Indian Penal Code, 1860, may also be amended soon to incorporate a section on sexual crimes against men and transgender persons. A senior government official said that police officers

Crime and punishment

The new Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita has 358 Sections against the 511 in the Indian Penal Code that it replaces. The Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita replaces the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam comes in place of the Indian Evidence Act



ISTOCKPHOTO

What is new?

- Provision for **Zero FIR** allowing filing of a first information report at any police station, regardless of jurisdiction
- **Online registration** of police complaints and mandatory videography of crime

scenes for all heinous crimes

- A person can now report incidents by **electronic communication**, without the need to visit a police station
- Judgment in criminal cases has to come **within 45 days**

of completion of the trial

- Provisions against false promise of marriage, gang rape of minors and **mob lynching**
- Statement of a woman rape victim will be recorded by a woman police officer

in the presence of her guardian or relative

- Death sentence or life imprisonment for **gang rape of a minor**
- Seditious has been replaced with 'secession' or 'act against the country's sovereignty, unity and integrity'

were being asked to invoke other allied sections under the BNS, such as wrongful confinement and physical hurt, if they get such complaints, until an amendment is brought to correct this anomaly.

The Bharatiya Sakshya (BS), which replaces the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, is the third law which will come into force.

From 00:00 hours on

July 1, more than 650 district courts and 16,000 police stations across the country will have no option but to migrate to the new system. Cognisable offences will be registered under Section 173 of the BNSS, instead of Section 154 of the Cr.PC.

The IPC and Cr.PC will run concurrently along with the new laws as several cases are still pending in

courts and some crimes that took place before July 1 that are reported later will have to be registered under the IPC.

'Hand-holding done'

On June 21, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking deferral of the implementation of the laws passed by Parliament

in December 2023.

However, a senior government official told *The Hindu* that training and hand-holding has been done for all States to help them adapt to the new system.

First information reports (FIRs) are filed through the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network Systems (CCTNS), a programme that functions un-

der the National Crime Records Bureau. A significant upgrade to the CCTNS will help people file an e-FIR, without visiting a police station, and a zero FIR, which can be filed irrespective of the jurisdiction of the crime location.

The official said that changes have also been made to the CCTNS software to register FIRs in languages other than English and Hindi.

Electronic evidence

The BNSS mandates compulsory audio-video recording of search and seizure in each criminal case and mandatory forensic examination in all cases where an offence attracts punishment of seven years or more.

The recordings will have to be submitted before the court electronically "without delay."

Under Section 105 of the BNSS, the scope of audiovi-

sual recording during search and seizure includes the process of preparing a list of seized items and the signature of witnesses.

While the Home Ministry is testing eSakshya (e-evidence), a mobile based application to help police record scene of crime, search and seizure in a criminal case and upload the file on the cloud-based platform, several States depending on their capacities have devised their own systems.

For instance, the Delhi Police have developed an e-pramaan application which will help investigating officials record a scene of crime and generate a hash value along with a certificate under Section 62 of Bharatiya Sakshya.

Officials pointed out that the security of the cloud-based system where the data will be stored will be of prime concern.

Patriot

Concerns emerge over BNSS provision on police custody

The new law, set to replace the Cr.PC, allows police custody beyond the first 15 days of arrest; legal and civil rights activists say this is a 'retrograde step' opposed to the fundamental right of citizens

R. Sivaraman
CHENNAI

With the three new criminal laws set to be implemented across the country from Monday, legal and civil rights activists have expressed concern over certain "retrograde provisions".

The Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.PC) empowers the jurisdictional magistrate to grant police custody up to 15 days in case investigation cannot be completed within 24 hours. However, Section 187 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which replaces the Cr.PC, says police custody of 15 days can be authorised in whole or in parts at any time during the initial 40 or 60 days out of the 60- or 90-day period of judicial custody.

The police custody of 15 days may be spread over 60 days where the offence is punishable with at least 10 years of imprisonment, or 40 days for any other offence.

Human rights activists are apprehensive that the provision could pave the way for the police to take undue advantage over the



Strong resistance: Advocates talk to the police during their protest against the new criminal laws, in Chennai on Friday. ANI

arrested persons and indulge in extrajudicial measures.

D. Nagasaila, an advocate practising in the Madras High Court, said: "The main point of concern is the change in police custody rules. Earlier, police custody was permitted for a maximum period of 15 days, and that too could be sought only in the first 15 days following the arrest. The BNSS allows the police to make requests for custody beyond 15 days. On face of it, extending powers of police to request custody up to the initial 60 days [after arrest] is a retrograde step. It is opposed to fundamental right of citizens."

The new provision could lead to bail being de-

nied during this period if the police argue that they need to take the person back in their custody.

Extrajudicial measures

V. Suresh, general secretary of People's Union Civil Liberties (PUCL), said, "The provision extending police remand is perhaps one of the dangerous provisions in the new law. The bar of police custody within the first 15 days from time of arrest is removed, permitting the magistrate to order police custody for a period of 15 days anytime during the initial 40-60 days of detention. This effectively means the earlier bar on seeking police custody once the remanding magistrate grants judicial

custody is lifted. Thus, the magistrate may order that any accused person can be shifted from judicial custody back to police custody at any time beyond the first 15 days of arrest, even if he has been granted judicial custody. This prolongation is a very serious infringement on protections available for the accused, and exposes them to more police torture, intimidation, and other dangers."

"The new law hits the spirit of custodial jurisprudence in India where the police have not been trusted in ensuring safety of people in their custody. You can end up going against the morality and spirit of the Constitution by changing procedural laws. The fundamental rights of citizens will be affected by the new provision," Henri Tiphagne, executive director, People's Watch, said.

However, police officers argue that the new provision will allow them to conduct proper investigation in cases and prevent hasty interrogations. It will also give them more time to collect all evidence. A senior police officer said, "It will be more useful in cases relating to property offences or cheating."

Indian diplomat summoned over sailor's death

GS Paper II:
India-Sri Lanka

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently summoned an official from the Indian High Commission in Colombo and voiced its concern over the death of a Sri Lankan naval sailor, who was part of a patrol unit that had seized an Indian fishing vessel in the early hours of June 25. He died due to the "aggressive manoeuvres of an Indian trawler" that had "resisted" apprehension by the patrol unit, according to the Sri Lankan Navy.

A senior Foreign Ministry official handed over a formal note to the Indian diplomat on the issue of persisting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU)



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar had met with his Sri Lankan counterpart M.U.M. Ali Sabry on June 20. PTI

fishing, especially using the bottom-trawling method, and "indiscriminate poaching by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters", according to a news report published in the Colombo-based *Sunday Times* newspaper.

An official source told

The Hindu that the Indian official was summoned to the Ministry on Friday. "It was mainly to convey concern from the Sri Lankan side," the source said, requesting anonymity.

The issue was reportedly raised in New Delhi too, when Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to India Kshenuka Senewiratne called on External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on June 25. However, neither official mentioned discussing this in their updates on the meeting posted on their official X handles.

Earlier that morning, the Sri Lankan Navy sailor had died during an operation targeting Indian fishermen and their fishing vessel off Kankesanthurai in the

island nation's Northern Province. Ten Indian fishermen were arrested on charges of illegal fishing. Their fishing trawler was confiscated.

