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Daily News Feed

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'T.N. Governor's actions forced SC to step in'

No intention of pronouncing a judgment on the T.N. Governor case, Bench clarifies

Governor had reasons to keep Bills pending, Attorney General R. Venkataramani argues

A Reference Bench need not get into the facts of the T.N. case, says Solicitor-General Mehta

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

A Presidential Reference Bench of five judges, headed by Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, observed on Tuesday that the Supreme Court's move to grant deemed assent to 10 crucial Tamil Nadu State Bills may have been a way to resolve an "egregious situation" created by the State's Governor, who had sat on the Bills since 2020.

The Reference Bench clarified that it does not intend to "pronounce a judgment on the T.N. Governor case judgment" or overrule it, making the subtle point that it could voice an opinion about a "binding" SC verdict, not supplant it.

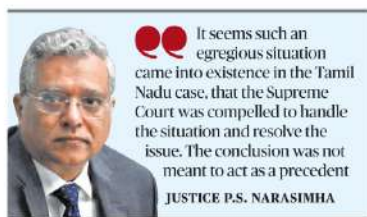
The Bench found the facts of the Tamil Nadu

case "glaring". Justice Surya Kant asked Attorney General R. Venkataramani, "Were the Bills pending since 2020?"

The A-G replied that there were reasons the Governor had kept the Bills pending. He was well within his powers under Article 200 to withhold assent to State Bills, and was not bound by the Council of Ministers' advice, he said.

Mr. Venkataramani asserted that the Constitution envisaged the President and Governors using their discretion to withhold assent if they found that the Bills sent to them for assent had suspect constitutionality. He said he did not want to get into the facts of the T.N. case.

"Is it because the facts are so glaring that you do not want to get into them?"



Chief Justice Gavai asked.

Justice P.S. Narasimha said the facts of the T.N. case did not consist of any "pudding" and were stark in themselves.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Union government, seconded Mr. Venkataramani's submission that a Reference Bench need not get into the facts of the T.N. case, but merely answer

the questions raised by the President.

Role of Bench

The role of the Reference Bench was to maintain the balance envisioned by the Constitution, Mr. Mehta submitted.

Mr. Venkataramani said the T.N. judgment was like someone saying, "I will myself take a pen and paper and rewrite the Consti-

tution." It had squarely encroached upon the legislative domain, he said.

But Justice Kant persisted, asking what a Constitutional court was expected to do if the facts were as obvious as those found in the T.N. case.

"It seems such an egregious situation came into existence in the Tamil Nadu case, that the Supreme Court was compelled to handle the situation and resolve the issue. The conclusion was not meant to act as a precedent," Justice Narasimha said, referring to the circumstances which had led to the April 8 judgment.

The debate came on the first day of hearing the Presidential Reference, which has questioned the top court's power to impose three-month deadlines on

the President and Governors to deal with State Bills which come to them for assent.

Imposing time limits

The Reference was issued by the President under Article 143 of the Constitution a month after a two-judge Bench of the SC, in an April 8 judgment in the T.N. Governor case, plugged a Constitutional silence by fixing specific time limits for Governors and the President to assent, withhold approval, or reserve State Bills for further consideration under Articles 200 and 201.

The Division Bench, headed by Justice J.B. Pardiwala, had also invoked Article 142 to grant 'deemed assent' to the T.N. Bills. It had held that laws which remain pending

with the President and Governor beyond the specified three-month deadline would be deemed to be approved.

On Tuesday, Mr. Venkataramani argued the court could not have used its extraordinary powers under Article 142 to supplant substantive law in the T.N. case.

The top law officer submitted that the Constitution did not impose any time limits on the President and Governors while dealing with State Bills, and contended that the SC's power under Article 142 cannot exceed the power of the Constitution.

Mr. Venkataramani urged the judiciary not to violate the basic structure of the Constitution and take over executive and legislative functions.

Polity & Constitution

1. Supreme Court on Tamil Nadu Governor's Assent to Bills

- A Presidential Reference Bench is reviewing the April 8 judgment that imposed a **3-month deadline on Governors/President for assent to State Bills** under Articles 200 & 201.
- Debate: Can SC use Article 142 to fill constitutional silence? AG argues Governor has **independent discretion** beyond Council of Ministers' advice.
- Relevance:
 - **Prelims:** Articles 143, 142, 200, 201, 163, 74.
 - **Mains GS-II:** Centre-State relations, Governor's discretionary powers, judicial activism vs basic structure.

'Poll Bill gives EC unfettered discretion'

Former CJI Sanjiv Khanna gives his opinion to a parliamentary committee reviewing the Bill; he says the clause that allows EC to postpone Assembly polls may result in Centre taking over the reins of the State government; four ex-CJIs too had flagged legal infirmities; panel to meet economists next

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The proposed legislation for simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies confers "unfettered discretion" to the Election Commission, former Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna told a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on Tuesday.

