

NEWS TODAY

Supreme Court (SC) issues Pan-India guidelines to halt illegal demolition of private property

Underlining the principle of 'Separation of Power', SC used extraordinary powers under **Article 142** to issue these guidelines.

- However, these guidelines and protection do not extend to encroachments into public land or unauthorized structures.

Concerns regarding illegal demolition of private property

- **Against Principle of Natural justice, Due process of law and Rule of Law:** in case of demolition of house by state based on mere accusation.
- **Violation of Fundamental Right:** E.g. 'Right to Shelter' under **Article 21**

Supreme Court Guidelines

- **Prior Notice:** demolition should be served to house owner by registered post with details of the nature of the unauthorized construction, details of specific violations, etc.
 - ⊕ In case of unauthorized construction, a **15 days' notice** must be given to the residents to remove the unauthorized construction or to find another place to live in.
- **Opportunity of Personal Hearing** must be given to the accused by the designated authority.
- **Personal Liability of Officials** for violation of the Court's order.
- **Videography and Due Report:** Demolitions must be recorded on video and be produced as evidence in case of challenge to its legality. A **report** on actual demolition must also be placed before the Municipal Commissioner.

Separation of Power

- As per **French Jurist Montesquieu**, 'Separation of Power' means that "The **three organs of the Government** i.e., Legislative, Executive and Judiciary should **work independently** and there should be **no overlap between the powers** of these organs".
- **USA follows strict separation of power**, however it is not that strict in India as executive is derived from legislative.

Supreme Court (SC) highlighted that Union has not implemented its Commitments to tackle Trafficking

SC noted that commitments made by the Union Government in **Prajwala vs. Union of India** case (2015) have not been fulfilled to curb trafficking (especially sex trafficking).

Key Commitments made by Union Government

- **Establish Organised Crime Investigative Agency (OCIA)**
- **Constitute a Committee under Ministry of Women & Child Development** to prepare a **comprehensive legislation** dealing with the subject of trafficking.
 - ⊕ Legislation was supposed to cover prevention, **pre- and post- rescue of victims** and **their rehabilitation**.

Other key Observation of SC

- **Legislative Inaction:** Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection, and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 was presented in Lok Sabha but later lapsed.
- **Highlighted limitations of 2019 Amendment to NIA Act, 2008:** 2019 Amendment to NIA Act empowered National Investigation Agency (NIA) to take up cases of human trafficking for investigation.
 - ⊕ Court Said that NIA can prosecute offenders but does not address victim protection or rehabilitation.

Status of Trafficking

- In India, more than 10 thousand cases have been reported from 2018 to 2022. (**National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**).
- ⊕ **Sex trafficking** is one of the most prevalent form of human trafficking.
- It has been identified as the **third largest** source of profit for **organized crime**, following arms and drug trafficking. (As of 2018).

Steps taken to deal with Trafficking in India

- **Statutory:** Enacted **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act (ITPA), 1956**.
- **Constitutional:** **Article 23** of the Constitution prohibits trafficking in human beings
- **Other:**
 - ⊕ **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** runs an **anti-trafficking unit** to guide states on improving law enforcement responses.
 - ⊕ India has signed **MoUs** with countries like **Bangladesh** to combat trafficking
 - ⊕ Ratified the **UNTOC (United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime)** to prevent trafficking, especially of **women and children**.
 - ⊕ **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)** addresses human trafficking, including trafficking for prostitution.

State of the Cryosphere 2024-Lost Ice, Global Damage Report released

The report has been coordinated by **International Cryosphere Climate Initiative (ICCI)**

About Cryosphere

It refers to **areas of snow or ice on Earth, subjected to temperatures below 0°C for at least part of the year and includes regions such as continental ice sheets, ice caps, glaciers, permafrosts etc. Eg. Greenland, Antarctica, Hindu Kush Himalaya etc.**

Key Findings of Report

- **Accelerated loss of Ice Sheets** : Greenland Ice Sheet is currently losing **30 million tons of ice per hour**. Moreover, Ice shelves in **northern Greenland have lost 35%** of their total volume since 1978.
- **Sea Level Rise** : Rate of global sea-level rise has doubled in the last 30 years & and as per current trends it would increase to 6.5 mm/year by 2050.
- **Melting Glaciers**: Venezuela recently joined & Slovenia(1st) to lose their final glaciers in modern times.

Impact of Cryosphere affect global climate

- **Weakening of Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) and Slowing of Antarctic Circumpolar Current (ACC)** affecting the global ocean circulation
- **Increase in Permafrost Thawing** may worsen local damage and global feedbacks
 - ⊕ Permafrost thawing means melting of ice inside permafrost leaving behind water and soil.
- **Decreases reflective ability** of sea ice leading to greater warming at both poles, **greater CO2 emissions and increased depletion of ozone layer.**
- **Risks of catastrophic floods** from glacial lake outburst floods.

