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DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

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FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.

It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.



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LETTER & SPIRIT

The jurisprudence of bail

The Supreme Court has time and again reiterated that “bail is the rule and jail is the exception”

THE GIST

■ The jurisprudence of bail in post-independent India, is anchored on the bedrock of Article 21 of the Constitution which states that liberty can be deprived only through the procedure established by law, which must be “just, fair and reasonable”.

■ Prolonged detention of an accused pending trial may convert the process itself into a punishment rendering a finding of acquittal practically useless as the accused would have suffered much of the punishment by then. This is why grant of bail is fundamentally important.

■ Grant of regular bail is usually guided by what is referred to as the triple test – the ascertainment of whether the accused is at flight risk; possibility of tampering with the evidence and influencing witnesses.

ABHILASH M.R.

The jurisprudence of bail in post-independent India, is anchored on the bedrock of Article 21 of the Constitution which safeguards not only life but also liberty by commanding that liberty can be deprived only through the procedure established by law, which must be “just, fair and reasonable”. The same procedural law which provides for arrest and incarceration, ensures that bail can be sought by an accused through a broad spectrum of provisions ranging from pre-arrest bail to statutory bail. While the former envisaged under Section 438 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) enables the accused to approach a Sessions court or High Court seeking a direction to release him on bail in case he is arrested on a non-bailable offence, the latter, as conceived under Section 167 of the CrPC, vests with the accused the right to be released if the investigation is not completed within ninety days or sixty days, as the case may be, depending on the severity of the alleged offence.

The basic presumption

The presumption of innocence is a foundational postulate in India's criminal jurisprudence. This is the main reason why an accused is usually released on bail pending investigation and trial except for a few offences under the Penal Code as well as offences framed under special statutes like the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, the Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances Act and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, all of which impose extremely rigid conditions for the grant of bail.

While bail refers to the conditional release of a person from confinement or custody during investigation and trial, it can also be sought during the appellate stage to prevent endless internment during the pendency of appeal though the benefit of the presumption of innocence is not available at the latter stage. In the ever-enduring words of Justice Krishna Iyer, “The issue of ‘Bail or

Jail’ – at the pre-trial or post-conviction stage – although largely hinging on judicial discretion, is one of liberty, justice, public safety and burden of the public treasury, all of which insist that a developed jurisprudence of bail is integral to a socially sensitised judicial process. After all, personal liberty of an accused or convict is fundamental, suffering lawful eclipse only in terms of procedure established by law.” (*Gudikanti Narasimhulu vs Public Prosecutor (1977)*).

Grant of bail as the rule

A common misnomer that precipitates public apprehension is the perception that jail is and ought to be a necessary consequence of arrest and the failure to jail an accused post-arrest endangers public justice. In fact, prolonged detention of an accused pending trial may convert the process itself into a punishment rendering a finding of acquittal practically useless as the accused would have suffered much of the punishment by then. Unless bail is granted to an accused who is presumed to be innocent in the eyes of the law until guilt is proven, he may not be able to take the necessary steps lawfully permissible to defend himself. The Supreme Court has time and again reiterated that “bail is the rule and jail is the exception”.

A conjoint reading of Section 436 (bailable offences) and 437 (non-bailable offences) of the CrPC makes it clear that the wisdom of the legislature is to secure bail as the rule and jail as the exception. Such an understanding reflects the legal lineage which can be traced back to the verdict of the Allahabad High Court in *Emperor vs H. L. Hutchinson* (1932), wherein the trade unionists who were accused to have conspired against the empire were granted bail on the basis of the aforesaid principle. This principle has been consistently reaffirmed by the Supreme Court in a catena of decisions including the constitution bench decision in *Gurbaksh Singh Sibbia* (1980).

The CrPC defines “bailable offence” as an

offence which is shown as bailable in the First Schedule of the CrPC, or which is made bailable by any other law for the time being in force; and “non-bailable offence” means any other offence. While bail is a matter of right in bailable offences, in non-bailable offences, the grant of bail is at the discretion exercised by the judge taking note of the factual aspects of the case. It was held by the Calcutta High Court in 1923 “that the discretionary power of the Court to admit to bail is not arbitrary, but is judicial”, and “is governed by established principles.” (*Nagendra vs King Emperor*).