The committee headed by BJP MP P.P. Chaudhary is reviewing the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Amendment) Bill, 2024, commonly called the one nation, one election Bill.

Justice Khanna is the

fifth former Chief Justice of India to underline this issue with the proposed legislation. Before him, Justice U.U. Lalit, Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar and Justice D.Y. Chandrachud also had pointed out various legal infirmities in the proposed legislation.

The committee had a three-hour meeting where the members queried Justice Khanna on all aspects of the legislation.

The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, proposes to insert Article 82A as well as clauses to Articles 83 and 172 of the Constitution.

Justice Khanna said



Clause 5 of the proposed Article 82A "confers unfettered discretion" to the Election Commission to decide when the election to a Legislative Assembly cannot be conducted along with the Lok Sabha election. "This clause will be open to question as violat-

ing and offending the basic structure of the Constitution on the ground of being arbitrary and offending Article 14 of the Constitution," he noted in his written submission, which he also explained at Tuesday's meeting.

He also articulated that

this clause gives powers to the EC and the government beyond what was envisaged in the Article 356 of the Constitution. "Postponement of elections by the Election Commission may result in indirect President's Rule - in other words the Union Government taking over the reins of the State Government. This will be questionable judicially, as violating the federal structure envisaged by the Constitution," Justice Khanna noted.

Justice Khanna said the Bill does not meet the basic objective of reducing policy paralysis induced by the differing election cycles in various States and the Lok

Sabha. He was answering questions by the members. As per sources, he argued that the Model Code of Conduct will come into play whenever there are elections to the State Legislative Assemblies on premature dissolution, therefore it defeats the purpose for which the legislation has been mooted.

Mr. Chaudhary, the panel chairperson, told *The Hindu* that the committee will now be meeting economists to evaluate the financial implications of the proposed legislation. The government has argued that the legislation will significantly reduce expenditure.

One Nation, One Election Bill

- Former CJI Sanjiv Khanna told JPC that proposed Article 82A gives “**unfettered discretion**” to the **Election Commission**, risking violation of federalism (may act like indirect President’s Rule).
- Relevance:
 - **Prelims:** Constitutional Amendment procedure.
 - **Mains GS-II:** Federalism, electoral reforms, EC’s powers.

SC dismisses child protection body’s challenge to HC order

Aaratrika Bhaumik

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a petition filed by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights challenging a 2022 judgment of the Punjab and Haryana High Court which held that, under Muslim personal law, a girl who had attained puberty or is aged 15 and above could marry, notwithstanding the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.

The High Court had also extended protection to the couple against threats to their life and liberty. A

Bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and R. Mahadevan ruled that the Commission lacked the locus standi to assail the High Court’s order. “We fail to see how the NCPCR can be aggrieved by such an order. If the High Court, in exercise of its writ jurisdiction, extends protection to two minors, it is strange that the NCPCR should contest it,” Justice Nagarathna said.

The counsel representing the body argued that the challenge was confined to the legal issue of whether minor girls could marry under personal or customary laws when such marriages are criminalised under statutory law.

SC Dismisses NCPDR Plea on Muslim Personal Law vs POCSO

- SC upheld that **girls above puberty (15+) can marry under Muslim law**, despite POCSO provisions.
- Relevance:
 - **Prelims:** POCSO Act, personal laws.
 - **Mains GS-I/II:** Uniform Civil Code, child rights vs personal law.

Bengal Governor bats for MoUs with other States for welfare of migrant workers

Ensuring enforcement of minimum wages, adherence to workplace safety standards, expedited mechanisms for grievance handling among steps recommended by Bose to Centre and State govt.

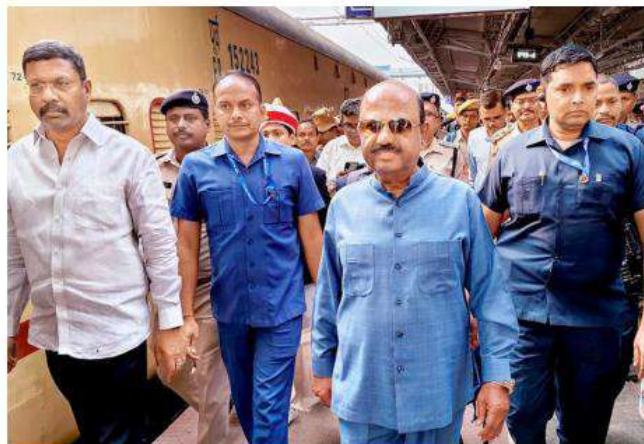
Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose has recommended a number of measures, including signing memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with major destination States and appointment of labour welfare officers, to address the challenges faced by migrant workers.

The Governor has suggested that the West Bengal government proactively engage and sign MoUs with key destination States, such as Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Delhi.

“These MoUs should clearly delineate responsibilities for ensuring the enforcement of minimum wages, adherence to workplace safety standards, and establish expedited mechanisms for grievance handling for West Bengal’s workers within their jurisdictions,” reads the letter.