Initiatives to Protect Cryosphere

- **United Nations General Assembly** has approved 2025 to 2034 as **Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences.**
- **World Meteorological Organisation** has adopted **four high High-Level Ambitions** for cryosphere.
- **India** has launched **National Mission for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)** to assess health of the Himalayan ecosystem including those of glaciers.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) releases 2024 list of Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)

State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank continue to be identified as D-SIBs in the RBI's 2024 list.

About D-SIBs

- **D-SIBs** are systemically important due to their **size, cross-jurisdictional activities, complexity and lack of substitute and interconnection.**
 - ⊕ It also means that **the bank is too big to fail.**
 - ⊕ If DSBs fail, there would be significant disruption to the essential services to the banking system and the overall economy.

Declaration of D-SIBs

- Based on the **D-SIBs Framework of RBI (2014).**
 - ⊕ Framework is based on **Basel Committee on Banking Supervision's (BCBS's)** framework.
 - ⊕ Banks having size as a percentage of GDP equal to or more than 2% are considered for **D-SIB list.**
- Banks are placed in **5 buckets** on the basis of **Additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1)** requirement as a percentage of **Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs).**
 - ⊕ **Bucket 1** banks have to maintain lowest **CET1** and **Bucket 5** banks have to maintain highest.
- In case a **foreign bank** having branch presence in India is a **Global Systemically Important Bank (G-SIB)**, it has to maintain additional CET1 capital surcharge.
 - ⊕ **Financial Stability Board (FSB)** releases the list of **G-SIBs.**

Key Terms

- **Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs):** RWAs are used to determine the minimum amount of capital a bank must hold in relation to the risk profile of its lending activities and other assets.
 - ⊕ It is calculated by assigning different risk weights to different types of assets held by a bank.
- **Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1):** It is a component of Tier 1 capital and comprises primarily of common stock held by a bank or other financial institution.
 - ⊕ It is the **highest quality of regulatory capital**, as it **absorbs losses immediately** when they occur.

Science and Technology Minister inaugurates Centenary celebrations of 'Bose-Einstein' Statistics (B-E statistics)

In 1924, **Satyendra Nath Bose** proposed a new approach to understand the **behaviour of particles** or **photons**, based on quantum theory.

- His collaboration with the **Albert Einstein** eventually led to postulation of B-E statistics.

About B-E statistics

- It describes ways in which a **collection of non-interacting and indistinguishable particles** may occupy a set of available discrete energy states at **thermodynamic equilibrium**.
 - ⊕ In simple words it explains how **particles** distribute themselves in an available energy states.
- Particles which obey **B-E statistics** principle are referred as "**Bosons**", named after S. N Bose.
 - ⊕ Bosons are **fundamental articles** that have integer values of spin (0, 1, 2, etc.). E.g. Photon, Gluon, etc.

Relevance/Significance of B-E statistics

- **Enabled first Quantum revolution** in 20th century which helped in development of technologies such as **lasers**, the **transistor**, **Magnetic Resonance Imaging**, and **semiconductors**.
 - ⊕ **Second revolution** is defined by developments in technologies like quantum computing and quantum sensing, etc.
- **Discovery of the fifth state of matter** i.e **Bose-Einstein condensate (BEC)**.
 - ⊕ BEC is a **state of matter created when particles are cooled to near absolute zero** (-273.15 degrees Celsius/0 Kelvin).



Report On Municipal Finances Released By Reserved Bank of India (RBI)

It analyzes budgetary data for Municipal Corporations (MCs), identifying opportunities, challenges and suggests measures to improve their financial health.

Key Findings

- **Low revenue collection:** MCs generate **only 0.6% of GDP in revenue (2023-24)**, much lower than central government (9.2%) and State Governments(14.6%).
- **Heavy reliance on transfers :** MCs rely heavily on government transfers.Grants from Central and State governments have increased by 24.9% and 20.4%, respectively (**2022-23**).
- **Increased municipal borrowings :** It has risen from ₹2,886 crore (2019-20) to ₹13,364 crore(2023-24).
- **Bonds :** It totals ₹4,204 crore (0.09% of corporate bonds), with most bonds privately placed.

Challenges in Municipal Finances: lower revenue compared to advanced economies, underdeveloped municipal bond market, low operational flexibility.

Recommendations

- **Enhancing Revenue Sources:** Reform property tax (with **use of GIS mapping**), rationalize user charges.
- **Transfers from State governments:** SFCS should recommend timely and predictable state transfers.
- **Improvement in Cost Efficiency:** by digitalization, use of **Public Private Partnerships** in urban transport, waste management, and renewable energy.
- **Innovative Financing:** Smaller MCs should explore options of **Municipal Bonds, Green Bonds**.
- **Financial Transparency:** Adopt of practices such as **National Municipal Accounting Manual**.

Revenue Sources of Urban Local Bodies

- **Own sources**
 - ⊕ **Tax Revenue**-Property tax,water benefit tax etc.
 - ⊕ **Non-tax Revenue**-User charges,developmental charges etc.
 - ⊕ **Other receipts**-lease rent,sale of rubbish etc.
- **Assigned(Shared) Revenue:** Entertainment tax (subsumed under GST, except when levied by the local bodies), professional tax etc.
- **Grants-in-aid:** Central and State Finance Commission(SFC) devolution,Grants under programmes like SBM,AMRUT
- **Borrowings:** Loans from state and central governments,banks etc

Also in News



Exercises in News

Garuda Shakti

- It is a **Joint Special Forces Exercise** between India and Indonesia.
- **Objective:** Enhance capabilities of forces from both sides to conduct joint military operations to **Counter Terrorism**.

Poorvi Prahar

- It is a high-intensity **tri-services exercise** being conducted by the Indian Army.
- **Objective:** Improve the combat effectiveness of the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force in executing **Integrated Joint Operations** in the challenging mountainous terrain.

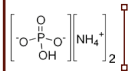


UMANG

UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) marks its 7th anniversary, with 70 million users benefiting from its services.

About UMANG

- Developed by Ministry of **Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** and National e-Governance Division (NeGD) to drive **Mobile Governance** in India.
- Provides a **single platform** for all **Indian Citizens** to access **pan India e-Gov services** ranging from Central to Local Government bodies. E.g. Passport Seva, Pension services, Weather Forecast, etc.



Diammonium Phosphate

Recently, farmers in Haryana and Punjab have been hit by shortage of fertilizer **Diammonium Phosphate**.

About Diammonium Phosphate (DAP)

- It is made from high concentration of two common macronutrients - **phosphate and nitrogen**, essential for plant growth.
- It is world's most commonly used fertilizer as it is highly soluble and gets quickly dissolved into the soil.

Distribution of DAP

- It has been decontrolled since 1992. The availability of DAP fertilizers is **decided by the market forces** of demand and supply.
- The Union Government monitors availability of fertilizers at State level and State Governments are responsible for its tie-up with the manufacturers & importers and further distribution within the State.



Mealworm Larvae

Recently, Mealworm larvae have been discovered in Kenya.

About Mealworm Larvae

- It is a **plastic (Polystyrene) eating insect** and hosts **bacteria in their guts** that help break down the material.
- It is mostly found in poultry rearing houses which are warm and can offer a constant food supply.
- It is the **first African-native insect species** identified with this ability but can be found outside Africa as well.

Polystyrene (styrofoam)

- It is commonly used plastic material used in packaging for food, electronics, industrial products etc.
- Known for durability, it is difficult and costly to recycle it through traditional methods of chemical and thermal processing which can create pollutants.



SVASTIK Initiative

During International Conference on Communication and Dissemination of Traditional Knowledge, significance of SVASTIK initiative was highlighted.

About SVASTIK (Scientifically Validated Societal Traditional Knowledge)

- It is coordinated by CSIR-NIScPR (National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research).
- Objective:** To preserve traditional practices, promote scientific validation of traditions, and instil confidence in their scientific value.
- Significance:**
 - Disseminates scientifically validated traditional knowledge through social media in 17 languages.
 - Facilitates interdisciplinary research and the immediate validation of traditional knowledge through modern science.



Boring Billion

Recently, some experts have suggested that 'Boring billion' wasn't really the duller period in Earth's history.

About Boring Billion

- Period:** 1.8 billion and 800 million years ago in Earth's history.
- Features:**
 - Represent a period of geobiological stasis **marked a delay in the evolution of complex life**, primarily due to low levels of oxygen in the atmosphere.
 - Most of the living species were **simple, unicellular organisms that had minimal requirements for life**.
- Significance:** Reflects **energy-centric challenges, prolonged nutrient, climatic, atmospheric and tectonic stability** in the past



Water rules, 2024

Union Environment Ministry notified **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) (Manner of Holding Inquiry and Imposition of Penalty) rules, 2024**

Water Rules 2024

- The rules comes in backdrop of amendments wherein **offenses and violations of the Act were decriminalized, replacing them with penalties**.
- It had also allowed the Centre to appoint 'Authorised Officers'** to adjudicate offenses, violations and determine penalties.
- Significance:** Reduce the burden on the judicial system; encourage compliance through financial disincentives.



Guidelines for Coaching Sector

Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued guidelines for prevention of misleading advertisements in the coaching sector.

Key Guidelines:-

- It explicitly prohibits coaching centers from making false claims, misleading representations of quality and creation of false urgency (such as limited seats or exaggerated demand etc.)
- Violation of guidelines will be treated as contravention of Consumer Protection Act, 2019.**

CCPA

- It has been established under Consumer Protection Act, 2019 to regulate matters relating to violation of rights of consumers, unfair trade practices and false or misleading advertisements

Place in News



Philippines (Capital: Manila)

India and Philippines unveiled a logo marking 75 years of their diplomatic ties.

Political features

- Location:** Island country of **Southeast Asia**.
- Surrounding Water bodies:** South China Sea (west), the Pacific Ocean (east), the Sulu and Celebes Seas (south), and the Bashi Channel (north).

Geographical features

- Three major island groups:** Luzon in the north, Visayas in the middle and Mindanao further down in the South.
- Major Volcanos:** Mount Pinatubo, etc.
- Highest Point:** Mount Apo.
- Major Rivers:** Cagayan River, Mindanao, etc



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI