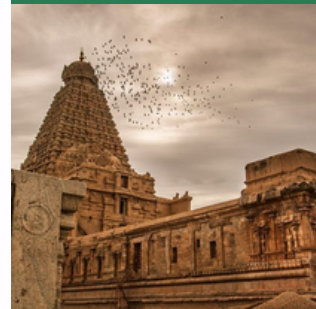




MAY

THE HINDU EDITORIAL MONTHLY COMPILATION

2024





THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: WEDNESDAY, 1 MAY, 2024

Constitution and the Redistribution of Wealth

The ongoing political campaigns have sparked a discussion, about wealth distribution in India. This controversial topic focuses on how material resources are allocated and controlled, impacting economic fairness and social equality.

CONSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The **preamble** of the **Indian Constitution** aims to ensure **economic justice, liberty** and **equality** for all citizens. **Fundamental rights** outlined in **Part III** guarantee freedoms and equality. **Part IV** includes **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)** which while not binding guide governance with a focus on justice. These DPSP provisions address justice; Article 39 (b); Promotes the distribution of ownership and control of resources for the good. Article 39 (c); Seeks to prevent wealth concentration that may harm welfare.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Initially the Constitution recognized property rights as fundamental under Article 19 (1) (f). Article 31 mandated state compensation for property acquisition. However changes were necessary due, to land reforms and public infrastructure projects requiring flexible land procurement methods. Amendments, like Articles 31A, 31B and 31C have restricted the right to property giving the government the authority to acquire land for benefit.

REGARDING JUDICIAL INTERPRETATIONS:

Courts have struggled with how fundamental rights interact with DPSP. In the GolakNath case, 1967 the Supreme Court ruled that fundamental rights should not be weakened to enforce DPSP. The current debate revolves around whether private properties considered "material resources of the community" fall under Article 39(b). Recently the Supreme Court established a nine judge Bench to interpret DPSP concerning ownership and management of material resources.

To sum up wealth redistribution remains an issue as we balance rights, with collective well-being. The judiciary's interpretation of these provisions will influence India's landscape and societal structure.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: THURSDAY, 2 MAY, 2024



Plastic Treaty: INC 4 Meeting, in Ottawa

The INC 4 gathering took place in Ottawa, Canada from April 23 to 29, 2024 with the aim of creating a binding agreement to tackle pollution in marine settings. Following the commitment of 175 nations in March 2022 to finalize the treaty by 2024 there is a sense of urgency matching the seriousness of the issue.

GOALS

The treaty seeks to prevent and decrease pollution at its origin safeguard marine ecosystems, adopt a life cycle approach promote global collaboration and establish concrete legal obligations. These actions involve setting targets for reduction advocating for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), limiting single use plastics, focusing on waste management practices, supporting research and innovation efforts and implementing worldwide monitoring and reporting systems.

CHALLENGES



Diverse Stakeholder Interests:

Reaching consensus among governments, industries and environmental organizations presents a challenge.



Reliance on Plastics for Economy:

Transitioning without causing economic disruptions requires planning.



Complex Supply Chains:

Regulating the life cycle of plastics requires coordination due to global supply chains.



Innovation and Research Gaps:

Encouraging investments, in alternatives and technologies is vital.



Cross Border Enforcement:

Ensuring effective international enforcement remains a task.



Behavioral Changes and Consumer Awareness:

Promoting consumption habits and raising awareness are hurdles.

In order to ensure that environmental objectives take precedence over benefits it is crucial to persuade decision makers of the importance of political determination and priorities. To effectively implement a treaty, on plastic usage it is essential to work educate and maintain long term dedication, from nations worldwide.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: FRIDAY, 3 MAY, 2024

Oxytocin Hormone

The recent actions taken by the Delhi High Court shed light on the use of Oxytocin hormone, in dairy communities across the capital city. **Oxytocin**, a hormone **naturally** produced in **mammals** for purposes like **reproduction** and **social bonding** has been improperly utilized in dairy cattle to **boost milk production**. This harmful practice not jeopardizes the well-being of the animals. It poses risks to human consumers. In response to these concerns the Indian government had **prohibited** the use of **Oxytocin** back in **April 2018**. The court now views its administration as a form of **animal cruelty** and urges authorities to crack down on Oxytocin usage. The primary focus is on safeguarding health and preventing harm to animals.

Oxytocin is a **hormone** originating from the hypothalamus released by the **posterior pituitary gland**. It serves functions like:

CHILDBIRTH AND LABOR

During childbirth oxytocin triggers contractions in the uterus aiding in labor progression. Healthcare providers also utilize oxytocin to initiate labor if it doesn't begin naturally or to enhance contractions during childbirth.

BREASTFEEDING

Following delivery oxytocin assists, in the release of milk from the breast. Oxytocin is crucial for fostering the bond between a parent and their newborn aiding in connection.

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Known as the "**bonding hormone**" oxytocin contributes to connections, trust and romantic relationships. It affects desire and recognition promoting emotions and emotional ties between individuals.

The consumption of **milk containing oxytocin** poses **health risks** for both consumers and cattle such as;

HEALTH RISKS FOR HUMANS:

Oxytocin is a hormone that aids in uterine contractions during childbirth and milk release during breastfeeding. Ingesting it through milk could disrupt oxytocin levels in humans. Some people may have allergies to oxytocin resulting in symptoms like skin rashes, itchiness or breathing difficulties. Milk contaminated with oxytocin may lead to issues such as **bloating**, **diarrhea** or **stomach cramps**.

HEALTH RISKS FOR CATTLE:

Misusing oxytocin, in cattle can cause problems that impact their wellbeing. Oxytocin not only promotes milk production, it can also lead to excessive production causing udder infections (mastitis) and discomfort for cows. Prolonged use of Oxytocin, in dairy cattle may result in health issues that shorten their lifespan.

To ensure safe milk consumption, it's essential to address the issue at its source and report any suspected milk adulteration to authorities.



THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: MONDAY, 6 MAY, 2024

Anti-Dumping Duties

In the three years there has been a noticeable rise, in anti-dumping duties imposed by the Finance Ministry in India. More than a third of these duties were aimed at products made by either one producer or two producers mainly in the chemical sector. A significant portion of these duties 60% were imposed on goods originating from China while 26% targeted products from China and at least one other country.

The Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) suggested dumping duties in 92 cases with about 33% of these involving products made by a single domestic producer or at most two producers. Interestingly the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) approved recommendations for dumping duties in half of these cases.

The Finance Ministry has been more open, to accepting ADD recommendations with an acceptance rate of 86% in FY24 from 42% in previous years despite concerns about how it may affect other industries.

Anti-Dumping Duties (ADD) are tariffs imposed by a government on imported goods that are being sold at a price lower than their fair market value, a practice known as "dumping." The purpose of anti-dumping duties is to protect domestic industries from unfair competition by ensuring that imported goods are not sold at artificially low prices, which could harm domestic producers. These duties are typically levied by the importing country's government following an investigation by relevant authorities to determine if dumping has occurred and if it is causing or threatening to cause material injury to the domestic industry.

The reason for implementing ADDs is to combat dumping, which when goods are exported at prices below their value—a practice deemed unfair. DGTR investigates cases. Suggests ADDs if there's proof of significant harm to local industries. CBIC has three months to either approve or reject DGTRs recommendations.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: TUESDAY, 7 MAY, 2024

GST

Goods and Services Tax

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Recently Finance Minister discussed the advantages of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India highlighting its focus on helping the stimulating economic activity. She credited the rise, in GST collections to a boost in engagement. Pointed out reductions in GST rates for essentials like hair oil, soaps, electrical appliances and movie tickets since its inception. It is noted a decrease in the weighted average GST rate from 14.4% in 2017 to 11.6% in 2019 due to ongoing tax rate adjustments. Also acknowledged the National Anti Authority's role in ensuring that consumers benefit from tax savings.

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) is a type of sales tax indirectly imposed on goods and services. Companies incorporate the GST into the product price. Customers pay for the item inclusive of the tax. The portion collected as GST is then sent to the government. In India GST has replaced taxes, like excise duty, VAT and services tax. It is a tax system that applies at stages based on destination ensuring a unified taxation structure, across the country.

Moreover various essential goods and services have been exempted under the GST framework aiding sectors such as healthcare, education and agriculture. The minister praised the business processes and reduced compliance burden for MSMEs brought about by the tax system. The implementation of GST has facilitated integration of India's markets by improving state trade and cutting logistics costs through initiatives like e invoicing and E way bills. Also highlighted that the consolidation of taxes and cesses, under GST was part of efforts led by Prime Minister to streamline taxation systems and drive economic progress.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: WEDNESDAY, 8 MAY, 2024



West Nile Fever

The Kerala government raised a warning, about West Nile fever following news of a fatality. Around eight cases in Kozhikode, Malappuram and Thrissur districts have been registered. Cases have been sporadically reported in these regions since 2011 with incidents prompting increased vigilance.

WEST NILE FEVER

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes. It is caused by a flavivirus, which is related to viruses that also cause diseases, like St. Louis encephalitis, Japanese encephalitis and yellow fever. It is commonly found in regions such as Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America and West Asia where mosquito populations are active. Temperatures are favourable for the virus to spread.

INDIAN SCENARIO:

In India, cases of WNV have been recorded in states since 1952 in Mumbai. The virus has been identified in both mosquitoes and humans across areas indicating its presence and potential for transmission.

TRANSMISSION:

Mosquitoes are the carriers of WNV with birds serving as hosts for the virus. Infected mosquitoes spread the virus to humans and animals through bites.

SYMPTOMS:

It can vary from flu symptoms to severe neurological conditions like encephalitis or meningitis. While most cases show no symptoms, severe cases can be deadly for people with weakened systems.

Preventive measures:

It includes monitoring systems to identify cases in animals, warning systems for public health authorities and deferral or testing of blood donors in affected regions. At present, there is no treatment or vaccine for WNV; therefore, supportive care remains crucial in managing severe cases.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: THURSDAY, 9 MAY, 2024

LPG Price Hike and Socio-Ecological Effects in India

Background and Government Initiatives:

Based on the 2014-2015 ACCESS survey conducted by Council of Energy, Environment and Water, it was noted that LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) emerged as the preferred fuel source. However its high cost has hindered its adoption in many areas. In response, to this challenge the Indian government launched initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) and Pahal scheme. These programs aim to boost LPG usage while reducing reliance on fuels like wood and dung which pose health and environmental risks. The focus of these efforts is on assisting 10 million households by offering subsidies and incentives to facilitate a transition, towards LPG use.

Current Situation and Challenges: With these attempts the increase in prices for LPG poses a challenge to its widespread use. India stands out with the price of ₹300 per litre among 54 countries surveyed making it harder for people to afford and sustain its usage. This especially affects regions like Jalpaiguri, where many rely on paying jobs in tea estates. A study conducted by Neeraj and Chhetri in West Bengal revealed that due to the cost of LPG people are now turning back to using firewood which has negative impacts, on both the environment and the economy.

Local Dependencies and Ecological Impact: Relying heavily on firewood not only puts stress on the environment but also poses threats, to wildlife leads to deforestation and puts individuals at risk of dangerous encounters with animals. The piece highlights the importance of exploring options that are both financially sound and environmentally friendly like strategically planting more shade trees in tea farms and promoting collaborative efforts among various stakeholders, for improved management of resources.

Future Directions: The article recommends government intervention to stabilize the costs of LPG and investigate eco options to replace firewood. This involves encouraging the adoption of fuel technologies and implementing environmental preservation measures to address the social and economic consequences of expensive LPG prices and environmental harm.



THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: FRIDAY, 10 MAY, 2024

Understanding the FLiRT COVID-19 Variants:

A NEW CHALLENGE IN THE PANDEMIC CYCLE

The recent surge in COVID-19 cases due to the emergence of new variants, specifically KP.2 and KP1.1, known as the FLiRT variants, has signaled a shift in the pandemic's behavior. These variants, descendants of the Omicron JN.1, have been identified in the U.S., U.K., South Korea, New Zealand, and India, raising concerns about another wave of infections. The Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) reported 238 cases of KP.2 and 30 cases of KP1.1 in India.

The FLiRT variants, particularly KP.2, demonstrate a higher resistance to immunity from vaccines and previous infections. Unlike endemic diseases that remain stable, COVID-19 is proving to be a cyclical disease with periodic spikes. The KP.2 variant, more prevalent in countries like the U.S. and U.K., is noted for its profound immune evasion capabilities. Preliminary research from Japan showed that KP.2 could bypass immunity from the latest vaccines and prior infections with JN.1, its ancestor.

WAY FORWARD

Despite the challenges posed by these variants, current vaccines continue to offer protection against severe COVID-19 illness. However, the rapid mutation of the virus necessitates updates in vaccine formulations. Interestingly, AstraZeneca announced the withdrawal of its COVID-19 vaccine due to a surplus of updated vaccines and concerns over rare side effects.

In India, a resurgence in COVID-19 cases was observed in April, with a significant positivity rate compared to March. While it's too early to attribute all new cases to the FLiRT variants, the consistent rise in infections highlights the ongoing risk, particularly for vulnerable populations. Given this backdrop, the approach to managing COVID-19 involves maintaining standard precautions like hygiene, masking in crowded areas, and vaccination. The challenge is not just the direct impact of COVID-19 but the broader health implications, including Long COVID symptoms like brain fog and fatigue.

IN CONCLUSION

the emergence of the FLiRT variants marks a new phase in the COVID-19 pandemic, demanding vigilance and adaptation in public health strategies to mitigate the impact of these recurrent waves.



THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: SATURDAY, 11 MAY, 2024

Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023

The Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023, is a pivotal step towards enhancing the operational efficacy and administrative efficiency of India's defence forces. Introduced by the Minister of State for Defence, during the Budget Session, this Bill addresses significant challenges in the disciplinary and administrative management of personnel across the Army, Air Force, and Navy within joint services organizations like the National Defence Academy (NDA), National Defence College (NDC), and the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC).

Current Challenges and Rationale for the Bill: Currently, disciplinary actions for service personnel are governed by the Air Force Act, 1950, the Army Act, 1950, and the Navy Act, 1957, limiting the power of officers from one service to discipline personnel of another. This fragmentation leads to inefficiencies, including financial costs and delays in disciplinary proceedings when personnel from different services are involved in the same incident. The Bill aims to unify command and control, thus streamlining proceedings and fostering a disciplined environment.

KEY PROVISIONS OF THE BILL

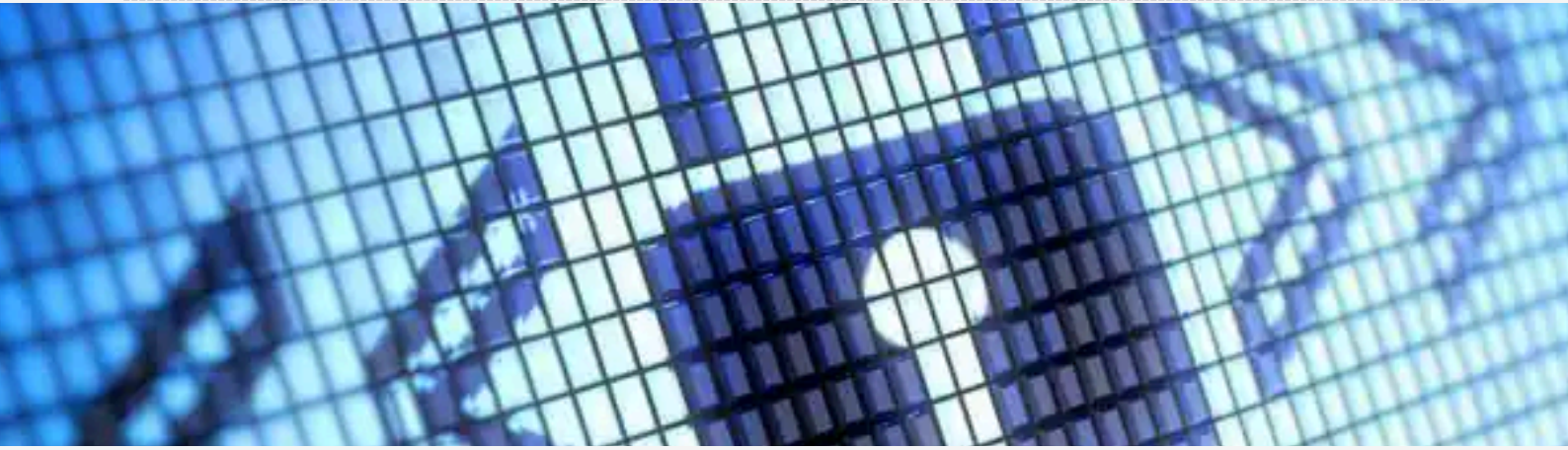
- The Bill empowers the central government to establish new inter-services organisations and gives the commander-in-chief or the officer-in-command disciplinary and administrative powers over all attached personnel.
- It ensures that personnel remain governed by their respective service Acts even while serving in inter-services organisations.
- The central government retains the authority to issue directives on matters of national security or general administration, enhancing central oversight and coordination.

Impact: The introduction of this Bill is concurrent with discussions on the theatre command system, which aims to integrate the capabilities of the three services under a unified operational command for specific geographical regions. By standardizing disciplinary procedures and command structures, the Bill will facilitate the effective management of these theatre commands, ensuring unified action and decision-making.

POTENTIAL CONCERNS

While the Bill streamlines command and control, disparities in the rules of the service Acts for similar offences could still pose challenges. Uniformity in disciplinary actions across services needs careful consideration to avoid any perception of unfair treatment among personnel.

Overall, the Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023, is expected to yield tangible benefits, including quicker case resolutions and enhanced integration among the armed forces, contributing to more effective national defense and security operations.



THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: MONDAY, 13 MAY, 2024

DigiLocker: Digital Storage with Varied Acceptance

DigiLocker, introduced in 2015 is an application developed by the government to securely store digital documents such as Aadhaar, PAN cards driving licenses and more. It's part of the Digital India campaign. It aims to reduce paper consumption while making important records easily accessible and verifiable. With a user base of over 270 million people and a total of 6.7 billion documents accessed DigiLocker plays a role in administrative procedures.

Uses

Users can conveniently retrieve their documents for purposes like passport applications verifying identity while traveling or checking educational transcripts. The apps collaboration with boards such as CISCE and the Tamil Nadu State Board allows students to access their exam results digitally with plans for similar integration with the CBSE board in progress. Considered as an eco-solution DigiLocker offers up to date document versions online eliminating the need to carry copies. This feature benefits both officials and users by reducing reliance on counterfeit documents. DigiLocker is not compulsory for passport applications its usage is being promoted to speed up the process.

SECURITY

Security remains a priority for DigiLocker under the Ministry of Electronics & ITs supervision, as part of the Digital India initiative. The platform employs security protocols like 2048 Bit RSA SSL encryption, multi factor authentication, consent mechanisms, timed logouts and regular security assessments.

Despite taking these precautions the platform is still a target, for cyber attackers. This was evident when a flaw in the registration process was fixed in 2020 following alerts from CERT In and an independent researcher.

CHALLENGES:

Even though DigiLocker offers convenience it comes with its set of challenges. People who are not familiar with using smartphones or those who cannot read may struggle to utilize the app. Inconsistencies in names or spellings on documents can also hinder the retrieval of records successfully. Moreover different government agencies and law enforcement bodies have varying levels of acceptance for DigiLocker documents with some insisting on copies despite the apps intended purpose.



THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: TUESDAY, 14 MAY, 2024

The Impact of 50 Years of Vaccination on Children Worldwide

In the five decades, measles vaccination has had an impact on the health of children worldwide. Around 94 million children have directly benefited from this vaccination initiative. The statistics show that vaccination campaigns have notably decreased both measles cases and deaths with deaths dropping significantly from 550,000 in 2000, to 207,500 in 2016.

KEY POINTS FROM THE VISUAL DATA AND ANALYSIS INCLUDE

- **Disease Reduction:** Measles vaccination has prevented about 50 million deaths since 1970. The reduction in measles deaths contributed to a larger decline in overall child mortality rates, particularly in regions with intensive vaccination drives like South Asia and Africa.
- **Global Coverage:** The expansion of vaccination programs worldwide has been a critical factor in improving child health. This includes regions like Africa, where the DTP3 (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis) vaccine coverage has risen from less than 5% in the 1970s to over 80% recently, though the ideal target is 95% for effective disease control.
- **Investment and Support:** Major contributions by global entities like Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have propelled the reach and efficacy of vaccination programs. These efforts have been particularly impactful in lower-income regions, ensuring that vaccines are accessible to all children.
- **Ongoing Challenges:** Despite the successes, challenges remain, such as reaching the under-immunized populations and dealing with the resurgence of diseases in regions with poor vaccine coverage or political instability.
- **Healthcare Impact:** Besides measles, vaccination has reduced deaths from other preventable diseases such as tetanus, whooping cough, and meningitis. Continuous efforts are needed to maintain and expand vaccine coverage to prevent these and emerging diseases like COVID-19.

This comprehensive approach to global vaccination underscores the significant strides made in public health through immunization, emphasizing the ongoing need for investment and innovation in vaccine delivery and development.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: WEDNESDAY 15 MAY, 2024

NISAR Satellite: A Game-Changer in Earth Observation

NISAR, a venture between **ISRO** and **NASA** is poised to transform earth observation through its state of the art Synthetic Aperture Radar technology. Set for lift-off this year from Sriharikota, NISAR features a dual band radar system equipped with S band and L band payloads enabling ranging coverage and high resolution monitoring capabilities. Boasting an antenna measuring 18 meters across NISAR has the capacity to comprehensively map Earth's surface twice a month offering valuable insights, into various environmental aspects.

Applications and Benefits of NISAR: NISAR has a range of functions, such, as monitoring activities, accurately measuring water bodies, vegetation and snow accumulation. It is crucial for researching climate issues, changes in agriculture and desertification to help make decisions and manage resources effectively. The satellites capability to penetrate the surface to an extent allows for observations although it is not ideal, for discovering archaeological sites buried deep underground.

Launch Timeline: The launch is now anticipated to happen in either October or November pending the resolution of issues on the U.S. Side.

ISRO:

The Indian Space Research Organisation can be traced back, to the formation of the **Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) in 1962**, which was initially part of the Department of Atomic Energy. **In 1969, INCOSPAR** underwent restructuring and was rebranded as ISRO serving as India's space agency. Throughout the years **ISRO** has made advancements in space exploration starting with the launch of its inaugural indigenous satellite, Aryabhata in **1975**. Since then **ISRO** has accomplished milestones such as developing satellite launch vehicles, like the **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)** and the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (**GSLV**).

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- **Satellite Projects and Technological Innovations:** ISROs satellite initiatives cover uses such as quantum distribution for secure communication and aircraft surveillance along with high quality imaging. Some of their projects include the Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS) and the Technology Development Satellite (TDS 01) which showcase the use of electric propulsion, in communication satellites.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: THURSDAY 16 MAY, 2024

Judicial Intervention

The Supreme Court's order to release Newsclick founder-editor Prabir Purkayastha on May 15, 2024, is a significant judicial intervention that underscores the critical importance of adhering to proper procedure and due process in legal actions, even under stringent terror laws.

CASE DETAILS

Purkayastha was arrested on October 3, 2023, by the Delhi Police's Special Cell. The police invoked the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), alleging that Newsclick received funds for pro-China propaganda. The FIR listed serious offences, including Sections 13, 16, 17, 18, and 22(C) of the UAPA, and Sections 153A and 120B of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

PROCEDURAL VIOLATIONS

The arrest was marked by significant procedural lapses. Purkayastha was arrested early in the morning and taken for his remand hearing **without being informed of the grounds** of his arrest. His lawyers were notified late and provided with an unsigned remand application via WhatsApp. Crucially, the remand order was signed at 6 am, even before Purkayastha was produced before the judge or his lawyers were informed, which violated due process.

LEGAL ARGUMENTS

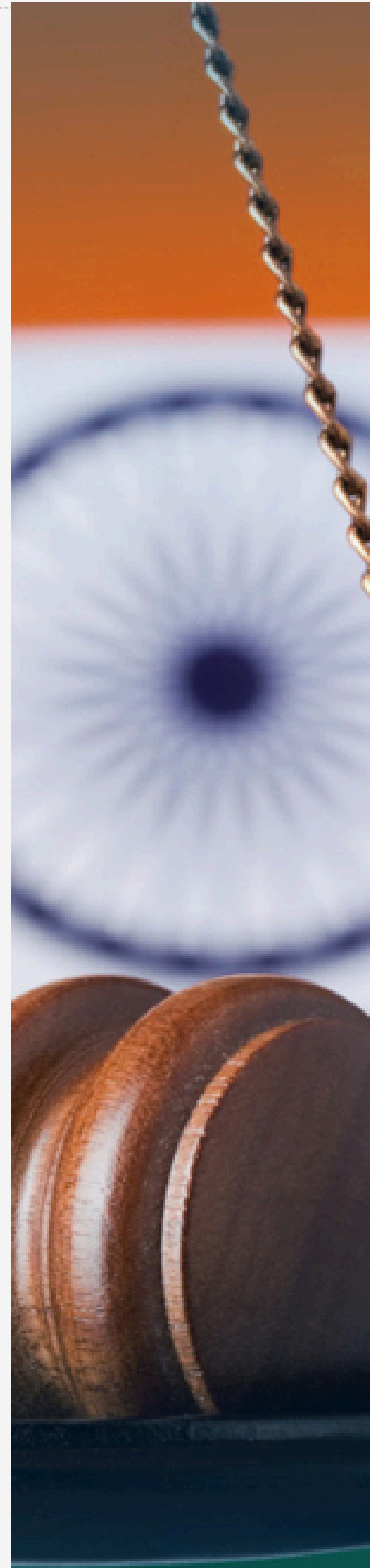
Article 22(1) of the Constitution mandates that individuals must be informed of the grounds of arrest and be allowed legal consultation. The Supreme Court, in a precedent set by the Pankaj Bansal vs Union of India case, emphasized that written grounds of arrest must be furnished immediately. This ruling applies to UAPA cases as well, underscoring the necessity of following due process.

COURT'S RATIONALE

The Supreme Court highlighted the essential role of proper procedure and due process as safeguards against arbitrary legal actions, particularly in cases involving stringent laws like UAPA where obtaining bail is challenging. This reinforces the need for strict adherence to legal protocols to protect individual rights.

CONCLUSION

The Supreme Court's decision in favor of Purkayastha emphasizes the judiciary's role in ensuring that legal actions adhere to due process, balancing national security concerns with the fundamental rights of individuals. This case is a pertinent reminder about the significance of constitutional protections and the judiciary's oversight in upholding the rule of law.



THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: FRIDAY, 17 MAY, 2024

Protection of Private Property: Supreme Court's Landmark Judgement

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO PROPERTY

The right to property was reaffirmed by the Supreme Court of India as a human right. Justices P.S. Narasimha and Aravind Kumar highlighted the importance of following safeguards when the state acquires property. The court emphasized that simply offering compensation to property owners is not sufficient to make the acquisition constitutional.

ESSENTIAL PROCEDURAL RIGHTS

- ➔ **Right to Notice:** The state must inform individuals of its intention to acquire their property.
- ➔ **Right to Objection:** Citizens have the right to be heard and object to the acquisition.
- ➔ **Right to Reasoned Decision:** The state must provide a reasoned decision for property acquisition.
- ➔ **Public Purpose Justification:** The state must demonstrate that the acquisition is exclusively for public purposes.
- ➔ **Right to Fair Compensation:** Citizens are entitled to fair compensation for their property.
- ➔ **Timely Acquisition Process:** The state must conduct the acquisition process efficiently and within prescribed timelines.
- ➔ **Conclusion of Proceedings:** The acquisition process must conclude with the vesting of rights in the state.

HC ORDER UPHELD

A Calcutta High Court order was upheld by rejecting an appeal from Kolkata Municipal Corporation as, per court records. The appeal challenged the directive to pay ₹5 lakhs and associated expenses within 60 days due, to a property acquisition.

HC ORDER UPHELD

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SUMMARY

The Supreme Court's verdict underscores the balance between eminent domain powers and individual property rights. It stresses the necessity for adherence to guidelines to prevent unwarranted seizure of properties ensuring that acquisitions serve legitimate public interests while offering just compensation to affected parties. This significant ruling reinforces the structure safeguarding property rights, in India.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: SATURDAY, 18 MAY, 2024

Coffee Boom

Driven by a global shortage in crop production, the soaring prices of coffee beans have provided a ray of hope for coffee farmers in Karnataka. These increased prices have significantly improved the farmers' income, allowing them to enhance their living standards and invest in various assets.

COFFEE PRODUCTION IN KARNATAKA:

Karnataka is India's largest coffee-producing state, with major coffee-producing districts including Chikamagaluru, Kodagu, and Hassan. The state predominantly produces two varieties of coffee: Arabica and Robusta, accounting for 70% of India's coffee production.

TYPES OF COFFEE:

ARABICA

Arabica coffee is known for its higher quality, milder flavor, and aromatic profile. It is grown at higher altitudes (600-2000 meters) but is sensitive to pests and requires more care.

ROBUSTA

Robusta coffee has a stronger, more bitter flavor and is grown at lower altitudes (sea level to 800 meters). It is more resistant to pests and diseases and yields higher quantities.

SUITABLE FACTORS FOR CULTIVATION

CLIMATE

Coffee cultivation requires moderate temperatures (15-30°C) and well-distributed rainfall (1500-3000 mm annually). Arabica prefers cooler climates, while Robusta can tolerate warmer temperatures.

SOIL

Ideal soil for coffee is well-drained, rich in organic matter, and slightly **acidic (pH 6-6.5)**.

SHADE AND ALTITUDE:

Shade-grown coffee is preferred for better quality. Higher altitudes affect the flavor and quality, with superior coffee typically grown at greater heights.

CHALLENGES:

Despite the positive outlook, coffee farmers face challenges such as high input costs and labor shortages. Climate change impacts rainfall patterns and temperatures, affecting coffee cultivation. Market volatility and fluctuating prices also pose significant risks. Improved irrigation systems and infrastructure are needed to mitigate these challenges.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: MONDAY, 20 MAY, 2024

RBI's Scrutiny on Gold Loans

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased its scrutiny on Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) involved in gold loans to ensure compliance with regulatory norms. This move aims to address violations and potential systemic risks in the gold loan industry.



RBI'S GOLD LOAN NORMS

RBI mandates that lenders cannot loan more than 75% of the gold's value submitted as collateral to ensure sufficient cushion against losses in case of default. Additionally, no more than ₹20,000 of the loan can be disbursed in cash, with the remainder deposited in the borrower's bank account. Auctions of defaulted gold must be conducted fairly and transparently in accessible locations.

REASONS FOR INCREASED SCRUTINY

The RBI's intensified scrutiny follows violations by certain NBFCs, such as IIFL Finance, which was found to have irregularities in loan disbursements, gold evaluation, and auction processes. NBFCs have been aggressively growing their loan books, sometimes offering loans exceeding 75% of gold value by overestimating collateral value. Internal assayers, rather than external ones, were used to evaluate gold, raising concerns about accuracy and compliance.

IMPACT ON NBFCs

RBI's stricter norms are expected to affect NBFCs' growth and profitability. The cash disbursement limit of ₹20,000 may reduce the attractiveness of NBFC gold loans, particularly for cash-dependent borrowers. NBFCs may need to be less aggressive in lending as the RBI enforces loan-to-value rules. The increased transparency in the auction process could raise operational costs and borrowing rates. However, these measures aim to make the gold loan business more sustainable and mitigate systemic risks.

CONCLUSION

RBI's scrutiny of gold loans aims to enforce compliance and ensure the stability of the financial system. While it may challenge NBFCs' growth, it promotes sustainable practices and reduces potential systemic risks in the long term.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: TUESDAY, 21 MAY, 2024

Population and Economic Dynamics

In 2023, India overtook China to become the most populous country in the world as China experienced a decrease in birth rate and low fertility. China reported a decline in population growth for the time leading to an increase in its dependency ratio. In contrast India's population continues to grow even as its fertility rate nears replacement levels. This change in demographics has an impact on consumer demographics and spending habits, in both countries.

CONSUMER SPENDING ANALYSIS

India has seen an increase in consumer spending outpacing China in areas. Recent data shows that India's final consumption expenditure as a percentage of GDP exceeds that of China. In 2022 India's total final consumption expenditure was notably higher accounting for 68% of GDP compared to China's 53%.

CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL CONSUMPTION GROWTH

India's impact on the expansion of consumerism stands out. It is projected that by 2030 India will see an increase in its consumer population compared to China thereby influencing the economic landscape. Forecasts indicate that India's consumer base will keep expanding making it more attractive to companies.

PRIVATE CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE

Private spending plays a role in the GDP of both nations. In 2022 India saw an increase in spending compared to China indicating the rising purchasing power and consumption habits of the middle class in India.

EXPENDITURE BY CATEGORIES

In India and China the spending habits differ significantly. In India a significant portion of expenses goes toward food, housing and transportation highlighting a focus, on needs. On the hand in China there is an emphasis on various goods and services, in their spending habits showcasing a more varied consumption pattern.

PURCHASING POWER PARITY (PPP) AND INCOME LEVELS

India's per capita spending in terms of purchasing power parity has been on the rise although it still lags behind China. On the hand when looking at figures India's per capita spending is increasing at a fast pace suggesting a boost, in income levels and overall economic progress.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FOREIGN INVESTMENT

With the increasing number of consumers and their purchasing power India is a market, for companies. The economic factors along with the benefits position India as a favourable choice than China in the foreseeable future. The ongoing growth trend in the market points towards an outlook for an economy driven by consumer demand.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: TUESDAY, 22 MAY, 2024



Environmental Footprints

IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATING FOOTPRINTS

Evaluating household environmental footprints is crucial for addressing localized environmental issues, such as water scarcity and air pollution. While climate change is a global concern, the impact of environmental footprints varies regionally, making it essential to focus on local contributions.

STUDY ON ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINTS IN INDIA

A recent study titled "Water, air pollution, and carbon footprints of conspicuous/luxury consumption in India" highlights the environmental impact of affluent individuals who engage in consumption beyond basic needs. The study examines three footprints: CO2 emissions, water usage, and particulate matter (PM2.5). It contrasts luxury consumption footprints, such as dining out, vacations, and personal goods, with non-luxury consumption footprints, like direct water usage and household emissions from fuels.

KEY FINDINGS

The findings reveal that luxury consumption significantly contributes to environmental degradation, with the top decile of income earners showing the highest increase in footprints. CO2 emissions and PM2.5 footprints rise notably in wealthier households due to the embedded emissions in goods and services consumed. This includes direct contributions from household activities and indirect emissions from luxury items. The study notes a 68% increase in CO2 emissions and a 55% rise in PM2.5 emissions among the top decile, compared to lower increases in water footprints.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

The implications of these findings are significant for policymakers. The study underscores the need for urgent action to address the disproportionate environmental impact of affluent households. It suggests that sustainability efforts should focus on reducing luxury consumption and aligning local environmental policies with broader sustainability goals. The study also highlights the necessity of implementing fair policies to mitigate the adverse effects on marginalized communities, who are disproportionately affected by luxury consumption-related environmental degradation.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: WEDNESDAY, 23 MAY, 2024

BIMSTEC's Legal Charter: A New Era of Regional Cooperation



BIMST-EC

The BIMSTEC Charter came into force on May 20, granting the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) a "legal personality." This pivotal development enables the organization to admit new members and observers, reinforcing India's commitment to regional cooperation through its **"Neighbourhood First"** and **"Act East"** policies.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Formed in 1997, BIMSTEC includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Myanmar, and India. Despite its long history, the organization struggled to reach a consensus on a common charter. The pandemic necessitated virtual meetings, culminating in the adoption of the charter during the 5th summit. Nepal's parliamentary ratification paved the way for its implementation.

SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

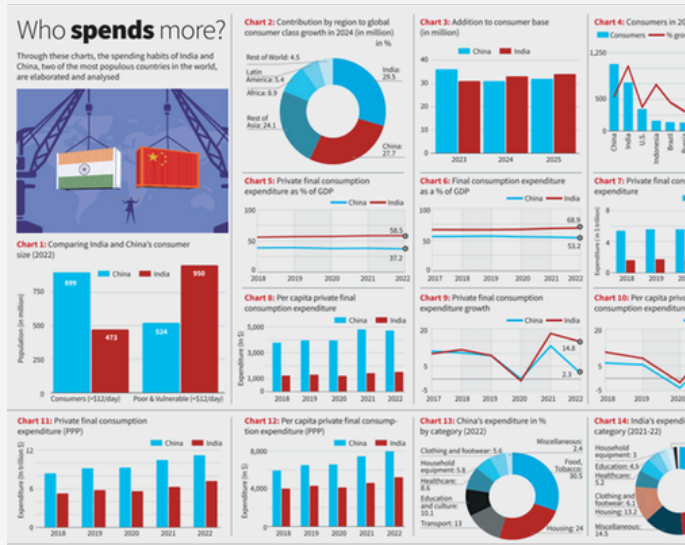
The charter provides a structured framework for enhanced regional cooperation. This marks a strategic shift from the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to BIMSTEC, given SAARC's dormancy since 2014. The growing discord between Bangladesh and Myanmar, particularly concerning the Rohingya refugee crisis, underscores the need for effective regional collaboration.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

India's endorsement of BIMSTEC aligns with its strategic interests. As the current chair, Nepal aims to balance support for both BIMSTEC and the revival of SAARC, striving for a prosperous, peaceful, and sustainable neighborhood in the Bay of Bengal region.

THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: THURSDAY, 24 MAY, 2024



Rising Debt and Household Savings

The decline in household net financial savings to GDP ratio during 2022-23 can be attributed to increased borrowing and structural shifts rather than changes in savings patterns. The household net financial savings to GDP ratio fell by 2.5 percentage points, while the household borrowing to GDP ratio rose by 2 percentage points, reflecting a rise in financial liabilities due to higher borrowing costs and greater interest payments.

CHANGES IN SAVINGS PATTERNS

Despite unchanged household savings, the net financial savings ratio dropped, driven by two main factors: higher interest payment commitments and elevated borrowing costs. This indicates an increased financial stress within households. The rise in household borrowing, which outpaced savings, suggests a shift in household behaviour driven by higher repayment obligations.

STRUCTURAL SHIFTS AND BORROWING INCREASE

The recent rise in household leverage is primarily linked to higher income financing needs and inflation pressures. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified this trend, with a notable rise in the ratio of borrowing to household income. Post-pandemic, the debt-to-income ratio has escalated, indicating a higher leverage for financial repairs. The surge in lending rates further exacerbates this trend, reflecting an increased financial burden on households.

MACRO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

The current macroeconomic landscape presents several challenges. The gap between nominal interest rate growth and household income growth has widened, pushing households towards higher leverage. Furthermore, household borrowing costs have surged, while income growth remains subdued, leading to increased financial strain. There is a critical need for macroeconomic policies that support household income growth to alleviate financial stress and stabilize the economy.

CONCLUSION

The rising household debt and declining net financial savings to GDP ratio highlight the pressing need for targeted policy interventions to support household financial health. These interventions should aim at narrowing the gap between borrowing costs and income growth, ensuring households can maintain financial stability amidst changing economic conditions.