



## News Analysis (03 Nov, 2021)

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### New Pledges at CoP26 Summit

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#### Why in News

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Recently, leaders at the **CoP26 global climate conference in Glasgow** have pledged to **stop deforestation** by the end of the decade and slash emissions of **methane** to help slow **climate change**.

Earlier, India announced that it will reach **carbon neutrality by 2070 as part of a five-point action plan** that included reducing emissions to 50% by 2030.

#### Key Points

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##### Methane Pledge:

- The **European Union (EU)** and the US have launched a landmark **pledge to slash emissions of the powerful greenhouse gas methane**, a commitment that could prevent 0.2 degrees Celsius of global warming.
- The alliance's members will seek to lower global emissions of methane - the second-largest contributor to climate change after carbon dioxide - by 30% below 2020 levels by 2030.
- Besides the EU and the US, **more than 103 countries have signed up so far**, including major methane emitters like Nigeria and Pakistan.
  - The **Global Methane Pledge** (US), first announced in September 2021, now covers emissions from two-thirds of the global economy.
  - **China, Russia and India - have not signed up**, while Australia has said it will not back the pledge.

##### Methane: A Concern

- Methane is more **short-lived in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide but 80 times more potent** in warming the earth.

- Humanity has also boosted the **greenhouse gases** in the atmosphere by hacking away at the forests that absorb roughly 30% of carbon dioxide emissions, according to the nonprofit **World Resources Institute**.
- Human sources of methane include landfills, oil and natural gas systems, agricultural activities, coal mining, wastewater treatment, and certain industrial processes.
- **Deforestation Pledge:**
  - More than **100 national leaders pledged to halt and reverse deforestation and land degradation** by the end of the decade, underpinned by USD 19 billion in public and private funds to invest in protecting and restoring forests.
 

In 2020, the **world lost 258,000 sq km of forest** — an area larger than the United Kingdom, according to WRI's Global Forest Watch.
  - The agreement vastly expands a commitment made by 40 countries as part of the 2014 **New York Declaration of Forests, and promises more resources**.
- **Call for Climate Finance:**
  - India noted that **climate finance** cannot continue at the levels decided in 2009 (100 billion USD), and emphasised that it **should be at least USD 1 trillion to meet the goals of addressing climate change**.
  - India underlined the unity and strength of **Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** as fundamental in the **UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change)** negotiations.
 

To **preserve the interest of the Global South in the fight against climate change**, India **highlighted that recognition of the current challenges** being faced by developing countries required intensified multilateral cooperation, not intensified global economic and geopolitical competition and trade wars.
  - India requested the LMDC members to join hands with India to support the global initiatives it has pioneered, including the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)** and the **Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT)**.
- **Infrastructure for Resilient Island States:**
  - India launched this initiative as **a part of the CDRI** that would **focus on building capacity**, having pilot projects, especially in small island developing states.
  - Small Island Developing States or SIDS face the biggest threat from climate change, India's space agency **ISRO** will build a special data window for them to provide them timely information about cyclones, coral-reef monitoring, coast-line monitoring etc. through satellite.

- **One Sun One World One Grid Group (OSOWOG) Launched:**
  - It is an **initiative by India and the United Kingdom** to tap solar energy and have it travel seamlessly across borders.
  - It includes a group of governments called the **Green Grids Initiative (GGI) - One Sun One World One Grid group.**
    - The aim of GGI is to help achieve the pace and scale of reforms to infrastructure and market structures needed to underpin the global energy transition.
  - It **has the potential to be a modern engineering marvel, and a catalyst for greatly expanding renewable electricity generation, and effectively mitigating climate change** in the next decade.
  - According to the ISA's concept note on OSOWOG, the global solar grid **will be implemented in three phases.**
    - In the first phase, the '**Indian Grid**' will interconnect with the **Middle East, South Asia and Southeast Asia grids** to share solar and other renewable energy resources for meeting electricity needs, including during peak demand.
    - It will **then be interconnected with the African power pools** in the second phase.
    - The **third phase would cover global interconnection** of the power transmission grid to achieve the OSOWOG's vision.

**Source: TH**

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## **NHRC on Police Reforms**

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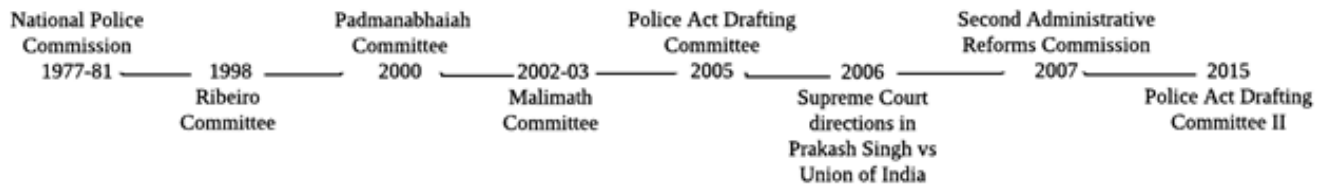
### **Why in News**

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Recently, the **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** has asked the **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** and the State Governments to set up **Police Complaints Authorities** as per the judgment in **Prakash Singh vs. Union of India, 2006.**

### **Police Reforms**

- Police reforms aim to transform the values, culture, policies and practices of police organizations.
- It envisages police to perform their duties with respect for democratic values, human rights and the rule of law.
- It also aims to improve how the police interact with other parts of the security sector, such as the courts and departments of corrections, or executive, parliamentary or independent authorities with management or oversight responsibilities.
- Police come under the state list of **schedule 7** of the Indian constitution.



## Key Points

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- **NHRC Recommendations:**

- **Burden of Proof:** The MHA and the Law Ministry should consider implementing the recommendations of the **113<sup>th</sup> report of the Law Commission of India** to add Section 114 B to the **Indian Evidence Act, 1872**.  
This would ensure that in case a person sustains injuries in police custody, it is presumed that the injuries were inflicted by the police and the burden of proof to explain the injury lies on the authority concerned.
- **Technology-Friendly Criminally Justice System:** The legal framework should be made technology-friendly to speed up the criminal justice system.  
Presently the legal framework is not suitable for the adoption of technology in the criminal justice system.
- **Ensuring Accountability:** The group also recommended that the Supreme Court's December 2020 order to **instal CCTV cameras** with night vision in all police stations should be **"implemented immediately"** to ensure accountability.
- **Community Policing:** It also pitched for the involvement of trained social workers and law students with police stations as part of **community policing** and incorporating community policing in police manuals, laws and advisories.

- **Supreme Court Directives in Prakash Singh Case 2006:**

- The **seven main directives** from the Supreme Court in the verdict were **fixing the tenure and selection of the DGP** (Director General of Police) to avoid situations where officers about to retire in a few months are given the post.
- In order to ensure no political interference, **a minimum tenure was sought for the Inspector General of Police** so that they are not transferred mid-term by politicians.
- The SC further directed postings of officers being done by Police Establishment Boards (PEB) comprising police officers and senior bureaucrats **to insulate powers of postings and transfers from political leaders**.
- Further, there was a recommendation of **setting up the State Police Complaints Authority (SPCA)** to give a platform where common people aggrieved by police action could approach.
- Apart from this, the SC directed **separation of investigation and law and order functions** to better improve policing, **setting up of State Security Commissions (SSC)** that would have members from civil society and **forming a National Security Commission**.

## SEVEN DIRECTIVES OF SUPREME COURT

- 1 **Constitute a State Security Commission**
- 2 **Fixed two-year tenure for DGP**
- 3 **Two-year term for SPs & SHOs**
- 4 **Separate Investigation and L&O functions**
- 5 **Set up Police Establishment Board**
- 6 **Set up Police Complaints Authorities at State & Dist levels**
- 7 **Set up National Security Commission at Centre level**



### Way Forward

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- **Modernisation of Police Forces:** The Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF) scheme was initiated in 1969-70 and has undergone several revisions over the years. However, there is a need to fully utilize the finances sanctioned by the government.  
MPF scheme envisages:
  - Procurement of modern weapons
  - Mobility of police forces
  - Logistics support, upgradation of police wireless, etc
  - A National satellite network
- **Revamping Criminal Justice System:** Along with Police reforms, there is a need to reform the criminal justice system too. In this context, the recommendations of the **Menon and Malimath Committees** can be implemented. Some of the key recommendations are as follows:
  - Creation of a fund to compensate victims who turn hostile from the pressure of culprits.
  - Setting up separate authority at the national level to deal with crimes threatening the country's security.
  - A complete revamp of the entire criminal procedure system.

**Source: TH**

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## Vanniakula Reservation Unconstitutional: Madras HC

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### Why in News

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Recently, the Madras High Court has declared as **unconstitutional a reservation law** passed by the Tamil Nadu legislative Assembly.

The law envisaged providing **10.5% internal reservation to Vanniakula Kshatriya community**, within the 20% earmarked for **Most Backward Classes (MBCs)** in education and public employment.

## Key Points

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- **About Vanniakula Khastriya Reservation:**
  - The reservation was provided under the State within the reservation for the **Most Backward Classes and Denotified Communities Act, 2021**.
  - Vanniakula Khastriya (including **Vanniar, Vanniya, Vannia Gounder, Gounder or Kander, Padayachi, Palli and Agnikula Kshatriya**) community.
  - The **second Tamil Nadu Backward Commission in 1983**, held that the population of Vanniakula Kshatriyas was found to be 13.01% of the State's total population.
  - Therefore, provision of **10.5% reservation** to a community with a population of 13.01% could not be called disproportionate.
- **Grounds for Challenging the Bill:**
  - The law was challenged on account of the law being **passed just hours** before the **Model Code of Conduct (MCC)** came into force in the State in February 2021.
  - Further, the petitioner argued that the **enactment was politically motivated** and that the law was **passed hastily**.
- **Tamil Nadu Government's Argument:**
  - In a democratic polity, an **elected government cannot be barred** from exercise of its power to make a policy to legislate any law during its **tenure/until the last minute** it holds power to meet the **public opinion at large**.
  - In 2020, a commission to collect quantifiable data on castes, communities and tribes in the State was established in chairmanship of **retired High Court judge A. Kulasekaran** within six months.
    - The Tamil Nadu government held that the **commission did not submit any report within its tenure**.
  - Further, asserting that the **government was empowered to pass such a law for providing internal reservation**, it referred to a **2007 enactment through which Backward Class Muslims** in the State were being actively provided separate reservation.

## Model Code of Conduct

- The MCC is a **set of guidelines** issued by the **Election Commission of India** to regulate political parties and candidates prior to elections.
- It **helps EC in keeping with the mandate it has been given** under **Article 324** of the Constitution, which gives it the power to supervise and conduct free and fair elections to the Parliament and State Legislatures.

- The MCC is operational from the date on which the **election schedule** is announced until the date of result announcement.
- Evolution:
  - The origins of the **MCC lie in the Assembly elections of Kerala in 1960**, when the State administration prepared a 'Code of Conduct' for political actors.
  - Subsequently, in the **Lok Sabha elections** in 1962, the ECI circulated the code to all recognised political parties and State governments and it was wholeheartedly followed.
  - It was in 1991 after repeated flouting of the election norms and continued corruption, the **EC decided to enforce the MCC more strictly**.

### Constitutional Provisions for Elections

- **Part XV** of the Indian constitution deals with elections, and establishes a commission for these matters.
- The Election Commission was established in accordance with the **Constitution on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1950**.
- **Article 324 to 329** of the constitution deals with powers, function, tenure, eligibility, etc of the commission and the members.

### Articles Related to Elections

<b>324</b>	Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.
<b>325</b>	No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.
<b>326</b>	Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be on the basis of adult suffrage.
<b>327</b>	Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures.
<b>328</b>	Power of Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature.
<b>329</b>	Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.

Source: TH

### Khasi Inheritance of Property Bill, 2021

## Why in News

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Recently, the **Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC)** in Meghalaya announced that it would introduce the '**Khasi Inheritance of Property Bill, 2021**'. The bill is aimed at "equitable distribution" of parental property among siblings in the Khasi community.

If implemented, the proposed Bill would modify an age-old customary practice of inheritance of the matrilineal Khasi tribe.

### Note:

- KHADC is a body under the **Sixth Schedule** of the Constitution.
- It does not have the power to legislate.
- Paragraph 12 A of the Sixth Schedule gives the final right of passing a law to the state legislature.
- The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution provides for the **administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram** to safeguard the rights of the tribal population in these states.
  - This special provision is provided under **Article 244 (2) and Article 275 (1) of the Constitution**.
  - It provides for **autonomy in the administration of these areas through Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)**, which are empowered to make laws in respect of areas under their jurisdiction.

## Key Points

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- **About Matrilineal System of Inheritance:**
  - The **three tribes of Meghalaya — Khasis, Jaintias, and Garos** — practise a matrilineal system of inheritance.

In this system, **lineage and descent are traced through the mother's clan**.
  - In other words, children take the mother's surname, the husband moves into his wife's house, and the **youngest daughter (khatduh)** of the family is entrusted the full share of the ancestral - or the clan's - property.

The **khatduh becomes the "custodian" of the land**, and assumes all responsibility associated with the land, including taking care of aged parents, unmarried or destitute siblings.
  - This inheritance tradition **applies only to ancestral or clan/community property**, which has been with the family for years. The **self-acquired property can be distributed equally among siblings**.
  - In this traditional set-up, **if a couple does not have any daughters**, then the **property goes to the wife's elder sister**, and her daughters.
  - If the wife does not have sisters, then the **clan usually takes over the property**.



- **Effect of this System on Women Empowerment:** Women activists have often pointed out that the matrilineal system in Meghalaya rarely empowers women.
  - **Issue in Custodianship:** Custodianship is often misconstrued as ownership vested in just one person, that is the youngest daughter.
    - This custodianship comes with the responsibility to care for aged parents, unmarried or destitute siblings and other clan members.
    - Moreover, the custodian cannot buy or sell the land, without taking permission from her maternal uncle.
  - **Matrilineal is Not Matriarchal:** People often confuse matrilineal with matriarchal, where women function as heads.
    - While women may have freedom of mobility and easier access to education, they are not decision makers in Meghalaya.
    - There are barely any women in positions of power, in politics, or heading institutions.
- **About the Bill:**
  - **Provisions:**
    - The proposed Bill is envisaged to **provide the “equitable distribution” of parental property among siblings – both male and female.**
    - The Bill would **let parents decide** who they want to will their property to.
    - It **would prevent a sibling from getting parental property if they marry a non-Khasi** and accept the spouse’s customs and culture.
  - **Need For the Bill:** Over the years, a few groups have protested the system of property inheritance, saying it **“disinherits” men**, and pressed for equitable property distribution between all children in the family.
  - **Impact:** This would modify an age-old customary practice of inheritance of the matrilineal Khasi tribe.
    - The legislation is aimed at **economic empowerment based on the principle of equitable distribution of property.**

Source: IE

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## Project-15B Class Destroyer Ship: Visakhapatnam

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **first ship of the four Project-15B state-of-the-art stealth guided missile destroyers i.e. ‘Y 12704 (Visakhapatnam)’**, was delivered to the Navy.

The ship is constructed using **indigenous steel DMR 249A** and is **amongst the largest destroyers constructed** in India.

### Key Points

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- **India's Destroyer Construction Programme:**
  - India's indigenous Destroyer construction programme **commenced in the late 1990s with the three Delhi class (P-15 class) warships** and this was **followed by three Kolkata class (P-15A) destroyers** commissioned a decade later.
  - Presently, under the **P-15B (Visakhapatnam Class)**, a total of four warships are planned (Visakhapatnam, Mormugao, Imphal, Surat).
  - The Destroyers **come next only to an Aircraft Carrier (INS Vikramaditya)** in terms of their reach and endurance.
- **Project-15B:**
  - **Four Guided missile Destroyers of Project 15B (P 15B)** are under construction at M/s Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai. The contract for construction of these four ships was signed in 2011.
  - These ships are **amongst the most technologically advanced Guided Missile Destroyers** of the world, with **state-of-the-art weapon/sensor package**, advanced stealth features and a high degree of automation.
- **Features of the P-15B Ships:**
  - These ships are equipped with **BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles** and long-range **Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM)**.
  - The ship has several indigenous weapons systems like **medium range Surface-to-Air Missile (SAMs)**, indigenous torpedo tube launchers, anti-submarine indigenous rocket launchers and 76-mm super rapid gun mount.
- **Other Three Ships of Project 15B:**
  - The **second ship of P15B, Mormugao was launched in 2016**, and is being readied for harbour trials.
  - The **third ship (Imphal) was launched in 2019**, and is at an advanced stage of outfitting.
  - The **fourth ship (Surat) is under block erection** and will be launched within this current financial year (2022) .
- **Role of P-15B:**
  - The **Indian Navy's responsibilities** to safeguard a large coastline of 7516 Kms and about 1100 offshore islands along with 2.01 million sq km **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** have been enhanced in the present geopolitical scenario.
  - Destroyers like the P-15B class shall **play an important role** in the larger oceans of the **Indo-Pacific**, making the Indian Navy a potent force.
  - The guided missile Destroyers are deployed for various responsibilities like escort duties with the Carrier Battle Group **to protect the Naval fleet against any air, surface and underwater threats.**

- **Other Recent Projects:**

- **Project 75 (I):** It envisages indigenous construction of submarines equipped with the state-of-the-art **Air Independent Propulsion system** at an estimated cost of Rs. 43,000 crore.
- **Project 75:** It is a **programme by the Indian Navy** that entails building six Scorpene-Class attack submarines. The programme has been undertaken with transfer of technology from French company Naval Group (formerly known as DCNS) at the Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL).

**Source: TH**

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## Ganges River Dolphin

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** released a guide for the safe rescue and release of stranded Ganges River Dolphins.

- The document has been **prepared by the Turtle Survival Alliance and the Environment, Forest and Climate Change Department (EFCCD) of the Uttar Pradesh Government.**
- It was recognised as the **National Aquatic Animal in 2009**, by the Government of India.

### Key Points

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- **Scientific Name:** *Platanista gangetica gangetica*.



- **Discovery:** It was officially **discovered in 1801.**
- **Habitat:** They live in the **Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of Nepal, India, and Bangladesh.**
  - The Ganges river dolphin **can only live in freshwater** and is essentially blind.
  - They hunt by emitting ultrasonic sounds, which bounces off of fish and other prey, enabling them to “see” an image in their mind. They are **also called ‘susu’.**
- **Population:** The global population of the species is estimated at 4,000, and nearly **80% found in the Indian subcontinent.**
- **Significance:**
  - It is a **reliable indicator of the health** of the entire river ecosystem.

- **Threats:**

- **Bycatch:** These dolphins and people both favor areas of the river where fish are plentiful and the water current is slower. This has led to fewer fish for people and more dolphins dying as a result of accidentally being caught in fishing nets, also known as bycatch.
- **Pollution:** Industrial, agricultural, and human pollution is another serious cause of habitat degradation.
- **Dams:** Construction of dams and other irrigation-related projects make them susceptible to inbreeding and more vulnerable to other threats because they cannot move to new areas.

Dolphins below a dam are threatened by heavy pollution, increased fishing activities and vessel traffic. They also have less food because dams disturb the migration, breeding cycles and habitat of fish and other prey.

- **Steps Taken:**

- **Project Dolphin:** The Prime Minister announced the government's plan to launch a Project Dolphin in his Independence Day Speech 2020. It is on the lines of **Project Tiger**, which has helped increase the tiger population.
- **Dolphin Sanctuary:** **Vikramshila Ganges Dolphin Sanctuary** has been established in Bihar.
- **National Ganga River Dolphin Day:** The **National Mission for Clean Ganga** celebrates 5<sup>th</sup> October as National Ganga River Dolphin Day.
- **Conservation Plan:** The Conservation Action Plan for the Ganges River Dolphin 2010-2020, which "identified threats to Gangetic Dolphins and impact of river traffic, irrigation canals and depletion of prey-base on Dolphins populations".

Source: TH

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## **Whistle Blower Portal: IREDA**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)** has launched a '**whistle-blower Portal**', as a part of '**Vigilance Awareness Week 2021**'.

- It is a part of IREDA's "**zero tolerance**" of corruption. Through this portal, IREDA employees can raise concerns related to fraud, corruption, abuse of power etc.
- IREDA is a **Mini Ratna (Category – I)** Government of India Enterprise under the administrative control of the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**.

### **Key Points**

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- **Whistleblowing:**
  - According to the **Companies Act 2013**, **whistleblowing is an action aimed at drawing the attention of stakeholders** to instances of unethical practices in an organization.
  - A whistleblower can be anyone who chooses to expose wrong practices and has evidence to support the allegations.
  - They can be either from within or outside the organization, such as current and former employees, shareholders, external auditors, and lawyers.
  - In India, whistleblowers are protected by the **Whistleblowers Protection Act, 2014**.
  - In January 2020, the **Securities and Exchange Board of India** (SEBI) came out with a **new mechanism to reward whistle-blowers** and other informants for sharing information about insider trading cases.
    - **Insider trading** is an unfair and illegal practice in the stock market, wherein other investors are at a great disadvantage due to the lack of important insider non-public information about a company.
- **Vigilance Awareness Week:**
  - **About:**
    - It is celebrated every year in the birthday week of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, often referred to as the '**Bismark of India**'. It is observed by the **Central Vigilance Commission**.
      - **National Unity Day or Rashtriya Ekta Diwas** is celebrated on 31<sup>st</sup> October every year to mark the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
    - This year, Vigilance Week is being observed from 26<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November.
  - **Theme:**
    - 'Independent India @ 75: Self Reliance and Integrity'.
  - **Aim:**
    - Various activities are planned through the week, which are aimed at **recognising the ills of corruption and promoting ways to combat it** at an individual as well as systemic level.

## Corruption in India

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- **Prevalence:**
  - The **Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) – Asia 2020**, found that nearly 50 of those who paid bribes were asked to, while 32% of those who used personal connections said they would not receive the service otherwise.
  - As of 2020, India stands at the **86<sup>th</sup> spot on the corruption perception index** among a list of 180 countries. This is worse than 2019 when India stood at the 80<sup>th</sup> spot.

- **Causes:**

The important causes of corruption in India are poor regulatory framework, exclusivist process of decision making aggravated by discretion and official secrecy, rigid bureaucratic structures and processes; and absence of effective internal control mechanism.

- **Impact:**

It promotes inefficiencies in utilisation of resources, distorts the markets, compromises quality, destroys the environment and of late has become a serious threat to national security.

**Source: PIB**

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