



PRS Capsule - June 2024

Key Highlights of PRS

▪ Polity and Governance

- New Union government formed after general elections to Lok Sabha
- President's Address highlights achievements of the government
- Cinematograph (Adjudication of Penalty) Rules, 2024 notified
- Cabinet approves scheme to enhance forensic infrastructure in India

▪ Economy

- Rules to identify offshore mineral areas for granting concessions notified
- CERC notifies new regulations for grant of inter-state transmission licences

▪ Education

- UGC releases curriculum and credit framework for postgraduate programmes
- High-level Committee constituted to suggest reforms in examination process

▪ Environment

- Cabinet approves viability gap funding for offshore wind energy projects

Polity and Governance

New Union Government Formed after General Elections to Lok Sabha

- Results to the elections to the **18th Lok Sabha** were declared on **June 4, 2024**, and members from **41 parties** were elected from **543 constituencies**.
- The **National Democratic Alliance (NDA)** formed the government with Mr. Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister.

Party	No. of seats
Bharatiya Janata Party	240
Indian National Congress	99
Samajwadi Party	37
All India Trinamool Congress	29
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	22
Telegu Desam Party	16
Janata Dal (United)	12
Others	88
Total	543

President's Address Highlights Achievements of the Government

- The [President of India](#) addressed a [joint sitting](#) of both Houses of [Parliament](#) on June 27, 2024.
- **Key Highlights of the Address Include:**
 - **Economy:** In 10 years, India has risen from being the **11th largest** to being the **fifth largest economy** in the world. The government is striving to make India the **third largest** economy in the world.
 - **Industry:** Sunrise sectors ranging from [semiconductors](#) to fighter jets and aircraft carriers are being promoted in [mission mode](#). The [north-eastern region](#) will be a hub of **Made-in-India chips**.
 - **Defense:** In the last year, about **70%** of defense procurement was sourced from Indian manufacturers. [Defense corridors](#) are being developed in **Uttar Pradesh** and **Tamil Nadu**.
 - **Infrastructure and Transport:** Feasibility studies will be conducted for [bullet train corridors](#) in the northern, southern and eastern regions. Government is making continuous efforts to **reduce** the **cost of logistics**.
 - **Urban and Rural Development:** Construction of **three crore houses** has been approved under [PM Awas Yojana](#).
 - **Home Affairs:** [Armed Forces \(Special Powers\) Act, 1958](#) is being withdrawn from **disturbed areas** of the north-east in a phased manner.

Cinematograph (Adjudication of Penalty) Rules, 2024 Notified

- The [Ministry of Information and Broadcasting](#) notified the **Cinematograph (Adjudication of Penalty) Rules, 2024**.
- **Key Features of the Rules Include:**
 - Appointment of Authorized Officers:
 - The **central** and **state governments** may appoint **authorized officers** for

adjudicating penalties.

- In case of the **central government**, the authorized officer must not be below the **rank of Under Secretary**.
- In case of **state governments**, the officers must not be below the **rank** of:
 - Additional District Magistrates
 - Additional Collectors
 - Additional Deputy Commissioners of a district
 - Under Secretary to the state government
- **Levy of Penalty:**
 - The **quantum** of penalty will be decided after considering **specified factors** including:
 - Nature of the violation
 - Amount of disproportionate gain or advantage
 - Repetition of the violation.
 - The **order** deciding the penalty must be passed within **90 days** of issuing the notice.
- **Powers of the Authorized Officer:**
 - The authorized officer may exercise certain **powers to investigate** violations. These include:
 - Entering (or authorizing another officer to enter) a place of exhibition
 - Summoning individuals (in writing)
 - Order for evidence considered relevant, such as surveillance footage and ticket scans.
- **Appellate Process:**
 - The appellate authority must be an officer not below the **rank** of
 - Deputy Secretary or Director where the authorized officer is of the rank Under Secretary
 - The District Magistrate, where the authorized officer is of the rank Additional District Magistrate.
 - **Appeals** must be filed **within 30 days** of the order by the authorized officer.
 - The appellate authority must decide appeals within **six months**, wherever possible.

Cabinet Approves Scheme to Enhance Forensic Infrastructure in India

- The Union Cabinet approved the [National Forensic Infrastructure Enhancement Scheme](#) with an outlay of **Rs 2,254 crore**.
- It will be implemented between **2024-25 to 2028-29**.
- **The Scheme will:**
 - Establish campuses of the [National Forensic Sciences University \(NFSU\)](#) in the country
 - Establish **Central Forensic Science Laboratories**
 - Enhance existing infrastructure of the Delhi campus of NFSU.
- The scheme seeks to address the shortage of **trained forensic manpower** in the country and help achieve a **conviction rate** of **over 90%**.

Economy

Rules to Identify Offshore Mineral Areas for Granting Concessions Notified

- The [Ministry of Mines](#) has notified the [Offshore Areas \(Existence of Mineral Resources\) Rules, 2024](#).
- These have been issued under the **Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002**.
- **Key Features of the Rules Include:**
 - **Identification of Areas for Production Lease:**
 - A production lease may be granted for an area for which:
 - At least **general exploration** has been completed
 - A **geological study** report has been prepared.