Judicial discretion and its requirements

As declared by the Supreme Court, “the grant or denial is regulated, to a large extent, by the facts and circumstances of each particular case. But at the same time, right to bail is not to be denied merely because of the sentiments of the community against the accused. The primary purposes of bail in a criminal case are to relieve the accused of imprisonment, to relieve the State of the burden of keeping him, pending the trial, and at the same time, to keep the accused constructively in the custody of the Court, whether before or after conviction, to assure that he will submit to the jurisdiction of the Court and be in attendance thereon whenever his presence is required.” (*Sanjay Chandra vs CBI (2011)*). In practice, the notion of judicial discretion remains circumscribed by the judicial pronouncements of superior courts.

However, a cryptic judicial order sans ratiocination is unhealthy as it endangers not only liberty but also law. The application of the mind is a necessary pre-requisite of a sound judicial order.

In 2022, the Supreme Court derided the recent tendency of granting or refusing bail through terse orders by observing that “reasoning is the life blood of the judicial system. That every order must be reasoned is one of the fundamental tenets of our system. A non-reasoned (cryptic) order suffers the vice of arbitrariness.” (*Ms. Y versus State of Rajasthan & Ors. (2022)*).



The triple test

The grant of regular bail is usually guided by what is referred to as the triple test – the ascertainment of whether the accused is at flight risk; possibility of tampering with the evidence and influencing witnesses. In addition to the above three, it was held by a three-judge-bench of the Supreme Court (*P. Chidambaram Case (2019)*) that the gravity of the offence may also be an additional consideration which may be ascertained by the sentence prescribed for the offence alleged to have been committed.

Despite multitude of declarations of the apex court, one is left surprised that there are numerous instances of courts of law violating the legal principles declared by the Supreme Court and resorting to verdicts beyond reason and comprehension. The right to personal liberty as manifested in Article 21 will remain elusive as long as institutional attitudes remain stymied by such perverse considerations.

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Minority status plea: govt. seeks time

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government has sought more time from the Supreme Court to hold consultations on the issue of granting minority status to religious communities, including Hindus, said to be numerically low in as many as 10 States.

The Ministry of Minority Affairs, in an affidavit, said comments and views of States such as Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir have not been

received as on date.

“Further, comments from Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh are also awaited. In these States, the issue may have wider ramifications,” the Ministry said.

The Centre said it proposed to hold meetings in the coming weeks. The government asked the court to defer the hearing scheduled for Tuesday.

Centre’s shifting stands

In May, the court had expressed its displeasure over

the Centre’s shifting stands on the issue. On March 25, the Ministry, in an affidavit, had told the court that both the Centre and States have “concurrent power” to notify minorities. It had even said that States could also recognise a community as a minority at the individual State level.

Hardly two months later, a “superseding” affidavit was filed by the same Ministry, reversing its own position. This time, the Ministry had claimed the Centre alone

was vested with the power to notify a minority community. “You seem to have taken a U-turn from your earlier stand... You people have not been able to decide what you have to do...,” Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul had lashed out in May.

Advocate Ashwini Upadhyay, the petitioner, has sought a clear answer from the Centre on whether it was Parliament or the State Legislatures that had the power to notify a community as a ‘minority’.

Challenges of sub-national fiscal correction

The Centre and States need to prioritise expenditure and adhere to fiscal discipline



M. SURESH BABU

Recent concerns over excessive doling out of freebies by States are often interpreted as intrusion into the federal powers of the States. States push back on this issue on the grounds of welfare provisioning and protection of the vulnerable sections of the population. The Central government's alarm has been on the mounting debt burden and the deteriorating fiscal situation in some States. As both the Union government and States are expected to work closely in a co-operative federal structure, frictions arising out of these exchanges might have repercussions on both resource sharing and expenditure prioritisation. Hence, it is important that the Centre and States are on the same page on these issues.

