

# NEWS TODAY

## SURAT COURT AWARDS TWO-YEAR JAIL TERM IN A CRIMINAL DEFACTION CASE TO A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (MP)

- Defamation is any **false and unprivileged statement** published or spoken with the **intention to damage someone's reputation**.
  - Article 19(2) has imposed reasonable exemption to freedom of speech and expression granted under Article 19(1) (a).
  - Contempt of court, defamation and incitement to an offence are some exceptions.
- Defamation could be **both a criminal offence and a civil wrong**.
  - Criminal defamation has been defined as an offence under Indian Penal Code (IPC) (Section 499 and 500) whereas **civil defamation is based on tort law**.
    - Tort law **does not rely on statutes but takes from case laws** to define what would constitute a wrong.
- Conviction **could triggers process of his disqualification** (prescribed in three situations) as an MP.
  - Articles 102(1) and 191(1) provides for disqualification, of an MP and MLA respectively, on grounds include holding **an office of profit, being of unsound mind or insolvent or not having valid citizenship**.
  - Tenth Schedule provides for disqualification on grounds of defection.
  - Representation of People Act (RPA), 1951 provides for disqualification for **conviction in criminal cases**.

- Supreme Court in **Lily Thomas vs. Union of India** case (along with Lok Prahari vs. Union of India), had ruled that any MP/MLA who is convicted and given a minimum of two years' imprisonment, **loses membership of House with immediate effect**.

- Earlier, **Section 8 (4) of RPA allowed convicted lawmakers a three-month period for filing appeal** to higher court and to get a stay of conviction and sentence.

- Section 8(3) states:** A person convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years shall be disqualified from date of such conviction and shall **continue to be disqualified for a further period of six years** since his release.

## ODISHA INTRODUCES BILL TO AMEND CENTRAL LAW, EASE LAND ACQUISITION

- Odisha proposed to **amend Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act (LARR), 2013** to ease land acquisition process for various industrial and infrastructure projects.
  - With the amendment Odisha **aims to do away with mandatory provision of social impact assessment (SIA)** study before land acquisition **for certain projects**.
  - States like **Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka** have already made the amendment and received assent of the President.
- An **advancement over colonial Land Acquisition Act of India (1894)**, LARR is a **central law** with focus on **fair compensation** with **resettlement and rehabilitation** of affected people through:
  - Compensation up to **4 times** of the market value in **rural areas** and **2 times** in **urban areas**.
  - Setting up of **SIA Committee and Environmental Impact Assessment committee** with increased participation from experts, people and Panchayati Raj Institutions.
  - Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) Authority** to coordinate R&R efforts including **protection of local ethnic and cultural identities**.
  - Mandatory consent requirement from **80% affected people** by acquisition for **private purposes** and **70% of affected people** for public-private partnership projects.

## TAMIL NADU ASSEMBLY RE-ADOPTS BILL AGAINST ONLINE GAMBLING

- First adopted in 2022**, bill was **returned by Governor** stating that it is **ultra vires the Constitution** and against court judgments.
  - Earlier, a **state-level study in Tamil Nadu highlighted negative impacts** of online gambling at **Individual Level** (loss of jobs, mental health issues, severe debt etc.), **Family and Societal Level** (family violence, use of fake identities etc).
- Online Gambling refers to **use of internet to place bets and earn money**. In India, online gambling **falls into a grey area** as:
  - The **Public Gaming Act, 1867** from Centre, which **excludes games of skill, lacks clarification** on what games are **games of skill** and what are **of chance**, i.e. games which don't involve skill (or considered as gambling activity).
  - Betting and gambling are **mentioned in List II of Seventh Schedule giving States exclusive power** over their regulation.
- Based on it, **while some states have adopted the central act** with some amendments or made their **own specific laws**.
  - Telangana, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh** etc. have passed laws **banning all online games**, including games of skill.
- Recently, **Ministry of Electronics and IT has also issued** a draft rules for **regulation of Online gaming**.

## EXTENSION OF SMART CITIES MISSION (SCM) AN OPEN ISSUE: MINISTRY OF HOUSING & URBAN AFFAIRS (MOHUA)

- As some of the cities in SCM asked for more time to complete projects, MoHUA has informed a Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC) that extension of SCM beyond its current deadline of June 30 is an open issue.
- Launched in 2015, SCM aims to **promote cities** that provide **core infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment** and give a **decent quality of life** to their citizens through the application of 'smart solutions'.
  - **100 cities were selected** in rounds from 2016 to 2018 and were **supposed to complete their projects within five years**.
  - **Implementation was extended to June 2023** due to reasons like COVID-19 pandemic, multi-sectoral projects, local challenges related to land, labour etc.
- **PSC also made observations related to SCM**
  - **32 performing smart cities completed more than planned projects**. But remaining **68 smart cities fall short** of meeting targets.
  - **Financial Allocation:** Out of ₹48,000 crore support for SCM, **₹36,561 crore already released** and **90% of the total released is utilized by smart cities**.
- **Recommendations by PSC**
  - **No further extension** should be granted **without a detailed assessment**.
  - **Rigorously pursue** with **lagging Smart Cities** to ensure that **targets are achieved** within the extended time period.

## PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE (PSC) RECOMMENDS NEW LAW TO DEFINE FUNCTIONS OF CBI

- PSC has stated that **existing Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946** that governs CBI has many limitations and there is a need for a **new legislation to define its status, functions and powers**.
- **Issues highlighted by PSC**
  - **Vacant posts in the CBI are not being filled up at the required pace** thereby increasing **pendency of cases and hampering quality** of investigation.
  - **Details of cases** registered with CBI, **progress made** in their investigation and **final outcome** are **not available in public domain**.
  - **9 states have withdrawn their general consent to CBI** which hampers seamless investigation of cases.
    - A "general consent" is normally **given by states to help CBI in cases against central government employees** in their states.
- **Recommendations**
  - **Lay down safeguards to ensure objectivity and impartiality** in its functioning.
  - **Director of CBI should monitor** the progress made in **filling up of vacancies** on a quarterly basis.
  - Publish **case statistics and annual reports** on its website.
  - Maintain a **case management system** which should be **accessible to the general public**.



### Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)



**Genesis:** Established in 1963 as a non-statutory body and governed by the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946.

- Establishment of CBI was **recommended by the Santhanam Committee**.



**Ministry:** Ministry of Personnel, Pension & Public Grievances.



#### Functions

- It is the **main investigation agency of the central government**.
- **Nodal agency in India** to coordinate investigations on behalf of the **INTERPOL**.

## INDIA REJECTS JOHNSON & JOHNSON'S (J&J'S) ATTEMPT TO EXTEND MONOPOLY ON LIFESAVING TB DRUG

- Latest **patent evergreening** attempt from J&J's was for '**Bedaquiline**', a crucial drug in **treatment of multidrug resistant TB**.
- **Patent Evergreening** refers to practice used by pharmaceutical firms to **extend patent life of a drug through minor reformulations** or other iterations of the drug, **without necessarily increasing the therapeutic efficacy**.
- **Section 3(d) of Indian Patent Act (IPA), 1970** stops evergreening of patents as it **bars patents to mere discovery** of a new form of a known substance **with no known efficacy enhancement**.
  - In **2013**, **Supreme Court rejected** application filed by **Swiss drug maker Novartis on anticancer medicament Glivec** stating did not qualify as a patentable invention under Section 3 (d).
- **Significance: Reduced Drug Cost and wider access** by paving way for generic drug manufacturing
- **In India, an invention is patentable if**
  - It is **Novel**,
  - It has **inventive step** or it must be **non-obvious**,
  - It has the **capability of Industrial application**, and
  - It should not attract provisions of **Section 3 and 4 of IPA**.
- **Term of every patent in India is twenty years** from date of filing of patent application.

## ALSO IN NEWS



DigiClaim

- It is **National Crop Insurance Portal's digitized claim settlement module**, under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).
- **DigiClaim would prevent delay in claim settlement** as claims will be processed directly to bank accounts of farmers (in 6 states).  
 > Also, it will facilitate **real-time tracking of claim**.
- **PMFBY provides comprehensive crop insurance** against non- preventable natural risks at premium rate of **2% for kharif crops, 1.5% for rabi crops and 5% for Horticulture and commercial crop**.



Canalisation

- Centre has extended tenure of **Indian Potash Limited (IPL) as a canalising agency for import of urea**.  
 > **Rashtriya Chemicals Fertilizers (RCF) and National Fertilizers Limited (NFL)** are other canalising agencies for urea import.
- **Canalisation of import and export** refers to importing and exporting of commodities **through specified government agencies**.
- **Purpose: Price stabilization**, ensure **availability of supplies** for domestic consumers, **Improve bargaining power**, **Boost exports**, **Eliminate under invoicing** etc.
- **Major Canalised Commodities:** Precious Metals, Arms/Ammunitions, agricultural products like onion etc.



Green shoe option

- **Ministry of Finance decided to exercise green shoe option** as offer-for-sale of Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd has received a good response.
- Also called an **overallotment option**, **Green shoe option** is an option that is **available to underwriters to sell additional shares** during an Initial Public Offering (IPO).  
 > An IPO is **selling of securities to the public in the primary market**.
- Underwriters are allowed to **sell 15% more shares than number of shares they originally agreed to sell**, but option must be **exercised within 30 days of offering**.



Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO)



### Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO)



**Genesis:** A multi-disciplinary organization, **established through Government of India Notification (2015)** as per Companies Act, 2013, to **investigate corporate frauds**.

**Ministry:** Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

**Objective:** Take up for investigation cases **characterized by:**








- Complexity and having **inter-departmental and multi- disciplinary** ramifications.
- Substantial **involvement of public interest**.

**Five Regional Offices:** Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad & Kolkata.



Long tailed ducks

- Long-tailed duck species have been spotted at iconic Wular Lake in Kashmir after 116 years.  
 > Wular lake is designated as the Ramsar site.
- **About Long Tailed Ducks**  
 > **Features:** Long-tailed ducks are slim, colourful sea ducks with long tails.  
 > **Habitat range:** Occur all the way around Arctic and Antarctic. Prefer to spend winter near major bodies of water.  
 > **Diet:** Marine invertebrates like crabs & molluscs.  
 > **IUCN Status:** Vulnerable.

 <p><b>Liquid Tree/ LIQUID 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Belgrade (Serbia)</b> has introduced <b>liquid tree</b>, an urban photo-bioreactor, <b>to combat air pollution</b>.</li> <li>• LIQUID 3 <b>contains water and uses microalgae</b> to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality by <b>binding carbon dioxide and producing pure oxygen through photosynthesis</b>.</li> <li>• <b>LIQUID 3 is more efficient than trees</b>, replacing two 10-year-old trees or 200 square meters of lawn.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Terran 1 rocket</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Terran 1, world's first 3D-printed rocket, failed to reach orbit.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>3D printing</b> or additive manufacturing uses <b>computer-aided designing to make prototypes</b> or working models of objects.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Terran 1 is designed to <b>haul lightweight satellites into orbital space</b>.</li> <li>• <b>World's first 3D printed rocket engine is Agnilet engine</b> produced by <b>Indian spacetechn startup AgniKul Cosmos</b>.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It is fully <b>designed and manufactured in India</b>. It was successfully tested in November 2022.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Transgender Athletes regulations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>World Athletics Council</b> has banned <b>transgender women athletes from competing in elite female competitions</b> if they have gone through <b>male puberty</b>.</li> <li>• Also, it <b>tightened restrictions on athletes with Differences in Sex Development (DSD)</b> by cutting the <b>maximum amount of plasma testosterone</b> for athletes to 2.5 nanomoles per litre from 5.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>DSD</b> is a group of <b>rare conditions</b> involving <b>genes, hormones and reproductive organs, including genitals</b>.</li> <li>➤ It leads to higher testosterone production, giving transgender women advantages in <b>strength, endurance, power, lung capacity</b> etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Sharda Peeth</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government plans to <b>open Sharda Peeth on lines of Kartarpur corridor</b>.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Kartarpur corridor <b>links two important Sikh shrines: Dera Baba Nanak, Punjab and Gurudwara Darbar Sahib</b> in Kartarpur, Pakistan.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>About Sharda Peeth:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It is a <b>revered site for Hindu community</b> and is considered to be <b>abode of Goddess Saraswati</b>.</li> <li>➤ It is believed to be <b>an ancient centre of learning established in Neelum Valley</b>, even before the Takshila and Nalanda universities.</li> <li>➤ It is <b>located in Neelum Valley in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK)</b> across Teetwal village in <b>Kupwara district</b> of Jammu and Kashmir, <b>along Line of Control (LoC)</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Vedic Heritage portal</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union Home Minister inaugurated the portal.</li> <li>• Portal aims <b>to communicate message enshrined in the Vedas</b>. It will <b>help common people</b> to have a <b>general understanding about the Vedas</b>.</li> <li>• Portal will be a <b>one-stop solution for the user</b>, who would like to search any information regarding the Vedic heritage.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Audio visual recording of four vedas</b> (Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda) have been uploaded on the portal.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Konkan 2023</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is an annual <b>bilateral maritime exercise</b> between <b>Indian Navy and Royal Navy (UK)</b>.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Personalities in News</b></p>	<p><b>Hemu Kalani (23 March 1923 - 21 January 1943)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born in <b>Sindh region of United India</b>, he was a <b>revolutionary</b> and a <b>freedom fighter</b> during the <b>Indian Independence Movement</b>.</li> <li>• Also <b>known as Bhagat Singh of Sindh</b>, he joined <b>Swaraj Sena</b> (a youth organization).</li> <li>• He distributed <b>anti-British literature</b> and also joined the <b>Quit India Movement in 1942</b>.</li> <li>• In 1942, he attempted to <b>derail and loot the British train</b> loaded with weapons to crush the <b>ongoing Balochistan agitation</b>.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ But he was caught and hanged at the young age of 19 years.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Personality Traits:</b> Courage, Fearlessness and Patriotism.</li> </ul>