

JANUARY–MARCH 2026 · TRI-EDITION COMPILATION

JIGYASA

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India's most rigorous current affairs magazine for CLAT 2027 —
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POLITY & GOVERNANCE

CONSTITUTIONAL & CRIMINAL LAW

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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POLITY & GOVERNANCE

POSH Act, 2013

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace — Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal

IN THE NEWS

The Supreme Court in **Dr. Sohail Malik v. Union of India & Anr (2025)** expanded the scope of the POSH Act. The Court held that a woman harassed at her workplace by a person from *outside* her organisation can file a complaint with the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) of her own workplace — not the ICC of the harasser's establishment. This gives a woman's own ICC cross-jurisdictional authority over employees of third-party organisations.

BACKGROUND

The POSH Act 2013 was drawn from the Supreme Court's landmark judgment in **Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997)**, where the Court, in the absence of legislation, laid down binding guidelines to protect women from workplace sexual harassment. Parliament codified these into a full statute in 2013.

Section 16 of the Act prohibits disclosure of the complaint contents or inquiry proceedings — protecting the identity of the complainant.

KEY DEFINITIONS

SEXUAL HARASSMENT	Any unwelcome act or behaviour including physical contact or advances, demand or request for sexual favours, sexually coloured remarks, showing pornography, or any other unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature.
WORKPLACE	Any place visited by an employee arising out of or during employment, including employer-provided transport. Covers both organised and unorganised sectors.
AGGRIEVED WOMAN	All women irrespective of age or employment status — organised, unorganised, public, private. Also includes clients, customers, and domestic workers.

PARAMETER	ICC	LCC
APPLICABLE TO	10 or more employees	Fewer than 10 employees
CONSTITUTED BY	Employer	District Officer
MINIMUM MEMBERS	4 (half must be women)	5 (half must be women)
PRESIDING OFFICER	Senior woman employee	Eminent woman in social work
NGO MEMBER	1 member	2 members (at least 1 woman)
TENURE	3 years	3 years
POWERS	Equal to a civil court	Equal to a civil court

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE — STEP BY STEP

1

FILE COMPLAINT

Aggrieved woman (or her legal heir) files complaint to **ICC or LCC within 3 months** of the incident. Time limit extendable by 3 more months.

2

CONCILIATION (OPTIONAL)

At the request of the aggrieved woman, ICC/LCC may attempt conciliation before starting inquiry. **Important:** No monetary settlement can be the basis of conciliation.

3

INQUIRY

ICC/LCC conducts inquiry. Must be completed within **90 days**. ICC/LCC may also forward complaint to police.

4

REPORT TO EMPLOYER

ICC/LCC submits report of findings to employer within **10 days** of completing inquiry.

5

ACTION

If proved: action against respondent as per service rules. If not proved: case closed. If complaint found false: ICC may recommend action against complainant (not mandatory).

6

APPEAL

Either party (aggrieved woman or respondent) may appeal in court or tribunal within **90 days**.

PARAMETER	VISHAKA GUIDELINES (1997)	POSH ACT (2013)
NATURE	Judicial guidelines	Statutory law by Parliament
SECTOR COVERAGE	Organised sector only	Organised + Unorganised
SCOPE OF "WOMAN"	Employed women	All women incl. clients, domestic workers
COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE	Recommended	Mandatory (ICC for 10+ employees)
PENALTY	Not specified	Fine up to Rs. 50,000; licence cancellation

**CLAT NOTE**

The POSH Act flows directly from **Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997)** — a rare instance of judicial law-making in a legislative vacuum, drawing on India's commitments under the **CEDAW** convention. Section 16's confidentiality protection and the civil-court powers of the ICC/LCC are frequently tested.

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Shah Bano to Samad

Muslim Women's Rights, Maintenance Law & the Uniform Civil Code Debate

IN THE NEWS

A recent Bollywood film based on the landmark **Shah Bano case of 1985** has reignited national conversation around Muslim women's right to maintenance, personal law reform, and the long-pending question of a **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** in India.

THE SHAH BANO CASE (1985) — BACKGROUND

In 1978, **Shah Bano Begum**, a 62-year-old Muslim woman from Madhya Pradesh, filed for maintenance from her husband after he divorced her. She sought relief under **Section 125 of the CrPC** — a secular provision that guarantees maintenance to destitute dependants regardless of religion. Her husband argued that under Muslim personal law, his financial obligation ended after the *iddat* period — a waiting period of roughly three months following divorce. The Madhya Pradesh High Court ruled in Shah Bano's favour and increased the maintenance; her husband appealed to the Supreme Court.

1985

Supreme Court Verdict

A 5-judge Constitutional Bench ruled unanimously in Shah Bano's favour. **Section 125 CrPC is secular** and applies to all citizens including Muslim women; maintenance did not cease after iddat. The Court lamented that Article 44 (UCC) had remained a "dead letter" and cited the Quran to argue Islam does not prohibit post-divorce maintenance.

1986

Legislative Reversal

Facing protests, the Rajiv Gandhi government passed the **Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986** — restricting the husband's obligation to the iddat period and shifting long-term support to relatives or the Waqf Board. Critics called it a step backward for gender justice.

2001

Daniel Latifi Case — Reaffirmation

Shah Bano's own lawyer challenged the 1986 Act. The SC **upheld the Act but gave it a purposive interpretation** — the husband must make a fair and reasonable provision for the wife's future within the iddat period itself, preserving the spirit of 1985.

2024

Mohd. Abdul Samad v. State of Telangana

The SC clarified that the 1986 Act **does not bar** a divorced Muslim woman from seeking maintenance under Section 125 CrPC (now mirrored in the **BNSS, 2023**). Women may approach the court under either law, or both — restoring 1985 parity.

**CLAT NOTE**

Article 44 falls under **Part IV — Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs)**. DPSPs are not judicially enforceable — courts cannot compel the government to implement them. This is precisely why Parliament could later pass a law that effectively reversed the Court's direction in 1985.

THE UNIFORM CIVIL CODE (UCC)

The UCC refers to a single, common set of civil laws — governing **marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption** — applicable to all citizens regardless of religion. It is envisioned under **Article 44** as part of the DPSPs. Implementation is left to government discretion; it is not a constitutional obligation courts can enforce.

Historical Background

During British rule, a uniform criminal law applied across India, but personal and family laws were left untouched out of sensitivity to religious communities. In the Constituent Assembly, Muslim members sought protections for personal law, while **B.R. Ambedkar, K.M. Munshi, and Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar** advocated for a UCC as essential to national integration and gender equality. A compromise was reached — the UCC was included as an aspiration, not a mandate.

Current Status

The **21st Law Commission (2018)** concluded a UCC was "neither necessary nor desirable at this stage," recommending reform of existing personal laws to remove gender discrimination instead.

Goa has a functioning UCC, operating under the Portuguese Civil Code of 1867 — a colonial-era law retained after Goa's integration.

Uttarakhand became the first Indian state to implement a UCC post-Independence (second overall after Goa). With its bill, **Gujarat** becomes the second post-Independence state to adopt the UCC.

KEY SUPREME COURT JUDGMENTS PUSHING FOR UCC

CASE	YEAR	SIGNIFICANCE
SARLA MUDGAL	1995	Addressed religious conversion used to practice polygamy; called for UCC implementation
LILY THOMAS	2000	A Hindu man converting to Islam cannot contract a second marriage without dissolving the first; conversion cannot be used to evade bigamy laws
SHAYARA BANO	2017	Struck down <i>triple talaq</i> (talaq-e-biddat) as unconstitutional; led to the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019 making instant triple talaq a criminal offence (up to 3 years)
JOSE PAULO COUTINHO	2019	Praised Goa as a model of UCC implementation; held Goa's Portuguese Civil Code governs succession even for properties outside the state

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Electoral Rolls & the ECI

Special Intensive Revision (SIR), Composition, Powers & the 2023 Reform Act

IN THE NEWS

The **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** — a comprehensive, door-to-door exercise by the ECI to verify and update electoral rolls — has drawn national attention, especially after Bihar's 2025 SIR re-verified nearly **4.74 crore electors** (about 60% of the state's electorate).

Art. 324

CONSTITUTIONAL
BASIS

Jan 25

NATIONAL VOTERS'
DAY (SINCE 2011)

3

MEMBERS (CEC + 2
ECS, SINCE 1993)

6 yrs

TENURE / UNTIL AGE
65

SC Judge

SALARY EQUIVALENT

WHAT IS THE SIR?

The SIR verifies and updates voter lists — adding eligible new voters, removing deceased or disqualified persons, eliminating duplicate and fraudulent entries, and correcting longstanding errors. **Legal basis:** Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, drawing constitutional authority from **Article 324**. Ground-level work is done by **Booth Level Officers (BLOs)**, who visit households and verify residency and citizenship documents.

