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DAILY NEWS **ANALYSIS**

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FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Vedhik - Daily News Analysis (DNA)_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Vedhik - Daily News Analysis (DNA)_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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Admiral Hari Kumar, India's Navy chief, visits Sri Lanka

Meera Srinivasan

COLOMBO

Admiral R. Hari Kumar, Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), Indian Navy, who is in Colombo on a four-day visit, will call on President Ranil Wickremesinghe, the Indian mission said on Tuesday, amid persisting concerns in New Delhi over a Chinese military vessel "re-entering" the Indian Ocean Region.

Admiral Hari Kumar arrived in Colombo on Monday at the invitation of Vice Admiral Nishantha Uluguttenne, Commander of Sri Lanka Navy, the Indian High Commission in Colombo said. During the visit, the CNS is scheduled to call on President Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena and Minister of State for Defence Premitha Bandara Tennakoon and meet senior military officials.

The Admiral is also scheduled to participate as



Admiral R. Hari Kumar

the Chief Guest at the passing out parade of Sri Lanka's Naval and Maritime Academy, in the eastern Trincomalee district, on December 15, the High Commission said in a statement.

Further, indigenous Indian Naval Ship *Sahyadri*, a multi-role missile frigate of the Indian Navy is also scheduled to make port call at Colombo [December 13] to complement the visit of the Indian Navy chief. "The ship would engage in training engagements with Sri Lanka Navy and partici-

pate in Maritime Partnership Exercises with Sri Lanka Navy," the High Commission said.

The visit comes even as Indian authorities reportedly flagged Chinese military vessel *Yuan Wang 5* "re-entering" the Indian Ocean Region last week. While there was no official comment immediately, a *PTI* report said the Indian Navy was "keeping an eye" on the movement of the Chinese satellite tracking ship.

In August this year, the same vessel became a source of diplomatic strain between the neighbours after Sri Lanka approved its arrival to the southern Chinese-funded Hambantota port, despite India raising concern. Later, Sri Lanka requested China to defer the arrival of the ship. Apart from India, the United States, too, had conveyed its apprehensions to Sri Lankan authorities at the highest levels.

Analysing U.S.-China bilateral ties

What events led to the unprecedented downturn of relations between the two countries? Is there a growing effort from both sides to reset the relationship to the pre-track war level? Is the complex relationship between the two powers set on an irreversible trajectory of rivalry?

EXPLAINER

Anand V.
Uday Nish Patel

The story so far:

U.S.-China relations have witnessed an unprecedented downturn in 2022. Nancy Pelosi's historic visit to Taiwan in August has deeply upset bilateral ties. The imposition of heavy restrictions on China's semiconductor industry by the U.S. in October has fanned the flames of rivalry further. Amid this escalation, the U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping had their first in-person interaction on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Bali in November, signalling a probable relaxation of the growing tensions.

How did relations sour between U.S. and China?

The U.S. and China, ever since the establishment of diplomatic relations in the latter part of the Cold War, have worked toward enmeshing their economic systems from the perspective of economic complementarity and strategic convergence. As a result, China rose to the status of the second largest economy and got itself ingrained into the global economy. This eventually translated into China's growing economic competence as well as its rising political ambition and might. China then started to systematically undermine U.S. global dominance through military and diplomatic means. This happened at a time when there was a growing perception of U.S. decline amidst the global financial crisis and its entrenchment in the "forever wars" of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Under Xi Jinping, China's assertiveness rose further, as its quest for primacy in the world stage became increasingly apparent. With Donald Trump's entry into the White House, the U.S. concerns about the threat from China reached critical levels. The Trump administration took progressively confrontational steps towards China, with growing bipartisan backing. The administration's imposition of tariffs on China's exports turned into a "trade war" which started to reverse the trajectory of U.S.-China relations. Though Mr. Biden succeeded Mr. Trump, the policy on China did not change significantly, as the momentum for "decoupling" bilateral relations did not just continue, but kept on gathering pace. China's crackdown in Xinjiang and Hong Kong, its "wolf warrior diplomacy" during the COVID-19 blame game, its evident support to Russia during the Ukraine crisis, and its escalating offensive posturing towards Taiwan, made it imperative for the U.S. to continue with a confrontational posture towards China.

The year 2022 witnessed the relation descend into an abyssal trajectory with the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi visiting Taiwan. The visit was extremely significant in light of sabotaging the U.S.'s stated commitment to the One China Policy as well as bolstering its commitment towards the defence of Taiwan. China expressed its exasperation through large scale military drills seemingly aimed at blockading Taiwan and signalling the U.S. of its intent to respond in kind. China has been going on an overdrive to gain technological dominance in the fourth Industrial Revolution over the U.S. In order to undercut China's growing technological prowess, the U.S. imposed a series of restrictions on China targeting its



Leading tensions: U.S. President Joe Biden with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Bali, Indonesia on November 24, 2022.

the leaders of both the countries to hit the pause button on the deterioration of ties.

What was discussed between the two leaders on the G-20 sidelines?

Mr. Biden and Mr. Xi discussed outstanding matters related to U.S.-China relations for nearly three hours at Bali. There was no joint statement released after the meeting, although both sides provided their own perspectives on issues of mutual concern. Easing tensions and reopening channels of communication were agreed upon by both the leaders. The U.S. President expressed that both the countries should "manage the competition responsibly and maintain open lines of communication", and that the U.S. is not looking for conflict with China. However, he said that the U.S. "will continue to compete vigorously" with China. Mr. Biden proposed promoting U.S.-China cooperation on the issues of climate change, global macroeconomic stability, as well as global health and food security. He also underlined the human rights concerns surrounding China's activities in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong.

On the other hand, the Chinese President stated that the relationship should not be seen by the U.S. through the prism of "democracy versus authoritarianism". Mr. Xi also re-emphasised Taiwan's position as being at "the very core of China's core interests" as well as the "the bedrock

U.S.'s commitment to the One China Policy had not changed, and that it will oppose "any unilateral changes to the status quo by either side". This is despite Mr. Biden's several previous statements which contradicted this stance. Mr. Xi also noted the "five noes" previously mentioned by Mr. Biden - not seek a new Cold War; not seek to change China's system; not to neutralise its alliances against China; not to disturb the cross-strait status quo; and not look for conflict with China. Mr. Xi stressed that both the countries needed to "explore the right way to get along".

What does the future hold?

The recent meeting between the two heads of states certainly imply that there is a move toward bringing in more stability into bilateral relations. However, to what extent could this move be aimed at taking the relations to where it was before the trade war remains questionable. For one, China has not moved away from its path to attain its long term goal of centrality in the international system. In fact, Xi Jinping has at multiple times underlined China's time bound aspiration to achieve such a goal through phased modernisation of the country. China's more specific objectives like the reunification of Taiwan with the mainland has been underscored by Mr. Xi most recently in November during the 20th National Congress of the Chinese

"new era" of Xi Jinping is fuelled by China's efforts to project rather than conceal its capabilities.

On the other hand, the Biden administration has continued with intensifying the U.S.'s rivalry with China by expanding it beyond trade and into arenas like technology and political freedoms. It has also utilised multilateral approaches like strengthening the Quad in the Indo-Pacific, and the founding of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework. However, the administration has coated these efforts with a veneer of moderation and accommodation to demonstrate some distinctiveness with the previous administration. For instance, the current U.S. administration's China policy outlined in May by the Secretary of State Antony Blinken identified China as the "most serious long-term challenge" to the international order. Nevertheless, it presented a three-pillar approach towards China - "invest, align, compete". This showcases the Biden administration's intent to deal with the threat posed by China without sliding into an inadvertent conflict.

Thus, the long-term trajectories of both countries do not seem to be poised for a reset; rather, both seem to be buying time and reducing unnecessary risks while the strategic rivalry unfolds.

Dr. Anand V. is an Assistant Professor (Senior Scale) at the Manipal Academy of

THE GIST

U.S.-China relations have witnessed an unprecedented downturn in 2022. Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan in August and the imposition of heavy restrictions on China's semiconductor industry by the U.S. in October have fanned the flames of rivalry between the two nations.

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'China plans \$143-bn push to boost chips, compete with U.S.'

Reuters

HONG KONG

China is working on a more than 1 trillion yuan (\$143 billion) support package for its semiconductor industry, three sources said, in a major step towards self sufficiency in chips and to counter U.S. moves aimed at slowing its technological advances.

Beijing plans to roll out one of its biggest fiscal incentive packages over five years, mainly as subsidies and tax credits to bolster semiconductor production and research activities at home, said the sources.

The plan, which according to the sources could be implemented as soon as

China has a stated policy priority to develop an independent chip industry

the first quarter of next year, has not been reported before.

Subsidy for purchases

The majority of the financial assistance would be used to subsidise the purchases of domestic semiconductor equipment by Chinese firms, mainly semiconductor fabrication plants, or fabs, said two of the sources.

Such companies would be entitled to a 20% subsidy on the cost of purchas-

es, the three sources said.

China has a stated policy priority to develop an independent chip industry.

The fiscal support plan comes after U.S. President Joe Biden in August signed a landmark bill to provide \$52.7 billion in grants for U.S. semiconductor production and research as well as tax credit for chip plants estimated to be worth \$24 billion.

With the incentive package, Beijing aims to step up support for Chinese chips firms to build, expand or modernise domestic facilities for fabrication, assembly, packaging, and research and development, the sources said.

India-U.K. FTA talks restart with Goyal-Badenoch meet

The dialogue for a trade pact has been stalled over multiple issues, which include political instability in the U.K.; the Ministers have urged the negotiation teams to iron out differences

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and his British counterpart Kemi Badenoch held the sixth round of discussion on the India-U.K. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) which had been stalled over multiple issues, including reported Indian demand for greater number of student visas and political turmoil in the U.K.

Ms. Badenoch, who arrived on Monday, held a round of meeting with Mr. Goyal soon after landing here and continued extensive discussion till Tuesday, amidst indications that the official negotiators would meet to deliberate on the landmark trade pact in the coming new year.

"Held a bilateral meeting with the U.K. Secretary of State for International Trade Kemi Badenoch. With the sixth round of India-U.K. Free Trade Agree-



Clearing roadblocks: Piyush Goyal greeting his British counterpart Kemi Badenoch in New Delhi on Tuesday. PTI

ment negotiations on, discussed how both sides can arrive at a mutually beneficial agreement to boost trade and investment ties," said Mr. Goyal.

'Respect each other'

"The Ministers urged the negotiating teams to work together with an aim to iron out the differences in the spirit of mutual accommodation based on the

principle of reciprocity and respect for each other's sensitivities, for a balanced, mutually beneficial, fair and equitable outcome," stated an official from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry that described the discussion as satisfactory.

Mr. Goyal presented flagship projects of the government such as National Infrastructure Pipeline,

Development Finance Institution and privatisation of non-strategic sectors PSUs, and urged the businesses in India and the U.K. to "take advantages of these initiatives for economic prosperity". The trade pact ran into trouble because of political instability in the U.K. when Liz Truss resigned after a brief stint of 44 days which also jeopardised the Deepavali deadline for the trade deal that was announced by Boris Johnson during his visit to Delhi last April.

