NEWS TODAY

DISTRICT JUDICIARY'S INDEPENDENCE PART OF BASIC STRUCTURE, SAYS SUPREME COURT (SC)

- **SC,** while pronouncing judgement in **All India Judges Association v. Union of India case,** highlighted certain principles concerning judiciary including:

  - **Independence of District Judiciary is equally a part of basic structure of Constitution** as it performs an important role in upholding rule of law.

    - Judicial independence and access to justice **ensures implementation of part III of Constitution.**

  - **Integration in terms of pay, pension and other service conditions** between District Judiciary, High Courts and SC.

  - **Separation of Power:** officers of judiciary be treated separately **from staff of legislative and executive wings.**

  - **Uniformity in designations and service conditions:** A unified judiciary entails that service conditions of judges of one state are equivalent to similar posts of judges of other states.

High Court → District and Sessions Judge's Court → (Civil Side) → Subordinate Judge's Court → Munsiff's Court; (Criminal Side) → Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court → Judicial Magistrate's Court

- As per court record, **on a single day,** district judiciary **handled nearly 11.3 lakh cases.**

  - District judge is the **highest judicial authority in district.**

  - **Organisational structure, jurisdiction and nomenclature** of subordinate judiciary **are laid down by states.** Hence, **they differ slightly** from state to state (**Broadly three tiers** below high court [refer image])

  - **Appointment, posting and promotion** of district judges are **made by governor** of the state **in consultation with High Court.**

EUROPEAN UNION (EU) FINDS WEAKNESSES IN INDIAN CERTIFICATION OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

- An audit, carried out by EU, **found weaknesses in the supervision and implementation of the controls at various levels including:**
  - A **high degree of non-compliance with National Programme on Organic Production** (NPOP) at producer groups.
  - **Lack of Knowledge** about organic farming and **poor quality of inspections.**
- **Organic products certification in India**

National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP)	• It involves **accreditation of Certification Bodies, standards for organic production, promotion of organic farming** and marketing, etc. • NPOP standards have been **recognized by European Commission and Switzerland.** • **Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority** (APEDA) under Ministry of Commerce & Industries **is implementing NPOP.** • **Accredited Certification Bodies** are responsible **for certifying.**
Participatory Guarantee System of India (PGS-India)	• PGS **ensures that production** of organic products takes place **in accordance with laid-down quality standards.** It is in the **form of a documented logo or a statement.** • It was **launched by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** to make certification system affordable and accessible without need for third-party certification agencies. • **Local Group** responsible **for certifying.**

- **FSSAI regulates manufacture, distribute, sell or import "organic foods"** as per provisions of the Food Safety Standards Act, 2006.

INDIA SET TO TRIPLE SPEED OF ITS FASTEST SUPERCOMPUTERS

- Minister of Earth Sciences (MoES) stated that **India would scale up** its supercomputing prowess **and install an 18-petaflop system** over the course of this year (Will be imported from French company).
  - **Floating-point operations per second (FLOPS) is an indicator of processing speed of computers,** and a petaflop refers to a 1,000 trillion flops.
- Supercomputers are **used for data-intensive and computation-heavy scientific and engineering purposes** such as quantum mechanics, weather forecasting, oil and gas exploration, molecular modeling, understanding patterns of disease, aerodynamics, nuclear fusion research etc.
  - **Fastest High-Performance Computing (HPC) system in the world is Frontier-Cray system in US** with a peak speed of 1 exa-flop (1,000 petaflops).
- **India's powerful civilian supercomputers include Pratyush and Mihir** with a combined capacity of 6.8 petaflops.
  - **PARAM Shivay** was the **first supercomputer assembled indigenously.**
- **Indigenous development** of Supercomputers **accelerated with launch of National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) in 2015 to empower national academic and R&D institutions** by installing a vast supercomputing grid.
  - NSM is being steered **jointly by Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeiTY) and Department of Science and Technology** (DST).
  - It is being **implemented by C-DAC and IISc, Bangalore.**

RELATED NEWS

- **AI Research Analytics and Knowledge Dissemination Platform** (AIRAWAT), installed at C-DAC, Pune has been **ranked 75th in top 500 global Supercomputing List.**

GLOBAL ALLIANCE OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (GANHRI) DEFER NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (NHRC) ACCREDITATION

- **For the second time** in a row, **GANHRI deferred accreditation of NHRC** citing objections like **political interference in appointments, involving police in probes** into human rights violations, **poor cooperation with civil society** etc.
  - **Without the accreditation,** NHRC will be **unable to represent India at UN Human Rights Council** (UNHRC).
- GANHRI is **responsible for reviewing and accrediting** National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) **in compliance with Paris Principles** every five years.
  - Paris Principles, **adopted in 1993** by U.N. General Assembly, helps in **development of standards for NHRI** across the world.
- In 2016 too, **NHRC's accreditation was deferred** by a year and later in **its recommendations in 2017 GANHRI asked the NHRC to address its lack of diversity** (regarding women representatives from other marginalised social groups).
  - An **amendment to Protection of Human Rights Act in 2019 sought to address these concerns.**
    - It **increased members of NHRC and made chairpersons** of National Commission for Backward Classes and National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, and Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities **deemed members of NHRC.**

SIX CRITERIA FOR NHRI UNDER PARIS PRINCIPLES
- Mandate and Competence
- Autonomy from Government
- Independence guaranteed by a statute or Constitution
- Pluralism
- Adequate Resources
- Adequate Powers of Investigation

About Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)
- It was **established in 1993 as International Coordinating Committee** of National Institutions for promotion and protection of human rights (ICC).
- **General Assembly** is GANHRI's **supreme deliberative body.**
- **Bureau is the GANHRI executive committee.** It is comprised of 16 members, 4 from each of GANHRI regional networks of Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific, and Europe.
- **HQ:** Geneva, Switzerland.

GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 2023 ISSUED BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

- Ordinance **amended Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act,** 1991.
- **Key highlights of the Ordinance:**
  - **Creates a new statutory authority –** National Capital Civil Service Authority (NCCSA) – **to make recommendations to Lieutenant Governor (LG)** regarding transfer posting, vigilance and other incidental matters.
    - NCCSA will **consist of CM of Delhi, Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary** of Home department.
  - Gives **power to LG to make a final decision** in case there is **a difference of opinion** between NCCSA and LG.
- Earlier, a **constitution bench of Supreme court had ruled that elected government** of National Capital Territory of Delhi **has legislative and executive power over Services** under Entry 41, List II of the 7th schedule.
- **Article 239-AA,** inserted by 69th Amendment Act, 1991, **conferred special status on Delhi** (on recommendations of S Balakrishnan Committee)
  - It provides that **NCT of Delhi will have an administrator and a Legislative Assembly.**
  - **Legislative Assembly** shall have power **to make laws with respect to any of matters in State List or Concurrent List except on** subjects of **police, public order, and land.**
  - **In case of difference of opinion** between L-G and his Ministers, **L-G shall refer it to President.**

WHO RELEASED "HEALTH FOR ALL: TRANSFORMING ECONOMIES TO DELIVER WHAT MATTERS" REPORT

- Launched at the ongoing **76th World Health Assembly (WHA)**, report provides roadmap for structuring economic activity to ensure Health for All.
  - ➤ It was **released by WHO Council on Economics of Health for All**, formed in 2020, **in response to COVID-19 pandemic** to reassess how health and well-being are valued, produced and distributed across the economy.
- Report provides **recommendations for shifting economic** thinking to ensure Health for **All across four interrelated pillars.**

ABOUT WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

- It is the **decision-making body of WHO.** It is **held annually in Geneva,** Switzerland
- It is **attended by delegations from all WHO Member States** and focuses on a specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board.
- **Main functions** are to **determine policies** of Organization, **appoint Director-General, supervise financial policies etc.**

Pillars	Recommendations
Valuing Health for All	• **Treat health and wellbeing,** health workers and health systems as a **long-term investment.** • Enforce **health as a human right.** • **Restore and protect environment** through a **regenerative economy.**
Financing Health for All	• Adopt a **comprehensive, stable approach for long term funding.** • **Redraw the international financial architecture** to fund health equitably and proactively.
Innovating for Health for All	• Build **symbiotic public-private alliances** to maximize public value. • **Design knowledge governance,** including IP regimes, **to ensure global equitable access** to vital health innovations.
Strengthening Public Capacity for Health for All	• **Whole of Government approach** to recognize that **Health for All is not just for health ministries** but for **all government agencies.** • **Invest in the dynamic capabilities** of the state and public sector. • **Demonstrate transparency and meaningful public engagement** to hold governments accountable

ALSO IN NEWS

India-Australia Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement (MMPA)

- MMPA was signed **during PM's recent visit to Australia.**
- MMPA **is aimed at promoting two-way exchange of students, graduates, researchers, and business people,** and expanding people-to-people ties.
- Their mobility **will be facilitated through** a new skilled pathway named **MATES** (Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early Professionals Scheme) **specifically created for India.**
- **Other key development:** Both countries have also finalized the **terms of reference of an India-Australia hydrogen task force.**

New Development Bank (NDB)

- NDB to set up a **regional office at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City** (GIFT City).
- **About NDB**
  - ➤ **Multilateral development bank established by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS)** in 2015 **to mobilise resources for** infrastructure and sustainable development projects in **emerging markets and developing countries.**
  - ➤ **Members:** BRICS nations, Bangladesh, UAE, Egypt (**Uruguay is a prospective member** and will become official member once it deposit instrument of accession).
  - ➤ **HQ:** Shanghai, China
  - ➤ **India is second-largest recipient** of NDB's financial support after China.

Foreign institutions (FIs) in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs)

- **Ministry of Finance** has exempted **courses in financial management, fintech, science, etc. offered by FIs** in IFSCs from **certain provisions of University Grants Commission Act and All India Council for Technical Education Act**
- **Regulatory framework of the respective home country** shall apply in all academic matters in such FIs.
- An **IFSC caters to customers outside the jurisdiction** of the domestic economy.
  - ➤ Such centres **deal with flows of finance, financial products and services** across borders.

Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition powered Solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification (ASTR)	• ASTR is an **AI powered tool to identify SIMs issued using fraudulent/forged documents.**
	  ➤ Launched **by Department of Telecom (DoT) under Sanchar Saathi initiative.**
	• **Working of ASTR:**
	  ➤ **Subscribers' images are encoded** using **convolutional neural network (CNN) models.**
	  ➤ **Face comparison is carried out** and two faces are concluded to be **identical if they match at least 97.5%**
	  ➤ Then, **ASTR uses fuzzy logic** to find similarity or approximate matches for subscriber names.

Sengol	• **PM will install the Sengol** in new parliament.
	• Known as Sengol , **the Sceptre** is a **historical symbol of Independence** as it **signifies transfer of power from British to Indians.**
	  ➤ Sengol gets its **name from Tamil word 'semmai',** meaning **righteousness.**
	  ➤ It was **inspired by ceremony** (for transfer of power) **performed during Chola dynasty.**
	  ➤ **Leaders of Thiruvaduthurai Atheenam,** a mutt in Tamil Nadu's Tanjore district, **commissioned manufacturing of Sengol.**
	  ➤ It is **believed to be in practice since Sangam Age** and finds mention in texts such as Purananooru, Kurunthogai, Perumpaanatrupadai, and Kalithogai

International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)	• **Saantiniketan,** the home of Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore, has been recommended for inclusion in **UNESCO's World Heritage List** by ICOMOS. **ICOMOS International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)** — **HQ: Paris, France** ⓘ **Genesis:** It was established in 1965 as an outcome of Second Congress of Architects and Specialists of Historic Buildings, held in Venice in 1964. **Objective:** It is a global NGO associated with UNESCO, whose mission is to promote conservation, protection, use and enhancement of monuments, building complexes and cultural heritage sites. **Membership:** It comprises professionals, experts, representatives from local authorities, companies and heritage organizations from around 151 countries including India. **Other Key Information:** ○ It is an Advisory Body of World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of UNESCO.

Places in News	**Lebanon (Capital: Beirut)**
	• Lebanon is likely to be **placed on a "grey list" of countries** under special scrutiny over unsatisfactory practices to prevent money laundering and terrorism financing.
	• **Political Boundaries**
	  ➤ Located on eastern shore of Mediterranean Sea.
	  ➤ Bounded by **Syria** (north and east), **Israel** (south), and **Mediterranean Sea** (west).
	  ➤ Shares **maritime borders with Cyprus**
	• **Geographical features**
	  ➤ **Terrain:** Narrow coastal plain; **El Beqaa (Bekaa Valley)** separates Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon Mountains.
	  ➤ **Major river:** Nahr el Litani.
	  ➤ **Highest point:** Qurnat as Sawda'
	  ➤ **Lowest point:** Mediterranean Sea.