Why Is SIR Necessary?

Correcting long-standing errors: rolls accumulate outdated addresses, deceased voters, and omitted electors over time.

Removing bogus & duplicate entries: ghost voters and multiple registrations undermine 'one person, one vote.'

Including first-time voters: millions turn 18 each year and become eligible under **Article 326** (adult suffrage).

Post-delimitation alignment: after boundaries are redrawn, rolls must reflect new constituencies — preventing disenfranchisement of migrants.

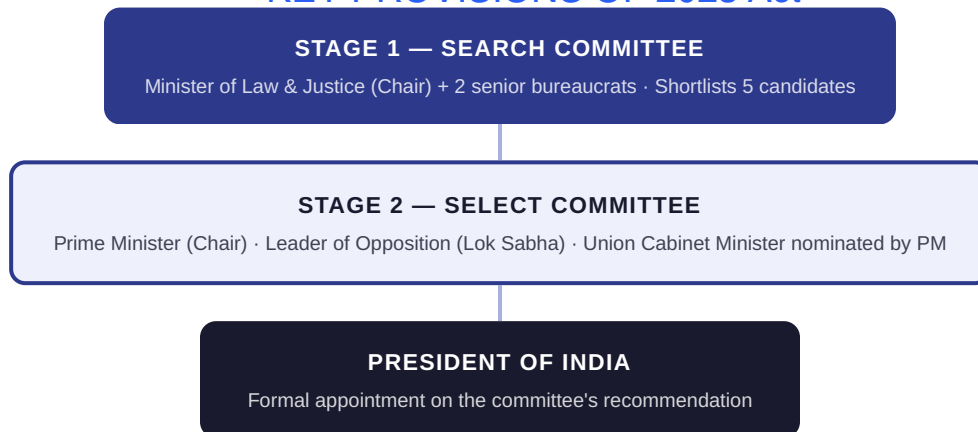
Transparency & public participation: draft rolls are published; citizens may raise claims and objections.

ARTICLE	PROVISION
ARTICLE 324	Vests superintendence, direction & control of elections in the ECI
ARTICLE 325	Prohibits exclusion from electoral rolls on grounds of religion, race, caste, or sex
ARTICLE 326	Establishes adult suffrage (18+) for Lok Sabha & State Assembly elections
ARTICLE 327	Parliament's power to legislate on elections to legislatures
ARTICLE 328	State legislature's power to legislate on its own elections
ARTICLE 329(B)	Judicial review restricted during an ongoing electoral process (election petitions only)

APPOINTMENT PROCESS — 2023 REFORM ACT

The **CEC and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023** replaced the 1991 framework. It followed the SC's ruling in the **Anoop Baranwal Case (2023)**, which held the appointment process lacked independence and directed a committee including the CJI to oversee appointments until Parliament legislated otherwise.

KEY PROVISIONS OF 2023 Act



CLAT NOTE

The **Anoop Baranwal case** illustrates the tension between judicial direction and parliamentary sovereignty on constitutional appointments. **Tenure:** 6 years or until 65, whichever is earlier (combined tenure capped at 6 years if an EC becomes CEC); no re-appointment. **Removal:** the CEC is removed like an SC Judge (parliamentary address); an EC only on the CEC's recommendation.

KEY SUPREME COURT JUDGMENTS

Mohinder Singh Gill v. CEC

1977

Upheld the ECI's broad independent powers under Article 324 — the Commission can act to ensure free and fair elections even where legislation under Articles 327/328 is silent. Affirmed Article 329(b): no judicial review mid-election; disputes via election petitions only.

Persons already on the rolls cannot be compelled to re-prove citizenship. **Citizenship determination is a sovereign function of the Ministry of Home Affairs — not the ECI.**

Reaffirmed the 1995 ruling — the ECI cannot determine citizenship. Allowed the SIR to proceed and suggested Aadhaar, EPIC (voter ID), and ration cards be accepted as valid verification documents.

Historical Evolution of Roll Revisions

1952–1956: intensive revisions covering one-fifth of each state every year.

1957–1961: coverage expanded to one-third of each state annually, alongside the States Reorganisation Act, 1956.

The **1951–52 Lok Sabha elections** revealed serious roll flaws due to administrative inexperience, accelerating systematic revision.

Bihar's last SIR before 2025: conducted in 2003 — over two decades ago.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

India's Counterterrorism Framework

Laws, Agencies & Strategy — The Constitutional & Institutional Architecture

IN THE NEWS

A car bomb explosion near Delhi's **Red Fort** has reignited debate about India's internal security architecture. An FIR was registered under the **UAPA, 1967** and the Explosive Substances Act, and the case transferred to the **NIA**. Investigators linked the attack to a terror module with alleged Jaish-e-Mohammed connections; nine arrests were made and the suspected mastermind, identified via DNA, was killed in the blast.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

Under the **Seventh Schedule**, law and order is a **State subject (List II)** — police and internal security are primarily state responsibilities. But terrorism, being cross-border, is increasingly treated as a central concern. **Article 355** obliges the Union to protect every state against external aggression and internal disturbance — the constitutional justification for central intervention, deployment of CAPFs, and the NIA operating across state boundaries.

LEGAL & POLICY FRAMEWORK

1967**UAPA — UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES (PREVENTION) ACT**

India's primary anti-terror law. Empowers the government to designate organisations as unlawful/terrorist, ban them, seize assets, and detain suspects. Bail is deliberately stringent — the court must be satisfied there are reasonable grounds to believe the accused is *not* guilty before granting it.

2008**NIA ACT**

Enacted after the 2008 Mumbai attacks. Established the NIA as a central agency to investigate terror offences nationwide without state permission; can take over cases from state police. Operates under the MHA.

1980**NSA — NATIONAL SECURITY ACT**

Allows **preventive detention** without charge or trial for up to 12 months if a person threatens national security or public order. Orders issued by DMs or State Governments, reviewed by an Advisory Board.

2002**POTA (REPEALED 2004)**

Dedicated anti-terror law after the 2001 Parliament attack; criticised for misuse and repealed in 2004. UAPA was then strengthened as the primary instrument.



CLAT NOTE

UAPA was amended in **2019** to allow designating *individuals* (not just organisations) as terrorists — challenged before the SC on due-process grounds. **Preventive detention** is governed by **Article 22**, which provides safeguards (grounds of detention, right to representation) — but **Article 22(3)** excludes preventive-detention detainees from certain protections available to ordinary accused. The NIA's 2019 amendment extended its mandate to human trafficking, counterfeit currency, illegal arms, cyber-terrorism, and offences committed outside India affecting Indian interests.

KEY INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

NSCS	National Security Council Secretariat — apex body for strategic security planning, led by the National Security Advisor (NSA); coordinates inter-agency strategy and intelligence.
MAC	Multi-Agency Centre — real-time intelligence fusion platform under the IB, connecting central and state agencies; created after intelligence failures identified post-Kargil (1999).
NTRO	National Technical Research Organisation — technical intelligence via cyber systems, satellite surveillance, and signal interception.
DIA	Defence Intelligence Agency — integrates Army, Navy & Air Force military intelligence into a unified picture.

INTELLIGENCE & SURVEILLANCE NETWORK

AGENCY	ROLE
INTELLIGENCE BUREAU (IB)	Domestic intelligence — internal threat assessment, counterintelligence, monitoring infiltration & radicalisation. Under MHA; <i>no powers of arrest</i> .
R&AW	External intelligence, established 1968 after the 1962 & 1965 wars. Carved out of the IB. Operates on an <i>executive order</i> (R&AW Cadre Rules, 1975), not a statute. Head = Secretary (R), reports to the PM via the Cabinet Secretary.
I4C	Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre — under MHA; coordinates cybercrime response nationally.
CERT-IN	Computer Emergency Response Team India — under MeitY; handles technical cyber incidents.

OPERATIONAL FORCES & RESPONSE UNITS

NSG ("Black Cats"): elite federal counterterror force under MHA — hostage rescue, counter-hijacking, rapid urban response.

CAPFs: CRPF (largest; insurgency areas) · BSF (Pakistan & Bangladesh borders) · ITBP (Himalayan border with China) · CISF (airports, nuclear facilities, PSUs).

ATS: state-level squads working with central agencies (Maharashtra's is most prominent).

Special Forces: Para SF (Army) · MARCOS (Navy) · Garud Commandos (Air Force) — covert missions, cross-border ops, high-value strikes.