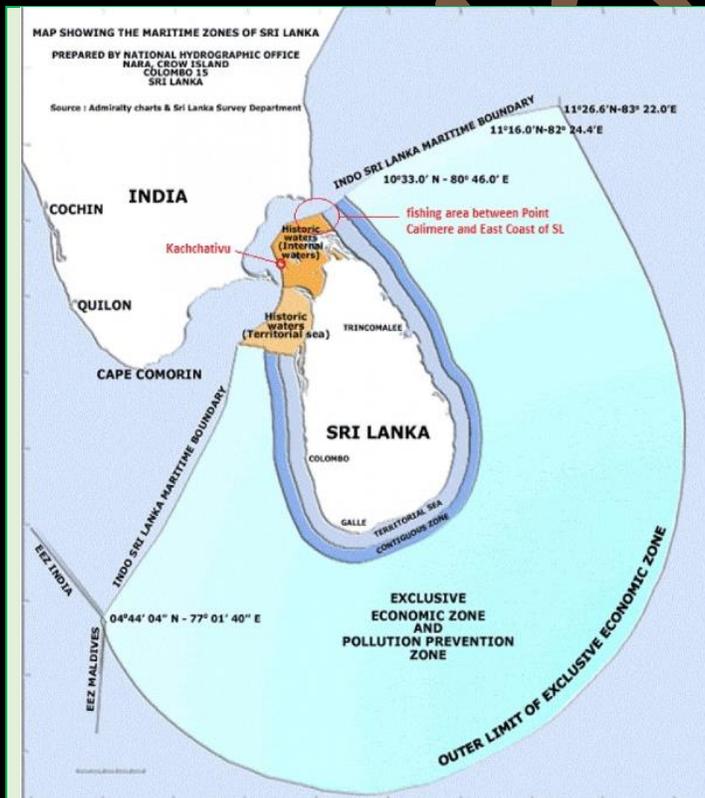
The development has brought the long-persisting fisheries conflict in the Palk Strait back into the spotlight. Disregarding the relentless demand of Sri Lanka's northern fishermen that their Indian counterparts stop using the destructive bottom-trawling method of fishing, the fishermen from India have continued the practice for years.

'Life under pressure'

Meanwhile, northern Sri Lankan fishermen have blamed the governments of Sri Lanka and India for

failing to work out a durable solution to the enduring problem, which has put their livelihoods under severe pressure.

They have also been demanding the resumption of talks between representatives of fishermen's organisations from both sides. "Both governments have a responsibility to implement the agreement reached by both sides in 2016 when the Foreign Ministers of both countries met in Delhi. They agreed to end the practice of bottom-trawling at the earliest. Instead of taking that effort forward, some actors are trying to politicise this issue," said Annalingham Annarasa, who leads a Jaffna-based fisheries cooperative society.



Where is Katchatheevu?

- Katchatheevu is a small, uninhabited island.
- It covers an area of approximately 285 acres.
- The island is situated in the Palk Strait.
- It lies about 14.5 km south of Delft Island.
- Katchatheevu is located approximately 16 km northeast of Rameswaram.
- The island is barren and lacks drinking water or infrastructure.
- The only structure on the island is a Catholic shrine dedicated to St. Anthony.

What was the dispute?

- The **dispute over ownership of Katchatheevu began in 1921 between the British colonial governments of Madras and Ceylon.**
- Negotiations between the two sides lasted for five decades until they were settled in 1974 and 1976.
- Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi of India and Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka signed bilateral agreements during this time.
- These agreements declared Katchatheevu as part of Sri Lanka's territory.
- They also **established a maritime boundary in the Gulf of Mannar and Bay of Bengal to define exclusive economic zones for both countries.**
- Under the agreements, India and Sri Lanka have sovereign rights over resources in their respective exclusive economic zones.
- Despite the territorial dispute, Tamil Nadu fishermen visit Katchatheevu annually in March for the St. Anthony's festival.
- The **1974 agreement permits Indian fishermen to access the island for rest, drying of nets, and the festival, but fishing activity is prohibited.**

What did India get?

- In the past, New Delhi was perceived as benefiting diplomatically by maintaining close ties with Sri Lanka.
- This diplomatic relationship was crucial as Sri Lanka was leaning towards China during that time.
- **After the liberation of Bangladesh, India aimed to strengthen ties with Sri Lanka, especially considering the issue of citizenship for stateless Indian-origin Tamils in Sri Lanka.**
- As part of the diplomatic negotiations, New Delhi gained sovereign rights over Wadge Bank, a location rich in marine resources near Kanyakumari.
- Recently, the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas invited offers for oil and gas exploration in India, including around Wadge Bank.



- However, this move faced criticism from local residents of Kanyakumari and environmentalists due to concerns about potential negative impacts on the marine ecosystem.

PatrioticIAS

Soren declares 'rebellion' to drive out 'feudal' forces in first rally after release

INDIA bloc will uproot BJP from power across the country, says former Jharkhand CM at event to commemorate Santhal rebellion; claims panic in BJP as party leaders are 'conspiring' against him

GS Paper I: Tribal
Am Movement
PATNA

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader and former Chief Minister Hemant Soren declared a 'rebellion' against 'feudal forces' while addressing a rally on the occasion of 'Hul Diwas' at Bhognadih village in Sahibganj district on Sunday.

The day is observed every year on June 30 to commemorate the Santhal rebellion against the British in 1855. "On the same lines, I declare 'Hool Vidroh' to drive out feudal forces not only from Jharkhand but the entire country. This is a day of inspiration for everyone."

The former Chief Minister was addressing his first rally after being released from jail on Friday after the Jharkhand High Court granted him bail in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam.

Accompanied by his wife and Gandey MLA Kal-



(From left) Kalpana Soren, Hemant Soren, and CM Champai Soren at the inauguration of new schemes in Sahibganj on Sunday. ANI

pana Soren and Chief Minister Champai Soren, the JMM leader asserted that the Opposition INDIA bloc will uproot the BJP from power across the country.

"There is panic in the BJP camp after my release. Party leaders are once again 'conspiring' against me. I have been implicated in false cases. Central agencies are being used against those raising their voice against the wrong policies of the government. Jharkhand is known as the land

of revolutionaries and we are not afraid of jail, lathi, or hanging," he said.

Mr. Hemant Soren also claimed that the BJP is making plans to advance the Assembly polls. "I dare them to conduct the election any day they wish to... We are prepared. They will face a crushing defeat."

The JMM leader said a legislation will be brought in, which will ensure that benefits of mines and minerals reach the people of Jharkhand first and urged

the gathering "to take our rights and answer those who conspire against it".

Mr. Soren also pointed out that in the last four years he had worked hard to bring change in the State and that now the government runs from the village and not the headquarters. "Our schemes are implemented on the ground, the benefits of which are being availed of by even the last person in society. The government has also taken many steps to provide employment to the youth. The people of Jharkhand have the first right to the wealth of Jharkhand. The State government is moving towards this goal," he said.

₹290-crore projects

Mr. Champai Soren, who inaugurated and laid the foundation of 396 projects worth ₹290 crore on the occasion, alleged that his predecessor was put behind bars as he was talking about the welfare of the poor, Dalits, and tribals.

Santhal Rebellion

The Santhal Rebellion, also known as the Santhal Hool, was a significant uprising against British colonial rule and zamindari (landlord) system by the Santhal tribe in the mid-19th century.

- **Location:** The rebellion took place in the present-day regions of Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, and Odisha.
- **Period:** The rebellion occurred between 1855 and 1856.
- **Tribe:** The Santhals are an indigenous tribal community primarily involved in agriculture.

Causes

1. **Land Exploitation:** The introduction of the **Permanent Settlement Act of 1793 by the British led to the zamindari system, where land was given to landlords (zamindars)** who exploited the tribals by imposing heavy taxes.
2. **Economic Exploitation:** The Santhals were **subjected to high-interest rates on loans taken from moneylenders, often resulting in their land being seized** when they could not repay the debts.
3. **Social Discrimination:** The Santhals faced **social discrimination from the upper castes and landlords.**
4. **Destruction of Traditional Life:** The **influx of outsiders (dikus), moneylenders, traders, and revenue officials** disrupted the traditional lifestyle and economy of the Santhals.

Key Figures

- **Sidhu Murmu:** One of the principal leaders of the rebellion.
- **Kanhu Murmu:** Brother of Sidhu, also a key leader.
- **Chand and Bhairav Murmu:** Younger brothers of Sidhu and Kanhu who also played significant roles.

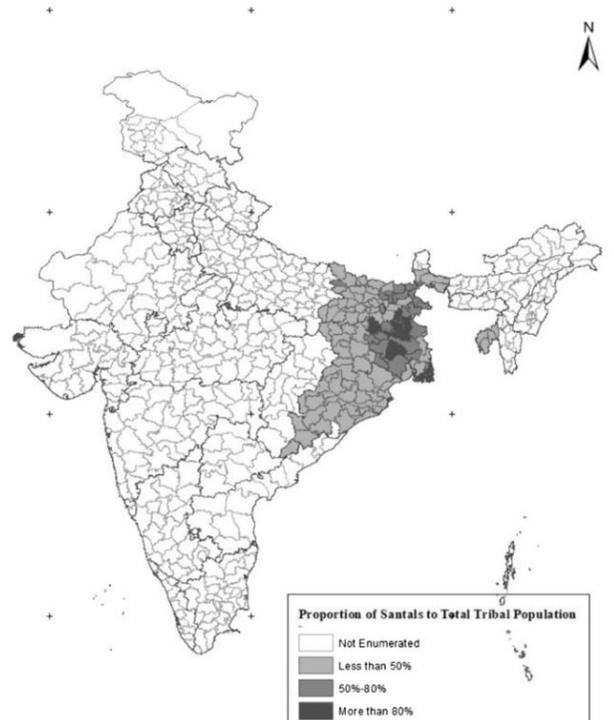
The Rebellion

- **Initiation:** The rebellion began on June 30, 1855, when Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu mobilized around 10,000 Santhals and declared their rebellion against the British and zamindars.
- **Methods:** The Santhals used traditional weapons like bows and arrows and initially attacked government officials, moneylenders, and zamindars.
- **Spread:** The rebellion spread rapidly across the Santhal Parganas and neighboring areas, leading to widespread violence and conflict.

Suppression

- **British Response:** The British government initially underestimated the rebellion but soon realized its magnitude. They deployed a large military force to quell the uprising.
- **Brutal Repression:** The British forces, with the help of zamindars, used brutal measures to suppress the rebellion, including mass killings and destruction of Santhal villages.

Concentration of Santal Population (2011)



- **End:** By early 1856, the rebellion was largely suppressed, with many Santhal leaders, including Sidhu and Kanhu, being killed or captured.

Meningoencephalitis due to amoebic infection claims two lives in Kerala

GS Paper III: Basic Science

Unhygienic and stagnant water resources and high temperatures could be the factors contributing to the recent unusual rise in the rare, but fatal primary amoebic meningoencephalitis cases in the State.

Three cases of the infection, including two deaths, have been reported in the last two months alone. While a five-year-old girl from Malappuram district died in May, a 13-year-old girl from Kannur district lost her life in June. Another 12-year-old boy from Kozhikode district is right now undergoing medical treatment at a private hos-

Unhygienic and stagnant water resources and high temperatures may be worsening situation

pital. First detected in Alappuzha municipality in 2016, the infection was reported in Malappuram in 2019 and 2020, Kozhikode in 2020, Thrissur in 2022, and in Alappuzha in 2023.

“There has been a rise in such cases the world over. Warming of the atmosphere and stagnant and unhygienic water resources could be some of the conditions leading to it. This type of amoeba is found to be more active in

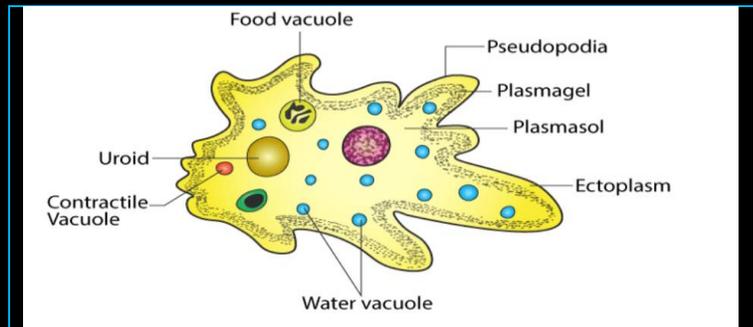
warm water,” M.P. Jayakrishnan, Additional Professor, Paediatrics, Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode, told *The Hindu* on Sunday.

Dr. Jayakrishnan was among those who treated the five-year-old girl from Malappuram and also suspected the possibility of the infection.

“Earlier, we used to have cases of bacterial meningitis among children. But, its instances have come down of late due to vaccination. The five-year-old girl had symptoms similar to that of bacterial meningitis. That was when we thought if it could be amoebic meningoencephalitis,” he pointed out.

Amoebic Meningoencephalitis

- Primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) is a rare but severe brain infection caused by *Naegleria fowleri*, a free-living amoeba found in warm freshwater environments such as lakes, rivers, hot springs, and poorly maintained swimming pools.
- When contaminated water enters the body through the nose, usually during activities like swimming or diving, the amoeba can travel to the brain and cause inflammation and destruction of brain tissue.
- Symptoms of amoebic meningoencephalitis typically begin within a few days to a week after exposure and may include severe headache, fever, nausea, vomiting, stiff neck, confusion, seizures, and hallucinations.
- The infection progresses rapidly and can lead to serious complications, including coma and death, within a short period.



- Amoebas are single-celled microorganisms that belong to the **phylum Amoebozoa**.
- They are characterized by their shape-shifting abilities and their method of movement through the extension and retraction of pseudopods, or "false feet."

Patriotic

General Dwivedi assumes charge as the 30th Chief of the Army Staff

PCS

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

General Upendra Dwivedi took over as the 30th Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) on Sunday from General Manoj Pande, who superannuated after more than four decades of service.

The change in the post also initiated a series of changes among other senior appointments, including the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff and several Army Commanders.

“He takes over as the COAS at a time when the global geo-strategic environment remains dynamic, with the challenges in the security domain becoming more pronounced due to technological advancements and ever-changing character of modern warfare,” the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

“Operational preparedness to counter security threats to a rising nation, therefore, would figure prominently as a key focus area for the COAS.”

A focused response strategy to myriad non-traditional security challenges



New leader: General Manoj Pande, left, hands over command of the Indian Army to General Upendra Dwivedi on Saturday. ANI

too shall be a priority towards augmenting the nation's defence, the Ministry said.

Born on July 1, 1964, General Dwivedi was commissioned into the Infantry (Jammu & Kashmir Rifles) of the Indian Army on December 15, 1984. Like the Navy chief, Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi, he is an alumnus of the Sainik School, Rewa, in Madhya Pradesh.

General Pande was to retire on May 31, but was given a one-month extension in service amid the delay in the announcement of a new chief. This generated speculation in the military fraternity of a possible deviation from the seniority principle in the appoint-

ment of service chiefs. However, on June 11, the Union government appointed Lieutenant-General Dwivedi, the senior-most officer, to the top post.

As a Lieutenant-General, he held important appointments, including that of Director-General of Infantry and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (Northern Command) from 2022 to 2024, before taking over as Vice-Chief.

General Dwivedi has a deep understanding of modern and emerging technologies in the security domain, and possesses a thoughtful approach in harnessing and integrating cutting-edge technologies into military systems to en-

hance operational effectiveness, the statement said.

Other appointments

Lieutenant-General N.S. Raja Subramani, currently the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Central Command, is set to take over as the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff.

Lieutenant-General Anindya Sengupta is set to take over from him as the Central Command chief. He is currently the Chief of Staff of the Udhampur-based Northern Command.

A.K. Singh retired as General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command, and Lieutenant-General Dhiraj Seth, who is presently commanding the South West Army Command, replaces him.

Lieutenant-General Manjinder Singh, chief of the Shimla-based Army Training Command, will take over as the South West Army chief. Replacing him will be Lieutenant-General Devendra Sharma, currently the Chief of Staff, Western Command.

Commissioned Ranks

General	Admiral	Air Chief Marshal
Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral	Air Marshal
Major General	Rear Admiral	Air Vice Marshal
Brigadier	Commodore	Air Commodore
Colonel	Captain	Group Captain
Lieutenant Colonel	Commander	Wing Commander
Major	Lieutenant Commander	Squadron Leader
Captain	Lieutenant	Flight Lieutenant
Lieutenant	Sub Lieutenant	Flying Officer

UPSC PRELIMS 2024

19. Which of the following is/are correctly matched in terms of equivalent rank in the three services of Indian Defence forces ?

	<i>Army</i>	<i>Airforce</i>	<i>Navy</i>
1.	Brigadier	Air Commodore	Commander
2.	Major General	Air Vice Marshal	Vice Admiral
3.	Major	Squadron Leader	Lieutenant Commander
4.	Lieutenant Colonel	Group Captain	Captain

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (a) 1 and 4
- (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2, 3 and 4
- (d) 3 only

India identified 641 fauna species and 339 taxa of plants last year

GS Paper III:
Environment

Shiv Sal
KOLKATA

A new species of turmeric in Manipur and a new kind of bat in Karnataka are among the plant and animal species which were discovered in India in 2023, show data released by Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav on Sunday.

A total of 641 species – 442 entirely new to science and 199 newly recorded in the country – were added to Indian fauna in 2023. India added 339 taxa – 326 species and 13 infraspecific taxa – to its plant database. Of these, 171 taxa are new to science and 168 new to distributional records from India. Taxa can refer to sub-species or varieties of a plant species.

Among the new plant discoveries were *Curcuma kakchingense*, a new species of turmeric discovered at Kakching in Manipur, and *Asystasia venui*, a flowering plant discovered in the Acharya Jagdish Chandra Bose Indian Botanic Garden at Howrah in West Bengal.

Most of the new animal



Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav at the 109th Foundation Day celebration of the Zoological Survey of India. ANI

discoveries were reported from southern India.

Kerala topped the list, with 101 additions – 74 completely new species, 27 new records – followed by West Bengal with 72 new species, and Tamil Nadu with 64.

Significant animal discoveries include *Capra himalayensis*, which proves that the Himalayan Ibex, distributed in the trans-Himalayan ranges of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh, is a distinct species from the Siberian Ibex.

Miniopterus srinii, a new species of bent-winged bat, was found in Kodagu district of Karnataka.

The vast majority of these new discoveries among fauna have been recorded in the invertebrate category, which saw 564 new species in 2023; only 77 vertebrate species, of which the majority were fish species, were discovered in 2023.

New wild plants

West Bengal recorded the highest number of new plant discoveries, with 52 new taxa, followed by Kerala and Uttarakhand. New discoveries include wild relatives of many potential horticultural, agricultural, medicinal, and ornamental plants, such as begonias, impatiens or balsams, legumes, zingibers, and or-

chids, according to *Plant Discoveries 2023*, an annual publication by the Botanical Survey of India, a premier institution which has been working on plant taxonomy for about 120 years.

“The hotspot regions such as Western Ghats, and North Eastern Regions have contributed 14% of total discoveries,” the publication said.

Apart from these publications, the Environment Minister also rolled out the ‘Fauna of India Checklist Portal’, a first of its kind. It comprises 121 checklists of all known taxa, covering 36 phyla, and providing information on all the 1,04,561 animal species distributed across India. Endemic, threatened, and scheduled species have also been included in the list.

Citing research showing that specific trees growing in specific areas is not accidental as they interact with their environment through specialised characteristics, Mr. Yadav emphasised the importance of conserving not just threatened species, but also bio-geographic zones.



Himalayan Ibex



Siberian Ibex

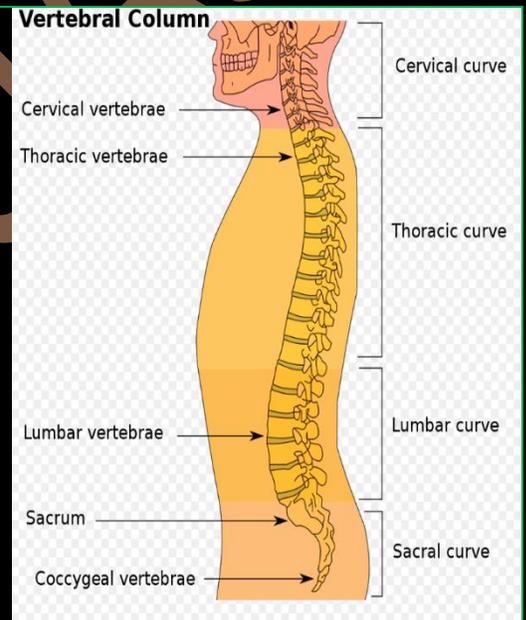
Invertebrate and vertebrate species represent two major divisions within the animal kingdom based on the presence or absence of a backbone or vertebral column.

Invertebrates:

- **Definition:** Invertebrates are animals that do not possess a backbone or vertebral column. They make up the vast majority of animal species, constituting about 97% of all known animal species.
- **Examples:** Invertebrates include diverse groups such as insects, arachnids, mollusks, echinoderms, annelids, cnidarians, and more.

Vertebrates:

- **Definition:** Vertebrates are animals that possess a backbone or vertebral column composed of individual vertebrae.
- **Examples:** Vertebrates include fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals.



Modi releases books on Venkaiah Naidu, says he is an 'inspiration'

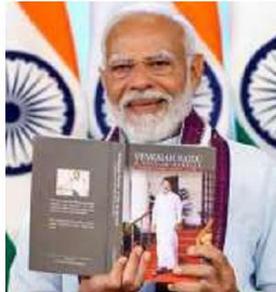
PCS

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Releasing three books on the life and works of former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu through video conferencing on Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the journey of Mr. Naidu's life is a source of inspiration for the younger generations.

The programme was organised in Hyderabad on the eve of Mr. Naidu's 75th birthday.

Mr. Modi said the life of Mr. Naidu was a perfect glimpse of the amalgamation of ideas, vision and



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the book on M. Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday. ANI

personality. "No one can match the level of Mr. Naidu's wit, spontaneity, quick counters and one-liners," he said, remembering his long association

with Mr. Naidu.

Mr. Modi released three books – *Venkaiah Naidu: Life in Service*, a biography authored by the former Resident Editor of *The Hindu's* Hyderabad edition, S. Nagesh Kumar; *Celebrating Bharat: The Mission and Message of Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu as 13th Vice-President of India*, a photo chronicle compiled by I.V. Subba Rao, former secretary to the Vice-President; and *Mahaneta: Life and Journey of Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu*, a pictorial biography in Telugu authored by Sanjay Kishore.

He said the three books

would become "a source of inspiration for the people", while also "illuminating the correct path to serving the nation".

Mr. Modi said he had had the opportunity to work with the former V-P for a long period since Mr. Naidu became the BJP president, followed by his senior role in the Cabinet, his tenure as the Vice President and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

"One can imagine the wealth of experience a person hailing from a small village may have gathered while holding such significant posts," he said.

