

NEWS TODAY

THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI (GNCTD) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023 TABLED IN LOK SABHA

- The bill seeks to **repeal the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023** that overrides a Supreme Court order giving the Delhi government control over most services.
 - In May 2023, **Supreme Court ordered that the Delhi government will have control over administrative services** other than matters related to public order, police and land.
 - To nullify the judgement, **the Centre promulgated an Ordinance to amend the GNCTD Act, 1991 to exclude "services" from the purview of Delhi legislature** and conferred LG with more powers.
- **Key Highlights of the Bill:**
 - **Bill establishes NCCSA (National Capital Civil Services Authority)** to make recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi (LG) **on matters related to services**. The Authority will consist of
 - **Chief Minister** of Delhi as Chairperson,
 - **Principal Home Secretary** of the Delhi government, and
 - **Chief Secretary** of the Delhi government.
 - **Empower the Central Government to make rules in connection with the affairs of the GNCTD** including the functions, terms and other conditions of service of officers and employees.
 - **Discretionary power to LG** which includes
 - Matters **outside the legislative competence of the Delhi Assembly** or
 - Matters where LG is required to **exercise any judicial or quasi-judicial functions**.

WHO REPORT ON THE GLOBAL TOBACCO EPIDEMIC, 2023: PROTECT PEOPLE FROM TOBACCO SMOKE

- Report tracks the progress made by countries in tobacco control since 2008 and, marks **15 years since MPOWER measures** (refer image) introduced.
 - It **focuses on controlling second-hand smoking (SHS or passive smoking)**.
- **Key highlights**
 - Number of countries implementing at least one MPOWER measure has **increased to 151 in 2022**.
 - **Only 4 countries** (Brazil, Turkiye, Netherlands, and Mauritius) have **implemented all measures**.
 - Tobacco kills more than 8 million people each year, **including 1.3 million non-smokers** who are exposed to SHS.
 - Tobacco **kills up to half of its users**.
 - **India** is ranked among the **highest achievers in tobacco dependence treatment**.
- **Initiatives taken by India**
 - **Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2019** to combat menace of e-cigarettes.
 - **National Health Policy 2017** targets to reduce tobacco use by 30% by 2025.
 - **Warnings covering 85% area on packs** of tobacco product.
 - **India** is party to **WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control**.
- **Recommendations**
 - **Creating smoke-free public areas and de-normalising the act** of smoking in society to control SHS.
 - **Bans on tobacco advertising** can minimize its consumption.



Monitor

Monitor tobacco use and prevention policies



Protect

Protect people from tobacco smoke



Offer

Offer help to quit



Warn

Warn about the dangers tobacco



Enforce

Enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship



Raise

Raise taxes on tobacco



LOK SABHA OFFSHORE AREAS MINERAL (DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION) (OAMDR) AMENDMENT BILL, 2023

- Bill amends OAMDR Act, 2002 which was enacted to provide for development and regulation of mineral resources in territorial waters, continental shelf, exclusive economic zone and other maritime zones of India.
- **Key highlights**
 - Introduces a **Composite Licence (CL) for granting rights for exploration and production**. Under CL, licensee will be **required to complete exploration within three years**.
 - Introduce **timeline of four years (extendable by one year)** for commencement of production.
 - **Mandates competitive bidding** for a **production lease and CL to private entities**.
 - In case of **atomic minerals**, exploration, production, and CL will be **granted only to government or government companies**.
 - Removes the provision for renewal of production lease and **provides a fixed 50-year production lease for offshore minerals**.
 - **Establishes an Offshore Areas Mineral Trust** under public account of India to ensure availability of funds for exploration, mitigation and disaster relief etc.
 - **Reduce the size of one block** for offshore mining to **one minute latitude by one minute longitude**.
 - **Increases amount of fine for illegal mining** between Rs.5 lakh and Rs 10 lakh.

PRESS AND REGISTRATION OF PERIODICALS (PRP) BILL, 2023 INTRODUCED IN RAJYA SABHA

- Bill seeks to replace the **Press and Registration of Books (PRB) Act, 1867** which governs the registration of print and publishing industry in the country.
- **Key Highlights**
 - Central Government may appoint a **Press Registrar General of India (PRG) and empowers PGI to suspend/ cancel certificate of registration**.
 - Restricts **persons convicted of offenses involving terrorist or unlawful activities**, to bring out periodicals.
 - **Decriminalization of various offenses** as mentioned under the PRB Act 1867, e.g., improper declaration of information.
 - Provides for an **Appellate Board (Press and Registration Appellate Board)**, headed by Chairman, Press Council of India.
 - It will **hear an appeal against refusal of grant of registration**, imposition of penalty or suspension/cancellation of registration by PRG.
 - **Books taken out of the purview of the PRP Bill**, which were earlier subject to PRB Act, 1867 (Books as a subject are administered by Ministry of Education)
- **Significance of the bill**
 - **Simplifies registration process** of periodicals and brings transparency in governance of press and periodicals.
 - **Upholding media freedom**.
 - Improves **ease of doing business**, particularly for small and medium publishers.

About PRB Act 1867

- Enacted during the Viceroyalty of **Lord John Lawrence**.
- 1867 act helped governments control the press, regulate book publishing, and inadvertently **curb the freedom of speech and expression**.

Need of OAMDR Bill 2023

- **To efficiently tap vast offshore mineral resources** of country for developmental need, thereby **promotes ease of doing business**.
- **Create a fair and transparent mechanism** on allocation of operating rights.
- **Adopt features on lines of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957** by establishing trusts for affected persons and encouraging exploration, removing discretionary renewals etc.

RAJYA SABHA PASSES MEDIATION BILL, 2021

- Bill aims to **promote and facilitate institutional mediation for resolution of disputes**.
 - Mediation is a **voluntary process** in which an
 - **impartial mediator facilitates** disputing parties in reaching a settlement.
- **Key highlights**
 - Bill requires **persons to try to settle civil or commercial disputes through mediation** before approaching any court or tribunal.
 - Mediation process must be **completed within 180 days**, which may be extended by another 180 days by parties.
 - **Setting up of Mediation Council of India** by central government for registering mediators, and recognising mediation service providers.
 - **Specified list of disputes are deemed inappropriate for mediation** such as those involving criminal prosecution etc. Central government has authority to amend this list if needed.
 - Agreements resulting from mediation (other than community mediation) will be **final, binding, and enforceable in same manner as court judgments**.
 - Mediators may be **appointed by parties by agreement** or mediation service provider (an institution administering mediation).
- **Significance of Mediation Bill**
 - **Reduce burden on courts** by enabling out of court settlements.
 - **Enforce domestic and international mediation** settlement agreement.
 - **Cost effective** dispute resolution process.

Issues with Bill

- **No provisions for enforcing certain International mediated settlements**.
- **Delegated Legislation** as power with centre to update negative list of disputes.
- **Lack of clarity** on qualification of mediators.

LOK SABHA PASSES REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

- The Bill seeks to amend the **Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969** for the first time.
 - The registration of births and deaths falls under the **Concurrent List**.
- Amendment bill aims **to keep pace with the societal change and technological advancements** during the period of its operation and to make it more citizen friendly.
- **Key features of bill**
 - To create a **National and State level database of registered births and deaths** which would help in updating other databases resulting in efficient and transparent delivery of public services and social benefits.
 - Bill provides for the appointment of a **Registrar General of India** who may **issue general directions** for registration of births and deaths.
 - **Electronic certificates** to be issued for birth or death.
 - **Aadhaar details of parents and informants required.** Informants can be manager of a hotel, jailor, etc.
 - **Mandatory for all medical institutions to provide a certificate** as to the cause of death to the Registrar and a copy of the same to the nearest relative.
 - **Any person aggrieved** by any action or order of the Registrar or District Registrar may appeal to the District Registrar or Chief Registrar, respectively.

ALSO IN NEWS



Rohini Commission

- Rohini Commission has submitted its report on sub-categorisation of OBCs.
- Government had **constituted the commission in 2017 under Article 340**.
 - **Article 340** empowers President to appoint Commission to investigate conditions of socially and educationally backward classes.
- **Objective of Commission**
 - **Examine the extent of inequitable distribution of benefits of reservation** (i.e. 27% reservation in jobs and education) among castes or communities with reference to central OBC list.