In recent times, three issues have emerged as major discussion points in India's fiscal federalism, leading to back-and-forth exchanges between the Centre and States. First are a set of issues related to Goods and Services Tax (GST) such as the rate structure, inclusion and exclusion of commodities, revenue sharing from GST and associated compensation. Second, State-level expenditure patterns especially related to the welfare schemes of States. Third, the conception and the implementation of central schemes.

Issues related to GST have a forum for discussions as they are usually the agenda for GST council meetings. However, other two matters are generally flagged by the Finance Ministry based upon reports and studies done by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. As States engage in clarifications on these reports and studies, it often ends up as exchanges of shifting the blame, especially when the Centre and the concerned State have different political parties in power.

Discretionary expenditure

A key issue of recent debates between the States and the Centre is the quantity and quality of public expenditure by the States. In this context, it



■ GETTY IMAGES

is important to distinguish between two kinds of public expenditure. Mandatory spending is expenditure that is governed by formulas or criteria set forth, rather than by periodic appropriations and as such, unless explicitly changed, the previous year's spending bill applies to the current year for these items of expenditure. By contrast, discretionary spending is expenditure that is governed by annual or other periodic appropriations. While States demand more fiscal space for increasing discretionary spending, the Centre is pushing for more fiscal discipline by reducing the scope for discretionary spending and limiting States to focus on mandatory expenditures.

Generally, the aim of enhanced discretionary public expenditure is to stimulate the economy during periods of excess slack, as government spending multipliers would be high and work primarily through consumption channel. Discretionary expenditure is, at the same time, more volatile than mandatory expenditure. Cross country empirical evidence also shows that discretionary expenditure is not contemporaneously correlated with output growth and the correlation is low for the next immediate time period. Further, once started, some of the discretionary expenditure, used to increase demand in the economy, continues for longer periods leading to fiscal stress. This is because of the fact that it is hard to decrease government spending, especially on expenditure heads that raise private consumption, as it requires some

counter balancing measures to deal with the resistance from the public.

The current debate around freebies needs to be viewed in this larger context of sub-national fiscal consolidation. In a federal system, States' fiscal stress gets spilled over to the Centre, leading to a situation of overall magnified fiscal slippages. As the economy is recovering from crisis, there exists a need to adhere to the path of fiscal correction both by the Centre and by the States, as a crisis demands more discretionary spending than normal times. Such additional expenditures need not be and cannot be sustained over longer periods. However, in the Indian context, many States indulge in higher levels of expenditures towards maintaining what they call as their 'models of welfare provisioning'. While these models claim to have their own merits, the effects of such expenditures on growth of the economy and well-being of the beneficiaries are ambiguous as there is a lacuna of credible evidence.

Fiscal consolidation

Sustained increase in welfare expenditure by the States leads to fiscal expansion, which necessitates additional resource mobilisation. When efforts towards additional resource mobilisation yield limited success, as in the case of many States in India, the States resort to borrowings. Fiscal expansion financed through debt and the resultant debt accumulation have important impacts on the economy both in the short run as well as in the long run. While debt per se might not be bad, the utilisation of

funds raised through borrowings is important, that is, if it is used for capital formation, it could contribute to the real income of future generations and add to repayment capacity of the government as well. On the contrary, if use of borrowings is to finance only the current expenditure, it poses the risk of debt rising to unsustainable levels.

Data published by the RBI show that in recent years, States' outstanding debt has registered an upward movement. This could be partly attributed to the implementation of the Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY), farm loan waivers, sustained increase in populist welfare measures and growth slowdown especially in 2019-20. A combination of increased expenditure and non-commensurate revenue mobilisation efforts has resulted in increased debt-GSDP ratio (gross state domestic product) between 2013 and 2022. The debt-GSDP ratio of States increased from 22.6 in 2013 to 25.1 in 2018, and further to 31.2 in 2022 (budget estimates).

Given the prevailing macroeconomic environment, the debt-GSDP ratio is expected to increase further. This rising trend in debt-GSDP ratio needs to be seen in the context of revenue mobilisation efforts of the States. Overall, there is a decline in revenue receipts due to a fall in the States' own tax revenue. With dwindling revenue receipts, many States had to opt for expenditure compression to adhere to the fiscal responsibility legislation target.

This scenario underscores the importance of fiscal correction at the State level. While there exists a need for raising additional resources at the sub-national levels, expenditure prioritisation has to be carried out diligently. Discussions on freebies need to be understood in this context of squeezing of development expenditure and capital expenditure on some important social and economic services. The Centre, too, on its part needs to demonstrate commitment to fiscal discipline by sticking to announced fiscal glide path to ensure the sustainability of a frictionless co-operative federal structure.

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There are no easy answers to the freebies issue

The presumption that parties are oriented towards short-termism without any thought for the future may be incorrect



T.T. RAM MOHAN

When the then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran launched his now-famous mid-day meal scheme in 1982, it met with opposition both within his own party, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), and the Opposition. Within the party, there were concerns that it would result in leakages and corruption. The Opposition said it was intended mostly to bolster his personal image among the poor.

Parents saw merit in sending their children regularly to school. As a result, attendance at schools shot up. The benefits thus went beyond the immediate objective of providing adequate nutrition to children.

Merit versus non merit

The success of the scheme illustrates a broader point. It is hard to capture the total welfare effects of a given scheme at the outset and, therefore, hard to evaluate the merit of a given freebie (a word used to describe subsidised consumption). Bicycles for children may look like a cheap electoral bribe. But those familiar with rural areas would know that poor transport is a serious obstacle to attending school or college. Television sets may not be about recreation, they could be vehicles for imparting useful information or they could simply bring the family together, both of which have wider benefits for society.

Economists make a distinction between 'merit' goods and 'non-merit' goods. Merit goods, such as education and health care, have positive externalities, that is, the public benefit exceeds the private benefit. Such goods are worth subsidising. Not so 'non-merit' goods.

But what is 'merit' or 'non-merit' is not always readily discernible. With their acute appreciation of grassroots realities, politicians often have a better understanding than economists do of the 'merit' underlying certain freebies. They have a much better grasp of what it takes to change the lives of the disadvantaged or to bring about social transformation

Court's intervention

These considerations seem to underlie the Supreme Court of India's decision to refer the matter of freebies to a three-judge Bench instead of to a panel of experts as indicated earlier. During the hearings, the then Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, remarked, "A shaving kit for a barber, a bicycle for a student, equipment for a toddy tapper or an iron for a washerman change their lifestyle and uplift them... That is why, sorry to say, you elite lawyers cannot understand." How true.

The Supreme Court has framed four questions for the three-judge Bench: What is the scope of judicial intervention? What should be the composition of the expert panel to examine the issue? Can the court pass any enforceable order? Does *S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Government of Tamil Nadu and Others* (2013) need reconsideration?

In its ruling in *S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Government of Tamil Nadu and Others*, the Supreme Court of India provided an emphatic answer to the third question and it



FILE PHOTO/K.V. SRINIVASAN

also partially addressed the first question. The case arose out of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam government's election promise of colour TV sets for a specified group of individuals in 2006 and the decision of the AIADMK government in 2011 to distribute goodies such as blenders, grinders, electric fans, etc.

The Court addressed the argument that freebies are unproductive expenditure and hence must be frowned upon. The Court remarked, "Whether the State should frame a scheme, which directly gives benefits to improve the living standards or indirectly by increasing the means of livelihood, is for the State to decide and the role of the court is very limited in this regard."

The top court's observations on the specific issue of whether the distribution of blenders, grinders, fans, *mangalsutras*, etc. is a desirable form of expenditure are worth quoting at length. "The concepts of livelihood and standard of living are bound to change in their content from time to time. It is factual that what was once considered to be a luxury has become a necessity in the present day... Hence, ... largesse in the form of distribution of colour TVs, laptops, etc. to elig-

ible and deserving persons is directly related to the directive principles of the State policy... Judicial interference is permissible when the action of the government is unconstitutional and not when such action is not wise or that the extent of expenditure is not for the good of the State."

Should the Supreme Court be issuing guidelines on a matter such as freebies? The Court observed that guidelines such as the Vishakha guidelines on sexual harassment could be issued where there was a legislative vacuum in respect of an issue. There was no such vacuum with respect to freebies: The Representation of the People Act dealt adequately with corrupt practices on the part of political parties.

Public finances and a cap

It does appear that the crucial questions on freebies have been answered substantially. However, in the present petition, a new issue has been posed, namely, the potential for freebies to undermine public finances. What is to stop a political party from promising freebies left, right and centre in order to get elected and leaving behind a bankrupt economy? That seems to be the motivation for having a three-judge Bench revisit *S. Subramaniam Balaji*.

The Supreme Court faces difficult questions. How do you rein in expenditure choices that are not responsible? Who makes the judgment on whether political parties are being responsible enough? Duvvuri Subbarao, former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, has proposed a cap on freebies, suitably defined. Alas, political parties will find a way around caps on freebies just as they have found ways around caps on the fiscal def-

icit. Moreover, it is hard to argue that freebies are the sole or even primary cause of fiscal imbalances. There is no assurance, therefore, that a cap on freebies will mean a return to overall fiscal prudence.

It is also incorrect to suppose that political parties are entirely oriented towards short-termism and will indulge in spending without any thought for the future. Political parties view themselves as going concerns that are in the game for the long haul. They are unlikely to take decisions that will wreck an economy and discredit them in the eyes of the electorate forever.

About growth and equity

Lastly, the issue is not expenditure on freebies *per se* but the choice of productive versus unproductive expenditure. It is all very well to say that we should be investing in job creation instead of blowing up scarce funds on freebies. But jobs in industry or services go to the relatively privileged, that is, those who have access to education and the means to afford it. A big chunk of freebies goes to those who will not be able to access the jobs created by productive expenditure.

So, how much to spend on freebies relative to productive expenditure is also a question of growth versus equity. It is a question that can be answered ultimately only by the electorate. They will do so by voting to power parties that they think have got the balance right. We may have no choice but to rely on democratic accountability to address the issue of freebies.

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Adani, RRPR seek SEBI clarity on NDTV warrant conversion

Media group promoters say deal can't go ahead sans nod

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

NDTV promoter entity RRPR Holding Private Ltd. and Adani Enterprises Ltd. (AEL) subsidiary VCPL have written to markets regulator SEBI seeking clarification on whether any regulatory restrictions prohibit the news network's founders from transferring shares amounting to a majority stake to Adani Enterprises.

"VCPL has received a reply on behalf of RRPR whereby RRPR has reiterated that Mr. Prannoy Roy and Mrs. Radhika Roy [the network's founders] are prohibited by SEBI, vide its order dated

November 27, 2020, from accessing the securities market for a period of two years," AEL said in a filing.

"It further states that since SEBI alone can determine whether the restrictions contained in the SEBI order apply to the transaction, RRPR has addressed a letter dated August 28 to the SEBI to determine if the warrants can be converted into equity shares ahead of the November 26 deadline laid out in the SEBI order, and that any further action to be taken, can only be based on the SEBI response."

"VCPL has also written a letter dated August 29 to SE-

BI, requesting SEBI to help provide clarity... and avoid confusion in the minds of public shareholders of NDTV that has arisen due to the stand taken by RRPR and issue appropriate response to RRPR clarifying that the SEBI order does not restrain RRPR from allotting shares to VCPL," as per the filing.

On August 23, the Adani Group said it was acquiring a 29.18% stake in NDTV via the acquisition of VCPL, which came to hold 99.99% in RRPR Holding through conversion of warrants into equity. NDTV's promoters have said the deal cannot go ahead without SEBI's nod.

RBI mulls fraud registry to help check banking frauds

Move aimed at preventing repeat offences, says ED Sharma

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank is considering setting up a fraud registry to create a database of fraudulent websites, phones and various modus operandi used for digital fraud.

Such a database would help prevent fraudsters from repeating the offence as the websites or phone numbers would be blacklisted, RBI executive director Anil Kumar Sharma said on Monday.

“There is no definite timeline for setting up of the fraud registry,” he said.

“At present, we are talking to different stakeholders including different depart-



Anil Kumar Sharma

ments like payments and settlement and supervision of RBI,” Mr. Sharma added.

Payment system participants would be provided access to this registry for near-real time fraud monitoring. The aggregated fraud data

would be published to educate customers on emerging risks.

Mr. Sharma also said that the customers of the Credit Investment Company (CIC) would come under the Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS), 2021.

Sharing details of complaints filed under the Ombudsman Scheme, he said 4.18 lakh complaints were received during 2021-22 as against 3.82 lakh in the previous year.

As many as 97.9% cases were cleared last financial year compared with 96.5% in the previous year.

Sensex, rupee slide on Fed's hawkish tone

Sensex slips 1.5%, rupee loses 7 paise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices fell more than 1% each on Monday in sync with weak global markets and a sharp fall in technology stocks.

The rupee depreciated 7 paise to 79.91 against the U.S. dollar due to risk aversion in the global markets and a strong greenback overseas after hawkish comments from the U.S. Federal Reserve.

A massive sell-off in the domestic equities and rising global crude prices also weakened sentiment in the forex market, experts said.

However, suspected RBI intervention restricted the rupee's fall, they added.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened sharply

 **Sell-off in domestic equities, rising global crude prices hit sentiment in the forex market**

lower at 80.10 and fell to its all-time low of 80.15 against the dollar in intra-day trade.

The BSE benchmark Sensex tanked 861.25 points, or 1.46%, to 57,972.62. Similarly, the NSE Nifty too fell 246 points, or 1.4%, to 17,312.90 points.

“Jerome Powell’s hawkish tone during the Jackson Hole symposium pointed towards a stricter rate hike while investors were expecting a milder policy action post the release of the softer July inflation reading,” said Vinod Nair, head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

IAF to induct first LCH squadron in October

Mi-35 copter squadron in service being sent for overhaul

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to formally raise its first unit of indigenous Light Combat Helicopters (LCHs) in Jodhpur in the first week of October coinciding with Air Force Day on October 8.

Ten LCHs will be inducted in the first batch completing one unit, a defence official said on Monday.

The IAF is still working out the total number of LCHs to be acquired, the official stated.

The IAF operates the older Russian Mi-25 and Mi-35 attack helicopters, of which one squadron has been phased out following the induction of 22 Boeing AH-64E Apache attack helicopters. The existing Mi-35 squadron is in the process of being sent for overhaul which will extend its life by many years.

The Army had already raised its first LCH squadron on June 1 in Bengaluru. As reported by *The Hindu* earlier, the unit will move to the Eastern Command along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on completion of the raising next year.

The Army plans to acquire 95 LCHs of which seven units, each having 10 helicopters, are planned to be deployed for combat role in the mountains.

In March 2022, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) had approved procurement of 15 Limited Series Production (LSP) variants of the LCH at the cost of ₹3,887 crore along with infrastructure sanctions worth ₹377 crore. Of the 15 helicopters, 10 are for the IAF and five for the Army. The LCH is designed and developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Li-

imited (HAL).

The Defence Ministry had stated earlier that the LCH LSP is an indigenously designed, developed and manufactured state-of-the-art modern combat helicopter containing 45% indigenous content by value which will progressively increase to more than 55% for Series Production Version.

The LCH is the first dedicated attack helicopter of the Army, which otherwise operates 75 Rudra helicopters, the weaponised variant of the indigenous Advanced Light Helicopter. It will start receiving Apache attack helicopters from early 2024 onwards, six of which have been contracted under an estimated \$800 mn deal from the U.S. It is also in talks with Boeing for the procurement of 11 additional Apache helicopters.

The new facets of terrorism

Recent attacks on public figures make a mockery of security knowledge that has been accumulated by security agencies



R.K. RAGHAVAN & AJAY GOYAL

Two recent acts of terror in Russia and the U.S. carry ominous signs for India. The first one was the attempt to murder Salman Rushdie, the famous author of the controversial 'The Satanic Verses', at an event in Upstate New York. He had been under constant police protection for years after Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a fatwa, a veritable death warrant, against him in 1989. So much time had lapsed since that threat that security services relaxed their vigil, and then, a previously unknown terrorist got to him for words he had written 34 years ago.

Mr. Rushdie is recovering but it is alarming that fanatics have such long memories. Terrorists driven by religious fanaticism are daring, suicidal and vengeful individuals and their fanaticism has no expiry date.

A second incident took place in Moscow on August 20 when the 29-year-old Darya Dugina, a nationalist and outspoken daughter of a conservative ideologue of Russia, Alexander Dugin – who is a supporter of Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine – died in a car bomb explosion. Russian State security services have already released details of a suspect, a woman, who they claim had arrived from Ukraine, rented an apartment and escaped into Europe through Estonia. Immediately after the attack, the Ukrainian government called the claim a "fiction." There is reference to a Ukrainian website which is termed as a "hit list" by Russian State security officials in which several pro-Putin journalists' and writers' home addresses and personal data are listed. Darya Dugina was on that list, and her name was crossed out as 'eliminated', moments after the explosion.

These two incidents involve prominent personalities and should worry the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The attack on Mr. Rushdie was the handiwork of a 24-year-old "sleeper", an unregistered offender who was not on the FBI records as a terror suspect. The FBI should be hugely worried because of the considerable time interval between the fatwa issued by Iran's religious leader and its execution.

The high value targets

An enormous investment has been made by the U.K. and the U.S. in protection of high value targets such as Mr. Rushdie. The question is whether the American security establish-

ment has slipped into complacency or whether it is simply impossible to protect a target because terrorists can melt away and integrate in the maze of ethnicities of the United States and emerge only to kill.

The U.S. has seen erosion of several human rights and privacy in an attempt to identify fanatic "needles in a haystack" that pose a terror threat. The U.S. agencies sift through volumes of personal data of citizens and people around the world and deploy tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify terrorists or their sympathisers.

Similarly, the Moscow incident puts a question mark on the efficacy of Russian intelligence and the law enforcement agencies. The incident involving Daria Dugina is either due to Russian overconfidence or helplessness in keeping track of all threats, or both.

Spying democracies

What these two attacks tell us when it comes to terrorism is that there is no difference between the rigours of a security apparatus in a democracy and in a heavy-handed security state. Democracies and autocracies are known to use the same tools of spying on citizens, listening to conversations, sifting through petabytes of online data using AI to find patterns or abnormalities that might lead to someone who might be part of a terrorist organisation. The recent attacks on prominent public figures make a mockery of all security drills and knowledge that has been accumulated by security agencies over the years.

Against this background comes the disconcerting report from Russia that a suspect has been apprehended there, who is alleged to have been preparing to enter India and harm an unnamed dignitary. The individual is said to owe his allegiance to an Islamic terror group. It may be invidious to name names but the contours are clear. Even in the chaotic and rumbunctious democracy of India, leaders of all hues must therefore be mindful of their words, lest they become terror targets.

Infiltration of security agencies by terror groups has always been a nightmare to governments across the globe. In the last decade, technology, software and tools for eavesdropping on all kinds of communication are deployed to tackle infiltration. But it is obvious they offer no guarantee of pre-emption and early detection. Only alert vigilance in physically defending critical infrastructure, buttressed by international collaboration can keep the determined terrorist at bay.

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General Studies Paper I	
A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies
General Studies Paper II	
A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these;
I	Structure, organization and functioning of the executive and the judiciary, Ministries and Departments;

J	Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions;
K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
General Studies Paper III	
A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
C	Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
D	Infrastructure Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc. Government budgeting;
E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
L	Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology;
M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
N	Developments and their applications and effects in everyday life;
O	Issues relating to intellectual property rights
P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;

T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;
V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
General Studies Paper IV	
A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
J	Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.
K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.