

NEWS TODAY

End Caste-based allotment of work to Prisoners: Supreme Court

Recently, Supreme Court in **Sukanya Santha vs. UoI & Others** Case struck down provisions of Prison Manuals of several States as per which jobs were assigned to prisons based on castes.

- Key issues highlighted in the case include **persistent caste-based discrimination in prisons** with respect to **segregation of barracks, division of manual labour**, and provisions that **discriminate against prisoners belonging to Denotified tribes (DNTs) and "habitual offenders"**.
- Court also laid down **guidelines for prevention of segregation and division of labour solely on the basis of the caste** of the prisoners in Prisons.

Key highlights of the Judgment

- Court struck down **caste-based discrimination** within prison walls as **unconstitutional** for being violative of **Articles 14, 15, 17, 21, and 23 of the Constitution**.
- **Caste column and any references to caste** in undertrial and/or convicts' prisoners' registers inside the prisons **shall be deleted**.
- **Within a period of three months:**
 - ⊖ All States and UTs are directed to revise their Prison Manuals/Rules in line with the judgment
 - ⊖ Union government is directed to make necessary changes to address caste-based discrimination in **Model Prison Manual 2016** and **Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act 2023**.
- Reference to habitual offenders in the prison manuals should be in accordance with the legislative definitions of respective State Laws.

About DNTs and 'Habitual Offenders'

- DNTs, also known as Vimukta Jati, are the tribes that were **listed originally under the Criminal Tribes act of 1871**, as criminal tribes.
 - ⊖ **Criminal Tribes Act was repealed in 1949** and thus 'de-notified' the tribal communities.
- '**Habitual Offenders**' are defined under Habitual Offenders Act of respective States to categorize person who has been convicted of multiple crimes and are considered a danger to society.
 - ⊖ **Idate Commission (2017)** recommended to immediately repeal Habitual Offenders Act by respective States as it gives scope for harassment of the members of DNTs.

RBI released Report of the Committee on MIBOR Benchmark

Recently, RBI released a report recommending **key changes in methodology for computation of Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR)** and proposed transition to a **new secured money market benchmark** for widely used product derivatives.

What is MIBOR?

- First introduced by **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** in **1998**, it is the **interest rate benchmark** at which **banks borrow unsecured funds from one another** in the Indian interbank market.
- It is computed and published by **Financial Benchmarks India Pvt. Ltd. (FBIL)** on a daily basis.
- Currently, it is computed based on trades executed on **Negotiated Dealing System or NDS-Call system** in the first hour.
- **Issues with current MIBOR:** Based on a **narrow volume (1% of daily money market volume)** of call transactions, thin call money market volumes making MIBOR **susceptible to volatility, etc.**

Key recommendations of the Committee

- **Change in computation methodology of MIBOR:** Include transactions based on first 3-hours instead of first hour, to make MIBOR more representative of transactions in call money market and potentially increase its reliability.
- **Benchmark based on secured money market:** FBIL to develop and publish a benchmark based on secured money market computed from trades in the first three hours of basket repo and the TREP (tri-party repo) segments.

About Call Money Market and TREP

- **Call Money Market:** It is a financial market where financial institutions and banks lend and borrow funds for short-term needs.
- **TREP:** It is a type of repo contract where a third entity acts as an intermediary between two parties to the repo to facilitate services like collateral selection, payment and settlement, custody and management during life of transaction.

Cabinet Approves National Mission on Edible Oils – Oilseeds (NMEO-Oilseeds)

About NMEO -Oilseeds

- **Aim:** Boost **domestic oilseed production**, achieve **self-reliance** in edible and **boosting farmers' incomes**.
 - ⊕ Currently, **imports** account for **57% of India's domestic demand for edible oils**.
- **Focus**
 - ⊕ **Enhancing the production of key primary oilseed crops** (Rapeseed-Mustard, Groundnut, Soybean, Sunflower, and Sesamum)
 - ⊕ **Increasing collection and extraction efficiency from secondary sources** (Cottonseed, Rice Bran, and Tree Borne Oils).
- **Approach:**
 - ⊕ Adoption of **high-yielding high oil content seed varieties**.
 - ⊕ **Extending cultivation into rice and potato fallow lands**, promoting intercropping, and promoting crop diversification.
 - ⊕ **Value Chain Clusters** will be developed **across 347 unique districts** to provide farmers access to **high-quality seeds, training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), and advisory services** on weather and pest management.
- **Timely availability of quality seeds**
 - ⊕ **SATHI Portal:** Mission will introduce an Online 5-year rolling seed plan through the **SATHI** (Seed Authentication, Traceability & Holistic Inventory) Portal.
 - ◆ **SATHI** will enable States to establish **advance tie-ups with seed-producing agencies** (cooperatives, FPOs, and government or private seed corporations).
 - ⊕ **New seed hubs and seed storage units** will be set up
- **Tenure: 7 years** (from 2024-25 to 2030-31)

Other Initiatives taken to promote domestic edible oils production

- **National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP):** Launched in **2021** to boost oil palm cultivation in the country.
- **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)** ensures that oilseed farmers receive MSP through price support scheme and price deficiency payment scheme.
- **20% import duty on edible oils** has been imposed to protect domestic producers from cheap imports and encourage local cultivation.