Mr. Bose’s recommendations to the Central and



Governor C.V. Ananda Bose wrote to the Centre and the West Bengal government over ‘socio-economic justice’ for workers. FILE PHOTO

State governments on Monday to “address the multifaceted challenges faced by West Bengal migrants” and to ensure “socio-economic justice” for them, include implementing a West Bengal Migrant Workers’ Registration Portal and a “West Bengal Migrant Worker Card”.

The development comes amid reports of harassment, detention and torture of West Bengal workers in several States on suspicion of being undocumented Bangladeshi

nationals, which has forced many to return to the State.

A day earlier, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced a scheme called *Shramashree* through which a monthly stipend of ₹5,000 will be disbursed to such migrant workers for up to one year until they get a job.

According to the West Bengal government, around 22.40 lakh residents are working in other States. While announcing the scheme on Monday,

the Chief Minister had said that about 10,000 workers had returned to West Bengal in the past few months.

Other recommendations by the Governor include developing affordable hostels, establishing skill training centres in districts with high rates of migration, 24x7 multilingual helpline, providing legal aid and setting up an emergency transport and relief fund.

Raj Bhavan officials said Mr. Bose has been interacting with migrant workers, trade union leaders and other stakeholders in various States during his visits.

‘Reality check’

“The Governor has also visited their workplaces and residences for a reality check. During his recent visit to Haryana, where some issues of migrant workers were reported, the Governor interacted with the workers and other stakeholders before making the specific recommendations,” the official noted.

Governance & Current Affairs

6. West Bengal Migrant Workers' Welfare

- Governor recommends **MoUs with destination states, helplines, hostels, migrant worker cards**, alongside CM's *Shramashree* scheme (₹5,000 monthly stipend).
- Relevance: **Mains GS-II** – migrant labour, federalism, welfare schemes.

EC lists SIR and regular interactions with parties among its 28 initiatives

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Tuesday listed 28 “significant initiatives aimed at streamlining and improving the electoral process” taken by it in the past six months, and listed them under four heads.

The initiatives include the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar; the linking of death registration data with voter rolls; and regular interactions with leaders of political parties.

The statement on initiatives comes two days after Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, who took charge in February, held a press conference over issues raised by the Opposition parties on the sanctity of the voter rolls and the SIR in Bihar. The Opposition has said the EC’s briefing left many questions unanswered.

Electoral Registration Officers, Deputy Electoral Officers, and Chief Electoral Officers have held all-party meetings nationwide, engaging with over 28,000 representatives of various parties, the EC’s statement said.

To clean-up and strengthen electoral systems, 476



Rigorous check: VVPAT slips are counted in the case of mismatch between Form 17C and EVM data, the poll body said. FILE PHOTO

inactive Registered Unrecognised Political Parties had been identified for delisting, and standard photo ID cards issued to Booth Level Officers, it said.

SOPs issued

Technical and administrative standard operating procedures (SOP) had been issued to check and verify burnt memory/microcontrollers in 5% of electronic voting machines (EVMs) after the declaration of results, the EC said.

National-level conferences had been held with legal counsel and Chief Electoral Officers to strengthen legal framework and representation across various judicial forums, the EC said. Bilateral meetings with heads of election

management bodies had also been held, it added.

ECINET, a one-stop digital platform, has subsumed more than 40 apps and websites for electors and other stakeholders of the poll body, including election officials and political parties. Other initiatives include 100% webcasting at polling stations, real-time voter turnout updates every two hours, and digital index cards and reports in a technology-driven system to promote accessibility of election-related data at the level of the constituency, the ECI’s statement said.

Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slip counting in the case of every mismatch between Form 17C and EVM data,

and wherever mock poll data was not erased erroneously, is also being carried out, the EC said.

Under the heading ‘Purity of Electoral Rolls’ in its statement, the EC’s statement listed the SIR in Bihar, special summary revision before byelections, linking of death registration data, and unique EPIC numbers for every voter.

A new SOP ensures delivery of EPIC cards within 15 days of an update in the electoral rolls, including new enrolment of an elector, or a change in any particulars of an existing voter. Electors will also receive notifications via SMS at each stage, it said.

For ease in voting, a mobile deposit facility has been provided at polling stations, with a limit of 1,200 voters to ensure shorter queues, and clearer voter information slips, with serial and part numbers displayed prominently for easier verification of voters, the EC said.

Among the other initiatives are enhanced remuneration for poll officials, training booth level agents appointed by political parties, and a special training for police officers to ensure law and order during elections, the EC stated.

Election Commission vs Allegations of Voter Fraud

- Congress alleges **16 lakh voters added before 2023 MP polls**, Rahul Gandhi accuses EC of collusion with BJP; EC lists 28 reforms (linking death registration, SIR in Bihar, 100% webcasting).
- Relevance: **GS-II – Electoral integrity, EC reforms.**

India, China have chance to reset ties after recent setbacks, says Chinese FM

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Striking a note of reconciliation, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Tuesday that the bilateral relationship between India and China is facing an “important opportunity”.

