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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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On the Parasnath trail, resisting Adivasi erasure

In Jharkhand, the Parasnath Hills are seeing Jain-Santhal conflict, with each side claiming it as their own. At the core of the discord is their differing belief systems, the give and take of community living waning, and traditions gradually hardening into opposing positions, finds **Abhinav Lakshman**



(Clockwise from top) In Giridih, Jharkhand, the Parasnath Hills are the site of a conflict between the Jains and Adivasis; the Santhal place of worship; activist Sikandar Hembrom; at the entry from Madhuban, the Adivasi worship site does not find space on the signboard. MAASOB CROWD/WHY

During the full moon of the Baisakh month (in May), Adivasis from the Santhal community in Hazaribagh, erstwhile Manbhum, and the larger Santhal Pargana areas in Jharkhand, gather at the base of Marang Buru or the hill deity. Here, by the stump of an otherwise towering Sal tree, with five stones dug into the mountain rock, they stand, with bows, arrows, and tangis (broad axes) in hand. They will spend the next three days in the jungle.

The annual custom, dating back generations, begins with a night-long hunt by the Santhal men in the forested hills along the eastern side of the Chota Nagpur Plateau. It culminates in a two-day tribal session to discuss community problems and resolutions.

Marang Buru, where the ritual is conducted, is located on the slopes of the Parasnath Hills, in present-day Jharkhand's Giridih district, also home to Sammed Shikharji, its highest peak at 1,350 metres, and one of the holiest pilgrimage sites of the Jain community. Here, followers believe 20 of the 24 Tirthankaras (enlightened beings) attained nirvana.



Jains from across the country undertake the 27-km trek to the summit and back, where 20 Tonks (pinacles), one for each Tirthankara, are located. The pilgrimage takes them through the hills, including the site from where the Santhals' sacred hunt begins. Jain pilgrims are bound by their scripture not to hurt any living creature. There are no lights on the hill, as these attract insects, which the Jains are then in danger of stepping on.

Saving Marang Buru, saving Shikharji

The last few weeks have seen protests from the Jain community across India against the Jharkhand government's December 2022 proposal to turn it into a religious tourism spot, in line with the Union government's 2019 plans to turn the hills into an eco-tourism hub. Succumbing to the "Save Shikharji" protests, the Environment Ministry issued an Office Memorandum earlier this month, suspending all plans for tourism activities on the Parasnath Hills and the surrounding wildlife sanctuary, noting that "The Government recognizes its sanctity and significance for the Jain community...".

Neither directive mentioned the significance of the hills for Santhals. This has triggered a centuries-old conflict between local Adivasis and the Jain community over worshipping rights on the slopes of the Parasnath Hills, widening the rift of mistrust between the two communities.

Sikandar Hembrom, 33, a local activist and social worker from the Giridih district, has been hearing stories of his Santhal forefathers going on the Baisakh hunt for as long as he can remember. Though it has been over a decade that he himself has joined in, he has never made a kill. "The ritual's importance is not in the kill; it is in the act of going into the forest for the hunt," he says. "It is our way of being one with the forest, the hill, and worshipping it. Sometimes we deliberately just join the chase and don't go for the kill." In fact, each village sends two men with *nagadas* to scare the animals away.

Just a week after the Jharkhand government's proposal for religious tourism became public, Digambar Jain monk Pulak



We have never claimed the hill just for us. We have respected the Jains' faith and even restricted our rituals as a mark of respect

SIKANDAR HEMBROM
Activist and social worker

Sagar is on the YouTube channel of Jirsharnam Media that has 5.95 lakh subscribers.

"Sammed Shikharji is hurting. All of us know how Sammed Shikharji is being misbehaved with. The Central and State governments are playing with our faith," he says in an angry voice on the channel in Hindi.

"When the Ram Temple is built in Ayodhya, Jains rejoice; when [Narendra] Modi forms the government, Jains rejoice. Jains have given votes, notes, and support, and gave the country a PM as strong as Modi. Whenever the nation needed Hindutva to be saved, the Jain community came forward. We have always supported RSS's efforts. Where is that Hindu today when the Jain community is under attack, and their faith is being made fun of?" The video was posted on December 29, with a logo on the top left saying, "Save Shikharji". It has, as of January 19 evening, 2.85 lakh views.

"A site as pure as this... people are eating meat there, they are drinking liquor... We cannot let this site become a tourist spot, a place for picnics," Mr. Pulak Sagar says in the video titled, "Mala chhodo, bhala pakado (Let go of the prayer beads; take up the spear)".

Mr. Hembrom asks, "Who does he want to save Shikharji? The only people who go there are Jain tourists, local residents, and Adivasis in the area."

The tourist trail

The Parasnath Hills see unprecedented crowds between December and March, especially during Makar Sankranti. The entire 9-km stretch to Sammed Shikharji and Parasnath Temple (a Shiva temple on the next hill) is lined with trash along both sides of the path. Wild monkeys play with plastic bottles and wrappers, and most shopkeepers along the way burn plastic garbage for warmth. There are long stretches without a dustbin in sight. People smoke; some play music on portable bluetooth speakers. Business is booming at the shops.

"Tourism has been going on here for a while now and there is only so much we can do to keep trash out of the hills," says an official of the Bharatvarshiya Digambar Jain Tirth Kshetra Committee, who has been managing a guest house in Madhuban, at the base of the hills, for about two decades now.

But activists like Mr. Hembrom say that speeches like the one Mr. Pulak Sagar has been delivering have led to Jains from across the country visiting the pilgrimage site and even those who have not, blaming local Adivasis and their annual Marang Buru ritual for "polluting" their religious site.

Erasing a shared symbol

Chandrakant Jain, 58, and his sister had started climbing up Sammed Shikharji the day after Makar Sankranti. Having attended a meeting of the local Digambar Jain society in Mumbai, they signed a "save Shikharji" petition and made their way to the plateaus of Jharkhand. "Tourism has no place here," he said, on the way down, adding, "Even Adivasis worship here..."

Before he could finish, Mr. Jain's sister cut him off. "We have 20 Tonks on these hills; the Adivasis just



have a few spots. Of course, it is our religious site." Even as pilgrims who were visiting the site for the first time said they found local Adivasis to be helpful along their trek, several who were on their third or fourth trip insisted it was only "their" hill.

Mr. Hembrom, who also runs the Marang Buru Sanvta Sussar Baisi, a tribal welfare association, says, "We have never claimed the hill just for us. We have respected the Jains' faith and even restricted our rituals as a mark of respect. We have a custom to sacrifice a male goat on the hill during Sarhul (when the Sal tree breaks into flower, this year on February 20, 21) but for the last 22 years we have done away with the sacrifice." He adds that it was only last year when he saw the first signs of an "organised effort" to erase their historical claim to worship at Marang Buru.

As Jain communities rose in protest across India towards the end of 2022, Mr. Pulak Sagar posted videos with titles like, "Jain de denge lekin Shikharji nahi denge (We'll give our lives but we won't give up Shikharji)".

Through the Right to Information Act, Mr. Hembrom accessed the list of complaints on the Pradhan Mantri Jan Shikayat Portal between mid 2021 and mid 2022. He found 1,068 complaints filed by Jains from across the country, with similarly worded ones, scores filed on the same dates. Nearly all the complaints argued that the Marang Buru ritual never existed and that "non-Jains" had "illegally" established worship customs on "their" sacred hill, hurting their sentiments.

"See where the complaints are coming from: Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat. Most would never have even visited Parasnath," Mr. Hembrom claims, adding he has written to the Jharkhand government and the Union government about his concerns, but has received no response.

According to records in the district office of the Dumri sub-division, the sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) has been clearing the complaints one by one, noting that the custom has existed from time immemorial, has been in the knowledge of the authorities, and is not illegal.

This is not a new argument from the Jain societies that oversee the management of the pilgrimage. The 1911 Census first recorded the dispute between Adivasis and the Jain society in the form of a suit filed by Svetambar Jains, denying the existence of the Santhal hunting ritual. The suit was dismissed by the Judicial Commissioner, defeated in appeal at the High Court, with the Privy Council finally holding that Santhals had the customary right to hunt on the Parasnath Hills, according to Gazette records.

On a precipice

With mistrust deepening between the two communities, Chief Minister Hemant Soren, also from a tribal community, facing his next Assembly election in 2024, for the first time since the

controversy broke out again, appeared to have picked a side. At a public meeting in Giridih district on January 18, Mr. Soren exclaimed in Santhali, "Marang Buru is ours and will remain so," adding that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was trying to "divide" people in the State.

Meanwhile, Mr. Hembrom, himself a member of the BJP, is desperately trying to reason with the party leadership at the State and Centre, to build support for their cause, as he gathers together as many Adivasi organisations as possible to join an all-Jharkhand bandh on January 24.

The support is coming along, with 102 Santhal associations from multiple States and other tribal societies pledging to participate. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad has publicly thrown its weight behind the Jain community.

Praveen Murmu, 35, of the Adivasi Chhatra Sangh's Giridih chapter, says, "Parasnath is home to Hindu gods like Shiva. Hindus in the area celebrate Durga Puja and Jains worship their gods there. Why then is the Santhal religious hunt being erased this way?"

"Our fight is with the Centre and the State government. All we are seeking is that they recognise the significance of the hill for the Santhal community and amend official notifications acknowledging our historical claim to the hill. Even the Monitoring Committee that is supposed to be



For the first time, I feel we might no longer have work on the hill

RAM PRASAD TURI
Palangpata, Bihar

formed makes room for just one Adivasi member against two Jain community members (one from the Digambar sect and one from Svetambar sect)," Mr. Hembrom says, adding that it would only be fair to have two Adivasi members on the committee and at least one non-Adivasi local of the area.

Amidst this, Mr. Hembrom's outfit is also trying to ensure that this year's hunt and Sarhul celebrations go smoothly, but tempers are running high and many members told *The Hindu* that they are not sure if they can prevent the sacrifice on Sarhul this year. "Local Adivasis are looking forward to a productive hunt on Marang Buru and the sacrifice this Sarhul, in a bid to reclaim their traditional rituals," Praveen Kumar, an activist working with Mr. Hembrom, says.

Falling out

In anticipation of the protest next week, the Jharkhand Armed Police, local police, and the Central Reserve Police Force have stationed extra battalions near the base of the hills at Madhuban. The Parasnath trails maintain a facade of normalcy, but those dependent on tourism for their livelihoods are anxious.

Ram Prasad Turi, 42, who has been carrying palanquins to take pilgrims up and down the slopes for over two decades, says, "Wherever we go, we try to find some work and earn something. We were confident that the hill would always have something for us." Already losing out to teenagers on motorcycles who offer pilgrims a much faster and considerably more comfortable ride to the top, Mr. Turi says of the renewed conflict between Adivasis and the Jains, "Now, if we are pushed from both sides, of course we will feel the pressure. For the first time, I feel we might no longer have work on the hill."



Air India may borrow some artworks after govt. transfer to national gallery

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Air India plans to borrow some of the over 4,000 paintings, sculptures and other artefacts, including works by M.F. Husain and S.H. Raza and Salvador Dali ashtrays, to recreate the airline's history at its new office. But concerns remain over the government's decision to transfer the vast repertoire of the airline's artworks to the National Gallery of Modern Arts (NGMA).

On Wednesday, the Civil Aviation Ministry signed a memorandum of understanding with the Culture Ministry in a symbolic handing over of the artworks that will be housed at the NGMA after they are transferred "in six to seven months" from Mumbai where they are stored in a godown at Air India's office in Nariman Point.

These artworks were under the charge of a special purpose vehicle of the government which houses all the assets of the erstwhile national carrier, which were not part of the privatisation deal under which Tata Sons gained the ownership of Air India last year. "We would like to loan back some of the artworks for our new office in Gurgaon to tell the story of Air India and its rich history," its CEO, Campbell Wilson, told *The Hindu*.



An ash tray designed for Air India by Salvador Dali.

It is learnt that the airline had expressed its intent to keep with itself all the artworks which were a result of its founder JRD Tata's vision to showcase "a little of India" at its booking offices across the world at a time the erstwhile Tata Airlines was expanding its global reach.

Though officially the government was in charge of the artworks, it is Air India which has been responsible for its custody even after the airline's privatisation.

Cataloguing process

A senior official of the NGMA declined to provide a timeline over which the artworks will be brought to Delhi, and said that they will now start the process of cataloguing them.

The artworks were collected over six decades between early 1950s and 2007 and includes those by India's best-known artists such as M.F. Husain,

S.H. Raza, S. Gaitonde, K.A. Ara, Anjolie Ela Menon, Arpana Caur and B. Prabha. There are stone sculptures dating back to the 9th century, woodwork, a collection of exquisite clocks and a costume collection.

The heyday of the airline had artefacts such as ashtrays designed by surrealist Salvador Dali, which were meant to be gifted to first-class passengers, or menu cards painted by B. Prabha.

But some ask whether the NGMA is the right place to house the artworks.

"An institution like NGMA would be interested in modern arts, which is their mandate. But Air India's art collection goes beyond modern art. Air India's collection is one of the richest in India and includes nearly 4,000 artefacts. The NGMA would be lost if they were to take all of the works. They wouldn't know what to do with it. They may also have space constraints to store all the works," says art historian Meera Dass, who was tasked with preparing an inventory of the works owned by Air India in 2018.

"What we really need is a dedicated aviation museum in the country considering we were early entrants to the sky market alongside the U.S., the U.K. and Germany," Ms. Dass says.

The political flux in Pakistan

As the economic and social conditions following the floods remain tense in Pakistan, the political landscape is not far behind. The effects of political engineering by the deep state to certain ends for the 2018 election can still be felt in the country especially in the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan

WORLD INSIGHT

D. Suba Chandran

With the dissolution of Punjab and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provincial assemblies, Pakistan's politics has entered tumultuous territory. Former Prime Minister and founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan believes that now the PTI has a better chance to return with more seats. On the contrary, the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML-N) and the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) have been trying to avoid holding elections immediately. They want more time to stabilise the economy and improve social conditions before asking the people to vote. However, Mr. Khan senses a public mood against the Establishment and wants to capitalise on it. The PDM would want to strengthen its case with the Establishment firmly, before making the next step. The economic situation and the social conditions following the floods remain tense in Pakistan. All of the above, along with the lack of political consensus leaves national politics in a flux. At the same time, in the provincial level, there is an effort to revamp regional political parties in Balochistan and Sindh.

The race for Punjab

For the PML-N, winning Punjab is important to come back to Islamabad, preventing the Sharifs from doing so is the primary task for the PTI. Mr. Khan is now battling without the support of the Establishment; for him, the latter is no more a neutral umpire. He is pursuing confrontational politics, perhaps in the hopes of making Punjab volatile. The province is the most populous and politically powerful in the country. The party that controls Punjab will control Pakistan. The PML-N leads Parliament but has failed to capture the Punjab provincial assembly.

Of the 342 seats in the National Assembly, 272 are directly elected, and 70 are reserved for women and minorities. Put together (the open and reserved seats), Punjab alone has 173 seats, followed by Sindh (75), KP (55), and Balochistan (20). All that a party needs to have a majority in Parliament is 172 seats; in paper, if a party wins all the seats from Punjab for the National Assembly, and does not have a single seat from the other three provinces, it may still be able to form the government in Islamabad.

Therefore, the Punjab province holds the key for both PTI and PML-N. For the PTI, the 2018 election in Punjab was a miracle. The Establishment's backing was considered as a primary reason for the win. Secondly, the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), then a new Brevi religious party, floated just before the elections, ate into the PML-N share in Punjab. Though the TLP could not win a single seat for the National Assembly, it spoiled the chances for PML-N in many constituencies, thereby providing space to the PTI. The PML-N has to win the hearts and minds of the people of the Punjab province first, but the current economic situation does not provide adequate space to do so. This is why Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif wants more time to hold elections.

In terms of internal party divide, both the PML-N and PTI have problems. For the PML-N, the two star campaigners – Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz are not in the country. It is also imperative to prove that all is well within the Sharif family. There are rumours about a divide between the Sharif brothers, and also between their siblings – Maryam Nawaz and Hamza Shehbaz. For the PTI, a section starting from Ja-



In defiance: Supporters of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan attend a rally, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan in November 2022. AP

hangir Tareen has left the party. There is an effort to form a third front with them; the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) also seems to be winning their support, so that it can have its presence in south Punjab.

In all of this, where does the TLP stand? What will be its political calculation? In the past, it has not been shy to use violence to make its presence felt in Punjab.

The wrestle in Karachi

Sindh politics, outside Karachi, seems to be with the PPP. Zardari has succeeded in keeping the party together and therefore, rural Sindh remains with the PPP. Karachi is the primary puzzle in Sindh. The city of lights has around 20 seats for the National Assembly, and 40 plus seats for the Sindh provincial assembly. The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) used to have the larger share of the above, but the 2018 election witnessed PTI taking over the lion's share in Karachi. The Pashtun population, and a section of the middle class is believed to have shifted to the PTI in Karachi.

The bigger political question in Karachi has been the MQM fragmentation. The deep state by 2018 had succeeded in making the party into MQM-minus Altaf Hussain (Altaf Hussain is known as the founder of the MQM). The process also resulted in the party getting fragmented into three factions – MQM-P (led by Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui), Pakistan Sarzameen Party (led by Syed Mustafa Kamal), and the third one headed by Farooq Sattar. Last week, mediated by Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, all three factions have come together. Two reasons are being projected for this reunification. One, the realisation that they have lost their bargaining power both at the national and provincial level, and the rise of PTI as a common threat. Two, a general perception, that the deep state is behind the reunification process. It is said that the deep state wanted to remove Altaf Hussain from Karachi's politics and thereby remove MQM's hold over the city. It succeeded in both – it forced Altaf Hussain out of Karachi and got Imran Khan in. Now, the deep state, it is argued, would want the MQM to be back, to keep Mr. Khan out.

The PTI would be the loser in the above discord in Karachi. The PPP may retain its

control over rest of the Sindh; and the MQM may win the city back. If the factions remain united. If not, religious parties from Jamaat-e-Islami to the latest entrant, the TLP, may find a space. But, how would Mr. Khan, with a substantial Pashtun following in Karachi respond to the above developments?

A highly fragmented Balochistan

Balochistan politics is also in a state of flux. This is due to the fragmentation of regional political parties, and the failure of national parties to find any reasonable space in provincial politics. None of the regional parties led by the Sardars could find a larger space nor could they unite the people with a pan-Baloch appeal.

As a result, provincial politics remain fragmented, and the deep state does not have to do much. Of all the engineering that happened around 2018, the formation of the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) has been the easiest. The party came into being overnight, succeeded in forming the government in Balochistan, and became a coalition member of the PTI. During the last two weeks, members of the BAP have been joining the PPP; Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) (JUI-F) has also been witnessing a revival in the province, with some of the Baloch leaders joining the party. The end game here has not been clear so far.

The provincial politics here may not have much of an affect nationally. There are only 20 seats for the National Assembly from Balochistan. But, it may impinge on provincial politics. In Gwadar, there is a middle-class movement outside tribal politics taking shape. In the heart and west of the province, a slow-burn insurgency is on the rise led by Baloch militants. In the north, the Pashtun ingress into Balochistan from KP and Afghanistan continues, though politically they are divided, as could be seen from the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP). There is a divide within the PkMAP, which can be seen from the recent splits, expulsions and related factional strife. The three sub-regions of the province are in different forms and stages of flux.

The stronghold

Of all the four provinces, the most stable

politically is the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Mr. Khan is confident that his fort is holding, and that the PTI would win the province again. His confidence stems from the fact that none of the other parties are strong enough. The Awami National Party (ANP) which ruled the province from the days of the Khan brothers, PPP, PML-N and religious parties – all have declined during recent decades.

However, a threat to Mr. Khan's confidence could come from the young tribal uprising led by the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement, and the violence unleashed by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the tribal regions. The first one is a socio-political movement demanding a new space for Pashtun youth; and the second one is a murderous terrorist organisation with whom Mr. Khan sympathised in the past.

Where is the political flux heading?

Political actors are getting ready to face the election this year. This is likely to make the situation unstable in the near future. The second reason for the flux is the change in the deep state's preference.

During the previous election, it decided to bring Imran Khan into the centre and propped the provinces to that goal. Political engineering in Punjab, Karachi and Balochistan were a part of the above design in 2018. Today, the situation is different, and stands reversed. Whether the deep state is with the PML-N or not is unclear but it is definitely not with Mr. Khan. Will it remain neutral? Contrary to the statements made by the outgoing army chief that the Establishment should stay out of politics, recent developments convey a different story.

Will Mr. Khan accept the emerging political situation, and the follow-up results, especially, if it is not in his favour? The possibility of Mr. Khan taking a confrontational position, and even boycotting the process cannot be overruled.

In any case, his recent decisions convey that he would not be likely to play by the rules.

D. Suba Chandran is Dean, School of Conflict and Security Studies at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru

THE GIST

Former Prime Minister and founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan believes that the PTI has a better chance to return to power with more seats now. On the contrary, the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML-N) and the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) have been trying to avoid holding elections immediately. They want more time to stabilise the economy and improve social conditions before asking the people to vote.

Of the 342 seats in the National Assembly, 272 are directly elected, and 70 are reserved for women and minorities. Put together (the open and reserved seats), Punjab alone has 173 seats, followed by Sindh (75), KP (55), and Balochistan (20). This means that the party that controls Punjab will control Pakistan.

One of the main reasons for the flux is the change in the deep state's preference. During the previous election, it favoured Imran Khan at the centre and propped the provinces to that goal. Today, the situation is different, and stands reversed.

Collegium recommends names for three HCs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended the elevation of lawyers and judicial officers to the High Courts of Madras, Karnataka and Allahabad.

In resolutions published on Thursday, the collegium approved the proposal

for the elevation of advocates Vijaykumar Adagouda Patil, Rajesh Rai Kallangala and Tajali Moulasab Nadaf as judges of the Karnataka High Court.

It also recommended to the government the names of nine lawyers – Prashant Kumar, Syed Qamar Hasan Rizvi, Manish Kumar Nigam, Manjive Shukla, An-

ish Kumar Gupta, Nand Prabha Shukla, Arun Kumar Singh Deshwal, Kshitij Shailendra and Vinod Diwakar – for elevation to the Allahabad High Court.

The collegium has recommended three judicial officers and five advocates for elevation as judges of the Madras High Court. The judicial officers are Pe-

riyasamy Vadamalai, Ramachandran Kalaimathi and K. Govindarajan Thilakavadi.

The advocates are Venkatachari Lakshminarayanan, Lekshmana Chandra Victoria Gowri, Pillaipakkam Bahukutumbi Balaji, Ramaswamy Neelakandan and Kandhasami Kulandai-velu Ramakrishnan.

SC backs right to free speech of 2 lawyers up for judgeship


Collegium refuses to drop the name of R. John Sathyan and Somasekhar Sundaresan; it also reiterates the names of advocates Amitesh Banerjee and Sakya Sen for Calcutta HC judgeship

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium, in separate resolutions published on Thursday, backed the right to free speech of two lawyers recommended for appointments as judges in the Madras and Bombay High Courts.

“All citizens have the right to free speech and expression under Article 19(1) (a) of the Constitution. Expression of views by a candidate does not disentitle him to hold a constitutional office so long as the person proposed for judgeship is a person of competence, merit and integrity,” the collegium of Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud and Justices S.K. Kaul and K.M. Joseph said.

It refused to drop the name of advocate R. John Sathyan for the Madras High Court merely because

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SC COLLEGIUM



the government received an Intelligence Bureau report that he had shared a Web portal's article critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and another regarding the death of a medical aspirant who was unable to clear NEET, while portraying it as a “political betrayal”.

‘Integrity intact’

Instead, the collegium, in its January 17 resolution, said Mr. Sathyan should get precedence over all the other names recommend-

ed by the collegium on that day. It also drew the Centre's attention to the part of the same IB report which said Mr. Sathyan did not have any “overt political leanings” and his integrity was intact.

On Bombay High Court advocate Somasekhar Sundaresan, the government had deduced that he was a “highly biased opinionated person” from his social media posts. It accused Mr. Sundaresan of being “selectively critical on social media on the important

policies, initiatives and directions of the government”.

‘Part of public debate’

Sharply contradicting the government's opinion on the lawyer, the collegium said, on the other hand, there was “no material to indicate that the expressions used by the candidate [Mr. Sundaresan] are suggestive of his links with any political party with strong ideological leanings”. In fact, the issues discussed by Mr. Sundaresan in his posts were part of public debate in the media, the judges' body said.

The collegium reiterated the names of advocates Amitesh Banerjee and Sakya Sen for Calcutta High Court judgeships. It had recommended these two names four years ago in December 2018. The government returned them in November 2022 without citing “fresh material or ground” for its objection.

SC Collegium firm on appointing gay lawyer as HC judge

Govt. had objected to the proposal citing Kirpal's relationship with Swiss national and possibility of bias because of his advocacy for LGBTQ rights

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium on Thursday stood firm by its resolve to have the government appoint openly gay lawyer Saurabh Kirpal as Delhi High Court judge, saying every individual is “entitled to maintain their own dignity and individuality based on sexual orientation”.

The three-member collegium of Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, Sanjay Kishan Kaul and K.M. Joseph took the rare decision to publish the full extent of the government’s objections to Mr. Kirpal, based on his sexuality and his “passionate” advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights.

The collegium referred to letters from the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), forwarded by the government, frowning upon Mr. Kirpal’s partner being a Swiss national, that they have an “intimate relationship” and the lawyer is “open about his sexual orientation”. The government, the collegium said,

File pending

In a rare decision, the three-member Supreme Court Collegium on Thursday revealed the full extent of the government’s objections to **Saurabh Kirpal’s** appointment. A look at his file:



SAURABH KIRPAL

October 13, 2017: Kirpal was unanimously recommended for judgeship by the Delhi High Court Collegium

November 11, 2021: This was approved by the SC Collegium

November 25, 2022: The Department of Justice refers the file back to the SC Collegium for reconsideration

Collegium backs right to free speech of 2 lawyers

The Supreme Court Collegium has backed the right to free speech of two lawyers recommended for appointment as judges in the Madras and Bombay

High Courts. “Expression of views by a candidate does not disentitle him to hold a constitutional office,” the collegium said. PAGE 13

was also worried that same-sex marriage was not recognised in India though “homosexuality stands decriminalised”.

“Moreover,” the collegium quoted the Law Minister’s missive of April 2021

stating that Mr. Kirpal’s “passionate attachment to gay rights” did not rule out the “possibility of bias and prejudice”.

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SC Collegium firm on appointing gay lawyer

Replying to the government, the Collegium said the R&AW did not consider the individual conduct of either Mr. Kirpal or his partner as having “any bearing on national security”.

Besides, many constitutional authorities in India have or had foreign spouses. “Many persons in high positions, including present and past holders of constitutional offices have had spouses who are foreign nationals. There can be no objection to the candidature of Shri Saurabh Kirpal on the ground that his partner is a foreign national,” the collegium said. Moreover, in this case, Switzerland was a friendly nation, the collegium pointed out to the Centre.

Constitutionally recognised right

The collegium said the fact that Mr. Kirpal is open about his sexual orientation goes to his credit. The lawyer’s sexual orientation is his constitutionally recognised right. He has never been “surreptitious” about it. Mr. Kirpal, the Collegium said, possessed “competence, integrity and intellect” and he would be an asset to the Delhi High Court as a judge.

“His appointment will add value to the Bench of the Delhi High Court and provide inclusion and diversity,” the collegium underscored.

If appointed, Mr. Kirpal would be India’s first openly gay judge in a High Court. The collegium however added a line that it “may have been advisable for the candidate [Mr. Kirpal] not to speak to the Press” about his prolonged appointment process.

Mr. Kirpal’s name was recommended five years ago by the Delhi High Court Collegium, in October 2017. The Supreme Court Collegium had approved his name in November 2021. The government had returned his file to the Collegium for re-consideration on November 25 last year.

Interested party

The PIB might be good at checking facts, but it cannot be the sole arbiter of truth

A proposal by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology that seeks to force social media platforms to take down content “fact-checked” by the Government’s Press Information Bureau (PIB) as false needs to be opposed without even a second look. The proposed amendment to the IT Rules opens the door for the PIB or any other agency “authorised by the central government for fact checking” for the purpose of such takedowns. This is problematic at many levels, with deep implications for free speech and information. At the most basic level, the question to be asked is how a wing of the “nodal agency of the Government of India”, whose job is “to disseminate information to the print and electronic media on government policies, programmes, initiatives and achievements”, could be the deciding authority on what is factual and what is not. The disturbing absurdity of an interested party also playing the judge cannot be missed. It is a really nasty world of disinformation out there but one would have to be delusional to think that governments do not have an axe to grind. If the proposal is implemented, the government can play the super censor at will.

While this proposal signals a new low in the administration’s thinking on matters of regulating news and information, things were not rosy prior to this either. The government in recent years has given enough indications that it wants to control the news sphere. The reworked IT Rules in early 2021 are an example of this. A similar mindset was reflected in the provisions of the data privacy Bill that gave government agencies a free pass. Defending the government and its institutions in the public sphere by putting out data or statements is very much within the PIB’s ambit and logically defensible; but fact-checking is a very different thing. This is not to say that the PIB’s fact check unit has not debunked rumours circulating on various social media platforms. It has, but it has done so as the agency of the government. Making its “fact-checks” binding on news disseminating platforms is something else. With this, the government will have a tool with which to easily throttle voices opposing it. Indeed, it will be the sole arbiter of truth. The Editors Guild of India has rightly criticised the proposal by pointing out that “determination of fake news cannot be in the sole hands of the government and will result in the censorship of the press”. Fake news has to be dealt with in an appropriate manner, but the proposal in question will only make the task harder.

Judging a decade of the POCSO Act

Ten years have passed since the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, enacted in consequence to India's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992, came into effect on November 14, 2012. The aim of this special law is to address offences of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, which were either not specifically defined or inadequately penalised. Amidst the debate on the poor conviction rate under POCSO and a lowering of the age of consent from 18 years to 16 years (though rejected by the Central government), it is worth evaluating its impact on the ground.

A significant feature of the POCSO Act is its gender-neutral nature. Even though the National Crime Records Bureau has not published data on male and female victims separately, in Chhattisgarh, male child victims accounted for about eight in every 1,000 POCSO cases (0.8%). Though the reported number is not big, it still endorses society's apprehension that the sexual exploitation of male children is also a serious issue that has been largely unreported. Second, there is sufficient general awareness now to report cases of sexual exploitation of children not only by individuals but also by institutions as non-reporting has been made a specific offence under the POCSO Act. This has made it comparatively difficult to hide offences against children.

The storage of child pornography material has been made a new offence. Further, the offence of 'sexual assault' has been defined in explicit terms (with increased minimum punishment) unlike an abstract definition of 'outraging modesty of a woman' in the Indian Penal Code.

No change in investigation

However, a large part of the investigation of offences under the Act is still guided by the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). The investigation of penetrative sexual assault cases generally involves recording the statement of the prosecutrix, a medical and forensic science laboratory (FSL) examination, and determination of the child's age. The POCSO Act provides for recording the statement of the affected child by a woman sub-inspector at the child's residence or place of choice. But it is practically impossible to comply with this provision when the number of women in the police force is just 10%, and many police stations hardly have women staff. In 2015, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) introduced a scheme to create an Investigation Unit on Crime Against Women (IUCAW) which was to be made up of 15 police officers (with at least one-third



R.K. Vij

is a former Special Director General of Police of Chhattisgarh

comprising women officers and headed by an additional superintendent of police) in each district. Its aim was to ensure quality investigation of crimes against women on a 50:50 expenditure sharing basis; the response by States to the scheme has been half-hearted. Similarly, despite funds being provided by the Centre to strengthen mahila desks, many police stations still do not have even a single woman staff.

Similarly, though there is a provision to record statements using audio-video means, and a Supreme Court judgment, *Shafiq Mohammad vs The State of Himachal Pradesh* (2018), on capturing and preserving the scene of crime of heinous offences using audio-video means (followed by standardization of technical specifications by the Bureau of Police Research and Development for uniformity), the pilot project has yet to be implemented across States. In the absence of proper infrastructure to ensure the integrity of electronic evidence, the admissibility of evidence recorded using any audio-video means will always remain a challenge. Another provision mandates the recording of the statement of the prosecutrix by a judicial magistrate. Though such statements are recorded in most cases, judicial magistrates are neither called for cross-examination during trial nor are those who retract their statement punished. In such a scenario, such statements get nullified.

Second, medical examination of the prosecutrix is conducted according to provisions of the CrPC. However, the medical examination of a girl child is conducted by a female doctor (as specified in the POCSO Act). Even so, and as observed by the Supreme Court of India, there are instances where the banned two-finger test is still in use. Further, there have been no attempts to upgrade the FSLs in States to expedite the examination of exhibits. The fact is that many cases have a charge sheet without an accompanying FSL report, which is then decided by courts.

Issue of age determination

Third, though age determination of a juvenile delinquent is guided by the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, no such provision exists under the POCSO Act for juvenile victims. The Supreme Court in *Jarnail Singh vs State of Haryana* (2013) held that the given statutory provision should also be the basis to help determine age even for a child who is a victim of crime. However, in absence of any change in the law or even specific directions, the investigating officers (IOs) continue to rely on the date of birth recorded in school

admission-withdrawal registers – which, in most cases, parents (in the absence of hospital or any other authentic records) are not able to defend in the court. Age estimation based on medical opinion is generally so wide in scope that in most cases minors are proved to be major. Once a minor is proved to be a major, the probability of acquittal increases based on other factors such as consent or no injury to private parts. Thus, the POCSO Act has made no difference in investigation when it comes to proving juvenility.

Period of investigation

Further, the time mandated to complete investigation of rape (as in the CrPC, without a similar provision in the POCSO Act) is two months. Though the aim is to expedite investigation, it has resulted in two significant changes on the field. One, there is much pressure on the IOs to somehow submit a charge sheet in two months irrespective of what stage the investigation is at. The IOs do not want to invite internal punishment as the Ministry of Home Affairs supervises POCSO cases through the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) and State police headquarters. Thus, unfortunately, the focus is largely on completion of investigation in two months irrespective of quality.

Second, if a charge sheet was not put up in 90 days of the arrest of the accused, he/she was granted bail. Now, when a charge sheet is put up in 60 days of the FIR (and not arrest), the accused may seek bail immediately after the filing of the charge sheet. Thus, it is the accused, and not the victim, who gets the benefit of completing an investigation in a shorter time.

The POCSO Act provides that the court shall presume that the accused has committed the offence. No conditions whatsoever are laid down in the POCSO Act in contrast to the Indian Evidence Act (Section 114(b)) which clearly provides for the prosecution to prove recent intercourse, and the prosecutrix to state in court that she did not consent. However, it has been observed that even after the minor age of the victim is proved, no such presumption (howsoever small a relevance it may have) is taken up by the court during trial.

Under such circumstances, the expected increase in the conviction rate is unlikely to be achieved. Therefore, it is time that there is a review of the way the POCSO Act is implemented to see how far it has helped victims of sexual exploitation and what more needs to be done to ensure justice.

The views expressed are personal

There needs to be a review of the way the Act has been implemented, as there are imperfections despite its impact

Women officers in command soon

A total of 244 of them are being considered by the Army for promotion from the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel to Colonel against 108 vacancies and the first set of such postings is expected by January-end; selection is expected to ensure gender parity as they will be posted to command assignments

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Army has begun the process for selection of women officers for command postings in the rank of Colonel, which has so far been the domain of male officers.

According to sources, a Special No. 3 Selection Board is being conducted for promotion of women officers from the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel to Colonel from January 9 to 22. This flows from the Supreme Court judgment in 2021 upholding an earlier

vices other than combat.

"A total of 244 women officers are being considered for promotion against 108 vacancies, from 1992 batch to 2006 batch, in various Arms and Services (Engineers, Signals, Army Air Defence, Intelligence Corps, Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps and Electrical & Mechanical Engineers)," an Army source said.

At the culmination of the Selection Board, the 108 women officers who are declared fit will be under consideration to be



Women Army officers after the Supreme Court judgment allowing them permanent commission on February 17, 2020. R.V. MOORTHY

January 2023," the source government to promote af-

said a total of 60 affected women officers have been called as observers for the Selection Board to ensure fair conduct and clarify their apprehensions, if any.

Following judicial intervention, the Army granted permanent commission (PC) to women officers on a par with their male counterparts. "All women officers granted permanent commission are undergoing special training courses and challenging military assignments to empower them for higher leadership roles in the Army," the source said, adding that

considered for permanent commission in their 10th year of service.

For the first time, five women officers cleared the Defence Services Staff Course (DSSC) and the Defence Services Technical Staff Course (DSTSC) examination last year, which is held annually in September. The five women officers will undergo a one-year course and be given adequate weightage while being considered for command appointments, the source added.

Army chief General Manoj Pandey had an-

'UAE, India discuss rupee non-oil trade'

Reuters

DAVOS

The United Arab Emirates is in early discussions with India to trade non-oil commodities in Indian rupees, Emirati Minister for Foreign Trade Thani Al Zeyouidi said on Thursday.

The UAE signed a wide-ranging free trade agreement last year with India, which, along with China, is among the biggest trade partners for Gulf Arab oil and gas producers, most of whose currencies are pegged to the U.S. dollar.

"They are in the early stages," he said on the dis-

cussions, in an interview on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos. The UAE's trade deal with India aims to increase bilateral non-oil trade to \$100 billion in the next five years.

The large majority of Gulf trade is conducted in U.S. dollars but countries such as India and China are increasingly seeking to pay in local currencies for various reasons, including lowering transaction costs.

"We have to be realistic, we are planning our budgets based on (U.S.) dollars so it is not an overnight movement."

National Export Cooperative Society to trade nano fertilizers, dairy products in 3 months

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Nano fertilizers produced by IFFCO and dairy products from Amul will be among the first few products that are expected to be exported by the first-ever National Export Cooperative Society that was approved by the Union Cabinet on January 11. The society's registration will be complete in the next few days and the first consignment will be exported in three months, a senior government official said on Thursday.

Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO), Krishak Bharati Cooperative Limited (KRIBHCO), National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), Guajrat Coopera-



Shot in the arm: The society will have an authorised share capital of ₹2,000 crore. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

tive Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), better known as Amul, and National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) will be the promoters of the society and contribute ₹100 crore each. The society will have an authorised share capital of ₹2,000 crore with the area

of operation all over the country. It will have its registered office in Delhi.

Though Amul and IFFCO currently export products to countries such as Brazil, the Philippines, Kenya and Canada, the proposed society is expected to enhance the scale and volume of exports.

“The society will benefit the smallest of farmer or artisan who has a good product but does not have access to the right platform. Through this society, they will get access to international market and good returns too. Once the product has been tested for international standards, the packaging and export will be done by the society,” the official said.

‘Think globally’

The official said there were 8.54 lakh registered cooperatives with more than 29 crore members. “Cooperatives need to think globally and act locally to leverage their comparative advantage in all economic areas. The focus will be on exporting the surplus available in the country in the cooperative sector,” the of-

ficial said.

The society will be different from the Export Promotion Council under the Ministry of Commerce that only acts as a facilitator and provides information about the potential markets that can be tapped for a particular product.

“This society will provide end-to-end services to the cooperatives. It will open foreign bank accounts and complete all the formalities, including necessary permissions for exporting a product. The dividends will be shared with the manufacturer instantly and without any brokerage fee,” the official said.

The proposed society will hire consultants in foreign countries who will help expand its footprint across continents.

RBI to guide inflation towards 4% target by 2024: officials

Reuters

MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India's 2023 monetary policy objective is to hold inflation within the mandated tolerance band and guide it towards the medium-term target of 4% by 2024, officials said in an article published in the monthly bulletin on Thursday.

Recent data indicated “the first milestone of monetary policy is being passed - bringing inflation into the tolerance band”, the RBI officials including Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra wrote in the article on the ‘State of the Economy’.

“The objective during 2023 is to tether inflation therein so that it aligns with the target by 2024 - the second milestone,” they added.

Annual retail inflation slowed to 5.72% in December, from 5.88% in the previous month, dipping below 6% for a second straight month after having stayed above the central bank's tolerance band of 2%-6% for 10 months.

The RBI officials said a slowdown in growth with possibilities of recession in swathes of the global economy had become the baseline assessment even as inflation might average well above target but emerging markets were appearing more resilient now. “But their biggest risks... stem from U.S. monetary policy and the U.S. dollar,” they added.

SC rejects Google's plea against NCLAT order in Android case

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday affirmed a National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) order refusing interim relief to Google against a Competition Commission of India (CCI) directive to pay a penalty of ₹1,337.76 crore for “abuse of dominance” in the Android ecosystem.

A three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, however, asked NCLAT to decide the tech giant's appeal against the CCI order by



March 31, 2023.

On a request by Google, the court gave the company a week from today to comply with the CCI directives.

The CCI had quantified the penalty levied on Google at the rate of 10% of its average turnover for finan-

cial years 2018-19, 2019-2020 and 2020-21.

Google had moved the apex court after NCLAT, in early January, refused to grant any interim relief while listing its appeal for detailed hearing in April. Google had wanted a stay of the CCI order.

Affirming the NCLAT decision, the court observed in its order that it would “suffice to note that findings in the CCI order cannot be held, at the interlocutory stage, to be either without jurisdiction or suffering from manifest error which would have necessitated interference”.

Draft IT rules surreptitious assault on free speech: Cong.

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The amendment to the draft Information Technology (IT) Rules that asks social media companies to take down news articles that have been deemed “fake” by the Press Information Bureau (PIB) is “a surreptitious assault on free speech”, the Congress said on Thursday, demanding its withdrawal.

Addressing a press conference, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said IT rules for the Narendra Modi government meant “image tailoring” rules.

He said the amendment essentially meant that the PIB’s fact-checking unit had become a “judge” in taking down content which might not suit the Modi government’s image.

If the Modi government “fact-checks” online news, who will “fact-check” it, Mr. Khera asked. He said, “Muzzling the Internet and censoring online content through PIB is the Modi government’s definition of fact checking.”

“In an unprecedented move, which smacks of the Orwellian ‘Big Brother Syndrome’, the Modi government has anointed itself to be the judge, jury and executioner of online content regulation,” he said.

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.