Union Cabinet approves classical language status for five Languages

Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese and Bengali were accorded Classical Language status.

- The primary states involved are **Maharashtra** (Marathi), **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh** (Pali and Prakrit), **West Bengal** (Bengali), and **Assam** (Assamese).

About Classical Language

- **Genesis:** Created in **2004**
- **Linguistic Experts Committee (LEC):** In 2004, it was constituted by the **Ministry of Culture** under the **Sahitya Akademi**.
 - ⊕ Its mandate is to **examine the eligibility of the languages proposed** to be accorded classical language status.
- **Criteria for inclusion** (instituted in 2004 and revised by LEC in 2024)
 - ⊕ **High antiquity** of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500- 2000 years.
 - ⊕ **A body of ancient literature/texts**, which is considered a heritage by generations of speakers.
 - ⊕ **Knowledge texts**, especially prose texts in addition to poetry, epigraphical and inscriptional evidence.
 - ⊕ The Classical Languages and literature could be **distinct from its current form** or could be **discontinuous with later forms** of its offshoots.
- **Languages and year of inclusion:** Tamil (2004), Sanskrit (2005), Telugu and Kannada (2008), Malayalam (2013) and Odia (2014).

About New Classical languages:

- **Marathi:** Earliest poetry and prose is by **Jnaneshwar** who wrote a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita
- **Prakrit:** It is a colloquial language. **Ashoka's inscriptions** have used **Prakṛti along with Pali**. **Gāthā Sattasai** is written in prakrit
- **Pali:** **Buddhist philosophical works** like Dhammapada and stories like Jātaka Tales are in Pali.
- **Assamese:** Shankardev's Vaishnavite poetries
- **Bengali:** Poet-saints **Sri Chaitanyadeva** produced literary masterpieces in Bengali, and Rabindranath Tagore's **Geetanjali received Nobel Prize**.

Prime Minister launched 'Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA)' in Hazaribag, Jharkhand

The scheme is named after **Birsa Munda** (popularly known as Dharti Aaba), the tribal leader who resisted the British Empire and led 'Ulgulan movement'.

About DAJGUA

- **Background:** Originally coined as the PM Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PM-JUGA), the scheme is a package for basic **scheme saturation in tribal-majority villages**
- **Aim:** To **address critical gaps in social infrastructure**, health, education, and livelihood development across approximately **63,000 tribal villages**.
- **Beneficiaries:** Over 5 crore **tribal people** across **30 states and Union Territories (UTs)**.
- **Collaborative approach:** It integrated **25 interventions across 17 ministries and departments of the Government of India**.
- **Funding:** To be **shared** between Centre and State
- **Tenure:** **5 Years** (2024-25 to 2028-29)
- **Monitoring:** PM GatiShakti Portal will be leveraged

About Tribal Population of India

- **Current population:** Around 8.6% of the population are ST (Census 2011)
 - ⊖ There are over **730 Scheduled Tribes notified under Article 342 of the Constitution of India**.
- **Challenges:** Low education, poor health, displacement due to development projects, etc.
- **Initiatives for empowerment:** Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana, Adivasi Mahila Sashaktikaran Yojna, etc.

Union Cabinet approved PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and Krishonnati Yojana

Recently, Union Cabinet approved proposal for **rationalization of all Centrally Sponsored Schemes** operating under **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare** into **two-umbrella Schemes** viz. **Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY)** and **Krishonnati Yojana (KY)**.

Need of rationalization of schemes

- **Comprehensive Strategic Plan by State governments:** By ensuring convergence, providing flexibility and avoiding duplication to suit their requirements for agriculture sector.
- **Streamlining approval of annual plans:** Annual Action Plan (AAP) of States can be approved in one go rather approving individual scheme-wise AAPs.
- **Focus on emergent challenges of Agriculture:** Nutrition security, Sustainability, Climate resilience, value chain development & private sector participation.

About PM-RKVY

- **Objective:** To promote sustainable agriculture.
- **Comprises of 9 schemes** viz., Soil Health Management, Rainfed Area Development, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, etc.
- **Key change:** State governments will be given flexibility to re-allocate funds from one component to other based on their state specific requirements.

About Krishonnati Yojana (KY)

- **Objective:** To address food security & agricultural self-sufficiency in India.
- **Comprises 9 components**, including National Food Security & Nutrition Mission, Digital Agriculture Mission, etc.
- **Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER)**, a component under the KY, **will be modified** to provide flexibility to the North Eastern states to address critical challenges.

Also in News



International Medical Device Regulators Forum

Recently, **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization** under Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has become an **affiliate member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF)**.

About IMDRF

- Established in **2011**, it is a collaborative group of **global medical device regulators** dedicated to accelerating the **harmonization and convergence of international medical device regulations**.
- **Members** include national regulatory authorities from different countries and the **World Health Organization (WHO)**.

Significance of India's membership

- Enable Indian medical device manufacturers to meet the regulatory requirements of IMDRF member countries, thereby **strengthening the "Brand India" in global market**.
- **Simplified manufacturing processes** and enhanced public health through improved collaboration and **harmonized global regulatory requirements**.



Global Strategic Preparedness, Readiness and Response Plan (SPRP)

World Health Organization (WHO) launched SPRP.

About SPRP

- **Aim:** To tackle **dengue and other Aedes-borne arboviruses** (Zika and chikungunya) by fostering a **global coordinated response**.
- **Tenure:** Over **one year** until September 2025.
- **5 key components:**
 - ⊖ Emergency coordination
 - ⊖ Collaborative surveillance
 - ⊖ Community protection
 - ⊖ Safe and scalable care
 - ⊖ Access to countermeasures
- **Aligns with other Global initiatives:** SPRP is aligned with the **Global Vector Control Response 2017-2030** and **Global Arbovirus Initiative**.



Akashteer Systems

Indian Army has completed the acquisition of 100 Akashteer Air Defence Systems.

About Akashteer Systems

- They are advanced **Air Defence Control and Reporting Systems (ADCRS)** which will serve as a critical asset in safeguarding country from aerial threats, including missile and rocket attacks.
- Developed **indigenously** by **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**
- **Significance:** Enable **monitoring of low level airspace** over battle areas of Indian Army, offers **ability to monitor and respond to enemy attacks in real-time, etc.**



Cyber Commandos Programme

IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation has launched a new training program to create 'Cyber Commandos' among law enforcement officers across India.

- IITM Pravartak Technologies Foundation is a Section 8 company.
- It is funded under its **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems** and hosted by IIT Madras.

About Cyber Commandos Programme

- **Nodal Ministry:** Union Ministry of Home Affairs
- **Aim:** To bolster India's **cyber defence capabilities.**
- **Significance:** While the existing cybercrime cells focus on reactive measures such as investigation and prosecution of cybercrimes, the **commandos will be a proactive force.**



Anna Darpan System

Recently, Food Corporation of India (FCI) launched **microservices-based integrated supply chain management system – Anna Darpan.**

About Anna Darpan

- It is a comprehensive digital transformation initiative to modernize FCI's existing supply chain management system, known as the 'Depot Online System'.
- Aims to **streamline and enhance the entire supply chain operations** and services at various levels.
- **M/s Coforge Limited** shall be responsible for the end-to-end design, development, implementation, and maintenance.
- **Key Objectives:** Improved efficiency and productivity, data-driven decision making, facilitating smooth interoperability with other systems, both within and outside FCI, etc.



Input Tax Credit

Recently, Supreme Court laid down twin tests - 'functionality' and 'essentially' - for Input Tax Credit eligibility in construction.

- Court stated that if a building is **essential for supplying services like renting or leasing (as per Schedule 2, clauses 2 and 5 of CGST Act)**, it may be considered a plant.
- **Functionality test** determines whether a building qualifies as a plant or not.

About Input Tax Credit

- It is a mechanism to **avoid cascading** of taxes, i.e, 'tax on tax'.
- A **registered taxable person under GST Act** who is paying tax due in the course or furtherance of business can claim and avail ITC credited in electronic ledge.



International Energy Efficiency Hub (IEEH)

Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a letter of intent enabling India to join the IEEH.

- **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** has been designated as the implementing agency for the Hub on behalf of India.

About International Energy Efficiency Hub:

- **Genesis:** Established in **2020** as the successor to the International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation (IPEEC) in which India was a member.
- **Mandate:** It is a **global platform** dedicated to fostering collaboration and promoting energy efficiency worldwide.



PM Internship Scheme

Union Government launched the PM Internship Scheme

About PM Internship Scheme

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- **Objective:** Providing internship opportunities to **one crore youth in the top 500 companies over 5 years**
- **Duration of internship:** 12 months.
- **Stipend:** ₹5,000 per month for one year.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - ⊕ Must be an **Indian citizen.**
 - ⊕ Aged between **21-24 years.**
 - ⊕ **Must not be employed** full-time or engaged in full-time education.

Personality in News



Raja Ravi Varma (1848 - 1906)

Eminent Modern Indian Artist Raja Ravi Varma was remembered on his death anniversary (October 02).

About Raja Ravi Varma

- Belonged to the family of **Maharajas of Travancore in Kerala** and was addressed as Raja.
- He is called the **father of modern Indian art.**

Key Contributions

- **Mastered the Western art of oil painting** and realistic life study.
- Painted **themes from Indian mythology**, depicting scenes from popular epics like the **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata.**
- **Most famous works:** **Damayanti Talking to a Swan, Shakuntala Looking for Dushyanta, Nair Lady Adorning Her Hair, and Shantanu and Matsyagandha.**

Rewards and Recognitions

- In **1904**, the then **Viceroy Lord Curzon**, on behalf of the British Emperor, bestowed upon him, the **Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal.**
- ⊕ Citation for this award **mentioned the title 'Raja' for the first time against his name.**

Values: Cultural nationalism, aesthetic excellence, Humanitarianism, etc.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI