



News Analysis (18 Jan, 2019)

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Supreme Court Sets Deadline for Lokpal Appointment

Recently, the Supreme Court has fixed a **February-end deadline** for the **search committee on Lokpal** to recommend a panel of names for appointment of the country's first anti-graft ombudsman.

- Earlier in January, 2019 the government informed the Supreme Court that an **eight-member search committee** has been constituted in September 2018 **headed by former Supreme Court judge, Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai**.
- Other members of the search committee are:
 - Former chief of State Bank of India Arundhati Bhattacharya,
 - Prasar Bharati Chairperson A Surya Prakash,
 - Former Indian Space Research Organisation head A S Kiran Kumar,
 - Former Judge of Allahabad High Court Sakha Ram Singh Yadav,
 - Former Gujarat Police head Shabbirhusein S Khandwawala,
 - Retired IAS officer Lalit K Panwar, and
 - Former Solicitor General Ranjit Kumar.
- The government informed SC that because of **lack of infrastructure and manpower** due the search committee was not able to hold deliberations on the issue.

Background

- Though passed in 2014, the Lokpal and Lokayukta Act of 2013 was not implemented all these years because **there was no Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the 16th Lok Sabha**.
- The Act intends the LoP to be the part of the selection committee of the **PM, the CJI and the Speaker, which has to first appoint an eminent jurist among their ranks**.
- However, on April 27 last year, the Supreme Court, in a judgment, clarified that the Lokpal appointment process need not be stalled merely due to the absence of the LoP.

- The court has for the past several months stated the **government's stand on Lokpal Appointment as unsatisfactory** and constantly urging the government to complete the Lokpal appointment.

Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013

- To provide for the establishment of a body of **Lokpal for the Union and Lokayukta for States** to inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- It **extends to the whole of India**; It shall apply to **public servants in and outside India**.
- The Lokpal shall inquire or cause an inquiry to be conducted into any matter involved in, or arising from, or connected with, any allegation of corruption made in a complaint in respect of the following, namely:—
 - Any person who is or has been a Prime Minister (**except for certain exceptions with respect to matters related to security, international relations etc.**)
 - Any person who is or has been a Minister of the Union or an MP.
 - Group A to D officers as defined in Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.
- It shall be the duty of the Lokpal to **present annually** to the **President a report to be laid before each House of Parliament**.
- Every State shall establish a body to be known as the Lokayukta for the State, if not so established, constituted or appointed, by a law made by the State Legislature.

UNNATI by ISRO

Indian Space and Research Organization (ISRO) has launched a training programme **UNNATI (UNISpace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training by ISRO)**.

- UNNATI is a capacity building programme on **nanosatellite development**.
- The Programme provides opportunities to the **participants from developing countries** to strengthen their capabilities in assembling, integrating and testing of nanosatellites.
- It is an ISRO initiative to **commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE+50)**.
- UNNATI programme is being conducted by **U.R. Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) of ISRO** for 3 years in 3 batches and has a target to benefit 90 officials from 45 countries.
- The training comprises of theoretical course work on nanosatellite definition, utility, laws governing their impact on space debris, design drivers, reliability & quality assurance and hands-on training on assembly, integration, and testing of nanosatellites.

- The first batch of this programme has started on January 17, 2019, with 30 participants from 17 countries (Algeria, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Oman, Panama, and Portugal).

United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE)

- **UNISPACE I**, held from 14 to 27 August 1968, was the first in a series of three global UN conferences on outer space, which focused on raising awareness of the vast potential of space benefits for all humankind.
 - **UNISPACE II** conference was held from 9 to 21 August 1982. UNISPACE II addressed the concerns of how to maintain the outer space for peaceful purposes and prevent an arms race in outer space.
 - **UNISPACE III** conference held from 19 to 30 July 1999. UNISPACE III created a blueprint for the peaceful uses of outer space in the 21st century.
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Regional Conference on Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)

Recently the Department of Empowerment of persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment organised Regional Conference on **“Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)”** in Mumbai.

- It was the second of a series of Regional Conferences to be held across the country wherein Programme Implementing Agencies (PIAs) from the western region namely, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Goa participated.
- Since this scheme was **revised in 2018**, the Regional Conference was organized in order to **disseminate the provisions of the revised scheme and bring the Department closer to implementing agencies.**

Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme

- DDRS is a **Central Sector Scheme** of Government of India which is being implemented **since 1999** for providing financial assistance to **NGOs working** for education and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.
- The objectives of the scheme are:
 - To create an **enabling environment** to ensure equal opportunities, equity, social justice and empowerment of persons with disabilities.
 - To encourage voluntary action for ensuring effective implementation of the **Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.**
- NGOs are being **given assistance under DDRS** for providing a wide range of services

to children/persons with disability, e.g.

- programmes for pre-school and early intervention
 - special education,
 - vocational training and placement
 - community based rehabilitation
 - manpower development
 - psycho-social rehabilitation of persons with mental illness
 - rehabilitation of leprosy-cured persons, etc.
- The "Scheme to Promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities" was **revised and was renamed** as the "Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) **from April 2003.**
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Jallikattu Event Held in Tamil Nadu

Recently, events of Jallikattu were organized in many parts of Tamil Nadu.

- **Jallikattu is referred to as bull taming event** typically practiced in Tamil Nadu as a part of Pongal celebrations.
- The person participating in the event has to **pluck bundles of money or gold tied to the animal's horns.**
- The term 'jallikattu' is derived from the **Tamil words 'jalli' and 'kattu'. Jalli refers to gold or silver coins. Kattu means 'tied'.**
- It is an **ancient 'sport'**, believed to have been practiced some 2500 years ago. It also **found mentioned in the Sangam literature.**
- It is controversial because the sport often results in **major injuries and even deaths of both bulls and humans.**
- Supreme Court in 2014 banned Jallikattu and bullock-cart races and such events like the Rekla (race-bulls lugging makeshift carts, TN), Kambala (buffalo race in Karnataka), Dhirio (bullfight in Goa), buffalo fight (Assam) in response to Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) and People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) petitions citing cruelty to animals.

Arguments in Favor

- **Culture:** Tamils consider it symbolic of Tamilian pride as it is an ancient tradition. Organizers of bullock cart races have argued that extreme care and precaution is exercised to prevent pain from bullocks.

However, the court had noted that even the ancient culture and tradition do not support Jallikattu in the form they are conducted today; Tamil culture and tradition is about worshipping the bull considered the vehicle of Lord Shiva.

- **Saving Native Bulls:** Proponents of Jallikattu argue that only native bulls are allowed

to participate in Jallikattu and these bulls will become extinct if Jallikattu is not allowed to happen; there were more than one million Kangayam bulls in 1990 but now the number is just 15,000.

Arguments in Against

- Violation of constitution and law: The practice of jallikattu is violating the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals act, 1960.
 - Also, the article 51A of the constitution which includes our fundamental duties and states that citizens should safeguard the wildlife and forests and have compassion for living creatures.
 - Animal rights issues: Some people consider bullfighting a cruel sport in which the bull suffers severe torture. Many animal rights activists often protest against it, citing the needless endangerment of the life of the animal and the fighter.
 - The animal welfare body through its studies and reports had highlighted that bulls were physically and mentally tortured for human pleasure.
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Important Facts for Prelims (18th January 2019)

National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC)

- **India's first National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) will be inaugurated in Mumbai.**
- The National Museum of Indian Cinema will not only provide a storehouse of information to laymen but it will **also help filmmakers, film students, enthusiasts and critics** to know and **evaluate the development of cinema** as a medium of artistic expression, not only in the country but also in all parts of the world.
- The museum is **housed in a 19th-century heritage bungalow, Gulshan Mahal**, along with another newly built state-of-the-art NMIC building.
- The new museum building has **four exhibition halls**, whose themes are:
 - Gandhi and Cinema;
 - Technology, Creativity and Indian cinema;
 - Cinema across India;
 - Children's Film Studio.
- **Raja Harishchandra made by Dadasaheb Phalke in 1913** was the **first silent feature film in India** and **Ardeshir Irani's Alam Ara in 1931** was the first feature film with sound.

Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY), the flagship scheme of the Central

Government for employment generation has crossed the milestone of one crore beneficiaries as on January 14, 2019.

Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY)

- Under the scheme, **the government incentivizes employers for generation of new employment.**
- The Government of **India pays the full employer's contribution of 12% (towards Employees' Provident Fund and Employees' Pension Scheme)**, for the new employment generated with salary up to Rs. 15,000 per month.
- PMRPY was announced on August 07, 2016 and is being implemented by the **Ministry of Labour and Employment through the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO).**
- The entire system of PMRPY is online and AADHAAR based with no human interface in the implementation of the scheme.
- A direct benefit of this scheme is that workers have access to social security benefit through Provident Fund, Pension and Death Linked Insurance.

Angel Tax

- The **Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry** has issued a clarification on "Angel Tax" levied on startups.
 - Recently, many startups have received notices from tax authorities to file their tax returns under angel tax.
 - **Angel tax** is a term used to refer to the **income tax payable on capital raised by startup companies** via the issue of shares where the share price is seen in excess of the fair market value of the shares sold. The excess realization is treated as income and taxed accordingly.
 - The angel tax is levied on investments made by external investors in startups or companies. The entire investment is not taxed – only the amount that is considered above "fair value" valuations of the startup.
 - Differing interpretations of "fair value" of a startup by tax authorities and startup owners and leave startups vulnerable to unduly high taxes.
 - The tax was introduced in the 2012 Union Budget to arrest laundering of funds by portraying them as angel investment.
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