INDIA & THE UN GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY (2006)

PILLAR	FOCUS
1. ADDRESS ROOT CAUSES	Tackle marginalisation, governance deficits and conflict; reject any justification for terrorism
2. PREVENT & COMBAT TERRORISM	Intelligence sharing, law enforcement cooperation, denial of safe havens, curbing financing & recruitment
3. BUILD STATE CAPACITY	Technical assistance, institution-building, coordination with UN bodies
4. HUMAN RIGHTS & RULE OF LAW	Compliance with international human rights law; refusal to associate terrorism with any religion or ethnicity



CLAT NOTE

Key implementing bodies: UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), INTERPOL, UNDP, and OHCHR. India is also a member of the **FATF** — the global watchdog on terror financing and money laundering; its "grey list" and "black list" designations carry significant geopolitical weight, particularly for Pakistan.

● CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Reproductive Rights in India

Surrogacy, Abortion & the Law — Article 21, Bodily Autonomy & State Regulation

IN THE NEWS

The Supreme Court has agreed to examine whether a key provision of the **Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021** — which bars couples who already have a child from accessing surrogacy — violates the right to reproductive autonomy under **Article 21**. The petitioners suffer from *secondary infertility* and argue the law is unwarranted State interference in a deeply personal decision.

REPRODUCTIVE AUTONOMY UNDER ARTICLE 21

Article 21 guarantees the right to life and personal liberty. Over decades, the SC has expanded its scope far beyond physical survival to encompass dignity, privacy, and personal choices. In **Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017)**, a nine-judge Bench unanimously held privacy is a fundamental right under Article 21, explicitly recognising that **reproductive choices** form part of a woman's personal liberty and bodily autonomy.



CLAT NOTE

The **Puttaswamy** judgment is one of the most cited cases in Indian constitutional law. Its significance lies in overruling two earlier judgments — **M.P. Sharma (1954)** and **Kharak Singh (1962)** — and affirming privacy as intrinsic to human dignity and liberty.

THE SURROGACY (REGULATION) ACT, 2021

India's surrogacy law permits **only altruistic surrogacy**. Commercial surrogacy — where the surrogate is paid beyond medical expenses — is completely prohibited, to prevent exploitation of economically vulnerable women.



WHO CAN SEEK SURROGACY

A legally married Indian couple (husband 26–55, wife 25–50) with certified infertility; or a widow/divorcee aged 35–45.



THE CRUCIAL RESTRICTION — S.4(iii)(C)(II)

A couple cannot opt for surrogacy if they already have a living child (biological, adopted, or by surrogacy) — unless that child has a life-threatening illness, severe disability, or incurable condition.



WHO CAN BE A SURROGATE

Must be a close relative of the couple, married with at least one biological child, aged 25–35, and can act as surrogate only once in her lifetime.



LEGAL STATUS OF THE CHILD

The child is the legal biological child of the intending couple from birth. Any abortion of the surrogate pregnancy requires the surrogate's consent and MTP Act compliance.

Donor Egg Restriction & Amendments

Rule 7 originally prohibited donor eggs entirely. The SC **stayed this rule** in a case involving a woman with **MRKH Syndrome** (born without a uterus or with an underdeveloped one), recognising a blanket ban could deny reproduction to women medically incapable of producing viable eggs. The **2022 Amendment** permitted donor gametes if either spouse is medically certified by a District Medical Board — but not where *both* partners have issues simultaneously. For widowed/divorced women, their own eggs must be used alongside donor sperm.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGE — SECONDARY INFERTILITY

Secondary infertility is the inability to conceive or carry a pregnancy to term after previously having a child. Such couples are barred from surrogacy under S.4(iii)(C)(II) unless the existing child has a severe condition.

PETITIONERS' ARGUMENTS	GOVERNMENT'S POSITION
SECONDARY INFERTILITY IS A GENUINE, DOCUMENTED MEDICAL CONDITION CAUSING REAL SUFFERING	Surrogacy involves another woman's body; the Constitution gives no right over another's reproductive labour
INDIA HAS NO ONE-CHILD POLICY; ADOPTION LAWS ALREADY ALLOW SECOND/THIRD ADOPTIONS	Surrogacy is a statutory right, not a fundamental right — Parliament may regulate it reasonably
DENYING SURROGACY IS STATE OVERREACH INTO REPRODUCTIVE AUTONOMY, VIOLATING ARTICLE 21	The restriction protects surrogate mothers from unnecessary pregnancies in non-essential cases
THE RESTRICTION DRAWS AN ARBITRARY DISTINCTION BETWEEN COUPLES WITH ONE HEALTHY CHILD AND THOSE WITH NONE	The exception for medically affected children shows the law addresses genuine need without misuse

SC's Observation: The Court found the restriction *prima facie* "reasonable" given population concerns, but held a detailed examination of whether it infringes reproductive freedom, bodily autonomy, and privacy under **Articles 14 and 21** is warranted. The case is ongoing.

Baby Manji Yamada v. Union of India**2008**

A Japanese couple commissioned surrogacy in India but divorced before the child's birth — no one was clearly the legal parent under existing law. The legal vacuum this exposed became a key trigger for legislating surrogacy.

Jan Balaz v. Anand Municipality**2009**

A German couple's surrogate-born twins were denied Indian passports (not genetically Indian) while Germany did not recognise surrogacy — highlighting the urgent need for a framework on citizenship and parentage.

ABORTION LAW IN INDIA

Under the original IPC, **Sections 312–313** made voluntary abortion a criminal offence, the only exception being to save the mother's life. The **Shantilal Shah Committee (1964)** recommended legalising abortion on health and social grounds — forming the basis of India's first modern abortion law.

Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971 — Timelines**1****UP TO 12 WEEKS**

Opinion of **one** registered medical practitioner required.

2**12 TO 20 WEEKS**

Opinion of **two** registered medical practitioners required.

3**BEYOND 20 WEEKS**

Not permitted except to save the mother's life (under the 1971 Act).

MTP (Amendment) Act, 2021 — Key Changes

Extended to unmarried women: removed the marital-status requirement — abortion rights now apply to all women.

Expanded categories (access up to 24 weeks): survivors of sexual assault/rape/incest, minors, women widowed/divorced during pregnancy, women with disabilities, foetal malformation, and disaster/emergency-affected women.

**CLAT NOTE**

The key 2021 change: reducing the **two-doctor requirement to one** for the 12–20 week window, and extending access up to **24 weeks** for vulnerable categories. In **X v. Principal Secretary, NCT of Delhi (2022)**, the SC held unmarried women have the same abortion rights as married women for 20–24 week pregnancies (restricting MTP to married women violates Articles 14 & 21). Under the **BNS, 2023**, abortion outside MTP exceptions remains criminalised. **Global note:** France is the only country to guarantee abortion as a constitutional right.

The ART (Regulation) Act governs the broader ecosystem of infertility treatments — IVF, intrauterine insemination, gamete donation — working alongside the Surrogacy Act.

All ART clinics & gamete banks must register with the **National Registry of Banks and Clinics of India**; unregistered operations prohibited.

ART may only treat infertility — **sex selection is expressly prohibited**.

Gamete donors must be screened, give informed consent, are insured, and face donation limits.

Commercialisation of human gametes and embryos is restricted — sale/purchase outside the framework is a criminal offence.

Patient confidentiality, donor anonymity, and data protection are mandated; National & State boards have inspection, enforcement and penalty powers.

**CLAT NOTE**

The **ART Act** and **Surrogacy Act** together form India's twin-pillar framework for assisted reproduction — the former governs the clinical/technical process, the latter governs who may commission surrogacy. This topic connects **Article 21** (life, liberty, privacy, dignity), **Article 14** (married vs. unmarried women), legislative policy, and judicial expansion (Puttaswamy; X v. Principal Secretary).

 CRIMINAL LAW

PCA & the Section 17A Debate

Can the Law Protect the Corrupt? — Prevention of Corruption Act, Prior Sanction & Article 14

IN THE NEWS

In **Centre for Public Interest Litigation v. Union of India (2026)**, the Supreme Court delivered a **split verdict** on whether **Section 17A** of the PCA, 1988 — which requires prior government sanction before any investigation against a public servant — is constitutionally valid. The split reflects a deeper tension: should public servants be shielded from premature prosecution, or does that shield become a tool of impunity?

THE SPLIT VERDICT — WHAT EACH JUDGE HELD



JUSTICE VISWANATHAN — VALID, WITH A CONDITION

Section 17A is constitutionally valid, *but* the sanction must not be granted by the government itself. It must be decided by the **Lokpal** (centre) or **Lokayukta** (state) — independent statutory bodies — to insulate the process from political interference.



JUSTICE B.V. NAGARATHNA — UNCONSTITUTIONAL

Section 17A violates **Article 14**. It creates a privileged class of public servants enjoying protection unavailable to ordinary citizens accused of similar offences — a differential treatment with no intelligible basis, amounting to special immunity for the powerful.



CLAT NOTE

A **split verdict** in a two-judge bench means the matter must be referred to a **larger bench** for a final, binding decision. It does not settle the law — it deepens the constitutional question.

WHAT IS SECTION 17A?

Inserted by the **Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018**, Section 17A provides that no police officer shall conduct any inquiry or investigation into an alleged PCA offence by a public servant without prior approval from: the **Central Government** (All India Services & central employees), the **State Government** (state employees), or the **competent authority** (other categories). The stated purpose was to protect honest officers from frivolous complaints; critics argue it lets the political executive act as a gatekeeper, blocking legitimate investigations against officials with political patronage.



CLAT NOTE

This is a classic **separation of powers** problem. Investigation is a function of the law-enforcement machinery, which must be independent of the executive. When the executive decides whether an investigation against one of its own officers should proceed, it becomes both party and judge — an inherent conflict of interest.

PRIOR SANCTION — A HISTORY OF JUDICIAL PUSHBACK

1997

Vineet Narain v. Union of India

Arose from the *hawala scandal*. When the CBI went slow on the powerful, the SC struck down the "single directive" requiring prior sanction before investigating senior civil servants — holding no person, however senior, is above the law. Laid down guidelines for CBI independence.

2014

Dr. Subramanian Swamy v. Director, CBI

Reaffirmed Vineet Narain — invalidated statutory provisions requiring prior approval before investigating senior public servants, holding such requirements impede the rule of law and compromise investigative independence.

2018

Section 17A Inserted

The amendment **revived by legislation** exactly the kind of protection the SC had struck down by judicial order — making the 2026 constitutional challenge inevitable.

ABOUT THE PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION ACT, 1988

The PCA, 1988 is India's principal legislation for prosecuting corruption in public office, significantly amended in 2018. "**Public servant**" is defined broadly: persons employed/paid by Government, local authorities or public bodies; those remunerated through government fees/commissions; judges and adjudicators; and chairpersons, members & employees of regulators, universities and PSUs.

"**Corruption**" = acceptance, solicitation, or agreement to accept any gratification (anything of value other than legal remuneration) by a public servant in exchange for performing/refraining from an official act, or showing favour/disfavour. **Key provisions:** prosecution for criminal misconduct and disproportionate assets; special courts for speedy trial; the 2018 amendment made **bribe-giving an offence** while protecting those who report bribe demands within 7 days.



CLAT NOTE

The **CBI** has no standalone statute — it operates under the **Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946**. Because police is a **State subject** (Seventh Schedule), the CBI needs State Government consent to investigate within a state's territory — unless directed by the Supreme Court or a High Court.

CONSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS

Article 14 (Equality): Justice Nagarathna's dissent — Section 17A carves out a protected class (public servants) who cannot even be investigated without executive permission, with no comparable protection for private individuals and no rational nexus to a legitimate objective.

Article 311 (Existing protections): civil servants already enjoy safeguards against dismissal/removal without inquiry. Adding a pre-investigation sanction gives a *double layer* of protection unavailable to any other citizen — a clear Article 14 concern.

Separation of powers: investigation is a law-enforcement function, not an executive one; placing the permission decision with the government creates structural conflict when the accused is its own employee.

LAW / BODY	ROLE
LOKPAL & LOKAYUKTAS ACT, 2013	Established the Lokpal (centre) & Lokayuktas (states); can inquire into corruption by public functionaries incl. the PM (conditionally), Ministers, MPs, Group A–D officers. Lokpal constituted 2019. Justice Viswanathan's remedy draws on this.
WHISTLE BLOWERS PROTECTION ACT, 2014	Mechanism to report corruption/misuse of power, with legal protection from victimisation or retaliation.
CVC ACT, 2003	Statutory body overseeing vigilance in the Central Government; supervises the CBI in anti-corruption cases; advisory/oversight role, no prosecution powers.
RTI ACT, 2005	Empowers citizens to demand transparency — a powerful indirect anti-corruption tool; denial of information (subject to exemptions) is an offence.
FUGITIVE ECONOMIC OFFENDERS ACT, 2018	Targets high-value offenders who flee India; allows confiscation of properties in India and abroad even in absentia.
UNCAC (RATIFIED BY INDIA 2011)	The only legally binding global anti-corruption treaty (UN, 2003) — covers prevention, criminalisation, international cooperation & asset recovery.

POLITY & JUDICIARY

Judicial Accountability & Impeachment

The Justice Varma Case — Removal of Judges, the In-House Procedure & Constitutional Safeguards

IN THE NEWS

Justice Yashwant Varma of the Allahabad High Court submitted his resignation to the President under **Article 217(1)(a)** — the latest figure in India's long-running debate over judicial accountability. His resignation came amid a serious controversy and a formal parliamentary motion for his removal, reigniting questions about whether India's impeachment process can structurally hold judges accountable.

BACKGROUND — THE "CASH-AT-HOME" CONTROVERSY

In March 2025, a fire broke out at Justice Varma's official residence in Delhi. During firefighting, substantial **unaccounted cash** was reportedly discovered. Following a prima facie inquiry by the SC's **in-house committee**, the matter escalated — **146 MPs** signed a formal removal motion under the **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968**. Before the process could conclude, Justice Varma resigned, effectively terminating the proceedings.

LEGAL & CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

ARTICLE	PROVISION
ARTICLE 217(1)(B)	A sitting HC judge can be removed only by the President, after both Houses pass a motion in the same session on grounds of proved misbehaviour or incapacity
ARTICLE 218	Extends SC judge removal provisions (Article 124(4)) to HC judges — a unified framework
ARTICLE 121	Neither House may discuss a sitting SC/HC judge's conduct except on a removal motion — insulating the judiciary from routine criticism
ARTICLE 124(2)	Governs SC appointments via the collegium — minimising executive influence over tenure



CLAT NOTE

The word **"impeachment"** does not appear in the Indian Constitution in the context of judges. It is borrowed from constitutional practice elsewhere (notably the US). The Constitution uses **"removal by order of the President"** following an address by Parliament.

1

INITIATING THE MOTION

Introduced in either House, but must clear a threshold: **100 MPs (Lok Sabha)** or **50 MPs (Rajya Sabha)**. The Speaker/Chairman decides admission — a key gatekeeping role (the RS Chairman rejected the 2018 motion against CJI Dipak Misra at this stage).

2

INQUIRY COMMITTEE

A three-member committee under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968: an SC Judge (or CJI), a HC Chief Justice, and an eminent jurist. Conducts a quasi-judicial, fact-finding inquiry.

3

COMMITTEE REPORT & DEBATE

Findings go to the initiating House. If proved misbehaviour or incapacity is found, the motion is debated in both Houses.

4

SPECIAL MAJORITY

Removal needs an **absolute majority of total membership** of each House *and* a **two-thirds majority of members present and voting** — both in the same session.

5

PRESIDENTIAL ORDER

Only after both Houses pass the motion can the President issue a removal order — a constitutional obligation, not a discretionary act.

**CLAT NOTE**

The dual threshold — absolute majority + two-thirds of those voting — is deliberately stringent. It is the same threshold used for certain constitutional amendments under **Article 368**. The framers made removal difficult to prevent the executive or a temporary majority from destabilising an independent judiciary.

THE IN-HOUSE PROCEDURE

Separate from the statutory process, the SC has developed a **non-statutory In-House Procedure**. Complaints are first examined by the CJI, who may form a committee of senior judges for a preliminary inquiry. If a *prima facie* case is found, it can recommend transfer or advise resignation; only if serious and the judge refuses does it escalate to Parliament. In Justice Varma's case, the in-house findings were reported to the SC collegium before the parliamentary motion — showing how the two processes interact.

**CLAT NOTE**

The in-house procedure shows judicial accountability is not solely a parliamentary function — the judiciary has its own self-regulatory mechanism, though critics argue it lacks transparency and enforceable teeth since it has no statutory backing.

IMPLICATIONS OF RESIGNATION BEFORE REMOVAL

Process becomes infructuous: once a judge resigns, there is no sitting judge to remove — the motion loses its object and lapses.

Retention of benefits: a judge who resigns retains pension and post-retirement benefits; one formally removed forfeits them. This creates a perverse incentive to resign before a verdict.

Accountability gap: no judge has ever been successfully impeached in India. Mid-process resignations (Varma; earlier Soumitra Sen) mean proved misbehaviour is never formally determined.

NOTABLE IMPEACHMENT ATTEMPTS IN INDIA

1993

Justice V. Ramaswami

First SC judge to face a motion. An inquiry committee found him guilty of financial misappropriation, but the motion failed in the Lok Sabha when the Congress party abstained — the closest India has come to a completed proceeding.

2011

Justice Soumitra Sen

Calcutta HC judge accused of misappropriating fiduciary funds. The Rajya Sabha passed the removal motion (a historic first), but he resigned before the Lok Sabha vote.

2018

CJI Dipak Misra

Opposition moved a notice in the RS to remove the sitting CJI — unprecedented. The RS Chairman rejected it at admission, holding it disclosed insufficient grounds.

2025–26

Justice Yashwant Varma

Cash controversy, in-house inquiry, 146-MP motion, eventual resignation before conclusion — a pattern consistent with earlier cases: initiated but never completed.

 CRIMINAL LAW

POCSO & the Romeo-Juliet Clause

Adolescent Relationships, the Age of Consent & the Constitutional Paradox at the Heart of POCSO

IN THE NEWS

In **State of Uttar Pradesh v. Anurudh and Another (2026)**, a Supreme Court bench (Justices Sanjay Karol and N. Kotiswar Singh) took judicial notice that the **POCSO Act, 2012** is increasingly used to prosecute adolescents in consensual relationships — a purpose it was never intended for. The Court suggested the Union consider a **"Romeo and Juliet clause"** to protect age-proximate consensual relationships, while keeping POCSO's full force for genuine exploitation.

WHAT IS A ROMEO AND JULIET CLAUSE?

A narrowly drawn statutory exception that shields consensual romantic/sexual relationships between adolescents **close in age** from criminal liability. It does not weaken protections against exploitation, abuse, or coercion — it draws a principled distinction between **sexual predation and age-proximate adolescent intimacy**, ensuring criminal law targets actual harm rather than normal human development.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL PARADOX — POCSO'S ABSOLUTIST FRAMEWORK

POCSO defines a **"child"** as anyone below 18 and treats *any* sexual activity involving a child as inherently exploitative — making consent legally irrelevant, regardless of the other party's age, the relationship, or age proximity. This absolutism was intentional: to stop adults using "consent" claims to escape liability for child abuse.



CLAT NOTE

India's **age of consent is 18** under POCSO. This is consistent with **Section 375 IPC** (now mirrored in the BNS, 2023), which defines rape to include any sexual act with a person under 18 regardless of consent. Together they create an overlapping absolutist framework making no distinction based on the accused's age or the consensual nature of the relationship.

14

ARTICLE 14 — MANIFEST ARBITRARINESS

Treating a consensual relationship between a 17- and 18-year-old like a violent assault collapses all meaningful distinctions, violating proportionality. When parents invoke POCSO to enforce caste or moral preferences, the prosecution itself becomes arbitrary — State coercion in service of private prejudice.

21

ARTICLE 21 — LIBERTY & DIGNITY

Adolescents are rights-bearing individuals, not merely objects of protection (Puttaswamy, 2017). Prolonged pre-trial incarceration where no exploitation occurred converts the criminal *process* into punishment — autonomy extinguished by the arrest itself, not a verdict.

**THE PROPORTIONALITY TEST**

A measure must be suitable, necessary (least restrictive means), and not excessive. POCSO's absolutist application to consensual adolescent relationships fails this test — far more restrictive than necessary for child protection.

15(3)

THE REFORM PATH

Article 15(3) permits special provisions for children — the foundation for POCSO. The same provision can justify a reformed POCSO distinguishing exploitation from consensual intimacy — protecting children without criminalising adolescence itself.

JUDICIAL WARNINGS — A PATTERN OF HIGH COURT CAUTION

Sabari v. Inspector of Police (Madras HC)

2019

POCSO was being invoked to criminalise consensual adolescent relationships, producing devastating personal and social consequences.

Vijayalakshmi v. State (Madras HC)

2021

Voluntary youthful relationships were being converted into serious prosecutions due to the law's rigid interpretation, with no room for judicial discretion.

Ajay Kumar v. State (NCT of Delhi) (Delhi HC)

2022

POCSO was designed to protect children from exploitation — never intended to criminalise consensual romantic relationships between young adults.

State of UP v. Anurudh (Supreme Court)

2026

Set aside Allahabad HC directions mandating medical age determination in all POCSO bail matters; noted the absence of any mechanism to distinguish exploitation from consensual age-proximate relationships, and invited the Union to consider a Romeo & Juliet clause.



CLAT NOTE

An inconsistency worth noting: under **Section 15 of the JJ Act, 2015**, adolescents aged 16–18 who commit "heinous offences" can be assessed by a Juvenile Justice Board to be tried as adults — recognising their maturity warrants differentiated treatment. Yet the same nuance is not extended when they are parties to a consensual relationship.

THE ROMEO AND JULIET CLAUSE IN COMPARATIVE LAW

COUNTRY	APPROACH
UNITED STATES	Close-in-age exemptions. Texas: no offence where the age gap is ≤ 3 years, the younger is at least 14, and the older is not in a position of trust/authority.
CANADA	Graded consent framework — permitted where the younger is 14–15 and the accused is < 5 years older, absent exploitation, trust, authority, or dependency. Focus on power imbalance, not age alone.
GERMANY	Does not criminalise consensual adolescent activity as such; liability arises only where the offender exploits the younger person's lack of capacity. Emphasis on exploitation, not rigid age thresholds.
AUSTRALIA	Several states incorporate close-in-age defences, exempting consensual relationships while maintaining strict liability for coercion and abuse of authority.

Against this backdrop, India's POCSO framework — which makes **no distinction whatsoever** — stands as a global outlier.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Article 143 & the Governor's Assent

Presidential Reference, Advisory Jurisdiction & the Tamil Nadu Governor Verdict

IN THE NEWS

A Presidential Reference under **Article 143** followed the Supreme Court's verdict on Governors sitting indefinitely over State Bills. The Court clarified the limits of judicial power over constitutional functionaries — holding courts cannot impose timelines on the President/Governor, but *can* issue limited mandamus in cases of prolonged, unexplained inaction.

WHAT IS ARTICLE 143 — ADVISORY JURISDICTION?

Article 143 empowers the President to refer any question of law or fact of public importance to the Supreme Court for its **advisory opinion** — distinct from the Court's original, appellate, or writ jurisdiction. The President acts on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers. Under **Article 145(3)**, any such reference must be heard by a bench of at least **five judges** (a Constitution Bench).

TWO TYPES OF REFERENCES

143(1)

DISCRETIONARY REFERENCE

The President may refer any question of law/fact of public importance that has arisen or is likely to arise. The SC *may* tender its opinion — or decline. In 1993, the SC **refused** the Ram Janmabhoomi reference, holding the question as framed was not one it could appropriately answer.

143(2)

MANDATORY REFERENCE

Covers disputes from pre-Constitution treaties, agreements, covenants, or instruments (e.g. those signed during British rule). Here the SC **must** tender its opinion — it has no discretion to decline.



CLAT NOTE

Unlike a writ judgment or appellate order — binding under **Article 141** (law declared by the SC binds all courts) — an Article 143 advisory opinion is **not binding**. The President may follow or disregard it. It is the only instance where the SC speaks without its words becoming the law of the land — though it carries high persuasive and political authority.

OPTION	MEANING	KEY LIMIT
GRANT ASSENT	Bill becomes law	Must do so on advice of the Council of Ministers
WITHHOLD ASSENT	Return Bill to legislature with a message	Cannot sit indefinitely; must return with reasons
RESERVE FOR PRESIDENT	Send to President for consideration	Obligatory for Bills affecting High Court powers (Art. 254)
PRESIDENTIAL ASSENT (ART. 201)	President gives or withholds assent	President may refer to SC under Art. 143 (discretionary)

KEY CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE	WHAT IT SAYS
ART. 143	Presidential Reference — President may seek the SC's advisory opinion on questions of law/fact of public importance
ART. 200	Governor's assent to State Bills — grant, withhold, or reserve for President
ART. 201	Presidential assent to State Bills reserved by the Governor
ART. 361	Governor's personal immunity from court proceedings
ART. 142	SC's power to do "complete justice" — held this cannot be used to create deemed assent
ART. 141	SC opinions under Art. 143 are NOT binding law — but carry high persuasive value

QUESTION	COURT'S VIEW
TIMELINES ON PRESIDENT/GOVERNOR	Cannot be judicially imposed — the Constitution prescribes none; it is not an enforceable deadline
DEEMED ASSENT	Alien to the Constitution — a Bill cannot be deemed approved merely because a court-ordered time lapsed; violates separation of powers
JUDICIAL REVIEW OF BILL CONTENTS	Not permissible at the pre-enactment stage — courts cannot examine a Bill's contents before it becomes law
PRESIDENTIAL CONSULTATION (ART. 143)	Not mandatory — the President need not seek SC opinion for every reserved Bill; subjective satisfaction suffices
GOVERNOR'S IMMUNITY (ART. 361)	Absolute personal immunity from court proceedings — courts cannot subject the Governor personally to proceedings
LIMITED MANDAMUS	Permissible only in prolonged, unexplained, indefinite inaction — a limited direction to act within a reasonable time

MNEMONIC

"PALO" — President Asks, Law/fact questions Only. (Article 143 has been used only about 16 times in India's history!)

COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Canada: the Supreme Court of Canada also gives advisory opinions to the federal government — issuing a landmark opinion on Quebec's right to unilateral secession in 1998.

United States: the US Supreme Court does *not* give advisory opinions — doing so would violate strict separation of powers by involving the judiciary before a real dispute arises.

India occupies a middle position — advisory jurisdiction exists, but its non-binding nature limits how far it blurs the separation of powers.



CLAT NOTE

This topic sits at the intersection of **Constitutional Law, Federalism, Separation of Powers, and Judicial Review** — all high-yield for CLAT. The key debate: can the judiciary direct constitutional functionaries like the President and Governors? Per this reference — **NO** for timelines, **YES** for limited mandamus in extreme inaction. Advisory jurisdiction traces to the Government of India Act, 1935 (Governor-General → Federal Court).

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Passive Euthanasia & the Right to Die with Dignity

From Gian Kaur to Harish Rana — Article 21, Living Wills & Palliative Care

IN THE NEWS

The Supreme Court in 2025 (**Harish Rana Case**) permitted the first practical implementation of India's passive euthanasia framework. Applying the **Common Cause v. Union of India (2018)** guidelines, it constituted medical boards and allowed withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment for a 32-year-old man in a Persistent Vegetative State for 13 years — declaring the case lay "at the intersection of love, loss, medicine, and compassion" and reaffirming that **Article 21 includes the right to die with dignity**. The Court urged Parliament to enact a comprehensive statutory framework.

THE EUTHANASIA JURISPRUDENCE TIMELINE

1994

P. Rathinam v. Union of India

Held the right to life under Art. 21 *includes* the right to die (analogy: free speech includes the right to remain silent). Struck down **Section 309 IPC** (attempt to suicide).

1996

Gian Kaur v. State of Punjab

A 5-judge Bench **overruled P. Rathinam** — Art. 21 cannot be read to include the right to extinguish life. But it left open the question of *dying with dignity* in terminal illness.

2011

Aruna Shanbaug

SC **legalised passive euthanasia** via High Court approval; rejected active euthanasia; set the initial framework.

2018

Common Cause v. Union of India

Constitution Bench: the **Right to Die with Dignity is a Fundamental Right** under Art. 21; recognised the **Living Will** (Advance Medical Directive).

2023

SC Modification

Removed the magistrate's countersignature requirement for a Living Will — simplifying the process for patients.

2025

Harish Rana

First practical application — SC allows withdrawal of CANH for a PVS patient and urges Parliament to legislate.

PARAMETER	ACTIVE EUTHANASIA	PASSIVE EUTHANASIA
DEFINITION	Intentionally causing death (e.g. lethal injection)	Withdrawing/withholding life-sustaining treatment
LEGAL STATUS	Illegal in India regardless of consent	Legal — with a Living Will OR court approval
CONSENT	N/A (illegal regardless)	Patient's Living Will OR court approval required
CLAT PYQ TREND	Frequently tested	More frequent — directly linked to Art. 21

KEY TERMS

LIVING WILL (AMD)

Advance Medical Directive — a written document stating a patient's wishes about withdrawal of life support if terminally ill.

PERSISTENT VEGETATIVE STATE

Unconsciousness with waking cycles but no awareness; the patient can survive with artificial support indefinitely.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Specialised care focused on relieving pain/symptoms rather than curing — emphasised by the SC in Harish Rana.

PARENS PATRIAE

The State's duty to protect those unable to protect themselves — invoked by High Courts when approving passive euthanasia.

MNEMONIC

"GACH" — Gian Kaur → Aruna Shanbaug → Common Cause → Harish Rana (1996 → 2011 → 2018 → 2025)



CLAT NOTE

Though Gian Kaur kept **Section 309 IPC** on the books, **Section 115 of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017** effectively decriminalised attempted suicide — presuming a person who attempts suicide is under severe stress, not to be tried or punished, with the State obligated to provide care. **Article 21** is now read to include both the Right to Live with Dignity and the Right to Die with Dignity.

POLITY & JUDICIARY

NCERT Textbook Controversy

Contempt of Court, Judicial Dignity & Free Speech — Article 19(1)(a) vs Article 19(2)

IN THE NEWS

In February 2026, the Supreme Court initiated **suo motu** proceedings against the **NCERT** after a report drew attention to Chapter 4 of a Class 8 Social Science textbook, "The Role of the Judiciary in Our Society." A three-judge bench (CJI Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M. Pancholi) ordered the textbook's nationwide withdrawal, issued contempt notices, and framed the matter as one of the judiciary's institutional dignity and the pedagogical responsibility of a national curriculum body.

BACKGROUND — WHAT DID THE TEXTBOOK SAY?

An *Indian Express* report (24 Feb 2026) highlighted the chapter's treatment of the judiciary — it referred to hundreds of complaints allegedly received against judicial officers, cited selected words from a former CJI's statement to suggest a judicial acknowledgment of systemic corruption, and presented the judiciary as lacking transparency and accountability. The Court's concern was the **framing and pedagogical intent** — the chapter omitted the judiciary's role in upholding constitutional morality, the Basic Structure Doctrine, and citizens' rights, which it called the "lifeblood of public existence." When asked to clarify, NCERT's Director defended the contents — a response the Court found revealed an absence of introspection and, *prima facie*, an intent to undermine institutional authority.

WHAT IS NCERT?

The **National Council of Educational Research and Training** is an autonomous organisation established in 1961, registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. It is **not a constitutional body** — its mandate flows from government policy. It develops model curricula, textbooks and materials for Classes 1–12; states may adopt or develop their own, but NCERT texts form the basis for CBSE-affiliated schools and set the *de facto* national standard.



CLAT NOTE

Because NCERT is a government-established body exercising public functions, it is amenable to **judicial review under Article 32** (Supreme Court) and **Article 226** (High Courts) — even though it is not a constitutional authority. Any body performing a public function with government backing is subject to constitutional scrutiny.

SUO MOTU JURISDICTION

Suo motu ("on its own motion") means a court initiates proceedings on its own initiative, without a formal petition. The SC's power flows from **Article 32** (guardian of fundamental rights) and its status as a court of record under **Article 129**; High Courts have similar powers under Articles 215 and 226. Courts invoke it when a matter of serious

public importance arises (often via media), when fundamental rights are systematically violated without anyone able to petition, or when the dignity of constitutional institutions is under threat.



CLAT NOTE

Suo motu proceedings are distinct from **PIL**. In a PIL a petitioner approaches the court on behalf of the public interest; in suo motu proceedings *the court itself* initiates the case — there is no petitioner. Both express the court's activist role in protecting constitutional values.

CONTEMPT OF COURT — LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The contempt power is **constitutional, not merely statutory**. **Article 129** makes the SC a court of record with power to punish for contempt of itself; **Article 215** extends the same to every High Court. These exist independently of legislation. The **Contempt of Courts Act, 1971** supplements them — defining contempt, specifying procedure and defences — without limiting the courts' inherent authority.

TYPE	PROVISION	MEANING
CIVIL CONTEMPT	Section 2(b)	Wilful disobedience of any judgment, order, writ, or process of a court, or wilful breach of an undertaking. E.g. a person ordered to vacate premises refuses to do so.
CRIMINAL CONTEMPT	Section 2(c)	Publication (words/signs/representations) that scandalises or lowers the authority of any court; prejudices a judicial proceeding; or obstructs the administration of justice.

The NCERT case engages the **first category — "scandalising the court"** — publications that damage public confidence in the judiciary without necessarily relating to a pending proceeding. **Punishment:** simple imprisonment up to 6 months, or a fine up to ₹2,000, or both.



CLAT NOTE

"Scandalising the court" is a uniquely judicial form of criminal contempt with no direct equivalent in ordinary criminal law. It protects not individual judges but the *institution of justice* — yet must be used carefully to avoid suppressing legitimate criticism.

THE CORE TENSION — FREE SPEECH VS. CONTEMPT

19(1)(a)

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Guarantees every citizen the freedom of speech and expression — including the freedom to criticise public institutions, courts included.

