



High Court Judges Shortage | Haryana | 30 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the Punjab and Haryana [High Court](#) has been facing a judicial crisis due to a shortage of judges and delays in appointments.

Key Points

- **Judge Shortage:**
 - The [Punjab and Haryana High Court](#) is functioning with only **54 judges** against a **sanctioned strength of 85**, leading to a **shortage of 31 judges**.
 - No new appointments have been made since November 2022.
 - 5 more judges are set to retire by 2025, with 2 expected to retire within 2024.
- **Pending Cases:**
 - The court faces a **backlog of 4,33,253 cases**, with 1,61,362 criminal matters involving [life and liberty](#).
 - 26% of all pending cases (1,12,754) are over 10 years old.
- **Elevations and Appointments:**
 - 15 judges are eligible for elevation from the category of [district and sessions judges](#), but appointments have stalled.
 - The delay was due to the absence of a regular Chief Justice for almost eight months.
- **Issues with Central Government and Collegium System:**
 - The [Supreme Court Collegium](#) recommended the elevation of five advocates over a year ago, but the Centre only notified three appointments. Two appointments remain pending despite the Supreme Court reiterating its recommendation.
- **Complicated Appointment Process:**
 - Even if new names are recommended, the appointment process is slow due to its complexity. Recommendations must pass through state governments, the **Supreme Court Collegium, the Union Law Ministry, and finally receive Presidential approval**.

Appointment of HC Judges

- **Article 217 of the Constitution:** It states that the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the [Chief Justice of India \(CJI\), the Governor of the State](#).
 - In the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court is consulted.
- **Consultation Process:** High Court judges are recommended by a Collegium comprising the CJI and two senior-most judges.
 - The proposal, however, is initiated by the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned in consultation with two senior-most colleagues.
 - The recommendation is sent to the Chief Minister, who advises the Governor to send the proposal to the Union Law Minister.
 - The Chief Justice of the High Court is appointed as per the policy of having Chief Justices from outside the respective States.
 - The Collegium takes the call on the elevation.
- **Ad-hoc Judges:** The appointment of retired judges was provided for in the Constitution under Article 224A.
 - Under the Article, the Chief Justice of a High Court for any State may at any time, with the

previous consent of the President, request any person who has held the office of judge of that court or of any other High Court to sit and act as a judge of the High Court for that State.

- The Supreme Court pushed for the [appointment of retired judges](#) to battle the pendency of cases in High Courts.
 - It orally outlined prospective guidelines for the appointment and functioning of an ad-hoc judge.

▪ **Collegium System:**

- It is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the SC, and not by an Act of [Parliament](#) or by a provision of the Constitution.
- **Evolution of the System:**
 - **First Judges Case (1981):** It declared that the “primacy” of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) recommendation on judicial appointments and transfers can be refused for “cogent reasons.”
 - The ruling gave the Executive primacy over the Judiciary in judicial appointments for the next 12 years.
 - **Second Judges Case (1993):** SC introduced the Collegium system, holding that “consultation” really meant “concurrence”.
 - It added that it was not the CJI’s individual opinion, but an institutional opinion formed in consultation with the two senior-most judges in the SC.
- **Third Judges Case (1998):** SC on President’s reference expanded the Collegium to a five-member body, comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues (for example for the transfer of HC judges).

Dera Chief Seeks Parole Ahead of Haryana Polls | Haryana | 30 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, Dera Sacha Sauda chief has sought a 20-day [parole](#) ahead of the Haryana Assembly elections, sparking questions due to the electoral context.

Key Points

▪ **Parole Request:**

- Dera Sacha Sauda chief, serving a 20-year sentence for the rape of two female disciples, has requested a **20-day parole ahead** of the Haryana Assembly elections scheduled for **5th October, 2024**.
- The Dera chief was granted a 21-day [furlough](#) on 13th August, 2024, to stay at his Dera in Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh.
- His request has been forwarded by the state government to the [Chief Electoral Officer \(CEO\)](#) for consultation, as the model code of conduct is in effect for the elections.
- The CEO has asked the Haryana government to provide emergent and compelling circumstances justifying the parole request during the election period.
- [Election Commission](#) guidelines do not mandate approval for parole but require consultation with the CEO in exceptional cases during the election period.

▪ **Previous High Court Challenges:**

- The Dera chief’s repeated paroles and furloughs have been challenged in the Punjab and Haryana High Court.
- In August 2024, his release on furlough was contested by the [Shiromani Gurdwara](#)

[Parbandhak Committee \(SGPC\)](#), but the court dismissed the plea, leaving the decision to the Haryana prisons department.

- The High Court emphasized the need for decisions on such matters to be made without "arbitrariness or favouritism."

Parole and Furlough

▪ Parole:

- It is a system of releasing a prisoner with suspension of the sentence.
 - The **release is conditional**, usually subject to behavior, and requires periodic reporting to the authorities for a set period of time
- Parole is **not a right, and is given to a prisoner for a specific reason**, such as a death in the family or a wedding of a blood relative
- It may be denied to a prisoner even when he makes out a sufficient case, if the competent authority is satisfied that releasing the convict would not be in the interest of society.

▪ Furlough:

- It is similar to parole, but with some significant differences. It is given in cases of long-term imprisonment.
- The period of **furlough granted to a prisoner is treated as remission of his sentence**.
- Unlike parole, furlough is **seen as a matter of right for a prisoner**, to be granted periodically irrespective of any reason, and merely to enable the prisoner to retain family and social ties, and to counter the ill-effects of prolonged time spent in prison.

Dhanyavaad Prakriti | Uttarakhand | 30 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, in the 114th episode of [Mann Ki Baat](#), Prime Minister highlighted the success of the [Swachh Bharat Mission](#) and praised individual cleanliness efforts across India.

Key Points

- **Uttarakhand's Jhala Village:**
 - The youth of **Jhala village in Uttarkashi** have launched a campaign called '**Dhanyavaad Prakriti**' (Thank You Nature).
 - As part of the initiative, villagers spend **two hours daily** cleaning their surroundings, properly disposing of garbage outside the village.
 - The PM urged other villages and localities to replicate this initiative.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission's 10-Year Anniversary:**
 - PM reminded listeners that the **Swachh Bharat Mission** will complete **10 years on 2nd October, 2024**.
 - He called the movement a fitting tribute to [Mahatma Gandhi's lifelong commitment to cleanliness](#).
 - The Prime Minister highlighted the growing impact of the '[Waste to Wealth](#)' mantra, where more people are adopting the principles of [Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle](#).

Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)

▪ About:

- It is a massive mass movement that seeks to create a **Clean India**. The father of our nation **Mahatma Gandhi** always puts the emphasis on **swachhta as swachhta** leads to healthy and prosperous life.
- Keeping this in mind, the Indian government has decided to launch the swachh bharat mission on **October 2, 2014**. The mission will cover all rural and urban areas.
 - The urban component of the mission will be implemented by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**, and the rural component by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti**.

Chhattisgarh Ranks 5th in Low Unemployment | Chhattisgarh | 30 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, Chhattisgarh has been recognized for achieving a **low unemployment rate, ranking fifth** among Indian states according to a recent central government survey.

Key Points

- **Survey Details:**
 - The [National Sample Survey Office \(NSSO\)](#) conducted its **seventh annual report** through the [Periodic Labour Force Survey](#) from **July 2023 to June 2024**.
 - The unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of unemployed individuals among the labor force.
- **Government's Role:**
 - Chhattisgarh Chief Minister attributed the low unemployment rate to the government's efforts in **generating employment**.
 - Initiatives have been implemented to create jobs and **self-employment opportunities**, particularly in **rural and tribal areas**.
- **Investment in Skill Development:**
 - The state government plans to establish **160 industrial training institutes (ITI)** aimed at providing **employment-oriented skills** to the youth.
 - ITIs will be modernized over the next **three years** with an investment of **Rs 484 crore**.
- **Innovative Educational Initiatives:**
 - The government plans to start **five institutes** modeled after [Indian Institutes of Technology \(IIT\)](#).
 - Emphasis is placed on [skill development](#) in the industry to address technology and employment needs.
 - The state is teaching [robotics](#) and [artificial intelligence](#) to youth in tribal regions, reflecting a commitment to modern education and skills training.

National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)

- The **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)** is a government agency that conducts surveys on a wide range of topics, including demographics, socioeconomic conditions, agriculture, and industry.
- The NSSO was **established in 1950** and has been under the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI)** since **1999**.
- The **NSSO's headquarters are located in New Delhi**, and there is also a zonal office in Bangalore.

▪ **Here are some of the things the NSSO does:**

- **Household surveys:** The NSSO conducts surveys on household consumer expenditures and other topics.
- **Employment and unemployment:** The NSSO conducts quinquennial surveys on employment and unemployment, which are a primary source of data on the labor force.
- **Housing conditions:** The NSSO has conducted surveys on various aspects of housing conditions.
- **Informal enterprises:** The NSSO has conducted surveys on informal non-agricultural enterprises and other topics.

Jivitputrika Festival | Bihar | 30 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, at least 46 people, including 37 children, drowned in rivers and ponds during the **'Jivitputrika' festival** in Bihar.

Key Points

▪ **Jivitputrika:**

- Jivitputrika, also known as **Jitiya Vrat**, is a Hindu festival celebrated mainly in northern and eastern India, particularly in **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand**.
- The festival is observed by **mothers** who fast for the **well-being, long life, and prosperity** of their children.
- The celebration lasts for **three days**.
- **Nahai-Khai:** The festival begins with mothers taking a **purifying bath** and enjoying a nourishing meal.
- **Fasting Day:** The second day is marked by the rigorous fasting ritual.
- **Paaran:** The festival concludes on the third day, where the fast is broken with a meal.
- The festival is rooted in Hindu mythology, particularly commemorating the story of **King Jimutavahana**, who is honored for his sacrifice for the welfare of others.

Bihar Festivals

- **Chhath Puja:** An ancient Hindu festival that honors the sun god and his wife, Usha. It is celebrated six days **after Diwali and is native to Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh**.
- **Sonepur Cattle Fair:** Asia's largest cattle fair, held on the full moon day after Diwali at the confluence of the [Ganga and Gandak rivers](#).
- **Makar Sankranti:** Bihar's harvest festival, celebrated in January with flower offerings, holy dips in the Ganges, and pujas.
- **Rajgir Mahotsav:** A colorful festival of dance and music held in the last week of October in Rajgir.
- **Buddha Jayanti:** Celebrated in May on the full moon day
- **Jhijhiya Folk Dance:** A famous folk dance performed by women only during the Navaratri festival.