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VEDHIK

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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Centre plans to document cultures, social practices of indigenous, tribal societies

Experts make a presentation before President Droupadi Murmu; plan is to encourage sociologists, anthropologists and researchers to research and document practices of their own communities

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), along with the Union government, is now pushing for the “re-documentation” of the cultures and social practices of indigenous and tribal societies in India, existing scholarly literature on which, it says, is heavily reliant on the body of knowledge created by colonising governments.

The plan is to encourage more sociologists, anthropologists and researchers from India’s indigenous and tribal communities to research and document the cultural, social and historical practices of their own communities in a bid to replace the colonial-era body of work on this subject, NCST Chairperson Harsh Chouhan explained,



First-hand experience: President Droupadi Murmu visiting a tribal museum in Bhopal on November 16. PTI

adding that this will enable the government to understand tribal societies, identity and rights better.

Professors, Tribal Research Institute (TRI) Directors, researchers and other academics who have been attending a two-day workshop this week on the way forward to achieve this goal, also met with President Droupadi Mur-

mu on Monday night at the Rashtrapati Bhavan for a presentation to her, after which Ms. Murmu launched a book compiling unheard stories of the sacrifice and bravery with which tribal communities and leaders resisted British rulers.

During the closing remarks of the workshop, Ms. Murmu said, “This

should not be the end. It should be the beginning of efforts to hold similar events and workshops across the country.”

She added that she hoped this workshop would inspire youth to research and write about the histories and cultures of their own communities.

Valuable knowledge

From ways to treat illnesses and ways to make weapons to ways of protecting nature and ways of passing along knowledge through community songs, Ms. Murmu said that the knowledge of tribal communities needs to be included in the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) that the National Education Policy is now focusing on, and that this knowledge of tribal communities will play an important role in making India a “knowledge superpower”.

Canada says India a crucial partner, terms China an ‘increasingly disruptive’ power

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Recognising that the Indo-Pacific region will play a “significant and profound” role in its future, Canada released an Indo-Pacific strategy which termed China an “increasingly disruptive” global power. Calling India a “crucial partner”, the strategy said Canada will seek new opportunities to partner and engage in dialogue with India in areas of common interest and values, including security, and the promotion of democracy, pluralism and human rights.

Based on five inter-connected strategic objectives, it announced an ambitious plan, beginning with an investment of \$2.3 billion over the next five years.

“China is looking to shape the international order into a more permissive environment for interests and values that increasingly depart from ours,” the strategy said. “In areas of



Justin Trudeau

profound disagreement, we will challenge China, including when it engages in coercive behaviour ... ignores human rights obligations or undermines our national security interests and those of partners in the region.”

As China becomes more assertive and grows in influence, Canada is stepping up as a reliable partner in the region to promote security and stability across the region and at home, the strategy said. “Canada will increase our military engagement and intelligence capacity as a means of mitigating coercive behaviour and threats to re-

gional security,” it adds.

India crucial partner

India’s growing strategic, economic and demographic importance in the Indo-Pacific makes it a critical partner in Canada’s pursuit of its objectives, while also noting that there are shared values and pluralism, among others. In line with this, the strategy said it will grow economic ties, including through deeper trade and investment, as well as cooperate on building resilient supply chains. “Seek to expand market access by concluding an Early Progress Trade Agreement [EPTA] as a step toward a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement,” it stated.

On people-to-people connect, the strategy said it would invest in and connect people, including by “bolstering Canada’s visa-processing capacity in New Delhi and Chandigarh” as also support academic, educational, cultural,

youth and research exchanges.

To advance Canada’s regional peace and security interests, it plans to invest over \$720 million which includes \$492.9 million to reinforce Canada’s Indo-Pacific naval presence and increase its military’s participation in regional military exercises as well as \$47.3 million to launch a new multi-department initiative to help develop cyber security capacity in select regional partners.

Canada also committed \$913.3 mn for a clean future, of which \$750 million is to support sustainable infrastructure and \$84.3 million to reinforce a healthy marine environment in the Indo-Pacific region, including enhanced measures against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Under the strategy, Canada also committed \$143.3 million to strengthen its presence, visibility and influence in the region.

India, France discuss defence industrial ties, 'Make in India'

Rajnath Singh and his French counterpart Sebastien Lecornu review military cooperation between the two countries and seek to increase maritime cooperation and bilateral exercises

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India and France on Monday discussed defence industrial cooperation with a focus on 'Make in India' and means to strengthen maritime cooperation and increase the scope and complexity of bilateral exercises. This was discussed during the fourth India-France annual defence dialogue chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his French counterpart, Sebastien Lecornu, here.

"During the dialogue, one of the key areas of discussion was defence industrial cooperation with a focus on 'Make in India'. Future collaborations and potential co-production opportunities were discussed. The Ministers agreed that the technical groups from both the countries should meet early next year and take the key cooperation issues forward," a Defence Ministry statement said. This is the first visit of Mr. Lecornu to India as French Minister of Armed Forces.

"A wide range of bilateral, regional and defence in-



Mutual trust: Rajnath Singh and French Minister Sebastien Lecornu in New Delhi on Monday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

dustrial cooperation issues were discussed during the dialogue," Mr. Singh said on Twitter.