UPSC PRELIMS 2024

26. Who of the following is the author of the books "*The India Way*" and "*Why Bharat Matters*"?
- (a) Bhupender Yadav
 - (b) Nalin Mehta
 - (c) Shashi Tharoor
 - (d) Subrahmanyam Jaishankar

Court on climate right and how India can enforce it (01 July 2024)

Because India is still developing, what the country needs is a law that enables progress toward low-carbon and climate resilient development

- The Supreme Court of India made a significant judgment in the case of M.K. Ranjitsinh and Ors. vs Union of India & Ors.
- The judgment established the constitutional right to be free from the adverse effects of climate change.
- This right is derived from the right to life and the right to equality.
- The judgment presents an opportunity for the new government to consider and implement more systematic governance regarding climate change.

A new right around climate

- Scholars and legal practitioners are analyzing the judgment.
- The issue was about building electricity transmission lines through the habitat of the Great Indian Bustard.
- The government argued that protecting the bird's habitat affected renewable energy potential.
- The Court prioritized transmission infrastructure for renewable energy development.
- The judgment introduced a new 'climate right' based on the right to life and equality.
- This could lead to climate litigation, empowering citizens to demand protection of this right.
- Questions remain about the Court's emphasis on clean energy and how the climate right will be protected.
- The judgment suggests the need for comprehensive climate legislation.
- Court-led actions may result in incomplete protections and require multiple policy actions.
- Climate legislation could provide a structured framework for future policy and governance.

Indian context is important

- India should consider climate legislation tailored to its context.
- Transitioning to a low-carbon energy future is necessary but not sufficient.
- Climate legislation should support sustainable cities, buildings, and transport.
- It should enable local adaptation measures, like heat action plans.
- Mechanisms for climate-resilient crops should be included.
- Legislation should protect key ecosystems like mangroves.
- Social equity should be considered in achieving these tasks.
- The goal is to integrate climate change considerations into India's development.
- A single, comprehensive climate law is not feasible for India.
- Existing legal frameworks already cover many areas.
- It is difficult to anticipate all ways to prepare for climate change.
- India can learn from international experiences.

- Many countries, like the UK, focus narrowly on regulating carbon emissions.
- This approach is not suitable for India.
- India needs a law enabling low-carbon and climate-resilient development.
- An enabling law stimulates development-focused decisions across sectors.
- This law should emphasize both adaptation and mitigation.
- It should create institutions, processes, and standards for mainstreaming climate change.
- The law should support knowledge-sharing, transparency, public participation, expert consultation, and setting and revising targets and timelines.

The factor of federalism

- An effective Indian climate law must work within Indian federalism.
- Relevant areas like urban policy, agriculture, and water are under State or local authority.
- The law should set a national framework while empowering States and local governments.
- It should provide information and finance to enable effective local action.
- The law should also involve business, civil society, and communities in decision-making.
- Participation from all sections of society is essential for addressing climate change.
- These principles can help create a climate law that fulfills the promise of the Ranjitsinh judgment.

New beginnings: On India's ICC T20 World Cup 2024 win (01 July 2024)

Indian cricket team finally did justice to the 'favourite' tag

- India ended its long drought in ICC tournaments by winning the ICC T20 World Cup in Bridgetown, Barbados.
- This was India's first title since the 2013 Champions Trophy in England.
- Previous underdog victories include the 1983 ODI World Cup and the 2007 ICC World T20.
- Indian teams are now expected to perform well in multi-team events due to high expectations from fans and the diaspora.
- India was in good form but lost to Australia in the 2023 ODI World Cup final.
- In the T20 World Cup final, India defeated South Africa by seven runs.
- Key performances included Virat Kohli's 76, all-rounders Axar Patel and Hardik Pandya, and Suryakumar Yadav's crucial catch.
- Rohit Sharma led the team well, and Jasprit Bumrah's bowling was exceptional.

- South Africa lost to a stronger Indian team in the final.
- Arshdeep Singh performed well under pressure from Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller.
- South Africa has yet to win significant ICC silverware but earned admiration.
- Small changes could have led to a different outcome.
- Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, and Ravindra Jadeja are retiring from T20Is, marking the end of an era.
- Coach Rahul Dravid is also stepping down.
- The T20 World Cup in the West Indies and the United States had challenging pitches unlike the IPL.
- Afghanistan's journey to the semifinals was inspiring, showing resilience despite difficult circumstances.

Weaponising PMLA: On the Hemant Soren case (01 July)

The finding that Soren may not be guilty exposes ED's approach to political cases

- Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren was granted bail.
- The Enforcement Directorate's use of money-laundering cases against political opponents is questionable.
- The Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) requires courts to find preliminary guilt before granting bail.
- Soren spent five months in prison and resigned as Chief Minister when his arrest was imminent.
- Granting bail can embarrass the prosecution and government, suggesting the accused may not be guilty.
- Justice Rongon Mukhopadhyay granted Soren bail, finding him likely not guilty.
- The Enforcement Directorate's case against Soren was based on a police case involving forgery and land possession.
- The Enforcement Directorate claimed its actions prevented the illegal acquisition of land.
- The court questioned why no one unlawfully evicted from the land sought legal redress.
- The agency inferred Mr. Soren planned to build a banquet hall based on a consultant's plan found on an accused's phone.
- The court questioned this inference as it was based on proximity to the involved land.
- The court discounted the argument that Soren set up Raj Kumar Pahan to exculpate himself.
- The High Court's findings may be appealed or revisited during the trial.

- The case highlights the haste of central agencies in arresting political figures based on inferences.

Respite may still elude a beleaguered community (01 July)

Scrutiny of the 2024 election campaign and representation in the 18th Lok Sabha shows a targeting of and a discrimination against the Muslim community

- Lord Dufferin noted in 1888 that Muslims in British India numbered 50 million.
- Today, India's Muslim population has grown significantly.
- Indian Muslims face challenges including lynching, judicial actions, and riots under the BJP regime since 2014.
- The outcome of the 2024 general election saw relief among many Muslims as the BJP lost its majority.
- India has returned to a coalition government era after the BJP's majority in 2014 and 2019.

A mix of optimism and scepticism

- India's return to a coalition government is seen as a potential hope for secular politics.
- Regional parties could counter the BJP's Hindutva agenda and anti-Muslim biases.
- Some skepticism remains about the transformative potential of the new Modi regime.
- Coalition leaders like Nitish Kumar and N. Chandrababu Naidu have historical ties with majoritarianism despite their current roles.
- The BJP's electoral setback in 2024 doesn't necessarily indicate an ideological defeat.
- Narendra Modi's 2024 election campaign was notably Islamophobic, unprecedented in India's electoral history.
- Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh criticized Modi's campaign for hate speech but the impact was limited.

No Muslim representation

- Narendra Modi started his third term as India's Prime Minister on June 9.
- His cabinet of over 70 members doesn't include any Muslims, despite Muslims making up about 15% of India's population.
- The BJP, Modi's party, has historically fielded very few Muslim candidates in elections.
- Modi has talked about concerns for a specific group of Muslims (Pasmanda), but hasn't taken significant actions.
- Opposition parties now have more Muslim members in Parliament compared to the BJP.

- This lack of Muslim representation raises concerns about fair political inclusion in India.

Under scrutiny

- Hindutva right-wing organizations view Muslims as a problem and a threat.
- They scrutinize aspects of Muslim life such as the Azaan, dietary preferences like beef consumption, attire such as the burqa/hijab, and religious institutions like madrasas and masjids.
- These actions are part of a broader agenda to de-Islamize India and establish a majoritarian Hindu Rashtra (Hindu state).
- Prime Minister Modi's Islamophobic campaign in 2024 aimed not only at winning elections but also at creating an atmosphere where Muslims are seen as outsiders and denied equal rights.
- This perspective goes beyond minority rights violations and reflects a strategy to marginalize Muslims in India.

The rot in India's higher education system (01 July)

The National Testing Agency-University Grants Commission-Vice Chancellor nexus needs to be examined

- In the academic year 2022-23, there were significant delays in university admissions due to the introduction of the NTA-run CUET (Common University Entrance Test) for undergraduate and postgraduate programs.
- Initially, the NTA planned to introduce a CUET for PhD admissions as well, but this plan was abandoned in mid-September 2022.
- Universities, including Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), faced challenges despite internal criticism from teachers and students regarding the loss of autonomy in admissions.
- JNU, known for conducting its own entrance exams for nearly 50 years before 2017, faced difficulties under the NTA regime despite its history of efficient admissions without issues like unfair means or paper leaks.
- There were calls within JNU to revert to conducting its own entrance exams due to its expertise and capacity, but these demands were not fulfilled.
- The Vice Chancellor of JNU publicly criticized the NTA's multiple choice question format, but the university continued to adhere to the NTA-imposed exam format.

The NTA's diktat

- PhD admissions for the 2022-2023 academic year were completed only by mid-March 2023, after an eight-month delay.

- In November 2022, the University Grants Commission (UGC) introduced new regulations allowing universities to conduct their own entrance exams for PhD courses.
- Many faculty members in Central universities expected to return to their own admission tests under these new regulations.
- However, the NTA-friendly heads of institutions decided to continue using the NTA for PhD entrance exams, disregarding objections from Academic Councils, students, and teachers.
- This decision included JNU, Delhi University, and Jamia Millia Islamia, forming a consortium for the NTA-led exams despite internal opposition.
- In April 2024, JNU's Vice Chancellor Santishree D. Pandit justified JNU's reliance on NTA for entrance exams, citing Ministry of Education directives and funding ties, despite government denials in UGC Regulations, 2022.
- There's no documented contract between JNU and NTA according to Right to Information queries.
- The Vice Chancellor supported a non-binding UGC notice from March 28, 2024, which contradicts its own regulations, favoring only June 2024 UGC-NET scores for PhD admissions.
- This decision lacked Academic Council approval and wasn't explicitly recorded in UGC meeting minutes.

Universities taken prisoner

- Over the past three years, the NTA has controlled university academic calendars, endorsed vigorously by the UGC and its Chairperson.
- Vice-Chancellors of many Central universities have collaborated in implementing UGC directives, suppressing internal doubts about exam security and format.
- This collaboration undermines university autonomy, a key concern under the NTA regime.
- The UGC's decision to prioritize only the June 2024 UGC-NET exam dates for admissions has sparked controversy.
- The Chairperson's premature announcement of exam success, later canceled by the Ministry of Education, raises questions about transparency.
- To restore student trust, government intervention is needed to ensure universities adhere to their own governance statutes and UGC regulations for timely PhD admissions.

On Tamil Nadu's financial distress

How are the funds for phase two of the Chennai Metro Rail distributed? Is the Centre stalling the funds for the metro project? What about funds released by the Centre for restoration work after natural disasters in the State?

GS Paper II: Center-State Relations

EXPLAINER

T. Ramakrishnan

The story so far:

Tamil Nadu's Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu, at a meeting chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi on June 22 as part of preparations for the Union Budget 2024-25, made a slew of demands including the Union Cabinet Committee's nod for the ₹63,246 crore Chennai Metro Rail Phase-2, the allocation of ₹3,000 crore towards "necessary" restoration works in areas hit by two natural disasters last year and the increase of unit cost of centrally sponsored schemes.

What is Chennai Metro Rail Phase-2?

The Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL), which is operating services on two corridors (Chennai Airport to Wimco Nagar, Thiruvottiyur, and Chennai Central to St. Thomas Mount) under Phase-1 of the metro rail project for about 54 km, has proposed to extend the project, through three corridors, for nearly 119 km. The corridors are Madhavaram to Siruseri SIPCOT (45.8 km), a north-south corridor; Lighthouse to Poonamallee Bypass (26.1 km), an east-west corridor, and Madhavaram to Sholinganallur (47 km), an orbital corridor. Eighty elevated stations and 48 underground stations have been proposed. For funding the second phase, the State government has tied up with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and New Development Bank (NDB).

The Tamil Nadu government, which gave in-principle approval for the phase in April 2017, accorded administrative sanction two years later for the execution of JICA-funded stretches of the phase, treating the project as a "State sector project" without prejudice to the participation of the Union government. It



In progress: Construction work of the Chennai Metro Rail's Phase 2 at OMR, Chennai. SRINATH. M

did the same for other stretches in July 2020. Up to March 31, 2024, the State government sanctioned ₹5,400 crore as share capital of the CMRL and ₹12,013.89 crore as subordinate debt.

Why has the State Finance Minister asked for the Centre's intervention?
The Chennai Metro Rail Project's Phase 2 got the approval of the Public Investment Board (PIB) as a Central sector project under the equity sharing model in August 2021. It has been awaiting the approval of the Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) since then. In fact, when the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) was in power in the State, Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone for the phase in November 2020.

In anticipation of the green signal, the

State government is bearing the entire expenditure out of its own funds, which are already under enormous stress. Its plea to the Centre is to sanction Phase-2 under the 50:50 equity sharing basis, as done for Phase-1. Presenting the current year's State budget in February 2024, Mr. Thennarasu observed that the "inordinate delay" by the Union government in approving the project had resulted in an expenditure of ₹9,000 crore during 2023-24 (which is expected to go up to ₹12,000 crore this year). Last week, he urged Ms. Sitharaman to immediately sanction the project and ensure adequate provisions in the Budget.

What are the other major issues of Tamil Nadu on the finance front?

It has been the contention of Tamil Nadu that the State gets a pittance when it

comes to the Central release of funds for natural disasters. In 2023, there were two spells of natural disasters that hit the State in quick succession. It had submitted two detailed memoranda to the Union government, seeking around ₹37,906 crore but the latter, according to the State government, released a "meagre sum" of ₹276 crore. In an order issued in April, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) approved an assistance of ₹285.54 crore and ₹397.13 crore for the two spells, of which the total funds disbursed under the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) stood at ₹115.49 crore and ₹160.61 crore. Also, the order mentioned ₹406.57 crore as the 50% of fund available in the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) account of Tamil Nadu as on April 1, 2023.

The Central government's position is that it can provide funds for immediate or temporary restoration work and not for works of a permanent nature. In the case of permanent projects, the State has to approach the Centre with separate proposals under any programme or project for funding.

The State is also concerned over the "unrealistic" unit cost of houses under centrally-sponsored schemes. For instance, under the 'Affordable Housing in Partnership' vertical of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), the Central government's share is only ₹1.5 lakh per unit against the Tamil Nadu government's contribution of around ₹7.5 lakh to ₹13 lakh per unit. In the case of the rural housing project, the former provides ₹72,000 per house and the latter, ₹1.68 lakh. Similarly, in the case of social security pension, the Centre gives a mere ₹200 per month per beneficiary for Old Age Pension and ₹300 per month per beneficiary for widows and differently abled. In view of the inadequacy of the amount, the State government, made it ₹1,200 per month per beneficiary. Besides, Tamil Nadu is also one of the States that has asked the Centre to merge cesses and surcharges with the basic rates of taxation so that the States receive their legitimate share in devolution.

THE GIST

The Chennai Metro Rail Project's Phase 2 got the approval of the PIB as a Central sector project under the equity sharing model in August 2021. It has been awaiting the approval of the Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) since then.

In anticipation of the green signal, the State government is bearing the entire expenditure out of its own funds, which are already under enormous stress.

It has been the contention of Tamil Nadu that the State gets a pittance when it comes to the Central release of funds for natural disasters. It had submitted two detailed memoranda to the Union government, seeking around ₹37,906 crore but the latter, according to the State government, released a "meagre sum" of ₹276 crore.

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB):

- **Formation:** The AIIB was founded in 2015 and is headquartered in Beijing, China. It is a multilateral development bank initiated by China with the aim of providing financing for infrastructure projects in the Asia-Pacific region.
- **Membership:** The AIIB consists of over 100 member countries from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, including major economies

New Development Bank (NDB):

- **Formation:** The NDB, also known as the BRICS New Development Bank, was established in 2014 by the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) during the BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil.
- **Membership:** The NDB is jointly owned by its five founding members, with each country having an equal share in the bank's capital and voting rights.

like China, India, and members of the European Union.

- **Purpose:** The primary objective of the AIIB is to address the infrastructure financing gap in the region by investing in projects related to transportation, energy, telecommunications, water supply, and sanitation. It aims to promote sustainable development, regional connectivity, and poverty reduction.
- **Governance:** The AIIB follows a governance structure where decisions are made by its member countries based on voting rights. It emphasizes transparency, inclusivity, and accountability in its operations.
- **Projects:** The AIIB funds a variety of infrastructure projects, including sustainable energy initiatives, urban development programs, and cross-border connectivity projects across Asia.

- **Purpose:** The NDB focuses on financing sustainable infrastructure projects and promoting development in BRICS countries and other emerging economies. Its key areas of focus include renewable energy, transportation, water infrastructure, and social development projects.
- **Governance:** The NDB operates on the principles of equality, democracy, and mutual benefit among its member countries. Decisions are made through a consensus-based approach that reflects the interests of all member countries.
- **Projects:** The NDB provides financial support for projects that promote sustainable development, environmental protection, and economic growth in member countries. It aims to contribute to the global infrastructure development agenda and address challenges faced by emerging economies.

Should education be brought back to the State list?

When was the subject added to the concurrent list? How do other countries govern education?

GS II: Education

Rangarajan. R

The story so far:

The NEET-UG exam has been embroiled in controversies over the award of grace marks, allegation of paper leaks and other irregularities. The government also cancelled the UGC-NET exam after it was held, while the CSIR-NET and NEET-PG exams have been postponed.

What is the historical background?

The Government of India Act, 1935 during the British rule created a federal structure for the first time in our polity. The legislative subjects were distributed between the federal legislature (present day Union) and provinces (present day States). Education which is an important public good was kept under the provincial list. After independence, this continued and education was part of the 'State list' under the distribution of powers.

However, during the Emergency, the Congress party constituted the Swaran

Singh Committee to provide recommendations for amendments to the Constitution. One of the recommendations of this committee was to place 'education' in the concurrent list in order to evolve all-India policies on the subject. This was implemented through the 42nd constitutional amendment (1976) by shifting 'education' from the State list to the concurrent list. There was no detailed rationale that was provided for this switch and the amendment was ratified by various States without adequate debate.

The Janata Party government led by Morarji Desai that came to power after Emergency passed the 44th constitutional amendment (1978) to reverse many of the controversial changes made through the 42nd amendment. One of these amendments that was passed in the Lok Sabha but not in the Rajya Sabha was to bring back 'education' to the State list.

What are international practices? In the U.S., State and local governments

set the overall educational standards, mandate standardised tests and supervise colleges and universities. The federal education department's functions primarily include policies for financial aid, focussing on key educational issues and ensuring equal access. In Canada, education is completely managed by the provinces. In Germany, the constitution vests legislative powers for education with landers (equivalent of States). In South Africa, on the other hand, education is governed by two national departments for school and higher education. The provinces of the country have their own education departments for implementing policies of the national departments and dealing with local issues.

What can be the way forward?

The arguments in favour of 'education' in the concurrent list include a uniform education policy, improvement in standards and synergy between Centre and States. However, considering the vast diversity of the country, a 'one size fits all'

approach is neither feasible nor desirable.

Further, as per the report on 'Analysis of Budgeted expenditure on Education' prepared by the Ministry of Education in 2022, out of the total revenue expenditure by education departments in our country estimated at ₹6.25 lakh crore (2020-21), 15% is spent by the Centre while 85% is spent by the States. Even if expenditure by all other departments on education and training are considered, the share works out to 24% and 76% respectively.

The arguments against restoring 'education' to State list include corruption coupled with lack of professionalism. The recent issues surrounding the NEET and NTA have however displayed that centralisation does not necessarily mean that these issues would vanish.

Considering the need for autonomy in view of the lion's share of the expenditure being borne by the States, there needs to be a productive discussion towards moving 'education' back to the State list. This would enable them to frame tailor-made policies for syllabus, testing and admissions for higher education including professional courses like medicine and engineering. Regulatory mechanisms for higher education can continue to be governed by central institutions like the National Medical Commission, University Grants Commission and All India Council for Technical Education.

Rangarajan. R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal.

THE GIST

▼ The Government of India Act, 1935 during the British rule created a federal structure for the first time in our polity.

▼ During the Emergency, the Congress party constituted the Swaran Singh Committee to provide recommendations for amendments to the Constitution. One of the recommendations of this committee was to place 'education' in the concurrent list.

▼ Considering the need for autonomy in view of the lion's share of the expenditure being borne by the States, there needs to be a discussion towards moving 'education' back to the State list.

01 July 2024

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

GS Paper II: Education, Center State Relation

Question: Critically analyze the advantages and disadvantages of placing 'education' in the Concurrent list as opposed to the State list. (250 words/15 Marks)

प्रश्न: 'शिक्षा' को राज्य सूची के बजाय समवर्ती सूची में रखने के लाभ और हानि का आलोचनात्मक विश्लेषण कीजिए। (250 शब्द/15 अंक)

ANSWER APPROACH

- Introduce the answer with the concept of Union List, State List, and Concurrent List in the Indian Constitution (optional, depending on the audience).
- Then Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of placing education in the Concurrent List as opposed to the State List.
- Then conclude by offering a balanced perspective on the issue, acknowledging there's no easy answer.

ANSWER

The inclusion of education in the Concurrent list of the Indian Constitution, as opposed to the State list, has been a subject of debate for decades. The shift from the State to the Concurrent list occurred through the 42nd Constitutional Amendment in 1976, aiming to facilitate the formulation of unified national education policies. However, this change brings both advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages of Education in the Concurrent List:

- **Uniform Education Policy:** Placing education in the Concurrent list allows for the development of uniform education standards across the country. This is crucial for maintaining a consistent quality of education, which can help bridge regional disparities and ensure that all students have access to similar opportunities and resources.
- **Centralized Regulation and Standards:** National bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC), National Medical Commission (NMC), and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) can effectively regulate and maintain standards in higher education, ensuring that institutions across states adhere to the same benchmarks of quality.
- **Synergy Between Centre and States:** The concurrent status fosters collaboration between the central and state governments, allowing for a balanced approach where national priorities and local needs are addressed simultaneously. This can lead to more comprehensive and effective educational reforms.
- **Policy Continuity:** Central oversight ensures that educational policies have continuity and are less susceptible to frequent changes due to political shifts at the state level. This stability can lead to long-term planning and implementation of educational initiatives.

Disadvantages of Education in the Concurrent List:

- **One-Size-Fits-All Approach:** India's vast cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic diversity means that a uniform national policy may not be effective in addressing local issues. A centralized approach might overlook the unique needs and challenges of different states, leading to policies that are not tailored to local contexts.
- **Bureaucratic Delays and Inefficiency:** Centralized control can lead to increased bureaucracy, causing delays in decision-making and implementation. States may have to wait for central approvals, slowing down the process of addressing urgent educational needs.
- **Reduced State Autonomy:** States, being more familiar with their specific educational challenges and contexts, may feel constrained by central regulations. The lack of autonomy can hinder states from experimenting with innovative approaches to education that are better suited to their populations.
- **Corruption and Lack of Professionalism:** As seen in recent controversies surrounding national-level exams like NEET, UGC-NET, and CSIR-NET, centralization does not necessarily eliminate corruption or inefficiencies. Issues of paper leaks, irregularities, and administrative lapses have highlighted that central control is not a panacea for all educational problems.

While placing education in the Concurrent list has its merits in terms of standardization and central oversight, it also brings significant challenges related to diversity, autonomy, and efficiency. Given that states bear the majority of the financial burden for education, there is a strong case for considering a return of education to the State list. This would enable states to design and implement education policies that are more attuned to their specific needs, while central institutions can continue to provide regulatory oversight to maintain quality standards. A balanced approach that incorporates both national and local perspectives might be the most effective way forward for India's diverse educational landscape.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Question 1: Consider the following statements about the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB):

1. AIIB is a multilateral development bank headquartered in Shanghai, China, with a focus on financing infrastructure projects in Asia.
2. India is the largest shareholder in AIIB.
3. Only regional members (countries located in Asia and Oceania) are allowed to join AIIB.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

Question 2: The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a significant development for India because:

1. It provides a new source of funding for infrastructure development projects.

2. It strengthens India's economic ties with other Asian countries.
3. India has veto power over AIIB's decisions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 1 only
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) All of the above

Question 3: Consider the following statements about the New Development Bank (NDB):

1. NDB was established by the G20 group of nations.
2. The bank is headquartered in New Delhi, India.
3. NDB membership is currently restricted to the founding BRICS countries.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) None of the above

Question 4: With reference to the decision-making process in the New Development Bank (NDB), consider the following statements:

1. Each member country has one vote, regardless of its financial contribution.
2. All decisions require a unanimous vote by all members.
3. The presidency of the bank rotates among member countries.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 3 only

Question 5: Consider the following statements about the Santhal Rebellion:

1. The main grievance of the Santhals was the displacement due to British imposed land settlements.
2. The rebellion was primarily led by Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu.
3. The Santhals aimed to overthrow British rule in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

Question 6: Consider the following statements about the leaders of the Santhal Rebellion:

1. The Santhal Rebellion was led by a single individual.
2. Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu were influential figures who mobilized the Santhals.
3. The rebellion lacked any centralized leadership.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 2 and 3 only

Question 7: Consider the following statements about invertebrates and vertebrates:

1. All invertebrates have a segmented body.
2. Vertebrates have a closed circulatory system, while invertebrates have an open circulatory system.
3. Earthworms are the only invertebrates with bilateral symmetry.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 2 and 3 only

Question 8: Examples of invertebrates include:

- (a) Fish, birds, and mammals
(b) Insects, worms, and jellyfish
(c) Snakes, lizards, and frogs
(d) All of the above

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATION

Question 1: Consider the following statements about the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB):

- AIIB is a multilateral development bank headquartered in Shanghai, China, with a focus on financing infrastructure projects in Asia.
- India is the largest shareholder in AIIB.
- Only regional members (countries located in Asia and Oceania) are allowed to join AIIB.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

Question 2: The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a significant development for India because:

- It provides a new source of funding for infrastructure development projects.
- It strengthens India's economic ties with other Asian countries.
- India has veto power over AIIB's decisions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 1 only
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) All of the above

Question 3: Consider the following statements about the New Development Bank (NDB):

- NDB was established by the G20 group of nations.
- The bank is headquartered in New Delhi, India.
- NDB membership is currently restricted to the founding BRICS countries.

Answer: (a) 1 only

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct:** AIIB is indeed a multilateral development bank headquartered in Beijing, China, and its primary objective is to finance infrastructure projects in Asia.
- Statement 2 is incorrect:** China is the largest shareholder in AIIB, followed by India.
- Statement 3 is incorrect:** AIIB has both regional and non-regional members. Countries outside Asia, like Germany, Canada, and Australia, are also members.

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct. AIIB offers India access to additional funding for infrastructure projects.
- Statement 2 is correct. AIIB promotes regional cooperation and economic integration, benefiting India.
- Statement 3 is incorrect. No member country has veto power in AIIB. Decisions are made through voting based on shareholding.

Answer: (d) None of the above

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is incorrect. NDB was established by the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa).
- Statement 2 is incorrect. The headquarters of NDB is in Shanghai, China.

<p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct? (a) 1 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 1 and 3 only (d) None of the above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement 3 is incorrect. NDB has expanded its membership to include other developing nations like Egypt, Bangladesh, UAE, and Uruguay.
<p>Question 4: With reference to the decision-making process in the New Development Bank (NDB), consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Each member country has one vote, regardless of its financial contribution. All decisions require a unanimous vote by all members. The presidency of the bank rotates among member countries. <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 1 and 3 only (d) 3 only</p>	<p>Answer: (d) 3 only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement 1 is incorrect. Voting rights are based on shareholding, with larger contributors having more influence. Statement 2 is incorrect. Decisions are made by a qualified majority vote, not unanimously. Statement 3 is correct. The presidency rotates among member countries for a specific term.
<p>Question 5: Consider the following statements about the Santhal Rebellion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The main grievance of the Santhals was the displacement due to British imposed land settlements. The rebellion was primarily led by Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu. The Santhals aimed to overthrow British rule in India. <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 1 only (d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>Explanation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement 1 is correct. Land alienation due to British policies and exploitative moneylenders were key grievances. Statement 2 is correct. Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu were prominent leaders of the rebellion. Statement 3 is incorrect. While they resisted British control, the aim was not complete overthrow of British rule.
<p>Question 6: Consider the following statements about the leaders of the Santhal Rebellion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Santhal Rebellion was led by a single individual. Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu were influential figures who mobilized the Santhals. The rebellion lacked any centralized leadership. <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) 1 and 3 only (d) 2 and 3 only</p>	<p>Answer: (d) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>Explanation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement 1 is incorrect. The Santhal Rebellion did not have one sole leader. Statement 2 is correct. Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu were brothers who played a key role in uniting and inspiring the Santhals. Statement 3 is correct. The rebellion wasn't a top-down structure but rather a collective movement driven by grievances.

Question 7: Consider the following statements about invertebrates and vertebrates:

4. All invertebrates have a segmented body.
5. Vertebrates have a closed circulatory system, while invertebrates have an open circulatory system.
6. Earthworms are the only invertebrates with bilateral symmetry.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 2 and 3 only

Answer: (b) 2 only

Explanation:

- Statement 1: Incorrect. Segmentation is a common feature in some invertebrate groups like annelids (earthworms) and arthropods (insects), but not all.
- Statement 2: Correct. Vertebrates have a closed circulatory system where blood flows through vessels, while invertebrates have an open circulatory system where blood bathes organs directly.
- Statement 3: Incorrect. Bilateral symmetry, with a left and right side that are mirror images, is a common feature of most animals, including many invertebrates like earthworms, insects, and vertebrates.

Question 8: Examples of invertebrates include:

- (a) Fish, birds, and mammals
(b) Insects, worms, and jellyfish
(c) Snakes, lizards, and frogs
(d) All of the above

Answer: (b) Insects, worms, and jellyfish

Explanation:

- Fish, birds, and mammals are all vertebrates with backbones.
- Snakes, lizards, and frogs are also vertebrates.
- Insects, worms, and jellyfish are all examples of invertebrate groups.