19(2)

REASONABLE RESTRICTIONS

Permits the State to restrict speech in the interest of, among other things, **contempt of court** — explicitly listed as a legitimate limitation on free expression.

The Court clarified its proceedings were not meant to suppress legitimate critique. Criticism of courts — including published analysis of failures — is not automatically contempt. **The line is crossed** when content goes beyond criticism and scandalises by presenting a fundamentally misleading picture; when it is embedded in a context (a nationwide school curriculum for children) where the audience lacks maturity to evaluate it critically; or when the intent appears to be institutional delegitimisation rather than education. The same content might suit a university

course on judicial reform; in a Class 8 textbook, where students are "only beginning to navigate the nuances of public life," the Court found it improper.

TRUTH AS A DEFENCE — THE 2006 AMENDMENT

The **Contempt of Courts (Amendment) Act, 2006** introduced **truth as a valid defence** to criminal contempt — provided the publication was made in good faith and in the public interest (previously, truth was no defence). NCERT could argue the facts are true and serve public education. The Court's answer: selective presentation of true facts, stripped of context and framed to demean rather than educate, cannot claim this defence.

BASIC STRUCTURE & JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

The Court referenced the **Basic Structure Doctrine** (Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala, 1973) — certain fundamental features cannot be amended even by Parliament; **judicial independence is part of the Basic Structure**. Systematically eroding public confidence, especially among the young, could undermine independence itself. Public legitimacy is the judiciary's only enforcement mechanism — unlike the executive, courts have no army or police; their orders are obeyed because respected.

DIRECTIONS ISSUED BY THE SUPREME COURT

Nationwide withdrawal of all physical and digital copies from schools, storage, retail, and online platforms.

A blanket prohibition on further publication, reprinting, or distribution.

Show-cause notices to the Secretary, Dept. of School Education & Literacy, and the Director, NCERT — explaining why contempt should not be initiated.

Compliance affidavits from Union and State authorities within two weeks.

NCERT to produce records identifying who drafted/approved the chapter, with minutes of all deliberations.

The Ministry of Education suspended distribution and stated the chapter would be rewritten; an apology was tendered. The Court reserved judgment on whether the apology was genuine or tactical — noting substantial, potentially irreversible damage had already been done.

 CRIMINAL LAW

Open Prisons & Prisoners' Rights

Reforming India's Correctional System — Suhas Chakma, Article 21 & the Reformatory Ideal

IN THE NEWS

In **Suhas Chakma v. Union of India (2026)**, the Supreme Court directed all States and UTs to establish, expand and properly use **Open Correctional Institutions (OCIs)** — open prisons — as a **constitutional obligation, not a discretionary policy choice**. The writ petition under Article 32 raised chronic overcrowding: prisons operating at **120.8% of capacity**, several states above 150% — a systemic crisis violating Articles 14, 15 and 21.

DO PRISONERS HAVE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS?

The SC's answer, settled across decades, is an emphatic **yes** — persons do not lose fundamental rights on imprisonment, only those necessarily curtailed by lawful incarceration itself.

Sunil Batra v. Delhi Administration

1978

Prisoners retain all fundamental rights except those necessarily curtailed by lawful incarceration. A prisoner loses free movement but not the right to life, dignity, or fair treatment. The State's power to punish does not include the power to dehumanise.

Francis Coralie Mullin v. Administrator, UT of Delhi

1981

Article 21 encompasses the right to live with **basic human dignity** — not mere animal existence. This right does not stop at the prison gates; the State must ensure adequate nutrition, shelter, clothing, and the opportunity to read and write.

Suhas Chakma v. Union of India

2026

Article 21's guarantee of life and dignity "extends beyond the prison gates" — incarceration must not degenerate into inhumanity. Prisons must be "correctional houses, not cruel iron aching the soul."



CLAT NOTE

"Prisoners do not cease to be bearers of constitutional rights upon incarceration" is now a **settled constitutional principle**, not judicial discretion — making prison reform a constitutional obligation, not a policy option.

1

RETRIBUTIVE

Punishment is deserved because wrongdoing demands a proportionate response. Focus on the *past* — what the offender did. Purpose is justice, not consequences.

2

DETERRENT

Punishment discourages the offender (specific) and others (general) from future crime. Focus on *consequences* — making crime costly enough to discourage it.

3

REFORMATIVE

Punishment should rehabilitate and return the offender to society as a productive citizen. Focus on the *future* — crime treated as a symptom of factors addressable through education, skills, and support.

**CLAT NOTE**

Indian jurisprudence — particularly via Article 21 — increasingly aligns with the **reformative theory**.

Punishment is not abolished, but its manner must serve rehabilitative goals. Open prisons, living wills, juvenile justice and probation all reflect this. The 2026 judgment: "Reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration must lie at the heart of the criminal justice system."

WHAT ARE OPEN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS?

An OCI is a **minimum-security facility** operating on self-discipline and trust rather than physical barriers and surveillance. Selected prisoners live in a normalised environment — working outside, receiving training, maintaining family contact, and gradually reintegrating. The philosophy: meaningful reformation cannot occur in conditions of total confinement and humiliation; the conditions of incarceration must model the norms of a law-abiding society.

No high walls or armed guards — open or semi-open facilities.

Access to vocational training, education, and skill development.

Family integration — in some models, spouses and children may reside with prisoners.

Prisoners earn wages for their work — promoting self-reliance.

Gradual reintegration into the community before full release.

₹50/dayOPEN PRISON COST
(RAJASTHAN)**₹333/day**

CLOSED PRISON COST

120.8%NATIONAL PRISON
OCCUPANCY**150%+**

SEVERAL STATES EXCEED

Per-prisoner cost in open prisons (~₹50/day in Rajasthan) is dramatically lower than closed prisons (~₹333/day) — making OCIs not only constitutionally preferable but **fiscally rational**. NCRB's Prison Statistics India 2023 confirmed the 120.8% occupancy crisis.

ARTICLE	HOW IT WAS ENGAGED
ARTICLE 21	Obligates the State to ensure incarceration serves reformatory, not purely punitive, purposes. Failure to establish OCIs or provide humane, rehabilitative conditions is a constitutional violation, not just administrative failure.
ARTICLE 14	Vast inter-state disparities in wages, healthcare, education, eligibility and family-integration policies create arbitrary inequality — prisoners enjoy better conditions purely by accident of geography. This arbitrariness violates Article 14.
ARTICLE 15	Systematic exclusion of women prisoners from OCI access — by express ineligibility or non-transfer in practice — violates the prohibition on sex-based discrimination, amounting to structural invisibilisation of women.



CLAT NOTE

Article 39A (DPSP) directs the State to ensure the legal system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity and provides free legal aid so justice is not denied by economic or other disability. The Court's earlier decision in the same case (Suhas Chakma, 2024) addressed legal aid to prisoners, relying on Article 39A.

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

NELSON
MANDELA RULES
(2015)

UN Standard Minimum Rules. Rule 4: incarceration must facilitate reintegration; Rule 89: recognises open prisons as most conducive to rehabilitation; Rule 2: prohibits discrimination on sex or other status.

BANGKOK RULES
(2010)

UN Rules for Women Prisoners. Rules 40 & 45 address women's access to rehabilitative and open facilities, leaving no room for blanket gender-based exclusions.



CLAT NOTE

The Nelson Mandela Rules and Bangkok Rules are **not legally binding treaties** — India has not ratified them as treaty obligations. But Indian courts regularly use them as **interpretive aids** when developing the content of fundamental rights (especially Art. 21) — international law influencing constitutional interpretation without formal treaty incorporation.

 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Menstrual Leave & Article 21

The Risk of Protective Discrimination — Menstrual Health as a Fundamental Right

IN THE NEWS

In **Dr. Jaya Thakur v. Government of India (2026)**, the Supreme Court made two interventions: it formally recognised **Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) as a fundamental right under Article 21**; and it expressed serious reservations about *mandating* paid menstrual leave — warning such a mandate could make women appear costlier to employ and deepen workplace inequality. It issued a **continuing mandamus** for free sanitary napkins and functional toilets in all schools, leaving workplace policy to the executive and legislature.

WHAT IS MENSTRUAL LEAVE?

Menstrual (period) leave refers to workplace or academic policies allowing time off during menstruation due to pain or discomfort — medically termed **dysmenorrhea**. It may be paid, unpaid, or take the form of flexible rest breaks.

CONSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATION — ARTICLE 21 & SUPPORTING DPSPS

Over decades the SC has expanded Article 21 beyond physical survival to dignity, health, privacy and quality of life. In **Dr. Jaya Thakur**, the Court held access to menstrual health facilities is *not merely a welfare measure but a constitutional entitlement* — a state failing to ensure basic menstrual health infrastructure in schools is violating a fundamental right, not merely being negligent.