The Ministers reviewed the ongoing military-to-military cooperation, which has increased substantially in recent years, the statement said, also noting that they recognised their convergences on a number of "strategic and defence issues and shared the commitment to work together on enhancing cooperation in bilateral, regional and multilateral fora, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region".

France is the current

chair of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and both countries cooperate closely in these fora.

During the two-day visit, Mr. Lecornu made a day-long trip to the headquarters of the Southern Naval Command in Kochi on Sunday and also went aboard the indigenously built aircraft carrier *INS Vikrant*. "The French Minister acknowledged India's indigenous potential and self-reliance. The discussions ranged from enhancing cooperation in areas of mutual interest to

the maritime challenges in the IOR," the Navy said in a statement.

The visiting French Minister also met External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

"The Armed Forces Minister's visit to India reaffirms France's engagement in the Indo-Pacific and India's centrality in the French strategy for the region," the French Embassy said in a statement. It comes in a year that has seen an acceleration of the French and Indian armed forces' endeavours towards even greater interoperability through joint Air, Navy and Army exercises, such as IMEX 22 in March, Varuna in March-April, and the recently concluded Garuda in October-November, it noted.

The two Air Forces recently held their bilateral Air Exercise 'Garuda' at Air Force Station, Jodhpur.

Ahead of the dialogue, Mr. Lecornu visited the National War Memorial and paid tribute to India's soldiers who have laid down their lives in the line of duty and also inspected a tri-service guard of honour.

U.K. to strengthen ties with Europe, Indo-Pacific: Sunak

Sriram Lakshman

LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak will say his country seeks to renew relationships in Europe while deepening ties in the Indo Pacific, as he delivers his first major foreign policy speech since taking office in October.

“We will evolve, anchored always by our enduring belief in freedom, openness and the rule of law and confident that, in this moment of challenge and competition, our interests will be protected and our values will prevail,” Mr. Sunak will tell business and other leaders at a dinner hosted by the Lord Mayor of the City of London.

Mr. Sunak is expected to say that competitors like Russia and China plan for the long term and the U.K. will need to do the same, according to a preview of the speech released by Downing Street.

“So we will make an evolu-



Rishi Sunak

tionary leap in our approach. This means being stronger in defending our values and the openness on which our prosperity depends,” he will say, adding that this is underpinned by delivering a “stronger economy at home”.

Assistance for Kyiv

Mr. Sunak, who was in Kyiv on November 19, where he announced a £50 million assistance for Ukraine, is expected to reiterate the U.K.’s commitment to holding or increasing aid levels for Kyiv in

2023 (the amount so far has been £2.3 billion pounds, the second highest amount of aid after the U.S., as per official U.K. estimates).

“...Be in no doubt. We will stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes. We will maintain or increase our military aid next year. And we will provide new support for air defence, to protect the Ukrainian people and the critical infrastructure that they rely on,” Mr. Sunak will say.

The U.K. is currently updating its integrated review of foreign and security policy, published in March 2021. The document had announced an “Indo Pacific tilt” for the U.K.

The update, announced by the Liz Truss administration will “take account of the huge geopolitical shifts” since March 2021, “including the sharpening of inter-state competition due to the actions of countries like Russia, China and Iran” according to Downing Street.

Same rights

As relationships change, rights on freedoms and liberties must expand

The Supreme Court has sought the Government's response to appeals to allow same-sex marriage under a special law, in another bid to provide legal sanction to widening social customs. A Bench of CJI D.Y. Chandrachud and Justice Hima Kohli agreed to hear two partners who said the non-recognition of same-sex marriage amounted to discrimination that struck at the rights of LGBTQIA+ couples. The petitioners cited the Special Marriage Act, 1954, which provides a civil marriage for couples who cannot marry under their personal law. Listing the case for hearing, the Court also transferred cases pending before several High Courts to itself. It is a first step towards same-sex marriage, which has been legalised in 30-odd countries, including the U.S. where this July the House of Representatives approved legislation to protect such marriages. This legislative action came amidst concern that an aggressive Supreme Court could revisit settled laws after it overturned *Roe vs Wade* on abortion rights. After the K.S. Puttaswamy verdict (2017) which upheld the right to privacy and *Navtej Singh Johar* (2018) that decriminalised homosexuality, there was hope that same-sex marriages would follow, but that has not been the case. At depositions in courts and outside, the Centre has opposed same-sex marriage, and said judicial interference will cause "complete havoc with the delicate balance of personal laws".

This is perhaps one of the reasons why the Supreme Court may consider allowing same-sex marriage under the Special Marriage Act, and not several other personal laws such as the Hindu Marriage Act. Over the past few years, it has passed a series of judgments that challenged conservative society and brought hope and expanded the scope for people who do not conform to age-old social norms. Eventually though, even if the Court rules in its favour, the march towards equality for the LGBTQIA+ community will be long and arduous. Enforcing something like same-sex marriage in a diverse country with varying customs and traditions will not be easy. Social mindsets are conservative and so well-entrenched that anyone who feels differently is stigmatised, humiliated and ostracised. Together with the Court, more needs to be done at the societal level to chip away at conservative views on sex, gender, women and the LGBTQIA+ community. Alongside the call for legalising same-sex marriage, activists have been seeking the extension of the benefits of a traditional marriage to same-sex couples, including the right to adopt children. As people's relationships change, and society undergoes transformation, constitutional rights on freedoms and liberties must extend to every sphere, including a same-sex couple's life.

