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DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

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FOREWORD

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

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

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

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India and Bangladesh review defence relations during meet

Dialogue meeting co-chaired by Ajay Kumar and Zaman

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The fourth India-Bangladesh annual defence dialogue was held on Thursday during which the two sides reviewed ongoing defence cooperation between the two countries and expressed satisfaction that collaboration is growing despite difficulties imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Defence Ministry said.

The dialogue was co-chaired by Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar and Principal Staff Officer of Armed Forces Division (AFD) of Bangladesh Lt. Gen. Waker-Uz-Zaman.

“The talks covered the existing bilateral exercises and training and agreed to increase the complexity of these exercises. Both sides



Deepening ties: Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar greeting Lt. Gen. Waker-Uz-Zaman in New Delhi on Thursday. ■PTI

reviewed the progress on various bilateral defence cooperation initiatives and expressed commitment to further elevate engagements between the armed forces,” the Ministry said in a statement.

Both sides emphasised the need to work closely to implement the \$500 million

line of credit extended from India for defence items, the statement said.

“It was wonderful event where both sides could project their interests and also could reflect the need for sustainable mutual cooperation between the age-old friends,” a diplomatic source said on the dialogue.

Guillermo Rios is new leader of UNMOGIP

Rear Admiral Rios will succeed Major General Jose Eladin Alcain of Uruguay

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed Rear Admiral Guillermo Pablo Rios of Argentina as the Head of Mission and Chief Military Observer for the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), the office of the UN Secretary-General has announced.

Rear Admiral Rios will follow Major General Jose Eladin Alcain of Uruguay who has nearly completed his tenure. UNMOGIP emerged from UN Security Council Resolution 39 of January 1948 that set up the UN Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP).

The Karachi Agreement of July 1949 firmed up the role of UN-level military observers and permitted supervision of the Ceasefire Line established in Jammu and Kashmir.



Rear Admiral Guillermo Pablo Rios during an official ceremony in Argentina. ■ EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA

India officially maintains that the UNMOGIP's role was "overtaken" by the Simla Agreement of 1972 that established the Line of Control or the LoC which with "minor deviations" followed the earlier Ceasefire Line. Pakistan, however, did not accept the Indian argument and continued to seek cooperation from the UNMOGIP. As a result of this divergent policies, Pakistan continues to lodge complaints with the

UNMOGIP against alleged Indian ceasefire violations whereas India has not officially gone to the UNMOGIP since 1972 with complaints against Pakistan.

In view of the difference of opinion between India and Pakistan, the UN has maintained that the UNMOGIP could be dissolved only with a decision from the UN Security Council. Despite the respective official positions, the military observers have

at times hit the headlines. In the summer of 2017, Pakistan alleged that Indian side had fired upon vehicles carrying UNMOGIP officials who were travelling in the Pakistani territory.

The then MEA Spokesperson Gopal Baglay categorically denied that charge and the UN Secretary-General's office had observed that there was no evidence that could prove Pakistan's allegation. Earlier, India had asked UNMOGIP to vacate the residential property that it occupied.

The Ministry of External Affairs, however, explained that decision as part of "rationalizing the presence of UNMOGIP". The latest announcement regarding appointment of the Argentine naval figure to head the UNMOGIP however has come at a time when India and Argentina are warming up official-level dialogue. Argentina which fought the war over

the Falklands with the United Kingdom in 1982 has urged the international community to bring the U.K. to the negotiating table so that it could regain control over the Falklands. India hosted the Argentine Foreign Minister Santiago Cafiero in April. Argentina's embassy here reopened its military wing in 2021 indicating a warming up of defence ties between India and Argentina.

Mr. Rios has been part of Argentine Navy since 1988 and has served in two peacekeeping operations – the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in 1993 and 1994 and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in 2007.

He has also served as a Humanitarian Demining Supervisor with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Angola (1997-1998). He speaks English, Portuguese and Russian.

Taiwan says China's threat still remains

Tsai says island will not provoke disputes; number of Chinese jets, warships crossing median line drops

REUTERS
TAIPEI

China's threat of force is undiminished, Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen said on Thursday, even though Beijing's largest ever military drills around the island seemed to be scaling down.