- **Identification of Areas for Composite License:**
 - A **composite license** may be granted for an area for which:
 - At least the **reconnaissance survey** has been completed, or **mineral potential** of the mineral block has been **identified** based on existing geoscience data but resources are yet to established.
 - A **geological study report** has been prepared.
- **Application to Notify an Area for Composite License:**
 - Based on the criteria outlined above, the central government will notify areas for granting composite licenses.
 - Any interested person may also submit a proposal to the government to notify an area for granting a composite license.

CERC Notifies New Regulations for Grant of Inter-State Transmission Licenses

- The [Central Electricity Regulatory Commission \(CERC\)](#) has notified the **CERC (Procedure, Terms and Conditions for Grant of Transmission Licence and Other Related Matters) Regulations, 2024**.
- It provides a **framework** for grant and administration of licenses for [inter-state transmission](#) of electricity.
- **Key Changes under the 2024 Regulations Include:**
 - Exemption for Certain Purposes:
 - **Distribution licensees** and **bulk consumers** will not need a license to develop and operate transmission lines that connect their systems to the inter-state transmission system.
 - **Bulk consumers** refer to consumers who avail supply at the voltage of 33 KV or above.
 - **Authorisation for Additional Works under Existing Licenses:**
 - It provides for the inclusion of such additional works under an existing license.
 - A licensee may apply to CERC to amend the existing license for this purpose.

Education

UGC Releases Curriculum and Credit Framework for Postgraduate Programmes

- The [University Grants Commission \(UGC\)](#) released the [“Curriculum and Credit Framework for Post Graduate Programmes”](#).
- **The Framework Seeks to Provide Flexibility to:**
 - Pursue **subjects different** from those studied in undergraduate programmes (UG)
 - Pursue PG education in **different modes** of learning
 - Pursue **simultaneous** academic or industry **engagements** and obtain **credits** for the same
 - **Exit** a PG programme after **one year with a PG diploma**.
- **Key Features of the Framework Include:**
 - Credit Requirement and Eligibility for PG Programme:
 - It **prescribes criteria** for undergraduate students to be eligible for various types of PG programmes.
 - For instance, to be eligible for a **one-year MA, MCom or MSc degree**, a candidate must have a Bachelor's degree with Honors with **minimum 160 credits**.
 - However, to be eligible for a **two-year MA, MCom, or MSc degree**, they need a three year/ six semester Bachelor's degree with **120 credits**.

- **Credit Distribution:**

- In line with [National Education Policy 2020](#), the framework requires **PG programmes** to span **one or two years**.
- **One-year** PG programmes will contain **40 credits**. This can be obtained by doing either course work, research (20 credits each), or both.
- A **two-year PG Diploma** contains **40 credits**, which must be obtained through coursework only.
- Other **two-year PG programmes** also contain **40 credits**. These can be obtained through either coursework, research, or both (20 credits each).

- **Flexibility in Switching Subjects in PG:**

- The Framework permits graduate students to:
 - Pursue a **different subject** in post-graduation, if they qualify in the **entrance examination**,
 - Apply for a **PG programme** that was a major or minor in graduate studies.
 - Under the Framework, certain students will be eligible for admission in Master in Engineering or a Master of Technology.

- **Assessment:**

- The framework suggests **assessments** to be **continuous** as opposed to summative (this includes **unit tests** and **semester-wise exams**).
- It also suggests for assessments to be driven by **learning outcomes**.
- The [National Higher Education Qualification Framework \(NHEQF\)](#) delineates learning outcomes for UG and PG programmes.

High-Level Committee Constituted to Suggest Reforms in Examination Process

- The **Department of Higher Education**, under the [Ministry of Education](#), has constituted a high-level Committee to ensure **transparent, smooth** and **fair conduct** of examinations.
- The committee will be **chaired** by **Dr. K. Radhakrishnan**, Chairman of the Board of Governors, IIT Kanpur, and the former Chairman of [ISRO](#).
- The committee will make **recommendations** on:
 - Reforming the mechanism of the **examination process**
 - Improvements in **data security protocols**
 - Structure and functioning of the [National Testing Agency](#).

Environment

Cabinet Approves Viability Gap Funding for Offshore Wind Energy Projects

- The Union Cabinet has approved a scheme to provide for [viability gap funding](#) to [offshore wind energy projects](#).
- Offshore wind energy refers to **generation** of **electricity** through [wind turbines](#) installed in the water bodies, usually at sea.
- Viability gap funding refers to **financial support** for projects that may be **economically justified** but fall **short** of **financial viability**.
- The scheme will support installation of a total of **one gigawatt capacity**, comprising **500 MW each** off the coast of **Gujarat** and **Tamil Nadu**.
 - These two projects are estimated to generate **3.7 billion units** of **electricity** annually.