The two-day discussion therefore marks a positive turn in negotiations as the two sides came together ending doubts over a lingering deadlock.



Watch: Rishi Sunak as UK PM | Will the India-UK FTA finally happen? | Worldview with Suhasini Haidar
bit.ly/3uNo032

Assam Accord: Constitution Bench lists citizenship case for January 10

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

A Constitution Bench on Tuesday listed for January 10, 2023 a series of long-pending petitions challenging Section 6A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 that allows citizenship to illegal immigrants, mostly from neighbouring Bangladesh, who entered Assam before March 1971. These petitions had been lying dormant while the court had gone ahead and monitored the publication of the final Assam NRC list in August 2019 and the government had enacted the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Section 6A was a special provision inserted into the Act in furtherance of a Memorandum of Settlement called the 'Assam Accord' signed on August 15, 1985 by the then Rajiv Gandhi government with the leaders of the Assam Movement to preserve and protect Assamese culture, heritage, linguistic and social identity. The Accord



Whether people who have acquired citizenship can now be denied citizenship... this question should be heard as a preliminary issue

INDIRA JAISING
Senior advocate

came after a six-year agitation by the All Assam Students Union to identify and deport illegal immigrants.

Under Section 6A, foreigners who had entered Assam before January 1, 1966, and been "ordinarily resident" in the State, would have all the rights and obligations of citizens. Those who had entered the State between January 1, 1966 and March 25, 1971 would have the same rights and obligations except that they would not be able to vote for 10 years.

Petitions were filed challenging the "discriminatory" nature of Section 6A in granting citizenship to im-

migrants, illegal ones at that. The petitioners, including Assam Public Works and others, argued that the special provision was in violation of Article 6 of the Constitution that fixed the cut-off date for granting citizenship to immigrants at July 19, 1948. One of the petitioners, Assam Sanmilita Mahasangha, a Guwahati-based civil society organisation, had sought the updation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) for Assam on the basis of the 1951 NRC and not on the electoral rolls of March 1971.

In 2015, a three-judge Bench of the court had re-

ferred the case to a Constitution Bench.

On Tuesday, appearing before the five-judge Bench led by Chief Justice Chandrachud, senior advocate Indira Jaising said the case concerned people who have been citizens for a period of 40 years. "Whether people who have been acquired citizenship can now be denied citizenship... this question should be heard as a preliminary issue," Ms. Jaising, for one of the parties, urged the court. Senior advocate Dushyant Dave, also for a party, said the focus of the case was the validity of Section 6A, and that should be decided first. Mr. Dave also highlighted questions raised about Section 3 of the 1955 Act concerning children born in India to parents, one of whom is an Indian and the other a foreigner.

The court asked the lawyers to meet and finalise the issues and present them before the Bench on January 10.

A conservation Bill that endangers forest rights

The expeditious passage of the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2021 in the Rajya Sabha this winter session – this followed its passing in the Lok Sabha during the monsoon session – needs comment. The Wildlife Protection Act (WPA), 1972 has safeguarded numerous species of wild animals and plants by prohibiting all forms of hunting and, more importantly, creating inviolate areas where wildlife conservation may be carried out. The amendment further invests in this conception of protected areas and species by bringing in newer species to be protected, augmenting the penal repercussions. While the aspects of protecting species from the wildlife trade, in line with international standards, have received thoughtful scrutiny by civil society, Members of Parliament and the Parliamentary Standing Committee, the impact of the criminal legal framework adopted by the WPA is less known.

Criminal laws and wildlife conservation

The need for criminal laws to assist wildlife conservation has remained unchallenged since its conception. From regulated hunting to complete prohibition and the creation of 'Protected Areas (PA)' where conservation can be undertaken without the interference of local forest-dwelling communities, State and Forest Department control over forests and the casteist underpinnings of conservation would not have been possible without criminal law. In this context, pitting wildlife species against communities as human-animal conflict has eluded the true cost of criminalisation under the WPA.

The recent move to increase penalties by four times for general violations (from ₹25,000 to ₹1,00,000) and from ₹10,000 to ₹25,000 for animals receiving the most protection should



Saakshi Samant

is Communications Intern, Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project in Bhopal



Mrinalini Ravindranath

is Research Head, Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project in Bhopal

Regressive policing allowed by the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill and other forest legislation hinders the full and beneficial scope of the Forest Rights Act

raise questions about the nature of policing that the WPA engenders.

Study based in Madhya Pradesh

A study by the Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project (the CPA Project examined arrest records, first information reports (FIRs), offence records of the police and Forest Department in Madhya Pradesh) found that persons from oppressed caste communities such as Scheduled Tribes and other forest-dwelling communities form the majority of accused persons in wildlife-related crimes. The Forest Department was found to use the threat of criminalisation to force cooperation, apart from devising a system of using community members as informants and drawing on their loyalty by employing them on a daily wage basis. Cases that were filed under the WPA did not pertain solely to the comparatively serious offence of hunting; collecting wood, honey, and even mushrooms formed the bulk of prosecution in PAs. Over 95% of the cases filed by the Forest Department are still pending.

Hunting offences that were primarily filed against Schedule III and IV animals (wild boars) which have lesser protection than tigers and elephants formed over 17.47% of the animals 'hunted' between 2016-20. Among the animals hunted the highest, only one in top five belonged to Schedule I (peacock). Surprisingly, fish (only certain species relegated to Schedule I) formed over 8% of the cases filed. A whopping 133 cases pertaining to fishing (incorrectly classified as Schedule V species) were filed in the last decade in Madhya Pradesh.

Forest rights, individual and collective, as part of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) were put in place to correct the injustice meted out by forest governance laws in recognising forest-dependent

livelihoods. The natural overlap of recognising forest rights in intended-as-inviolate PAs was quickly resolved by making the FRA subservient to the WPA, thereby impeding its implementation.

In the field work carried out, it was noticed that while individual forest rights in buffer zones of the Kanha National Park of Madhya Pradesh were recognised, the same cannot be said of collective rights over usage of forest resources, fishing, and protecting forest resources. Fishing, which forms an important part of subsistence for tribal communities, has come to be regularly criminalised as part of the WPA. In cases recorded by the Forest Department, as noted above, the very fact that these occurred in PAs led to the offence becoming punishable by three to seven years.

In a case from 2016 documented by the CPA Project, five men were apprehended by a range officer and beat guards as they sat across a fire with fish they had caught from the river nearby. The catch weighed less than 500 grams, yet the accused were charged with causing damage to a wildlife habitat under a host of WPA provisions. The case continues to remain pending in trial court.

Criminal cases filed by the department are rarely compounded since they are meant to create a 'deterrent effect' by instilling fear in communities. Fear is a crucial way in which the department mediates governance in protected areas, and its officials are rarely checked for their power. Unchecked discretionary policing allowed by the WPA and other forest legislations have stunted the emancipatory potential of the FRA. Any further amendments must take stock of wrongful cases (as in the case of fishing) and resultant criminalisation of rights and lives of forest-dwelling communities.

Ministry evades direct reply on demand to include Ladakh under 6th Schedule

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Evading a direct reply on the possible inclusion of Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, the Union Home Ministry has informed a Parliamentary panel that the main objective of the inclusion of tribal populations under the said Schedule is to ensure their overall socio-economic development, which the Union Territory's administration "has already been taking care of since its creation".

On August 5, 2019, the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir was bifurcated into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, the latter without a Legislative Assembly.



Steady fight: A protest in Delhi demanding the Sixth Schedule status for Ladakh. FILE PHOTO

was removed, several political groups in Ladakh have been demanding that land, employment and cultural identity of Ladakh should be protected under the Sixth Schedule.

The Schedule protects tribal populations, providing autonomy to communities through the creation of

Councils, which can frame laws on land, public health and agriculture.

In 2021, Ladakh's only member in the Lok Sabha, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal of the BJP, demanded constitutional safeguards by amending the Ladakh Autonomous Hill District Council Act for the protec-

and cultural identity of Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule.

Later, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs tabled a report in the Rajya Sabha recommending that special status may be granted to the Union Territory considering the developmental requirements of the tribal population.

Responding to this, the Ministry stated that "the main objective for inclusion of tribal population under Fifth/Sixth Schedule is to ensure their overall socio-economic development, which, the UT administration has already been taking care of since its creation and sufficient funds are being provided to Ladakh to meet its develop-

Collegium recommends five judges to top court

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium led by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud on Tuesday recommended the names of five judges for appointment in the top court and three for elevation as Chief Justices of High Courts (HC).

The five judges recommended to the government for appointment as Supreme Court judges are Rajasthan HC Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal, Patna HC Chief Justice Sanjay Karol, Manipur HC Chief Justice P.V. Sanjay Kumar, Patna HC judge Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, and Allahabad HC judge Justice Manoj Misra, in that order of seniority. If the government appoints them, the vacancies in the top court will come down to one.

The Collegium proposed the names of Uttarakhand HC judge Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra as CJ of the Jharkhand High Court. The incumbent Chief Justice, Dr. Ravi Ranjan, is retiring on December 19, 2022.

Gauhati HC judge Justice N. Kotiswar Singh was recommended for elevation as the CJ of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court. The incumbent Chief Justice, Ali Mohd. Magrey, retired on December 7, 2022.

Kerala HC judge Justice K. Vinod Chandran was recommended for elevation as the CJ of the Gauhati High Court. The current Gauhati CJ, Rashmin Manharbhai Chhaya, is retiring in January next year.

The attack on the last bastion — the judiciary

Recent comments by the Vice-President, Jagdeep Dhankar, and the Law Minister, Kiren Rijja, can be read as a concerted attack on the collegium system, the Supreme Court of India, and even the basic structure doctrine (conveniently forgetting that it is this doctrine that has kept the Indian Constitution intact). Clearly, the present government continues to try and undermine judicial independence, which it has been doing since it first came to power in 2014. As a long-standing critic of the collegium system, I might have joined a chorus that called out the problems with judicial appointments. But this onslaught from the Government has been particularly disturbing and wholly unwarranted.

An 'elected autocracy'

The Supreme Court, conceived as the custodian of the Constitution and the final arbiter of the law, has had an inconsistent history. The ghosts of ADM Jabalpur continue to haunt to this day. While the government under Indira Gandhi intended to destroy the judiciary during the Emergency, the entire Court, barring Justice H.R. Khanna, was also complicit in the erosion of citizens' rights that took place then.

Over the decades, after much reflection and repair, from both within and outside the judiciary, those dark days have been seemingly left behind. But what worried us then has now re-emerged to torment us again.

The present move — of attempting to undermine and discredit the judiciary, as seen in the comments — is part of the larger mission to make the executive the most powerful entity. Today, executive accountability is a thing of memory, for no one raises any questions about its actions. Since 2014, the Government has undertaken a well-crafted, deliberate takedown of various institutions and mechanisms that could hold the executive accountable. Its efforts may not be as brazen as the Indira Gandhi-led government, but the same ends are being achieved: the state is rendered practically comatose, and the executive, most often, has the upper hand.

Parallels can be drawn with 'elected autocracies', where elected governments use the very institutions integral to democracy to kill democracy itself and destroy civil liberties. We have heard nothing of the Lokpal since. The National Human Rights Commission has been made dormant. Investigation agencies are misused at the slightest opportunity, with action against activists, journalists, students, political opponents, or anyone who protests against the government. The Election Commission of India



Aji Prakash Shah

is former Chief Justice, Delhi High Court and Madras High Court, and former Chairperson, Law Commission of India

appears to have been clearly compromised. The Information Commission is almost non-functional. The list is long and disturbing. Others who can hold the executive accountable — academia, the press, and civil society — have also been systematically emasculated. Universities are under attack. An unbiased mainstream fourth estate in India no longer exists, and the media operates mostly as a propaganda machine. Civil society, too, is being slowly but surely strangled.

And a resurgent judiciary

Since the Supreme Court's decision in 2015 on the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act, arguably, from the Court under the Chief Justices of India (CJI Dipak Misra onwards, through the tenures of notably Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice S.A. Bobde, the judiciary has remained passive, even submissive, to the executive. Consequently, not even a whisper emerged against the collegium. However, with the last three CJIs, i.e., Justice N.V. Ramana, Justice U.U. Lalit, and Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, the Court is being more assertive and speaking in a now-aligned and confident voice. The executive seems to have recognised that the judiciary is the last bastion and final protector of civil liberties which it must overcome to claim its position as the most powerful entity in India.

History tells us that in the early years of modern India, decisions on judicial appointments were usually made on the advice of the CJI. Even if concurrence was not contemplated, for our founding fathers, an independent judiciary was non-negotiable. B.R. Ambedkar was unambiguous that appointments should have no political pressure and considerations, but that 'consultation with persons who are well-qualified ... to give proper advice' would be appropriate. This was followed through the Nehru era.

Both the Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi governments attempted to manipulate the process. The collegium was created as a historical response to contemporaneous challenges, and succeeded in preventing the executive from hijacking judicial appointments. However, I maintain that 'judges appointing judges' is never a good idea, and a formal, structured appointments commission, with rules and accountability mechanisms, is the ideal way forward.

The NJAC law could have fixed this problem but it had many flaws, structured to undermine judicial independence, including giving a veto to so-called 'eminent persons'. The Court could have read down these flaws and at least set up a body that could incrementally improve with every selection round. But the Government

refused to accede to any change or modification in the law. Eventually, the Court was forced to strike down the law completely, leaving us, once again, with the collegium system.

Fixing the system of appointments

For better or for worse, the collegium system is currently the law of the land, which everyone, including the executive, must adhere to. Instead, we see a defiant government refusing to cooperate, let alone consult, with the Supreme Court. Names proposed by the collegium are left pending for years, only to be eventually returned unceremoniously. The Government would also do well to think about its own culpability in allowing the problem of pendency and vacancies to fester. Pendency is caused majorly by poor judicial infrastructure, including an abysmally low number of judges. Court funding is at the mercy of the government, which is either particularly frugal or deliberately parsimonious in the matter. Similarly, vacancies in the higher judiciary are directly due to the Government's frequent refusal to accept names of persons who are out of favour, or who have not toed the Government's line.

All this points to the same thing repeatedly, i.e., the appointments system must be fixed. Pending a clear, rule-based system, even the existing collegium system can be improved, e.g., through well-defined criteria for appointments, transparency and accountability in selection, better methods of assessing candidates for elevation, and improved ways of ensuring diversity and representation. CJI Chandrachud, with two years in office, has a wonderful opportunity to make these changes, even as, in the long term, we strive for a well-structured and balanced legislation on a judicial commission that brings in transparency without compromising judicial independence.

Until then, issues of pendency and infrastructure should be broached in appropriate forums, such as the Chief Justices Conference, or meetings between the Prime Minister and the CJI. Press interviews or parliamentary addresses are not fit stages for this, and only serve to incite acrimony and reinforce the view that the Government does not have a cooperative spirit.

We can rest assured that the leadership at the Supreme Court appears to be in good hands now and is resisting the pressure and attacks in a dignified and restrained way. If the Government continues to stonewall, perhaps the judiciary should find ways to persuade or even compel the Government to follow the law of the land. This is the best that the Supreme Court can do to protect democracy, and for the sake of Indian citizens.

Issues of pendency and infrastructure ought to be broached in appropriate forums and in high-level meetings to quell the growing acrimony between the executive and the higher judiciary

No panel formed to consider SC status for Dalit converts: govt.

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Union government has not formed any commission to study granting of Scheduled Caste (SC) status to Dalit converts, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment A. Narayanaswamy said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

Mr. Narayanaswamy was responding to a question by YSRCP member Margani Bharat on “whether the government had constituted a commission to study giving SC status for Dalit converts”.

The response came despite the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on October 6 publishing a notification regarding the formation of a Commission of Inquiry to examine the demand for providing SC status to Dalit people of re-

ligions other than those notified in the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950.

While saying “no” to the YSRCP member, the government, however, pointed to the Gazette notification on the formation of the commission.

The first term of reference for the commission in the notification was outlined as follows: “To examine the matter of according Scheduled Caste status to new persons, who claim to historically have belonged to the Scheduled Castes, but have converted to religion other than those mentioned in the Presidential Orders issued from time to time under Article 341 of the Constitution.”

The matter of according SC status to Dalits who have converted to Christianity or Islam is pending in the Supreme Court.

Interim relief

Headline inflation's moderation below 6% in November may not sustain yet

After a seemingly interminable 10-month streak of Indian consumers facing runaway price rise of over 6%, retail inflation appeared to have relented a bit in November to 5.88%. This may only be slightly below the 6% upper tolerance threshold for the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), but constitutes some relief. Since April 2022, when retail prices surged at a near-eight year high rate of 7.8%, five of the first eight months of 2022-23 year registered 7%-plus inflation. Sequentially, November's 0.9 percentage point drop from October's 6.77% mark is the sharpest moderation in this period, with a similar correction in rural inflation's trajectory though it remains high at 6.1%. The Finance Ministry termed this a 'drastic decline' mainly attributable to a sharp decrease in food price inflation brought about by government measures. Consumer food price inflation cooled to an 11-month low of 4.67% in November from over 7% in October. Vegetable prices accounted for most of the decline in food inflation – moving from 7.8% inflation in October to deflation of 8.1% last month, and plummeting 8.3% month-on-month.

Vegetable prices may remain benign for a bit, but are volatile by nature – excluding them, retail inflation would have accelerated to 7% in November, some reckon. There has been little respite on other household budget items, including essential kitchen supplies such as cereals, milk and spices, whose inflation rates accelerated to 13%, 8.2% and 19.5%, respectively. The Government expects steps to check cereals and pulses prices to be 'felt more significantly' in coming months. Fuel inflation rebounded to 10.6%, with kerosene and coal costs rising month-on-month. Core inflation, which excludes food and energy prices and whose 'stickiness' RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das warned of in the latest monetary policy review, inched up too. Price rise in transport and communication, health, and household goods and services accelerated. About 56% of items in the Consumer Price Index basket clocked over 6% inflation in November, a higher proportion than September and October. While asserting the worst is behind us, the RBI estimates inflation to average 6.6% in this quarter, so December could yet see a bounce back beyond 7%. Inflation has to be sustainably reined in below 6% and shepherded to the preferred 4% target, but with industrial output tripping as well, the central bank may have limited room for aggressive rate hikes, and fiscal policy may have to do the heavy lifting now. That petrol pump prices remain frozen in India means no gains will accrue to consumers from the dip in global crude oil prices, unless the daily price reset regime for petroleum products is allowed to function again. The Government could fix that for starters.

The rise of rural manufacturing

There is growing evidence to suggest that the most conspicuous trend in the manufacturing sector in India has been a shift of manufacturing activity and employment from bigger cities to smaller towns and rural areas. This 'urban-rural manufacturing shift' has often been interpreted as a mixed bag, as it has its share of advantages that could transform the rural economy, as well as a set of constraints, which could hamper higher growth.

Given the size of the Indian economy and the need for balanced regional development, the dispersal of manufacturing activities is a welcome sign. However, the compulsions of global competition often extend beyond the considerations of low-wage production and depend on the virtues of 'conductive ecosystems' for firms to grow.

The movement of manufacturing away from urban locations was brought out by the World Bank in a report a decade ago (Ghani, Ejaz et al (2012) "Is India's Manufacturing Sector Moving Away from Cities? Policy Research Working Paper, World Bank). This study investigated the urbanisation of the Indian manufacturing sector by "combining enterprise data from formal and informal sectors and found that manufacturing plants in the formal sector are moving away from urban areas and into rural locations, while the informal sector is moving from rural to urban locations". Their results suggested that higher urban-rural cost ratios caused this shift.

Recent data from the Annual Survey of Industries for 2019-20, shows that the rural segment is a significant contributor to the manufacturing sector's output. While 42% of factories are in rural areas, 62% of fixed capital is in the rural side. This is the result of a steady stream of investments in rural locations over the last two decades. In terms of output and value addition, rural factories



M. Suresh Babu

is Professor of Economics at IIT Madras and currently Adviser to Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council

A steady stream of investments in rural locations over the last two decades has ensured that 42% of factories and 62% of fixed capital is in the rural side

contributed to exactly half of the total sector. In terms of employment, it accounted for 44%, but had only a 41% share in the total wages of the sector.

Studies have documented several causes for the relatively steady rise and presence of rural manufacturing. Rural areas have generally been more attractive to manufacturing firms because wages, property, and land costs are all lower than in most metropolitan areas. Broadly there could be three explanations for this shift of manufacturing away from urban locations. First is the factory floorspace supply constraints. When locations get more urbanised and congested, the greater these space constraints are. However, the driving force behind such a shift is the continuing displacement of labour by machinery as a result of the continuous capital investments in new production technologies. In cities, factories just cannot be expanded as opposed to rural areas. Thus, increased capital intensity of production is one reason for this trend.

The second explanation hinges on the production cost differentials. Many firms experience substantially higher operating costs in cities than in rural areas, with inevitable consequences for the firm's profitability and competitiveness.

The third is the possibility of capital restructuring – an approach advocated by radical and Marxist geographers. According to this view, there is a tendency for growing capital accumulation and centralisation by large multi-plant corporations. Big firms deliberately shift production from cities to take advantage of the availability of less skilled, less unionised and less costly rural labour.

The shift in manufacturing activities from urban to rural areas has helped maintain the importance of manufacturing as a source of livelihood diversification in rural India. In the aftermath of trade liberalisation, import

competition intensified for many Indian manufacturers, forcing them to look for cheaper methods and locations of production. One way to cut costs was to move some operations from cities to smaller towns, where labour costs are cheaper. This trend helped to make up for the loss of employment in some traditional rural industries. The growth of rural manufacturing, by generating new jobs, thus provides an economic base for the transition out of agriculture.

Challenges ahead

The shift towards rural manufacturing faces two major challenges. First, though firms reap the benefits of lower costs via lower rents, the cost of capital seems to be higher for firms operating on the rural side. This is evident from the shares in rent and interest paid. The rural segment accounted for only 35% of the total rent paid, while it had 60% of the total interest payments. The benefits reaped from one source seem to be offset by the increased costs on the other front.

Second, there exists an issue of "skills shortage" in rural areas as manufacturing now needs higher skilled workers to compete in the highly technological global 'new economy'. Manufacturers who depend only on low-wage workers simply cannot sustain their competitive edge for longer periods as this cost advantage vanishes over time. Manufacturers who need higher skilled labour find that rural areas cannot supply it in adequate quantities. This suggests the need for clear solutions to the problems of rural manufacturing and the most important is the provision of more education and skilling for rural workers. A more educated and skilled rural workforce will establish rural areas' comparative advantage of low wages, higher reliability and productivity and hasten the process of the movement out of agriculture to higher-earning livelihoods.

'India may be first to hold satellite spectrum auction'

TRAI in discussion with experts, regulators worldwide for suitable model, consultation paper to be floated thereafter; to recommend steps to ease process for govt. permissions, says chief Vaghela

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India will be the first country to auction spectrum for satellite communication (SatCom), and it should be designed to attract investments in the sector, telecom regulator TRAI chairman P.D. Vaghela said on Tuesday.

Speaking at a Broadband India Forum summit on SatCom, Mr. Vaghela said the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) would soon make recommendations to make permissions required for satellite communication

Aiming for the sky

TRAI received reference from DoT for spectrum to be put to auction and associated aspects of satellite communication



- Auction should be designed to attract investments in the sector
- TRAI working on auction model
- Applicants need permission from Ministries of Information, and Broadcasting, Space and Telecom

from various Ministries – Information and Broadcasting, Space and Telecom – seamless to enhance ease of doing business in the sector. He

also said TRAI had received a reference from the Department of Telecommunication for the spectrum required to be put to auction and associated aspects of

satellite-based communication. "I think India will be the first to handle the issue of auctioning the space base spectrum. We are working on it."

TRAI is yet to come up with a consultation paper on the spectrum auction as per the standard process meant for satellite communication.

When asked about the status of the paper, Mr. Vaghela said that TRAI was in discussion with experts and regulators worldwide for a suitable model and the consultation paper would be floated after those discussions are over.

'Real rates turn positive as inflation slows, peak in view'

Reuters
MUMBAI

India's real interest rate has turned positive after headline retail inflation eased below 6% for the first time this year, analysts said, suggesting that the peak policy rate is now close at hand.

The RBI has raised repo rate by 225 basis points since May, taking the terminal rate to 6.25%, to curb inflationary pressures. Inflation had stayed above the central bank's repo rate for this year, implying a negative real rate.

"India returned to a positive real policy rate in Nov, 2022, and this month's 35 bps (basis points) rate hike to 6.25% has moved the real (inflation-adjusted) repo rate even more emphatically into positive territo-



ry," Prasenjit K. Basu, chief economist at ICICI Securities wrote in a note.

"We retain our view that the Dec. 2022 rate hike was the last one for FY23 (fiscal year 2023), and the next policy action by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will entail a rate cut of 25 bps," Mr. Basu added.

India's retail inflation was at 5.88% in November, as against 6.77% in the previous month, surprising

analysts who had predicted the reading at 6.40%. Inflation had stayed above the central bank's target for 10 straight months to October.

While the central bank does not target real rates, most analysts expect it to try keeping the inflation-adjusted rate at close to 1% to support growth.

This would mean that the central bank will be ready to pause rate increases as inflation is seen easing towards 5% in the first quarter of 2022/23, implying a real rate of above 1%.

While the economic research division of State Bank of India believes that the chances of a rate increase are minimal in February, Nomura lowered the probability to 60% from 70% previously.

Bad loans written off by banks in the last five years

10.09 In ₹ lakh crore,
the worth of
the bad loans

written off by banks during the last five
financial years, Finance Minister Nirmala
Sitharaman informed Parliament.

Non-performing assets, including those in
respect of which full provisioning has been
made on completion of four years, have
been removed by way of write-off. PTI

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Only one-fourth of sanctioned solar projects have taken off, says Minister

Some solar parks were cancelled due to slow progress; other hurdles include difficulty in acquiring land, environmental issues and halt in economic activity owing to pandemic, New and Renewable Energy Minister R.K. Singh tells Rajya Sabha

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The Union government has so far sanctioned solar projects with a capacity of nearly 39,000 MW but only a fourth have actually been commissioned so far, reveal figures presented by R.K. Singh, Minister for New and Renewable Energy, in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday.

Under the 'Scheme for Development of Solar Parks and Ultra Mega Solar Power Projects', a total of 57 solar parks of aggregate capacity of 39,285 MW were sanctioned until No-



Tapping the sun: Fifty-seven solar parks with a total capacity of 39,285 MW were sanctioned until November-end. REUTERS

vember-end. However, only solar power projects of 10,027 MW have been commissioned in these parks.

Citing reasons for the shortfall, Mr. Singh said some solar parks had been cancelled due to their

"slow progress". The key challenges in this scheme included hurdles in acquisition of land with clear title; a "mismatch" in the time taken to set up a project and the infrastructure to route the power pro-

duced to the grid; "environmental issues" and the halt in economic activity due to COVID-19, he said.

Bird habitat affected

In his reference to "environmental issues," Mr. Singh mentioned the "Great Indian Bustard (GIB) issue". In recent years, the habitat of the GIB – a critically endangered species that number less than 200 in Rajasthan – has been encroached upon by solar power projects, particularly by transmission lines that endanger the bird.

The Supreme Court, last April, directed power com-

panies to lay underground cables in solar parks in Rajasthan though few companies complied with the order.

The New and Renewable Energy Ministry told the Supreme Court in December 2021 that laying underground cables were impractical and would greatly raise the cost of solar power.

India had committed to installing 1,75,000 MW of renewable energy by 2022 of which 1,00,000 MW was to be solar power. As of October 2022, 61,000 MW of solar power was installed, according to numbers presented in Parliament.

Breakthrough in fusion technology

Agence France-Presse

WASHINGTON

U.S. researchers announced a historic nuclear fusion breakthrough on Tuesday that could pave the way for alternative clean energy sources.

The Lawrence Livermore

National Laboratory (LLNL) said an experiment it conducted this month “produced more energy from fusion than the laser energy used to drive it.”

The U.S. Department of Energy described the achievement of fusion igni-

tion as a “major scientific breakthrough” that will lead to “advancements in national defence and the future of clean power.” LLNL director Dr. Kim Budil described it as “is one of the most significant scientific challenges ever tackled by humanity.”

Only 2% of cybercrime complaints get registered as FIRs

1,500 The number of complaints of cybercrime reported daily across the country in the last three years of which only 2% have turned into FIRs, the Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai informed Parliament. More than 16 lakh cybercrime incidents have been reported and more than 32,000 FIRs have been registered. PTI

Chinese tried to change LAC status quo: Rajnath

Indian Army bravely prevented the PLA from transgressing into our territory and compelled them to return to their posts, Defence Minister tells Parliament about the clash at Yangtse

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Chinese troops unilaterally tried to alter the status quo on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh on December 9 and the move was contested by Indian soldiers in a firm and resolute manner, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Tuesday.

Making a statement in both Houses of Parliament on the clash at Yangtse in Tawang sector, Mr. Singh said: "The ensuing face-off led to a physical scuffle in which the Indian Army bravely prevented the PLA [People's Liberation Army] from transgressing into our territory and compelled them to return to their posts. The scuffle led to in-



Calling for peace: The Chinese side was asked to maintain peace and tranquillity along the border, Rajnath Singh told Parliament. PTI

juries to a few personnel on both sides."

"I wish to share with the House that there are no fatalities or serious casualties on our side," he said.

Meanwhile, speaking to the media outside Parliament, Home Minister Amit Shah said: "No one can capture an inch of land till the Narendra Modi govern-

ment is in power. The BJP government will not allow any incursion on land. We will not leave an inch of land. The bravery shown by soldiers is appreciable, they have saved our land."

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UPROAR IN PARLIAMENT

» PAGE 10

PLA blames India for latest face-off at LAC

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

The Chinese military on Tuesday blamed India for triggering the December 9 clash by "illegally crossing" the Line of Actual Control (LAC). People's Liberation Army Senior Colonel Long Shaohua, spokesperson for the Western Theatre Command, said the Chinese military was conducting "a regular patrol in the Dongzhang area" on "the Chinese side of the LAC".

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PLA blames India for latest face-off at LAC

That was where the troops were "blocked by the Indian Army illegally crossing" the line, he said. "We ask the Indian side to strictly control and restrain frontline forces and work with the Chinese side to maintain peace and tranquillity on the border," he said. "Our troops' response is professional, firm and standard, which has helped to stabilise the situation. Both sides have been under disengagement since then."

In a separate comment, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin at a daily briefing said the "the current border situation between China and India is generally stable" and "both sides have maintained unimpeded communication on border-related issues through diplomatic and military channels".

Aggressive posture

The clash has underlined the growing risks of "strategic miscalculation" along the border, a former senior Indian official said, with China's increasingly aggressive posture wrongly discounting India's willingness to respond.

The PLA's recent LAC transgressions reflected an aggressive posture, seen since 2013, as well as raised the question "whether there is a potential for strategic miscalculation by China after the military stand-off in Ladakh", former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to China Vijay Gokhale wrote in a newspaper published on Tuesday by Carnegie India on China's India policy. "Two Chinese assumptions – that India will not intentionally escalate militarily in response to low-level coercion and that it will not form alliances against the coercer – should be weighed against the changes in Indian strategic thinking since 2020," he said.

"First, the ambiguity that prevailed in India's decision-making and strategic circles as to whether China is a partner or a rival has been replaced by strategic clarity. China's behaviour is now perceived as adversarial... Second, the idea of strategic restraint has been redefined. This has involved a change in risk-taking appetite among the political class, as a result of which the Snow Leopard counter-operation at Rezang La/Rechin La was carried out in August 2022," he said, referring to India's countermoves in the south of Pangong Lake which pushed China to subsequently disengage on the north bank. "This was an intentional escalation by India that was not anticipated by China," he noted. "Thus the Chinese assumption that there will be no immediate backlash to low-level coercion on the LAC because India is risk-averse may no longer be valid."

He said Chinese scholars "also need to revisit the idea that an Indian response to future military coercion will remain indefinitely low" as India "is now more willing and committed to enhancing military capacity in preparation for the situation of armed coexistence that it expects to prevail along the LAC."

'Need better risk management'

With growing tensions along the border, there was a urgent need for better risk management, Mr. Gokhale argued. "The Galwan incident has shown that, contrary to Indian hopes, preventive measures and the pursuit of peace and tranquillity may not be sufficient to deter a China that believes it has military advantage along the LAC," he cautioned. "Thus, given that there is likely to be a military imbalance there in the short term, India should prioritise the pursuit of higher-level risk management. This is qualitatively different than seeking peace and tranquility—risk management shifts the focus from the ground tactical level to the politico-strategic level. Dialogue at this level would reduce the risk of escalation to an undesirable threshold. Thus, the resumption of political

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-drawal 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.