Furious about a visit to Chinese-claimed Taiwan last week by U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, China launched ballistic missiles and deployed multiple aircraft and warships in recent days to simulate sea and air attacks.

Patrols to continue

China said on Wednesday it would keep up patrols but



Staying prepared: Soldiers fire 155 mm howitzers during a military drill in Pingtung county, southern Taiwan. • REUTERS

had "completed various tasks" around Taiwan, signalling a possible end to the war games even while keeping up pressure.

Taiwan has also been conducting relatively small-scale, annual exercises, scheduled before the flare-up and aimed at preparing to

repel an invasion.

"At present, the threat of Chinese military force has not decreased," Ms. Tsai told Air Force officers, according to a statement from her office.

Taiwan will not escalate conflict nor provoke disputes, her office quoted her as saying, adding: "We will firmly defend our sovereignty and national security, and adhere to the line of defence of democracy and freedom."

A source said that the number of warships close to the Taiwan Strait's median line, an unofficial buffer, was "greatly reduced" from previous days.

But several Chinese Navy

ships were conducting missions off Taiwan's east coast and near Japan's Yonaguni island on Thursday, said the source familiar with security planning.

Yonaguni is the Japanese island closest to Taiwan, about 100 km away.

Taiwan's Defence Ministry said in a statement on Thursday it had detected 21 Chinese military aircraft and six Chinese naval ships in and around the Taiwan Strait, of which 11 planes had crossed over the median line.

That was down from the 36 aircraft and 10 ships detected the previous day, when 17 aircraft crossed the median line.

War, U.S. inflation hitting global demand, say MSME exporters

Sector seeks govt. intervention, warns of orders drying up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Facing slowdown in demand in the global markets due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, MSME exporters have sought immediate intervention by the government to deal with the situation, industry players said.

The dip in demand may impact the country's exports in the coming months, they added.

Ludhiana Hand Tools Association president S.C. Ralhan said the industry was passing through "acute recession" in both domestic and international markets.

"At the moment, we are getting very small orders," he said.



Most of the exporters said they had orders for only one or two months.

"This scenario would impact exports growth," Mr. Ralhan added.

Dalpat Forge (India) manager Ashwani Aggarwal said the demand situation was "bad" in both domestic as well as global markets such

as the U.S. and Europe.

"There are demand issues mainly in the U.S. due to high inflation there. We, as exporters, are planning how to deal with this slowdown," said Farida Group chairman Rafeeq Ahmed.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) vice chairman Khalid Khan added that the order book position was "bad."

Exports dipped, though marginally, for the first time in 17 months in July, while trade deficit tripled to a record \$31 billion fuelled by a more than 70% increase in crude oil imports.

The MSME sector accounts for close to 40% of India's exports.

EXPLAINER

What is the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022?

How is the recent legislation different from the earlier Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920? What are the main concerns and oppositions against the Act?

TRISHEE GOYAL

The story so far: The Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022 provides legal sanction to law enforcement agencies for "taking measurements of convicts and other persons for the purposes of identification and investigation of criminal matters". While the legislation was enacted earlier this year, the Ministry of Home Affairs notified it to come into effect from August 4, 2022. It also repeals the existing Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920.

What is the use of identification details in criminal trials? Measurements and photographs for identification have three main purposes. First, to establish the identity of the culprit against the person being arrested, second, to identify suspected repetition of similar offences by the same person and third, to establish a previous conviction.

What was the previous Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920? Even though the police has powers of arrest, mere arrest does not give them the right to search a person. The police requires legal sanction to search the person and collect evidence. These legal sanctions are designed so as to maintain a balance between the rights of an individual and the interests of society in prosecution and prevention of offences.

The legislation comes in the backdrop of the right to privacy being recognised as a fundamental right. A fundamental facet of the right to privacy is protection from the invasion of one's physical privacy

The Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 became a necessity when the recording of newer forms of evidence such as fingerprints, footprints and measurements started becoming more accurate and reliable.