National Investigation Agency (NIA)

- NIA conducted searches at various locations to locate those involved in attack on High Commission of India in London.
- NIA was formed under **NIA Act 2008**, in the aftermath of 26/11 attacks.
 - It is a **federal counter-terror agency** that can take **suo-motu cognizance** of terrorist activity in any part of India.
 - **NIA (Amendment) Act, 2019** empowered NIA to **investigate scheduled offenses committed outside India**, subject to international treaties and domestic laws of other countries.
 - Act 2019 also empowered the centre to **designate sessions court as special court** for NIA trials.



Nyaya Bandhu Program

- **Nyaya Bandhu Mobile Application** has been developed and onboarded on UMANG platform.
- Nyaya Bandhu is **pro bono legal service scheme** that provides **voluntary legal advice** to individuals/ organizations that are unable to afford/ access legal aid.
 - It is being **implemented by Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice**.
 - As per **Legal Service Authority Act 1987**, marginalized and disadvantaged including SC, ST, women, children, PwDs, etc., can get free legal aid under the program.
 - **Article 39A (DPSP)** obligates the state to **provide free legal aid to needy**.



Account Aggregators (AA)

- SEBI has released a **consultation paper on AA to curb misuse of financial information** in frauds and improve user safeguards.
- **AA is a RBI regulated entity** (with an NBFC-AA license) that **helps an individual to secure, digitally access and share information from one financial institution to other**.
 - In AA, **data cannot be shared without the consent of individual**.
 - AA system can make **lending and wealth management a lot faster and cheaper**.
 - Registering with an AA is fully **voluntary for consumers**.

 <p>Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in 2020. • It is a micro credit scheme, facilitating a working capital collateral free loan of ₹10,000, with subsequent loans of ₹20,000 and ₹50,000 with 7% interest subsidy. • The Scheme is available for beneficiaries belonging to only those States/UTs which have notified Rules and Scheme under Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014. • The scheme incentivize digital transactions by vendors through cash back facility. • Recently lending period extended till December 2024.
 <p>Quality Control Orders (QCOs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPIIT has notified QCO for 'Smart meters' and 'Welding Rods and Electrodes'. • QCOs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ QCO is a mandatory certification scheme to ensure compliance with Indian standards applicable to concerned products ➢ Issued by the central government under various considerations such as public interest, protection of human, animal or plant health, national security, etc. ➢ It is issued under the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Act, 2016 • Benefits of QCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Ensures safety of consumers ➢ Improves manufacturing quality standards ➢ Aid in development of quality ecosystem in India
 <p>Term in news: Paleo Proxies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paleo Proxies are indirect evidence or indicators that scientists use to reconstruct past environmental conditions, such as climate, vegetation, or ocean conditions. ➢ They can only provide a larger scale or seasonal timescale temperature anomaly estimates of a past era. ➢ Examples: Tree rings, ice cores, sediment layers, fossilised pollen, coral data etc.
 <p>Western Tragopan (Tragopan-melanocephalus)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is Himachal Pradesh's State bird. • About Bird <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ IUCN Status: Vulnerable; CITES- Appendix I. ➢ Habitat: It is endemic to the northwest Himalaya, within a narrow range of north Pakistan through Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, to the western part of Garhwal. ➢ Features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ During the breeding season (April-June), it inhabits little-disturbed temperate coniferous and deciduous forests. ▪ Feeds mostly on leaves, shoots and seeds, but also consumes insects and other invertebrates. ➢ Threat: Habitat degradation and fragmentation through subsistence farming, etc. 
 <p>Great Barrier Reef (GBR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A UNESCO heritage committee have recommended the Great Barrier Reef not be placed on a list of world heritage sites "in danger". ➢ However, they warned that the world's biggest coral reef ecosystem remains "serious threat" from pollution and the warming of oceans. • The GBR, which extends for over 2,300 kilometers along the northeastern coast of Australia, is home to over 9,000 known species. • They're home to a quarter of the ocean's marine life, generate clean air and protect vulnerable coastlines from erosion, flooding and storms. • It was declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1981. 