Still a nightmare for domestic violence survivors

Just ahead of the International Day for Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women (November 25), the brutal murder and mutilation of a young woman by her partner has drawn attention to intimate partner violence, also recognised under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 (PWDVA) as a kind of domestic violence. Many questions are being raised. Why did she choose him? Why did she not leave? As evidence of her help-seeking efforts surface, we should also be asking this: why were these not effective?

Domestic violence is a punishable offence under Indian law. It is a violation of human rights. Yet, the latest round of the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) reveals that we live in a society where violence against women persists to such an extent that 32% of ever-married women aged 18-49 years have ever experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence committed by their husband, with more rural than urban women reporting experiences of domestic violence. This does not even capture the prevalence of violence by other family members too.

Over 17 years ago the PWDVA, a progressive legislation, was passed, promising a joined-up approach – involving civil and criminal protections – to support and protect women from violence within the household, not just from husbands. But despite the law existing on paper, women are still largely unable to access the law in practice. Its promise and provisions are unevenly implemented, unavailable and out of reach for most Indian women.

The most disheartening reality is that despite almost a third of women being subject to domestic violence, the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) reports that only 14% of women who have experienced domestic violence have ever sought help; and this number is much lower in the rural areas. In a country where domestic violence is a crime, where there are multiple laws explicitly designed to protect women against violence, why is it that most women survivors of domestic violence never seek help?

Questions and responses

Our research in Maharashtra, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu aims to better understand 'help seeking' and the everyday realities, obstacles, prejudices and fears that women experience around sharing and reporting experiences of violence. Simple and well-meaning questions – "Why didn't you leave earlier?" "Why didn't you tell someone about the violence earlier?" – can

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All the writers are members of the Surviving Violence research project. Visit: www.survivingviolence.org

have the most complicated and contradictory responses.

Women were hopeful that things would change, that they could change their husband's behaviour, that he would listen to them. Crucially women did not want to be a 'burden' on others, in particular their families. 'My mother has a lot of worries, she has her own life so I didn't want to add to her own worries, with mine.' By naming the violence they experienced, women believed that they would become 'a problem' or a source of 'tension' for their families, in bringing them shame and dishonour, irrespective of the survivor's level of education, caste, or class. For migrant women, transpeople or those with several sisters, or ill, older or deceased parents, it was felt even more acutely that the perpetrator's violence was their individual responsibility to manage.

On seeking help

When it comes to help seeking, we found two main groups of women – those who shared experiences of violence within six months, and those who shared after five years or more. The first group of women mainly turned to their parents who, in a majority of cases, insisted on their daughter preserving the family environment which they should do by 'adjusting' to, or accommodating their husband's (and his family's) needs better. In a minority of cases, the daughter's welfare was prioritised over the well-being of the 'the family' and steps were taken to help mediate or exit the relationship, and much more infrequently approach the police and lawyers.

For survivors who took longer to seek help, the actions of relatives or neighbours who witnessed the violence were often pivotal in transforming their situations. So were key 'turning' or 'tipping' points such as a survivor's heightened concerns for their children's safety, the discovery of a husband's affair or when violence became "too much" and required medical assistance. Waiting until such a point before seeking help was more likely for survivors who struggled to imagine exiting a relationship due to financial insecurity and/or patriarchal norms concerning property ownership.

So ingrained are social norms about gender inequality that NFHS-5 data reports that women are more likely than men to justify a scenario in which it is acceptable for a husband to beat or hit his wife. As one interviewee explained, 'the way we are conditioned, it was hard to complain

about any suffering'. Though survivors who did (finally) confide in relatives and friends about domestic violence described feeling a 'sense of a relief' and that a 'burden had been lifted', giving them new 'hope' that things might change.

Whilst sharing experiences of violence was an incredibly powerful step for women, actually transforming their violent domestic experiences and accessing services and support provided by the state and non-state actors proved to be an arduous roller coaster of emotions, promises, uncertainty, fear and disappointment. With few safe houses across India, the simple reality was that many women have nowhere else to go, and access to legal justice through the courts was a material possibility only for women with independent wealth and connections or those supported by specialist non-governmental organisations.

So, for many survivors, transforming their situation depended on securing their economic self-sufficiency by pursuing new skills and livelihood opportunities.

Role of the police

Women who reported experiences of violence to the police were cynical about the outcome. Though a small minority had positive experiences, for the majority of those we interviewed, the police were part of the problem rather than a solution to violence. Across the States, we heard that the police were more likely to send women back to violent households to reconcile with the perpetrator or use violence against perpetrators as a deterrent instead of filing an official complaint or connecting women to protection officers and other service providers, as the PWDVA outlines they should. Several States are yet to implement Protection officers. And where they are in post, they are under resourced, under-skilled and overworked, making their remit impossible.

While sharing experiences of violence was a powerful step for women, accessing services and support often resulted in uncertainty, fear and disappointment.

Women know all too well that the state serves patriarchal and heteronormative interests first. The state is failing women. Even whilst its legislature recognises that domestic violence is a crime, and civil remedies exist through protection orders, managing the fallout of domestic violence is still being subcontracted to survivors and the family. That is the biggest crime being committed against women today.

While sharing experiences of violence was a powerful step for women, accessing services and support often resulted in uncertainty, fear and disappointment

Right to religion does not include right to convert, Home Ministry tells court

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The right to religion does not include the right to convert other people to a particular religion, especially through fraud, deception, coercion, allurement and other means, the Ministry of Home Affairs told the Supreme Court on Monday.

The Ministry said the word 'propagate' in Article 25 (right to freedom of religion) does not include the right to convert. It is rather in the nature of a positive right to spread one's religion by exposition of its tenets.

The government said that, "Fraudulent or induced conversion impinged upon the right to freedom of conscience of an individual apart from hampering public order and therefore, the state is well within its power to



regulate or restrict it".

The Centre said that the statutes enacted in the past to curb "the menace of organised, sophisticated large-scale illegal conversion" was upheld by the Supreme Court.

On November 14, the apex court observed that fraudulent religious conversions "ultimately affect the security of the nation and freedom of religion and conscience of citizens". It had asked the Centre to "step in" and clarify in an affidavit what

 There may be freedom of religion but there may not be freedom of religion by forced conversion... Everybody has the right to choose their religion, but not by forced conversion

Justices M.R. Shah and Hima Kohli

it intended to do to curb compulsory or deceitful religious conversions.

"There may be freedom of religion but there may not be freedom of religion by forced conversion... This is a very serious issue. Everybody has the right to choose their religion, but not by forced conversion or by giving temptation," a Bench of Justices M.R. Shah and Hima Kohli had said.

The case was listed on Monday but was adjourned to December 5.

Anguish over NJAC order behind posting delays: SC

Supreme Court had struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission, which gave the government an equal say in judicial appointments to the constitutional courts, in 2015

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

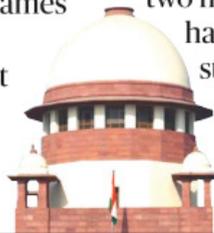
The Supreme Court on Monday linked the bitter failure of the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) to the government's willingness to "cross some Rubicons" and take on the judiciary by delaying Collegium recommendations.

The top court had struck down the NJAC, which gave the government an equal say in judicial appointments, in 2015. The judgment had revived the Collegium system of judicial appointments.

"There appears to be an unhappiness in the government of the fact that NJAC did not muster the constitutional mandate... That cannot be the reason to not comply with the law of

 Government neither appoints the persons and nor communicates its reservation, if any, on the names [suggested by the Collegium] ... Keeping the names pending is something not acceptable

SUPREME COURT ON NOVEMBER 11



 It (government) is crossing some Rubicons by keeping these names pending like this... It cannot go on like this... We went on thinking that things will improve. But for the past two months, everything has come to a standstill, whether it is appointments to the HCs or to SC

SUPREME COURT ON NOVEMBER 28

the land," a Bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and A.S. Oka.

The hearing coincided with a fresh salvo from Law Minister Kiren Rijiju, a relentless critic of the Collegium system. Mr. Rijiju, in an interview, reportedly

dared the judiciary to "issue its own notifications" of appointments if it thought the government was sitting on Collegium recommendations.

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Govt. asks SC to reconsider 20 names for HC judges

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre has asked the Supreme Court to reconsider 20 names recommended for appointment as High Court judges, including that of advocate Saurabh Kirpal. He recently said his appointment was delayed as he was gay. He was one of the lawyers whose efforts in the SC had led to the decriminalisation of homosexuality.

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'Anguish over NJAC behind posting delays'

"Let them give the power to us then, we have no difficulty... When somebody high up says 'let them do it', we will do it ourselves... This [Rijju's remarks] came from somebody high enough, it should not have," Justice Kaul shot back when apprised of the Law Minister's comments by the Supreme Court Bar Association president, senior advocate Vikas Singh, in court.

The hearing on Monday marked a new high in the tensions simmering for the past few weeks between the judiciary and the government over appointments. Mr. Rijju has been criticising the Collegium system in several public fora. The court had responded by accusing the government of using silence and inaction as a ploy to compel the withdrawal of consent by eminent persons considered for judgeships in the constitutional courts. On Monday, Justice Kaul told Attorney-General R. Venkataramani that the government was "effectively frustrating the method of appointment". Names have been pending for a year and a half. Some of them had been originally recommended way back in 2019 and still not cleared by a government which remains incommunicado. The court accused the government of picking and choosing names from the Collegium list. "What happens is this completely destroys the seniority. The Collegium while sending names keeps many factors in mind," Justice Kaul said. The court said it was plainly "anguished" by the government's attitude. "It [government] is crossing some Rubicons by keeping these names pending like this... It cannot go on like this... We went on thinking that things will improve, that it will improve... But for the past two months, everything has come to a complete standstill, whether it is appointments to the High Courts or to the Supreme Court," Justice Kaul observed. The court said 20% of the judicial posts in High Courts were vacant. Justice Kaul said Chief Justices of several High Courts have complained about lawyers unwilling to accept invitations to the Bench because of the uncertainty posed by the government's inaction. Mr. Singh said the court should issue contempt notice against the government.

"There is no need to be rhetorical," the A-G snapped.

"What rhetorical? Are you saying following the law of the land is rhetoric?" Mr. Singh asked.

"We kept our patience today because the A-G appeared... Timelines [for judicial appointments] have gone completely haywire, there have been many aggravating circumstances after that... Don't make us take decisions on the judicial side on this," Justice Kaul and Oka said told Mr. Venkataramani.

The court scheduled the case for December 8.

Gujjars, Bakerwals call off stir against ST status for Paharis

Peerzada Ashiq

SRINAGAR

The Save Tribals March (STM), a street agitation launched by Gujjar and Bakerwal activists, was called off on Monday after passing through 12 districts in J&K in protest against the government's move to include Paharis, a linguistic minority, in the Scheduled Tribes (ST) list recently.

Shah's assurance

"A delegation had gone to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi. I was not part of the delegation. They have been assured that a special legislation will be brought so that inclusion of Paharis does not impact the current quota of STs," Gujjar leader Talib Hussian, who led the Tribal Bachao March on November 4 from north Kashmir's Kupwara, told *The Hindu*.

Gujjar and Bakerwals are opposed to G.D Sharma Commission's recommendations to include Paharis in the ST list.

NCST go ahead

The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has also given a go-ahead to the inclusion of Pahari ethnic people, a linguistic minority of J&K, along with Paddari tribe, Kolis and Gadda Brahmans in the ST list.

The Paharis, unlike Gujjars and Bakerwals who are Muslims, comprise a mixed population of both Hindus and Muslims.

Members of the Jammu-



A protest against grant of ST status to Pahari people of J&K in New Delhi. FILE PHOTO

Kashmir Gujjar Bakerwal Joint Action Committee, during their meeting with the Home Minister, had expressed fears that the government's move to include upper castes in the ST category "will deprive them of their rights in education and jobs".

PM thanked

"The joint committee has thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Shah for an effective move to protect the reservation of existing 12 tribal groups," the spokesman said.

Gujjar leader Mr. Hussain said the Gujjar-Bakerwal delegation had met Mr. Shah at New Delhi in the presence of Union Home Secretary A.K. Bhalla, Member of Parliament Engineer Ghulam Ali Khattana, senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma and tribal researcher Javaid Rahi recently.

Gujjars and Bakerwals, who were included in the ST list in 1991, constitute 14% of J&K population.

'Mumbai tops in sale of poll bonds followed by Kolkata, Hyderabad; most encashment in Delhi'

Jatin Anand
NEW DELHI

While Mumbai, Kolkata and Hyderabad saw the sale of most electoral bonds since they came into existence in 2018, a significant majority of these were encashed in New Delhi followed by Hyderabad and Kolkata out of 20 Indian cities over the entire sale period of their 22 tranches, according to a Right to Information (RTI) response.

In a response to a query filed by transparency activist Commodore Lokesh Batra (ret'd) from the State Bank of India (SBI), which is the sole financial entity empowered to both issue and encash these, electoral bonds worth ₹2,742 crore were sold in Mumbai, ₹2,387 crore in Kolkata and

Bond strength

A look at the quantum of sales and encashment of electoral bonds and the locations in which most transactions took place

- Electoral bonds (EBs) worth ₹10,791.47 crore have been sold since 2018
- The highest sale of EBs worth ₹2,742.12 crore was recorded in Mumbai
- Patna recorded the lowest sale of EBs, valued at ₹80 lakh
- EBs worth ₹10,767.79 crore have so far been encashed since 2018
- The highest encashment of EBs worth ₹6,748.97 crore was recorded in Delhi
- Srinagar recorded the lowest encashment of EBs, valued at ₹50 lakh



₹1,885 crore in Hyderabad. The lowest sale, valued at ₹80 lakh, was recorded at Patna. Since 2018, electoral bonds worth ₹10,791 crore have been sold, according to the reply.

When it came to their encashment, New Delhi led the charge recording the encashment of electoral bonds worth ₹6,748

crore followed by ₹1,384 crore in Hyderabad and electoral bonds worth ₹1,012 crore in Kolkata.

Lowest in Srinagar

The lowest encashment of electoral bonds, at ₹50 lakh, was recorded in Srinagar and, according to the reply, bonds worth ₹10,767 crore have so far

been encashed from 2018 till now.

At 10,108, bonds of the denomination of ₹1 crore accounted for the lion's share of those being sold across 20 Indian cities followed by 6,562 of 10 lakh and 2,610 of one lakh denomination.

Mumbai accounted for the sale of 2,643 bonds of the 1 crore denomination followed by 2,152 at Kolkata and 1,815 at Hyderabad. When it came to their redemption, however, out of the total number of 19,361 bonds encashed so far, 12,161 were encashed in New Delhi, 2,314 in Hyderabad and 2,302 in Kolkata. As many as 6,331 electoral bonds encashed in the national capital were of the ₹1 crore denomination, while 1,300 and 922 bonds

of this denomination were encashed in Hyderabad and Kolkata, respectively.

"As of now electoral bonds worth nearly ₹10,791.50 crore – of which 93.67% electoral bonds purchased are of one crore denomination each – leaving no doubt that it is big corporate(s) are purchasing electoral bonds for donations to 'political parties,'" Commodore Batra alleged.

"The irony of the scheme is that while donors who buy them are not required to pay any service charges or commission to SBI, even the printing cost is borne by the government and ultimately by the taxpayers; so far, nearly ₹9.53 crore has been paid by for enabling such transactions," he added.

Time for change

China must complete full vaccination and end the zero-COVID policy

After three years of living under the world's most stringent pandemic restrictions, thousands of people in China have taken to the streets in many cities, calling for an end to lockdowns and the "zero-COVID" policy. The ruling Communist Party of China would do well to listen. The unprecedented protests, on a scale not seen since 1989, reflect public weariness towards a policy that appears out of date. The lockdowns, mass testing and quarantining of infected cases and close contacts formed a strategy that helped China emerge faster than any other country out of the first COVID-19 wave, avoiding mass deaths seen in the rest of the world. The emergence of more transmissible but milder variants has, however, rendered that approach increasingly obsolete, particularly when vaccines are enabling countries to live with the virus. To deal with new variants, China's lockdowns have grown harsher. In March, Shanghai was placed under a brutal two month-long lockdown that saw food and medicine shortages. It is no surprise that one of the biggest protests took place in China's largest city. What will concern the leadership is that the call to end lockdowns from the mostly young protesters will have resonance, as the economic and social costs of zero-COVID grow. The trigger for the protests was an apartment fire in Urumqi that claimed 10 lives. The slow emergency response was widely seen as a result of lockdown measures.

The Chinese leadership has defended zero-COVID, warning that opening up will lead to mass deaths. That is, however, only because a large portion of the elderly population remains unvaccinated. Rather than continue to devote China's considerable state capacity towards enforcing lockdowns, an urgent nationwide effort to vaccinate the vulnerable is long overdue. Data from Hong Kong shows three doses of Chinese vaccines, which are less effective than mRNA shots, work well enough to protect the elderly. The problem is China has dragged its feet on vaccinating its population. As of this month, 68% of the more than 250 million Chinese aged 60 and above had received three shots. For the 30 million Chinese aged 80 and above, only 40% have received three doses. The government fears that opening up with such a large vulnerable population would lead to a collapse of China's health-care system and damage its credibility, with President Xi having personally backed the zero-COVID approach and framed it as a contrast to the West, which has seen mass COVID deaths. Completing the vaccination coverage and simultaneously phasing out the zero-COVID strategy seem the only way out.

How FIFA is using SAOT for offside decisions

How does FIFA's brand new Semi-Automated Offside Technology work? Is this tool accurate and reliable? Are on-field decisions going to be completely automated? Can the data generated by this technology be used for other purposes other than making on-field resolutions?

EXPLAINER

N. Sudarshan

The story so far:

In the opening match of the FIFA World Cup 2022 between host Qatar and Ecuador, just three minutes' of action had passed before the first goal of the tournament was ruled out for offside. Ecuador forward Enner Valencia's headed strike was disallowed because the lower half of his right leg was in an offside position. While such close calls being settled with the help of Video Assistant Referee (VAR) technology is largely commonplace in modern-day football, what surprised fans was the speed with which it was adjudicated. One three-dimensional animation of the incident was displayed for a fleeting second or two before play restarted. FIFA's brand new Semi-Automated Offside Technology (SAOT) was responsible for the quick decision.

What is SAOT?

There are two parts to the technology – a sensor inside the match ball (Adidas's Al Rihla) that is held using suspension technology, and existing tracking tools that are part of the VAR system as we know. Kinexon, a German company that specialises in providing sensor networks and computing solutions, has designed a small in-ball device which gives precise positional data and also detects ball movement in a three-dimensional space. Every time the ball is hit, data is sent in real time (at a whopping 500 frames per second) to a network of antennae installed around the playing field. Additionally, there are 12 Hawk-Eye cameras set up around the turf that shadow both the ball and the players, with as many as 29 separate points in the human body tracked. The coming together of the ball sensor and the Hawk-Eye cameras is in effect SAOT, which FIFA says allows for decisions that are highly accurate and quick. These two data sets are run through artificial intelligence software which generates automated alerts about offsides to the



Acute precision: Ecuador's Enner Valencia heads the ball to score a goal against Qatar which was later disallowed for an offside at the 2022 World Cup. AFP

match officials. This replaces the manual effort taken in poring over replays for minutes on end.

Is there no human intervention?

FIFA has made it clear that SAOT is only a confirmatory tool. Speaking ahead of the World Cup, referees chief Pierluigi Collina underlined that the final decision "always belongs to the match official – on the VAR, the video assistant referee, on the field of play, to the referee." In addition, the differentiation that exists between normal offside – where a player is flagged because of active involvement irrespective of whether he touches the ball – and 'passive offside' – where a player will not be flagged despite being in an offside position if he does not touch the ball – is expected to retain some subjectivity. A case in point was the goal scored by Ecuador against the Netherlands that was eventually disallowed; the

player was in an offside position and did not touch the ball but was deemed offside for being in the goalkeeper's line of sight and thus actively involved.

How accurate is the SAOT data?

According to FiveThirtyEight, ABC News's statistical analysis portal, the data transmission rate from the ball (500 frames per second or 500Hz) makes the process pretty accurate. The time between two frames is two milliseconds (1/500), which is 10 times better than a standard 50Hz video that is commonly used in High Definition monitors. Further, to synchronise the data from the ball sensor and Hawk-Eye, a Precision Time Protocol clock is used. This, Nicolas Evans, the head of football research and standards for FIFA Technology Innovation, says, gets down the precision to up to one-millionth of a second. FIFA tested the whole technology at both the

2021 FIFA Arab Cup in Qatar and the 2021 FIFA Club World Cup in Abu Dhabi.

Is the data only used for officiating?

Experts believe offside decision-making is just the starting point and the wealth of tracking data will soon be used by coaches for tactical analyses and gauging individual athlete performances. The metrics can also be useful for scouting good players, similar to what Second Spectrum tracking does in the NBA. Hawk-Eye, in fact, has been in use in tennis since 2006. Though it was first employed to decide close line calls, the positional information is a treasure trove for players and coaches looking for data on ball trajectories, movement, distances covered and the pace of the court among others. SAOT is expected to aid such statistical thinking and data mining in football, in line with what is increasingly the Moneyball era of sports.

THE GIST

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▼ FIFA has made it clear that SAOT is only a confirmatory tool.

▼ Experts believe that the wealth of tracking data generated by the technology will soon be used by coaches for tactical analyses and gauging individual athlete performances.

Why was Google sued for its location tracking practices?

How did Google's settlement with the Attorney-Generals of 40 U.S. States make history? How is the tech giant planning to improve its privacy features with respect to location tracking disclosures?

Abhishek Chatterjee

The story so far:

In November 14, Google reached an agreement with the Attorney-Generals of 40 U.S. States to pay a historic \$391.5 million settlement, over its location tracking practices, *Associated Press* reported. The multi-million dollar settlement, which was led by Oregon AG Ellen Rosenblum and Nebraska AG Doug Peterson, is the largest attorney general-led consumer privacy settlement.

What is the lawsuit about?

Google was found to violate state consumer protection laws by misleading its users about its location tracking practices since at least 2014. The company misled consumers into thinking they had turned off location tracking,

when, in fact, the company continued to collect their location information and use that for advertising. "They have been crafty and deceptive," Oregon Attorney-General Rosenblum said in a release. "For years Google has prioritised profit over their users' privacy," she added. Location data is a key part of Google's digital advertising business. The company uses the personal and behavioural data it collects to build detailed user profiles and target them with ads. In fact, location data is among the most sensitive and valuable personal information Google collects. Even a limited amount of location data can expose a person's identity, routines, and can be used to infer personal details, the release noted.

When was it sued?

The states' investigation was triggered by

an *Associated Press* story in 2018, which found that Google continued to track people's location data even after they turned off location tracking by disabling a feature called "location history." Arizona Attorney-General Mark Brnovich filed the first state action against Google in May 2020 when he slammed the company for misleading its users. Google settled the case with Arizona for \$85 million last month. Yet by then, Attorney-Generals of other states and the District of Columbia filed their individual lawsuits against the search giant for deceiving users.

What does this mean for Google?

As part of the settlement, Google has agreed to significantly improve its location tracking disclosures and user controls starting next year. The company has also been asked to be more transparent about its practices. Google

must show additional information to users whenever they turn a location-related account setting 'on' or 'off'. The company is not allowed to hide any key information about location tracking to its users and it must give them details about the types of location data it collects and how it is used, at an enhanced "Location Technologies" webpage.

Will Google make any changes?

The company is creating a single, comprehensive information hub to highlight key location settings and help people make informed choices about their data. Google will put additional disclosures on their Activity controls and Data & Privacy pages. "We will be making updates in the coming months to provide even greater controls and transparency over location data," Google said in a blog post. The search giant will also allow its users to easily turn off their Location History and Web & App Activity settings and delete their past data. The company will continue to delete Location History data for users who have not recently contributed new Location History data to their account. For users setting up new accounts, the company will provide a more detailed explanation of what Web & App Activity is, what information it includes, and how it helps their Google experience, the company said in the blog.

THE GIST

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‘Centre must present correct info on GM mustard before SC’

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

A day ahead of the Supreme Court hearing on a petition against the testing of GM mustard, a group of scientists and activists has urged the Centre to present “correct information” before the court.

Alleging that the Centre’s affidavit on the matter is an attempt to mislead the court, they said the Centre should be transparent in its filings since the issue concerns the life and livelihoods of all citizens of the country.

Dhiraj Singh, former Director of the Directorate of Rapeseed Mustard Research, said the country’s production of rapeseed-mustard had increased by around 38% in the past decade.

“We are self-sufficient when it comes to mustard oil demand and supply. Further, farmers already have more than a dozen non-GM mustard hybrid options in the market which are well-performing, and high yielding than

The group urged the court to pass orders to uproot and destroy GM mustard crop planted

GM hybrid... In such a context, where is the need for GM mustard? Why is the Supreme Court being told that we need this option, which is risky and irreversible,” he asked.

They urged the apex court to immediately pass orders to uproot and destroy GM mustard crop planted in multiple sites, in defiance of Court orders.

Kavitha Kuruganti of the Coalition for a GM-Free India said at least in five areas the Centre is actively providing incorrect information to the Supreme Court. “A herbicide-tolerant crop has not even been tested as a herbicide-tolerant crop and India does not have any specific regulatory protocols for the same. Conflict of interest continues along with opaque functioning and hiding of biosafety data,” she said.

Loss and Damage decisions, pitfalls and promises

A major takeaway from COP27 in Egypt, as far as loss and damage (L and D) is concerned, is the decision relating to new funding arrangements focusing on L and D – those particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

The decision includes a transitional committee to prepare elements relating to the operationalisation of the new funding arrangements to be adopted at COP28. The decision restores the faith of countries, especially those vulnerable, in the process of multilateralism. The committee will aim to identify and expand sources of funding, which demonstrates a lack of clarity on the source of funding (adequate and predictable) accruing to the new fund only. There is a question mark over the new L and D fund with non-compliance by developed countries as far as climate finance commitment (mobilising \$100 billion per year by 2020) is concerned. The new funding arrangements will complement the existing arrangements and include sources, funds, processes and initiatives under and outside the Convention and the Paris Agreement, which would assist in mobilising new and additional resources. This dilutes the consistent demand raised at COP27, and outside of it by the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) to set up a dedicated loss and damage response fund, which would be on top of existing climate finance commitments.

The decision again recognises the mitigation-centric nature of the history of climate change negotiations to be suiting the agenda of developed countries. It says restricting the global average temperature rise to below 1.5° Celsius is essential to limiting future loss and damage.

The mitigation-centric nature of the negotiation can be traced to Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 1992. Adaptation as the second pillar of the climate change regime is possible once 'stabilisation of greenhouse gas



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The compensation aspect involves a legal hurdle of establishing causal relations between the injurer and the victim since the adverse effects of climate change occur substantially later than greenhouse gas emissions causing them

concentrations is achieved at a level that prevents dangerous human-induced interference with the climate system and allows ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change'. L and D could gain traction after two decades of climate change negotiations at Paris 2015. Article 8(1) only makes the party recognise the importance of averting, minimising, and addressing L and D associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events.

Past, present and the future

In the entire climate change negotiations, the developed countries have consistently opposed being made liable for climate-change related adverse effects. The basis for their contribution to various funds so far is the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR). For global environmental degradation, they only acknowledge their responsibility in view of the pressures their societies place on the environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command, according to research papers.

The compensation aspect involves a serious legal hurdle of establishing causal relations between the injurer and the victim since the adverse effects of climate change occur substantially later than the greenhouse gas emissions that cause them. During the negotiation process for the UNFCCC in 1991, AOSIS, which is at the forefront for the cause of loss and damage, "unsuccessfully" tried to include the establishment of an international insurance pool as a 'collective loss-sharing scheme to compensate the most vulnerable small island and low-lying coastal developing countries for loss and damage arising from sea level rise'. Funding was to come from assessed contributions according to a 'formula modelled on the 1963 Brussels Convention Supplementary to the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy, with 50% based on

parties' relative contributions to emissions in the year prior to a contribution year, and 50% based on parties' relative shares of gross national product in the year prior to the contribution year'.

Taxing fossil fuel firms

The realisation of the 1991 proposal would have addressed at least who pays for the L and D. But the concept of an international insurance pool requires more research and deliberation amongst major emitters in developed and developing countries. In Egypt, AOSIS, instead of insisting on an international insurance pool, demanded a dedicated L and D Response Fund. It wanted funding from governments on a grant basis, which would be on top of existing climate finance commitments. The fund would also draw upon other potential sources, which include, as UN Chief Antonio Guterres advocates, a windfall tax on oil and gas companies' profits. The idea of taxing fossil fuel oil and gas companies needs more research as it indicates an alternative to the nation-state approach of climate change negotiations. The idea highlights that 'substantial emissions have come from fossil fuels sourced from non-Annex I countries such as China, India, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Iran, Brazil, and Mexico, and from nations that are not large-scale emitters, such as Nigeria, Venezuela, Kuwait, Angola, Malaysia, and Libya'.

The German-backed "Global Shield Scheme against climate risks", is a part of COP27's decision. The Shield is aimed at increasing pre-arranged finance to be disbursed before or just after disasters happen. The AOSIS favours a dedicated L and D response fund which would help disburse funding from different propositions, including the Global Shield, and avoid a piecemeal approach. The other probable avenues to address L and D are litigation, but the issues of causation, attribution and standing appear to be potential obstacles, at the domestic and international levels.

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.