The Statement of Objectives and Reasons of the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 states that "the value of the scientific use of finger impressions and photographs as agents in the detection of crime and identification of criminals is well known". It further goes on to state that although lack of legal sanction has not created problems before, there were increasing instances of prisoners refusing to allow their fingerprints or photographs to be recorded. Therefore, "to prevent such refusals in the future...[and] to place the taking of measurements etc which is a normal incident of police work in India, as elsewhere, on a regular footing" it was considered necessary to enact the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920.

What was the need to replace this Act?

Over the years, the need to amend/update the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 has been voiced several times. In 1980, the 87th Report of the Law Commission of India undertook a review of this legislation and recommended several amendments. This was done in the backdrop of the *State of UP vs Ram Babu Mishra* case, where the Supreme Court had highlighted the need for amending this law. The first set of recommendations laid out the need to amend the Act to expand the scope of measurements to include "palm impressions", "specimen of signature or writing" and "specimen of voice". The second set of recommendations raised the need of allowing measurements to be taken for proceedings other than those under the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

The Law Commission Report also notes that the need for an amendment is reflected by the numerous amendments made to the



Act by several States. The Minister of Home Affairs, while laying the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, 2022, in the Lok Sabha, observed that with advancements in forensics, there was a need to recognise more kinds of "measurements" that can be used by law enforcement agencies for investigation.

What are the main highlights and differences in both the legislations?

Like the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920, the new Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022 provides for legal sanction to law enforcement agencies for the collection of measurements. The purpose is to create a useable database of these measurements. While at the State level, each State is required to notify an appropriate agency to collect and preserve this database of measurements, at the national level, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) is the designated agency to manage, process, share and disseminate the records collected at the State level.

What are some of the concerns with the present legislation?

Since the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 was a colonial legislation, its duplication in the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022, a post-independence legislation has raised some concerns related to the protection of fundamental rights.

The legislation comes in the backdrop of the right to privacy being recognised as a fundamental right. A fundamental facet of the right to privacy is protection from the invasion of one's physical privacy. As per the *Puttaswamy* judgment, for a privacy intrusive measure to be constitutional, there is a need for the measure to be taken in pursuance of a legitimate aim of the state, be backed by the law and be "necessary and proportionate" to the aim being sought to be achieved. In this case, while the first two tests are satisfied, as "prevention and investigation of crime" is a legitimate aim of

the state and "measurements" are being taken under a valid legislation, the satisfaction of the third test of necessity and proportionality has been challenged on multiple counts.

First, while the need for expansion of the "measurements" that can be taken is well justified, the inclusion of derivative data such as "analysis" and "behavioural attributes" have raised concerns that data processing may go beyond recording of core "measurements". That is some of these measurements could be processed for predictive policing. While this is a legitimate concern, and purposes for which the "measurements" can be processed need to be better defined, merely recording core measurements without conducting the required forensics on them would severely limit the usability of these "measurements".

Second, unlike the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 which provided that "measurements" will be taken for those either convicted or arrested for offences that entail imprisonment of one year or upwards, the current law allows for "measurements" to be taken if a person has been convicted/arrested for any offence, including petty offences. The necessity of taking measurements of such persons for investigation of offences is unclear, and such discretion is likely to result in abuse of the law at lower levels and overburdening of the systems used for collection and storage of these "measurements". Given that these records will be stored for 75 years from the time of collection, the law has been criticised as being disproportionate.

It needs to be noted here that the new legislation allows that a person who has been arrested for an offence that is punishable by less than seven years of imprisonment, and is not an offence against women and children, "may not be obliged to allow taking of his biological samples". This is definitely an improvement over the earlier law which did not allow for any such refusal. It also helps allay concerns of disproportionate collection. However, given

A comparison between the two Identification Acts

The previous Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 and the freshly notified Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022 have similarities as well as major differences. A quick look at how "measurements" of convicts and arrested persons will be collected from now on

Relevant provisions	Identification of Prisoners Act	Criminal Procedure Identification Act
Persons whose measurements can be taken	should be convicted of an offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment of one year or upwards	if convicted of an offence punishable under any law
	should be arrested for an offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment of one year or upwards	if arrested for an offence punishable under any law or if detained under preventive detention laws
	if directed by the Magistrate for measurements to be taken for the purposes of investigation of proceedings under the CrPC, provided the person has been arrested in connection with such investigation previously	if directed by the Magistrate for measurements to be taken for the purposes of investigation of proceedings under the CrPC or any other law in force; there is no requirement for the person to have been arrested in connection with such proceedings previously
Measurements that can be taken	ordered to give security for his good behaviour under CrPC	ordered to give security for his good behaviour under CrPC
	finger impressions, foot impressions, measurements and photographs	finger-impressions, palm-print impressions, foot-print impressions, photographs; iris and retina scan; physical, biological samples and their analysis; behavioural attributes including signatures, handwriting or any other examination referred to in section 53 or section 53A of the CrPC, 1973
Destruction of measurements	in case of acquittal, discharge or release, if not previously convicted of any offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment of one year or upwards	in case of acquittal, discharge or release, if not previously convicted of any offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment for any term. For convicts, records are to be destroyed from 75 years of collection

the option to not submit for "measurements" is limited to biological samples and is available at the discretion of the police officer, this exception provides restricted relief.

Another worry expressed by experts is that such collection can also result in mass surveillance, with the database under this law being combined with other databases such as those of the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS).

Lastly, concerns are being raised that the present law violates the right against self-incrimination enshrined in Article 20(3) of the Constitution of India. However, this argument is nebulous since the Supreme Court has already settled this point. In the *State of Bombay vs Kathi Kalu Oghad*, the Supreme Court had conclusively held that "non-communicative" evidence i.e. evidence which does not convey information within the personal knowledge of the accused cannot be understood to be leading to self-incrimination. Therefore, no challenge lies to the law on this ground.

What is the way ahead?

The Opposition has raised objections to a law of such import not being submitted for public consultation or referred to parliamentary standing committees, as was done for the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019 which has benefited from such scrutiny.

The Central government has responded to the criticisms of the law stating that privacy and data protection related concerns will be addressed in the Rules formulated under the legislation and through model Prison Manuals that States can refer to.

The immediate future of this law is unclear. A writ petition has been filed challenging the constitutionality of the law before the Delhi High Court. The court has issued notice to the Central government for filing a reply.

Trishree Goyal is a research fellow at the Centre for Applied Law and Technology Research, Vidhi Centre for legal policy

THE GIST

■ The Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022 provides legal sanction to law enforcement agencies for "taking measurements of convicts and other persons for the purposes of identification and investigation of criminal matters". It came into effect from August 4.

■ Over the years, the need to amend/update the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 has been voiced several times. In 1980, the 87th Report of the Law Commission of India undertook a review of this legislation and recommended several amendments.

■ Multiple concerns have been raised about the new law. One of the main concerns is that unlike the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920, the current law allows for "measurements" to be taken if a person has been convicted/arrested for any offence, including petty offences. The necessity of taking measurements of such persons for investigation of offences is unclear and will probably lead to overburdening of systems used for collection and storage of these "measurements".

Dhankhar sworn in as Vice-President

Inspired to be ever in service of Bharat, he tweets after visit to Raj Ghat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Jagdeep Dhankhar was sworn in as the 14th Vice-President of India at a brief oath-taking ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Thursday.

President Droupadi Murmu administered the oath of office to Mr. Dhankhar, 71, who took the oath in Hindi in the name of God.

“*Bahut bahut badhai* (many congratulations),” President Murmu said after Mr. Dhankhar signed the register of oath. Be-



President Droupadi Murmu greets Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Thursday. ■PTI

fore his swearing-in, the Election Commission’s certification of election issued to Mr. Dhankhar was read out.

Prime Minister Naren-

dra Modi, former President Ram Nath Kovind, Mr. Dhankhar’s predecessor M. Venkaiah Naidu, former Vice-President M. Hamid Ansari

and Union Ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nirmala Sitharaman, Nitin Gadkari, Sarbananda Sonowal and Smriti Irani were among those present on the occasion.

In the morning, after visiting Raj Ghat, Mahatma Gandhi’s memorial, Mr. Dhankhar tweeted: “Felt blessed, inspired and motivated to be ever in service of Bharat in serene sublimity of Raj Ghat while paying respects to puja Bapu.”

He was elected to the post on August 6.

A timely gesture

Transferring more tax devolutions to States early in the year is a prudent move

The Centre's move to transfer a large chunk of tax devolution dues to States in one go on Wednesday is a pragmatic step that will not only lend impetus to fresh capital spending on the ground but also temporarily soothe tempers amid a fresh round of unease between the Centre and States. Higher than anticipated buoyancy in tax receipts has nudged the Finance Ministry into raising the States' monthly share of the divisible pool of taxes from about ₹48,000 crore in the first quarter of 2022-23, to ₹58,332.86 crore for August. And surplus cash balances with the exchequer have created room to transfer two months' dues to States in one go, translating into a significant lump sum of nearly ₹1.17 lakh crore. While the Government had done similar transfers to States, dovetailing and remitting two months' dues together last year as well, the context is dramatically different for States in this fiscal year. For starters, they no longer have the fallback option of assured revenues from GST Compensation in the five years till June 30, 2022. Even for the GST dues that accrued this year, the Centre frontloaded the release of around ₹87,000 crore to States for April and May, although accruals in the GST Compensation Cess account at the time were just ₹25,000 crore, by dipping into its own coffers. With another ₹35,000-odd crore of GST dues outstanding for June, the overall recompense for States from GST will be around ₹1.22 lakh crore, less than half of the ₹2.5 lakh-odd crore in 2021-22.

There is another uncertainty facing States that has led to extremely tentative behaviour from their treasuries in recent auctions of State development loans – changes in their net borrowing norms. While the Centre had pegged States' borrowing limit at 3.5% of their Gross State Domestic Product for the year, this ceiling is to be pared in accordance with off-budget debt raised by States since 2020-21. Initial signals that all such off-the-books loans will be deducted from this year's ceiling had a chilling effect too, not in the least because the paucity of clear data on the extent of such borrowings, make it difficult to anticipate the actual ceiling that the Centre would determine for each State. The Finance Ministry has eased up on this front as well, clarifying that only their off-budget debt for 2021-22 will be adjusted against the ceiling and that too, in a staggered manner between this year and 2025-26. The norms for the ₹1 lakh crore interest-free loans offered to States for discretionary projects this year could also be reviewed to help it gain greater traction with State governments. Taken together, these steps should help States, which expressed concerns about dwindling revenues at the recent NITI Aayog governing council meet, back the effort to rev up the economy with a capex spree. Friction points between the Centre and States will persist with fluctuating intensities, but a rising economic tide will ease constraints for both.

'CAD will ease as commodity prices dip'

Items that guzzled foreign exchange are seeing price declines, says government official

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

Concerns about India's trade and current account deficits are likely to dissipate in view of the recent decline in global commodity prices, a top government official said on Thursday, asserting that criticism which equated the country's import duties to a protectionist approach in trade was misplaced.

"Most of the foreign exchange guzzlers that have led to a wider trade deficit for India are seeing a decline in prices in the last few days, be it crude oil, fertilizers, or even coal and gold. When prices are down, the current account deficit will also go down over time," the official explained. India's monthly goods trade deficit has hit record highs in the past few



Think local: Broadly, goods whose demand can be met locally will attract customs duties, the official said. ■K.R. DEEPAK

months, peaking in July, when it crossed \$31 billion. With exports growth slowing down and imports continuing to rise sharply, driven by higher prices of commodities with inelastic demand, economists expect the cur-

rent account deficit to cross 3% of GDP this year from 1.2% in 2021-22.

On the imposition of import duties on goods over the last couple of years, the official stressed just counting the items since the unveiling

☞ If the Centre could give even 50% more funds to States than their monthly dues, we will do it

of the AtmaNirbhar Bharat programme was misleading as it suggested an 'inward looking' stance. "Unlike in the past, when customs duties were tweaked in an indiscreet and uncalibrated manner, often to suit just one business or another, our approach to imposing tariffs is driven by item-wise data analysis. Broadly, goods whose demand can be met locally will attract customs duties," the official said.

Tax transfers to States

The Centre plans to devolve more funds to the States

from their share of the divisible pool of taxes whenever it is possible, in a bid to drive faster spending on capital projects at the ground level, the official added.

On Wednesday, the Centre released more than ₹1.16 lakh crore to States as their share for August, equivalent to two monthly instalments of tax devolution.

'Action belongs to States'

"If we are able to give even 50% more funds to States than their monthly instalment, we will give it right away," the official said.

"This is vital because action happens in the States and the Centre is not interested in keeping their funds in its accounts for even a single extra day," the official pointed out.

Drugs shortage haunts HIV-positive community

Union Health Ministry responds to protest in New Delhi, says there is no stock-out of drugs at the national and State levels

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

People living with HIV are facing an acute shortage of life-saving drugs, say protesters who have been camping outside the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) office here for over 15 days now.

They allege rationing of medicines, arbitrary change in the drug regimen and even complete deprivation of life-saving paediatric drugs.

They fear that treatment will be interrupted, leading to drug resistance and deaths from AIDS.

The NACO, functioning under the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry, is a nodal agency responsible for overlooking and coordinating activities of the National AIDS Control Programme.

NACO stand

The protesters noted that the NACO, in its public communication, had claimed that 95% of the recipients had not faced any shortage. Going by the figure, 5% of 14.5 lakh, or 72,500 people, are being affected by the current shortage and stock-out. The impact is severe and

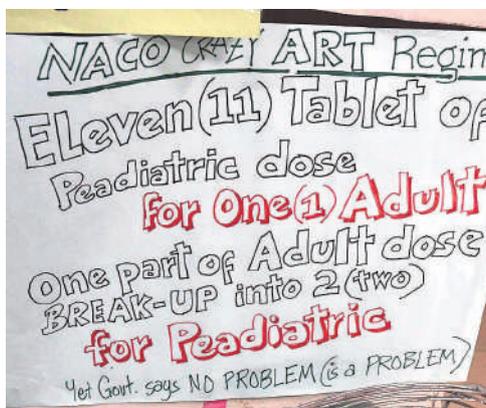
far-reaching, they said.

The protesters said that in December 2021, HIV-positive networks across the country started witnessing a shortage of certain drugs at the antiretroviral therapy (ART) centres.

Anticipating a large-scale shortage, they started reaching out to the authorities with numerous letters and e-mails, including an urgent representation to the Health Secretary and the NACO on February 16, raising concern and requesting prompt action to address them.

A fresh tender for procurement was floated in March, but the new tender and contracts were not awarded in time to ensure the resumption of supply, leading to a stock-out of HIV drugs such as Dolutegravir 50 mg, Lopinavir/Ritonavir (adult and child doses), and Abacavir in Assam, Bihar, Uttarakhanda, Haryana, Delhi, Punjab, Gujarat, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur and so on, the protesters said.

They added that the NACO, in its May 30 communication to all State AIDS Control Societies (SACS),



Right to life: A placard put up by protesters during the ongoing sit-in strike in New Delhi. •SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

requested a change in existing treatment regimens as an interim measure to deal with the countrywide stock-out. However, it was an arbitrary request, and did not take into consideration existing treatment protocols, a protester said.

Protocol not considered

“Whether an HIV-positive person has suppressed viral load or not, or if they had used any other regimen before the current regimen, with regards to what pre-

vious Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI) or Protease inhibitors (PI) was used, was not considered,” another said.

They added that the response to the crisis in States such as Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh had been alarming as the tenders came too late and the shortage has already started affecting the recipients.

“As an interim measure, certain SACS procured small quantities of the drugs local-

ly. But a quality test revealed that some drugs did not meet the quality standards prescribed by the Drugs and Cosmetics Act and Rules, raising concern around substandard drugs entering the supply chain,” warned a protester, who did not want individuals to be named or identified.

The HIV-positive community seeks streamlining of central procurement of HIV medicines and an uninterrupted supply of life-saving medicines, thereby safeguarding the right to life of millions in the country who are at risk of being pushed to death, they said.

Ministry's response

The Health Ministry has responded to the protest, saying there is no stock-out and there are no instances of disruptions or non-availability of treatment services or antiretroviral medicines at the national and State levels.

“The NACO has reviewed the entire situation and held a series of meetings with the protesters. The issue of providing a month's supply of ARV drugs was discussed in detail. ARV drugs are being provided for a duration of

less than one month currently, but at no point in time has there been any shortage of drugs for any of the HIV-positive people. The ARV stock status is monitored strictly and closely by the NACO,” it said.

The Ministry said that at times, if there is an anticipated shortage at ART centres, various proactive steps were undertaken to ensure uninterrupted supply, through immediate relocation from nearby ART centres or from other States in consultation with the concerned SACS.

Also, State and District AIDS Control Societies are authorised to do emergency local procurement as per requirement from their budgeted grant-in-aid provided by Government of India under the National AIDS Control Programme.

“The information under circulation in various fora that there was a shortage of syrup Nevirapine (which is given as prophylaxis to infants born to positive women) and near-expiry medicines were being dispensed is not correct, as most SACS have got fresh supply of this medicine before its expiry date,” the Ministry said.

India slams China for blocking move against JeM deputy chief

Beijing thwarts a joint India-U.S. bid to list Asghar as UNSC designated terrorist

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

China on Thursday thwarted a joint India-U.S. bid to list Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) deputy chief Rauf Asghar as a UN Security Council-designated terrorist by placing a “technical hold” on the process, a move India called “politically motivated” and evidence of China’s “doublespeak” on Pakistan-based terrorism.

Rauf Asghar, the brother of JeM leader Masood Azhar, is accused of masterminding a number of terror attacks from the IC-814 hijacking in 1999, the Parliament attack in 2001, as well as a number of attacks on security forces personnel from 2014-2019, including the strikes on the Air Force base in Pathankot, Army camps in Kathua, Nagrota, Sanjwan and other locations.

The National Intelligence Agency chargesheet on the Pulwama terror bombing in 2019, in which 42 CRPF personnel died, also names Rauf Asghar and Masood Azhar.

Also known as Abdul Rauf Azhar Alvi, Asghar was arrested by the Pakistani authorities in 2019 and convicted for terror financing charges, Pakistani officials had submitted to the Financial Action Task Force some months ago. It is unclear

Who is Rauf Asghar?

- Brother of Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar

- Planned and executed the IC-814 hijacking to free Azhar and two other terrorists in 1999

- Wanted for Parliament attack, terror strikes on security forces in Pulwama



and other areas

- Wanted for organising training camps, fund raising drives, coordinating with Lashkar-e-Taiba on anti-India attacks

- Arrested in Pakistan in 2019 as part of the National Action Plan on Terror and convicted for terror finance

China's poor record on terrorism at UNSC

- Put initial holds on listing of Hafiz Saeed and Zaki Ur Rahman Lakhvi before finally relenting, over the past decade

- Blocked Masood Azhar's listing from 2008-2010

and 2016-2019 before withdrawing objections after Pulwama attack in May 2019

- Places hold on designation of Saeed's brother-in-law Abdur Makki in June 2022, valid till December

where he is being held, however.

China's stance

In response to a question from *The Hindu*, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said China had “strictly followed rules and procedures of the committee”, and that the government required “more time to assess the information to sanction the individual”.

This is the second time China has blocked an India-U.S. listing proposal at the UNSC in the past two months, after China placed a

similar hold on the listing of Abdur Rahman Makki, deputy chief of the Lashkar-e-Taiba/ Jamaat-ud-Dawa (LeT/JuD).

'Double standards'

“China's actions expose its doublespeak and double standards when it comes to the international community's shared battle against terrorism,” said government sources in response, akin to a similarly angry response to the hold on Makki's designation in June. The sources pointed out that both Makki and Asghar had been placed

on terror lists in the United States and India and called China's actions “politically motivated” in favour of Pakistan-based terrorists, and undermine the “entire sanctity of the working methods of the UNSC sanctions committee”.

China's decision is likely to further strain ties between New Delhi and Beijing, which have been in a military stand-off at the Line of Actual Control since April 2020, and comes despite signs of a diplomatic thaw, after External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of a G-20 meeting in Bali, and Chinese Special Envoy on Afghan Affairs Yue Xiaoyong travelled to Delhi for talks with his Indian counterpart J.P. Singh last week.

Ministry of External Affairs officials declined to comment on whether the government had requested China to support the listing, although sources said the MEA officials discussed the proposal during the UN coordination talks with a number of countries recently, and that 14 of the 15 UNSC members had supported the proposal on Thursday.

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India slams China over JeM deputy chief

The 1267 UN listing mandates members to ensure that terrorists and organisations designated must not be allowed to travel, have recourse to funds or weapons.

However, a UNSC permanent member can place a hold on any listing for a period of up to 6 months, followed by an extension of 6 months, after which it must either accept or deny the listing.

Expressing India's frustration with similar decisions by China in the past, U.N. permanent representative Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj had said on Tuesday that "double standards and continuing politicisation" of the process had rendered the credibility of the sanctions regime at an "all-time low."

(With inputs from Ananth Krishnan in Beijing)

'JeM's Asghar led terror attacks'

Officials say China ignored 'incontrovertible evidence' in placing hold at UNSC

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Rauf Asghar, the brother of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar, organised, planned and executed the IC-814 hijacking in December 1999 that finally ended after the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government agreed to release his brother Masood Azhar and two other major terrorists, India and the U.S. said in their joint proposal to the UN Security Council. The proposal detailed a number of attacks Asghar masterminded, from the Parliament attack to Pulwama bombing.

Proposal filed in July

Government sources said China's hold came despite the fact that India and the U.S. had provided "incontrovertible evidence" against Rauf Asghar for the terror listing.

As co-sponsors, India and



Rauf Asghar, brother of Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar ■ NIA WEBSITE

the U.S. had filed the proposal with the UNSC's 1267 committee at the end of July under what is called a "no-objection" procedure.

Terror lists

Officials said they had hoped that the listing would go through without any objections in the final meeting scheduled on August 10, given that Rauf Asghar is on both India and the U.S.'s own terror lists and he has also been convicted in Pakistan on terror-related charges.

Rauf Asghar, whose age is listed as 45 or 48, is identified with four known addresses in Pakistan's Bahawalpur and Karachi.

As deputy chief of the JeM, and financial and administrative head, he is in charge of all the group's terror activities, reporting only to Masood Azhar.

Asghar was a member of the Jaish-e-Mohammad's Shura or General Council as well as on the Qaima standing committee.

'De-facto head'

When Masood Azhar was sent to an undisclosed location by the Pakistani authorities after the Parliament attack in India in 2001, and an assassination attempt on then President Musharraf in Pakistan in 2003, Rauf Asghar had assumed as "de-facto" head of the JeM, said the submission. One Indian hostage was killed during the IC

814 hijacking. While Azhar went on to found the Jaish-e-Mohammad (also called the Jaish-i-Mohammad or JiM) along with Rauf Asghar, Omar Saeed was convicted for the killing of American journalist Danny Pearl.

Mushtaq Zargar, who founded the Al-Mujahideen, is responsible for a number of terror strikes in Jammu and Kashmir.

Terrorist organisation

The Jaish-e-Mohammad was designated a terrorist organisation in 2001 and Masood Azhar was only designated in 2019.

However Rauf Asghar, who is also wanted for the Parliament attack in December 2001, and at least eight major attacks on army camps in Jammu and Kashmir between 2014 and 2019, up until the Pulwama attack of February 2019, has not so far been designated.

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A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
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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,
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H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
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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;
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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;
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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;
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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
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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;
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W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
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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;
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