Speaking at the 24th meeting between the Special Representatives on the India-China boundary question, Mr. Wang indirectly referred to the negative impact of the 2020 Galwan clashes and said, the “setbacks” of the recent past did not advance the “interest of the people” of both countries.

Responding to the positive sentiment from the Chinese side, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Tuesday evening, announced that he will meet President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's summit in Tianjin, China, and said “stable, predictable and constructive ties” between New Delhi and Beijing will help in “global peace and prosperity”.

“...in October last year, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Modi held an important meeting in Kazan. That meeting pointed the direction for the development of our bilateral relations and provided impetus for the proper settlement of the boundary question,” said Mr. Wang.

He was referring to the meeting between Prime Minister Modi and President Xi during the BRICS summit in Russia's Kazan.

Later in the evening, Mr. Wang called on Mr. Modi where the Prime Minister also recounted the importance of the meeting with President Xi and said, “India-China relations have



Renewed connections: NSA Ajit Doval with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi during a meeting, in New Delhi. PTI

made steady progress guided by respect for each other's interests and sensitivities.” During the meeting, Mr. Wang handed over a personal message and invitation from President Xi to the Prime Minister for the SCO summit. Mr. Modi conveyed his acceptance of the invite to Mr. Wang, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

Constructive ties

“I look forward to our next meeting in Tianjin on the sidelines of the SCO Summit. Stable, predictable, constructive ties between India and China will contribute significantly to regional as well as global peace and prosperity,” said Mr. Modi after the meeting, which was a special gesture from the Indian side to the Chinese Foreign Minister. The Ministry of External Affairs said that during the meeting, Mr. Modi emphasised the importance of a “fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable resolution of the boundary question”.

Mr. Wang referred to the SCO Heads of State Council meeting in Tianjin and said, “Now the bilateral relationship is facing an important opportunity of im-

provement and growth. The Chinese side attaches great importance to the Prime Minister's visit to China to attend the SCO summit at our invitation. We believe the Indian side will also make contribution to a successful summit in Tianjin.”

‘Upward trend’

During his talks with Mr. Wang, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, the Indian Special Representative (SR), described last year's SR-level talks in China as “wonderful” and said that there has been an “upward trend” in India-China ties in recent months.

Foreign Minister Wang arrived here on a two-day visit on Monday and hours later held a meeting with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who emphasised that the process of withdrawal of troops from the Line of Actual Control (LAC) needs to “move forward”. The MEA said that during the talks, Mr. Jaishankar “strongly raised” the issue of cross-border terrorism from Pakistan, the all-weather friend of China, and reminded that one of the “original objectives of SCO” was to counter terrorism.

International Relations

9. India-China Relations

- FM Wang Yi & PM Modi agree on **resetting ties**; upcoming SCO summit in Tianjin.
- India insists on boundary resolution; Jaishankar raises **cross-border terrorism issue**.
- Relevance: **Prelims** – SCO, Galwan 2020. **Mains GS-II** – India-China relations, LAC disputes.

U.S. air cover, EU troops may be part of Ukraine security pledge: Trump

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that U.S. air support and European ground troops could be part of security guarantees for Ukraine, warning of a “rough” situation if talks between Moscow and Kyiv fail.

“When it comes to security, they’re willing to put people on the ground,” he told *Fox News*, referring to European allies whom he met in the White House on Monday. “We’re willing to help them with things, especially, probably, if you talk about by air, because no one has the kind of stuff we have, really, they don’t,” Mr. Trump said.

He added that his “assurance” that no U.S. ground troops would deploy to Ukraine, and he categorically ruled out Ukraine joining the Western military alliance NATO.



Keen eyes: French President Emmanuel Macron and U.S. President Donald Trump with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. AFP

Post-war security is a key concern for Kyiv after more than three years of Russian invasion. Moscow has long said it will not tolerate Ukraine joining NATO and has been hostile to the idea of Western troops deploying to the former Soviet territory.

Mr. Trump said that “France and Germany, a couple of them, U.K. – they want to have boots on the ground. I don’t think it’s

going to be a problem. I think Putin is tired of the war.”

Another meet

Mr. Trump said that following his talks on Monday with European leaders he is pushing to organise a bilateral summit between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy – followed by another where he will join.

“I called President Putin, and we’re trying to work out a meeting with President Zelenskyy. We’ll see what happens there,” he said.

Saying it was possible Mr. Putin would back out, Mr. Trump said, “I hope President Putin’s going to be good and if not, it’s going to be a rough situation.” Mr. Zelenskyy “has to show some flexibility also”.

In addition to the question of guaranteeing Ukraine’s future security, the other key sticking point in ending the war is the status of the huge swaths of land occupied by Russia.

Mr. Trump said Ukraine has to accept it will not get its lost territories back – including the eastern Donbas region – but in return will get peace.

The U.S. leader said Ukraine was not powerful enough to change the situation.

9. Ukraine War – Trump’s Security Proposal

- Trump: US may provide **air cover**, Europe ground troops, but Ukraine must accept **loss of Donbas & occupied territories**.
- Relevance: **GS-II IR** – Russia-Ukraine war, NATO, geopolitics.

Private sector share in defence production increases to 22.5%

Saurabh Trivedi

NEW DELHI

For the third consecutive year, the contribution of private manufacturers to India's total defence production has increased.

According to data from the Department of Defence Production, private sector companies contributed ₹33,979 crore (22.56%) to the total defence production of ₹1,50,590 crore in financial year 2024-25. This marks the highest share of private sector participation since 2016-17, when it stood at 19%.

The defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs) accounted for 57.50% of the total defence production, while Indian ordnance factories contributed 14.49%, and non-defence PSUs 5.4%.

Since the opening of the defence manufacturing sector to private players in 2016-17, the contribution of private companies has ranged between 19% and 20%. It stood at 19.39% in 2022-23 and 20.93% in



Military equipment on display at a seminar organised by the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers in Jaipur. PTI

2023-24, reflecting a steady upward trend.

The larger share of production, however, continues to come from the Ordnance Factory Board, DPSUs, other PSUs, and joint ventures.

According to the Defence Ministry, India's defence budget has witnessed a steady rise – from ₹2.53 lakh crore in 2013-14 to ₹6.81 lakh crore in 2025-26. In 2024-25, the country achieved its highest-ever defence production of ₹1.50 lakh crore, more than three times the ₹46,429 crore recorded in 2014-15.

Economy & Development

11. Defence Manufacturing

- Private sector share rises to **22.56% (₹33,979 crore)** of total defence production.
- Defence budget: ₹6.81 lakh crore (2025–26).
- Relevance: **Prelims** – DPSUs, defence budget. **Mains GS-III** – Atmanirbhar Bharat, defence industry.

'Action plan needed to distribute industries evenly across States'

In the context of industrial policy, while industry is a State subject, the Central Government's initiatives are vital, the Standing Committee on Finance noted in a report submitted to the Lok Sabha

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The Standing Committee on Finance has recommended that the Government consider an action plan to evenly distribute industries across all States, for "more balanced and equitable economic development", it said in a report submitted to the Lok Sabha.

This comes at a time when the Congress has accused the Centre of being "biased" against opposition ruled States and forcing new investments to move out of them.

The Standing Committee on Finance is chaired by Bharatiya Janata Party MP from Odisha Bhartruhari Mahtab. In its report, the Committee also pointed out that the Government's disinvestment plans had not progressed since they were announced and that the investment rate in India needed to be higher than it currently is.



Fair play: The panel recommended the action plan for a more balanced and equitable economic development. SRINATH M.

hari Mahtab. In its report, the Committee also pointed out that the Government's disinvestment plans had not progressed since they were announced and that the investment rate in India needed to be higher than it currently is.

"In the context of industrial policy, the Committee note that while industry is a State subject, the Central Government's initiatives are vital," the report said. "Therefore, the Committee recommend the Government to consider an action plan for the even

distribution of industries across all States for more balanced and equitable economic development."

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh on August 14 took to the social media platform X to accuse the Central Government of approving investments by companies only if those investments are moved out of Opposition-ruled states.

"The PM speaks of competition among states that will make India strong," Mr. Ramesh said. "But if the umpire is so blatantly biased, the competition becomes a farce."

The Committee also highlighted the Centre's Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) Policy, which envisaged that loss-making pu-

blic sector companies in non-strategic sectors be considered for privatisation or closure, with the aim "to promote fiscal prudence and efficient resource allocation".

"However, not much headway has been made in this regard as the proposal for disinvestment of any non-strategic CPSE has not been approved since the guidelines were issued in December 2021," the report noted.

The Committee recommended that the Government accelerate the implementation of the PSE Policy by speeding up the process of identifying and seeking approval for the disinvestment or closure of non-strategic, loss-making CPSEs.

Standing Committee on Finance Report

- Recommends **even distribution of industries across states** to reduce regional imbalances.
- Relevance: **GS-III** – Industry, regional planning.

Amoeba causing PAM detected in well water in Kozhikode

The Hindu Bureau

KOZHIKODE

Health officials in Kerala have detected the presence of *Naegleria fowleri*, the amoeba that causes primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM), a rare brain infection, in the well at the house of a three-month-old child who is undergoing treatment for it at the Government Medical College Hospital in Kozhikode for over two weeks.

A senior health official said on Tuesday that samples from waterbodies on the residential premises of two more infected persons, a 40-year-old man who is also being treated at the same hospital, and a nine-year-old girl from Thamarassery who died



A three-month-old child is undergoing treatment for PAM at MCH in Kozhikode.

recently, too had been sent for tests.

The girl's brother was put under observation as he had fever.

However, he has not shown any other symptoms associated with the brain infection, the official said.

Naegleria fowleri Infection (Kerala)

- Rare brain infection (PAM) cases detected; amoeba found in well water.
- Relevance: **Prelims** – disease, causative organism. **GS-III – Public health.**

ISRO moots heavy-lift rocket that can carry payload of 75,000 kg

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

More than four decades after developing the first indigenous launch vehicle SLV-3, capable of carrying a modest 35-kg payload, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is now aiming for a giant leap. The agency is conceiving an advanced heavy-lift rocket that can carry a 75,000 kg payload to space.

“This rocket will be the height of a 40-storey building. We are also in the advanced development stages of Gaganyaan and its first unmanned mission is planned very shortly,” ISRO Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space, V. Narayanan said on Tuesday. Delivering the 84th convocation address at the Osmania University here, Mr. Narayanan elaborated on the country’s space journey, the organisation’s

accomplishments and future plans.

“Chandrayaan-4 programme is approved. The Bharathiya Anthariksh Station shall be a reality by 2035 for which the initial modules will start as early as 2027. An Indian must land on the moon and return safely by a fully indigenous moon mission by 2040. A Venus Orbiter Mission has also been approved and we shall be sending a spacecraft to study planet Venus. A heavy-lift Next Generation Launch Vehicle with recoverable first stage has also been approved,” he said.

Mr. Narayanan was conferred an honorary doctorate at the convocation.

A record 1,261 Ph.D degrees were awarded, and 121 gold medals were presented to top-performing students for academic years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.

ISRO Mulls Heavy-Lift Rocket (75,000 kg Payload)

- **Background:**

- ISRO's first indigenous launch vehicle SLV-3 (1980) could carry **35 kg payload**.
- Now, ISRO is working on a **new heavy-lift rocket** capable of carrying **75,000 kg** payload to space.
- **Features:**
 - Rocket will be as tall as a **40-storey building**.
 - Part of **next-generation launch vehicle** with **recoverable first stage**.
 - Linked to advanced development stages of **Gaganyaan** (India's human spaceflight mission).
- **Upcoming Missions & Plans:**
 - **Gaganyaan** first uncrewed mission planned soon.
 - **Chandrayaan-4** approved.
 - **Bharatiya Anthariksh Station (Indian Space Station)** target: **2035** (initial modules from 2027).
 - **Indian astronaut to land on Moon & return by 2040** using indigenous mission.
 - **Venus Orbiter Mission** approved.
- **Other Highlights:**
 - ISRO Chairman **S. Narayanan** announced these plans at Osmania University convocation.
 - He received an honorary doctorate.
 - 1,261 Ph.D. degrees & 121 gold medals were awarded in the ceremony.

✓ **Relevance for UPSC/BPSC/JPSC**

- **Prelims:** SLV-3, Gaganyaan, Chandrayaan-4, Venus Mission, Bharatiya Anthariksh Station, Next Gen Launch Vehicle.
- **Mains GS-III:** Space technology, Atmanirbhar Bharat in space sector, global space race, ISRO's role in India's strategic & scientific growth.

Saltwater crocodile population in Bengal's Sundarban Biosphere Reserve shows substantial increase: survey

Moyurie Som
KOLKATA

The estimated population of saltwater crocodiles, one of the largest reptiles in the world, has increased in the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve (SBR) from last year, according to a survey by the State's Forest Department.

"In comparison [to 2024], there is an increase in the number of all demographic classes [of saltwater crocodiles], specifically in the hatchling class. This is an encouraging sign as sighting of hatchlings is very rare and difficult in the terrain of Sundarbans," the Forest Department report, titled 'Population Assessment and Habitat Ecology Study of Saltwater Croco-



The State government has made major efforts to conserve saltwater crocodiles with a breeding facility opened in 1976. FILE PHOTO

diles in Sundarbans 2025', says.

According to the report released on Monday, the saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*) is the largest of all crocodilians and the largest reptile in the world. They are "hypercarnivorous apex predators" that keep flowing water ecosys-

tems clean by feeding on carcasses. In India, saltwater crocodiles are distributed across the swamplands, rivers, mangroves of Odisha and West Bengal and the coastal areas of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The estimated population of saltwater crocodiles

at the SBR has been found to be between a maximum of 242 and a minimum of 220 this year, with 213 direct sightings recorded during the study. In comparison, last year, the estimated maximum number of saltwater crocodiles in the region had been pegged between 204 and 234.

According to direct sighting data and based on the length of the saltwater crocodiles, a total of 125 adults, 88 juveniles, and 23 hatchlings were traced through direct sightings in 2025. These numbers reflect a considerable increase from the crocodile census done in 2024, where 71 adults, 41 juveniles and only 2 hatchlings were traced through direct sightings.

Meanwhile, the encounter rate of the saltwater crocodiles in the Sundarbans, according to this year's study, is around 0.18 per kilometre, that is, around one saltwater crocodile per 5.5 kilometres of the studied stretch.

GPS mapping

The study was conducted at the SBR through systematic surveys, GPS mapping and habitat characterisation.

The West Bengal government has, in the last many decades, made significant efforts to conserve saltwater crocodiles, with a conservation and breeding facility in the form of the Bhagabatpur Crocodile Project being started in the South 24 Parganas in 1976.

Saltwater Crocodile Survey – Sundarbans

- Population in Sundarban Biosphere Reserve rises (220–242, including 23 hatchlings).
- Relevance: **Prelims** – *Crocodylus porosus* habitat, IUCN status. **GS-III – Conservation efforts.**

Gender change: HC directs Manipur authorities to issue fresh academic certificates to transwoman doctor

The Hindu Bureau

GUWAHATI

The High Court of Manipur has directed the heads of the State's education apparatuses to issue fresh academic certificates "under a new name and gender" for a female doctor who was born male.

Boboi Laishram underwent a gender reassignment surgery in October 2019 and the subsequent legal process to become Beoncy Laishram, a year after completing her MBBS. This made her the first doctor from the transgender community in the northeastern region.

She updated her Aadhaar, voter identity, and



Beoncy Laishram

Permanent Account Number cards, but struggled to get her name and gender changed in her academic certificates. This made her approach the High Court.

In an order on Tuesday, Justice A. Guneshwar Sharma ordered the authorities of the Board of Secondary Education Manipur (BOSEM), the Council of Higher Secondary Education Mani-

pur, the Manipur University, and the Manipur Medical Council to issue fresh educational certificates to Ms. Laishram.

The court did not find merit in the argument on behalf of the higher education authorities that any correction in the educational certificates has to start from the first institute, BOSEM in this case. The court was told that the Manipur University "has no objection in correcting the name and gender of the petitioner in the MBBS certificate" if the Class 10 and Class 12 certificates are updated first.

The educational heads were accordingly directed to provide Ms. Laishram with fresh certificates.

Transgender Rights – Manipur HC

- Directed universities & councils to issue new academic certificates for transwoman doctor.
- Relevance: **GS-II – Transgender rights, Social justice, Judiciary role.**

HINDI SUMMARY

राजनीति एवं संविधान

1. **तमिलनाडु राज्यपाल द्वारा विधेयकों की स्वीकृति पर सर्वोच्च न्यायालय**
 - राष्ट्रपति संदर्भ पीठ 8 अप्रैल के निर्णय की समीक्षा कर रही है, जिसमें अनुच्छेद 200 और 201 के तहत राज्यपाल/राष्ट्रपति को राज्य विधेयकों पर निर्णय के लिए 3 महीने की समयसीमा तय की गई थी।
 - बहस: क्या सर्वोच्च न्यायालय अनुच्छेद 142 का उपयोग कर संवैधानिक शून्यता भर सकता है?
 - अटॉर्नी जनरल का तर्क: राज्यपाल मंत्रिपरिषद् की सलाह से परे स्वतंत्र विवेकाधिकार रखते हैं।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:**
 - **प्रारंभिक परीक्षा:** अनुच्छेद 143, 142, 200, 201, 163, 74
 - **मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-II):** केंद्र-राज्य संबंध, राज्यपाल की विवेकाधीन शक्तियाँ, न्यायिक सक्रियता बनाम मूल संरचना

2. **एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव विधेयक**
 - पूर्व मुख्य न्यायाधीश संजीव खन्ना ने जेपीसी को बताया कि प्रस्तावित अनुच्छेद 82A चुनाव आयोग को “असीमित विवेकाधिकार” देता है, जिससे संघवाद का उल्लंघन हो सकता है (अप्रत्यक्ष राष्ट्रपति शासन जैसा)।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:**
 - **प्रारंभिक परीक्षा:** संवैधानिक संशोधन प्रक्रिया
 - **मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-II):** संघवाद, चुनावी सुधार, चुनाव आयोग की शक्तियाँ

3. **मुस्लिम पर्सनल लॉ बनाम POCSO पर NCPCR की याचिका खारिज**
 - सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने माना कि मुस्लिम कानून के अनुसार 15 वर्ष से ऊपर/यौवन प्राप्त लड़कियाँ विवाह कर सकती हैं, भले ही POCSO अधिनियम के प्रावधान हों।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:**
 - **प्रारंभिक परीक्षा:** POCSO अधिनियम, व्यक्तिगत कानून
 - **मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-I/II):** समान नागरिक संहिता (UCC), बाल अधिकार बनाम व्यक्तिगत कानून

शासन एवं समसामयिक घटनाएँ

4. **पश्चिम बंगाल प्रवासी श्रमिक कल्याण**
 - राज्यपाल ने गंतव्य राज्यों के साथ MoUs, हेल्पलाइन, हॉस्टल, प्रवासी श्रमिक कार्ड की सिफारिश की।
 - मुख्यमंत्री की “श्रमीश्री योजना”: ₹5,000 मासिक भत्ता (अस्थायी बेरोजगारी के दौरान)।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:** मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-II) – प्रवासी श्रमिक, संघवाद, कल्याणकारी योजनाएँ

5. **चुनाव आयोग बनाम मतदाता धोखाधड़ी के आरोप**
 - कांग्रेस: 2023 म.प्र. चुनाव से पहले 16 लाख मतदाता जोड़े गए।
 - राहुल गांधी ने आरोप लगाया कि चुनाव आयोग BJP से मिलीभगत कर रहा है।
 - EC ने सुधार बताए – मृत्यु पंजीकरण डेटा लिंकिंग, बिहार में SIR, 100% वेबकास्टिंग आदि।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:** GS-II – चुनावी अखंडता, चुनाव आयोग सुधार

अंतर्राष्ट्रीय संबंध

6. **भारत-चीन संबंध**
 - विदेश मंत्री वांग यी और पीएम मोदी ने रिश्ते सुधारने पर सहमति दी।
 - आगामी SCO शिखर सम्मेलन (तिआनजिन) में बैठक।

- भारत ने सीमा विवाद और **पाकिस्तान से प्रायोजित आतंकवाद** का मुद्दा उठाया।
- **प्रासंगिकता:**
 - **प्रारंभिक परीक्षा:** SCO, गलवान 2020
 - **मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-II):** भारत-चीन संबंध, LAC विवाद

7. **यूक्रेन युद्ध - ट्रम्प का सुरक्षा प्रस्ताव**
- ट्रम्प: अमेरिका हवाई सहायता देगा, यूरोप जमीनी सैनिक भेजेगा।
 - यूक्रेन को डोनबास और अन्य कब्जाए क्षेत्र छोड़ने होंगे।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:** GS-II IR - रूस-यूक्रेन युद्ध, NATO, भू-राजनीति

अर्थव्यवस्था एवं विकास

8. **रक्षा उत्पादन**
- निजी क्षेत्र की हिस्सेदारी बढ़कर **22.56% (₹33,979 करोड़)** हुई।
 - रक्षा बजट 2025-26: ₹6.81 लाख करोड़।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:**
 - **प्रारंभिक परीक्षा:** DPSUs, रक्षा बजट
 - **मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-III):** आत्मनिर्भर भारत, रक्षा उद्योग

9. **वित्त पर स्थायी समिति की रिपोर्ट**
- राज्यों में उद्योगों का **समान वितरण** करने की सिफारिश।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:** GS-III - उद्योग, क्षेत्रीय योजना

विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी / स्वास्थ्य

10. **Naegleria fowleri संक्रमण (केरल)**
- दुर्लभ मस्तिष्क संक्रमण (PAM) के मामले मिले।
 - कुएँ के पानी में अमीबा पाया गया।
 - **प्रासंगिकता:**
 - **प्रारंभिक परीक्षा:** रोग एवं कारक जीव
 - **मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-III):** सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य

11. **ISRO का 75,000 किलो पेलोड वाला हेवी-लिफ्ट रॉकेट**
- SLV-3 (1980) → 35 किलो पेलोड; नया रॉकेट → 75,000 किलो पेलोड।
 - विशेषताएँ: 40-मंज़िला ऊँचाई, पुनः प्रयोज्य स्टेज, गगनयान से जुड़ा।
 - आगामी मिशन:
 - गगनयान (पहला बिना-मानव मिशन)
 - चंद्रयान-4 (स्वीकृत)
 - **भारतीय अंतरिक्ष स्टेशन (2035)**
 - 2040 तक भारतीय अंतरिक्ष यात्री चंद्रमा पर उतरेंगे व लौटेंगे
 - शुक्र ऑर्बिटर मिशन
 - **प्रासंगिकता:**
 - **प्रारंभिक परीक्षा:** SLV-3, गगनयान, चंद्रयान-4, शुक्र मिशन, अंतरिक्ष स्टेशन
 - **मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-III):** अंतरिक्ष तकनीक, वैश्विक स्पेस रेस, आत्मनिर्भर भारत

पर्यावरण एवं पारिस्थितिकी

12. सुन्दरबन में खारे पानी के मगरमच्छ सर्वेक्षण

- जनसंख्या 220-242 (23 हैचलिंग सहित) तक बढ़ी।
 - प्रासंगिकता:
 - प्रारंभिक परीक्षा: *Crocodylus porosus* आवास, IUCN स्थिति
 - मुख्य परीक्षा (GS-III): संरक्षण प्रयास
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सामाजिक न्याय

13. ट्रांसजेंडर अधिकार - मणिपुर हाईकोर्ट

- विश्वविद्यालयों को ट्रांसवुमन डॉक्टर को नए नाम व लिंग के शैक्षणिक प्रमाणपत्र जारी करने का निर्देश।
- प्रासंगिकता: GS-II - ट्रांसजेंडर अधिकार, सामाजिक न्याय, न्यायपालिका की भूमिका