42

ARTICLE 42 (DPSP)

Directs the State to provide just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief. The underlying principle — accommodating women's biological realities at work — is directly relevant.

47

ARTICLE 47 (DPSP)

Directs the State to raise nutrition and standard of living. Menstrual health is integral to women's overall health and nutritional wellbeing.



CLAT NOTE

DPSPs under Part IV are **not judicially enforceable** — but the SC regularly uses them as **interpretive tools** to expand the content of Part III fundamental rights. Articles 42 and 47 thus inform what Article 21's guarantee of dignity requires for women's health.

WHAT IS CONTINUING MANDAMUS?

An ordinary **mandamus** orders a public authority to perform a specific legal duty; once done, the court's involvement ends. A **continuing mandamus** keeps the case pending while the court retains ongoing supervisory jurisdiction,

periodically monitoring compliance — used for long-term institutional reform. Examples: environmental pollution monitoring over years; prison-reform tracking; and here, monitoring whether states actually install toilets and distribute napkins.



CLAT NOTE

Continuing mandamus is a key tool of judicial activism — it lets courts supervise executive compliance without formally taking over executive functions. It sits at the boundary of separation of powers and recurs in CLAT passages on judicial overreach vs. accountability.

THE CORE INSIGHT — PROTECTIVE LAWS THAT HARM

CONCEPT	MEANING
DIRECT DISCRIMINATION	Treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic (sex, religion, caste) — straightforward.
INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION	A law/policy that appears neutral or even protective but, in practice, produces disadvantageous outcomes for the group it intends to help.

A mandate to grant *all* women paid menstrual leave appears pro-women, but the Court warned it could: make women a costlier workforce relative to men; incentivise employers to prefer male candidates; cause women to be passed over for leadership due to assumptions about absences; and disproportionately harm women in informal/insecure employment not covered at all. This connects to **Article 15(1)** — the paradox that a protective law could enable subtler sex-based discrimination.



CLAT NOTE

Contrast with **Vishaka (1997)**, where the SC issued binding guidelines in a legislative vacuum, treating CEDAW as part of Indian law. The menstrual-leave petition followed similar logic, but the Court's 2026 response was more restrained — preferring executive/legislative action over judicial mandate. This illustrates the Court's evolving calibration of when to act and when to defer.

INDIA'S INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS — CEDAW

India ratified the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** in 1993. It requires state parties to eliminate discrimination in employment, including the right to health and safety in working conditions. The petitioner argued the absence of menstrual leave breaches these obligations. The Court did not reject this but held that translating CEDAW into specific statutory rights is for Parliament and the executive, informed by consultation — not judicial imposition.

EXISTING FRAMEWORK — MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT, 1961

- 26 weeks** of paid maternity leave (amended 2017 from 12 weeks) for establishments with 10+ employees.
- Protection from dismissal during maternity leave; nursing breaks for mothers of young children.
- Mandatory creche facilities in establishments with 50+ employees.
- The gap:** no menstrual-leave provision at all — leaving this dimension of women's health unaddressed by law.

JURISDICTION	POSITION
CENTRAL LAW (INDIA)	No central law mandates menstrual leave for working women or students
BIHAR	Two days of menstrual leave/month for women government employees since 1992 — India's earliest and longest-running policy
KERALA	Menstrual leave and attendance relaxation for female university students
BILLS INTRODUCED	Menstruation Benefits Bill (2017); Right of Women to Menstrual Leave Bill (2022) — none enacted
ASIA	Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia have menstrual-leave laws
SPAIN	First European country to legislate paid menstrual leave (2023)

The evidence is sobering: in **Japan and South Korea**, despite decades-old laws, actual utilisation is often **under 1%** — due to cultural stigma, fear of appearing less committed, and career anxiety. This directly supports the Court's concern: protective legislation alone does not change workplace culture; a law women are too afraid to use offers protection in theory but no benefit in practice.

**CLAT NOTE**

This case exemplifies the **judicial activism vs. judicial restraint** tension — one of CLAT's most examined themes. The Court was *activist on constitutional recognition* (declaring the Art. 21 right) but chose *restraint on policy design*, echoing **Shailendra Mani Tripathi v. Union of India (2023)**, where it declined to mandate a nationwide policy and advised approaching the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Scheduled Caste Status & Religious Conversion

The Constitutional Framework — Article 341, the 1950 Order & the Religion-Neutrality Debate

IN THE NEWS

In **Chinthada Anand v. State of Andhra Pradesh (2026)**, the Supreme Court reaffirmed that a person who converts to a religion other than Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism **immediately and completely loses Scheduled Caste (SC) status** from the moment of conversion — regardless of caste of birth. This reignited debate over whether the religion-based restriction is constitutionally defensible, given that Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims continue to face caste discrimination after conversion.

ARTICLE 341 — PRESIDENTIAL POWER TO SPECIFY SCs

Article 341 empowers the President to specify, by public notification, the castes/races/tribes deemed Scheduled Castes within particular states/UTs. Once the initial notification issues, **only Parliament** may add or remove communities — state governments have no independent power to modify the list. **Article 342** is the parallel provision for Scheduled Tribes.



CLAT NOTE

The SC list is a **centrally controlled, Parliament-exclusive domain**. States cannot create their own SC lists. This is why Dalit Christian or Dalit Muslim communities cannot be granted SC status by a state acting unilaterally — it would require an Act of Parliament amending the Presidential Order.

1950

Original Order

Clause 3: no person professing a religion different from Hinduism shall be deemed a member of an SC. Only Hindus were eligible.

1956

Sikhism Added

Recognised Sikh communities carried forward caste-based discrimination from Hindu origins.

1990

Buddhism Added

Recognised the mass conversion of Dalits to Buddhism led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in 1956, and that caste discrimination followed converts into their new religion.

Christianity & Islam

Never included, despite persistent advocacy — the core of the ongoing constitutional debate.

WHAT DOES "PROFESSING" MEAN?

The 2026 judgment clarified that "**professing**" a religion means *publicly practising* it — not merely nominal or ancestral. The Court's reasoning rests on a theological observation: Christianity and Islam, as theological systems, *do not recognise the caste system*. Therefore a person cannot simultaneously profess a faith that rejects caste while claiming SC status premised on caste-community membership — the two identities, the Court held, are mutually exclusive. Critics argue this ignores sociological reality, where caste discrimination continues within Christian and Muslim communities regardless of official theology.

WHAT THE 2026 JUDGMENT HELD

Immediate, complete loss: SC status is lost at the exact moment of conversion — not gradually or conditionally. Birth into an SC community does not preserve status after conversion.

Loss of statutory protection: the person also loses protection under the **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989** — enhanced penalties and special courts.

Reconversion: reclaiming SC status requires strict proof of genuine renunciation of the converted religion, adoption of original caste practices, and clear acceptance back by the original caste community. Mere formal reconversion is insufficient.



CLAT NOTE

Asymmetry with ST status: the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 has *no religion-based restriction*. An ST person who converts does not automatically lose tribal status, provided they maintain tribal customs and community acceptance. SC = caste + religion; ST = tribal identity + community acceptance, no religious qualifier. The framers viewed tribal identity as ethnographic/cultural, while SC status was tied to the Hindu caste order.

PROVISION	WHAT IT PERMITS
ARTICLE 15(4)	Special provisions for advancement of socially & educationally backward classes, SCs and STs — covers reservations in education
ARTICLE 16(4)	Reservation of appointments/posts for any backward class inadequately represented in public services — covers government employment
ARTICLE 46 (DPSP)	Promote with special care the educational & economic interests of weaker sections, especially SCs/STs; protect from social injustice and exploitation



CLAT NOTE

Articles 15(4) and 16(4) are **enabling provisions** — they permit reservations but do not mandate them. Implementation is via legislation and executive orders, grounded in the Presidential Orders under Articles 341 and 342.

KEY JUDICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS

C.M. Arumugam v. S. Rajgopal

1976

Caste is primarily a social phenomenon; to retain SC status after conversion, a person must demonstrate continued social discrimination and acceptance by the original caste community.

Soosai v. Union of India

1985

Denied SC status to Dalit Christians — insufficient empirical evidence they faced the same degree of caste discrimination as Hindu Dalits; SC status cannot be extended without such evidence.

K.P. Manu v. Chairman, Scrutiny Committee

2015

Allowed restoration of SC status on reconversion to Hinduism, subject to proof of genuine return to caste practices and community acceptance.

Punjab v. Davinder Singh

2024

A 7-judge Bench held states **can sub-classify** within the SC list for reservation, giving preference to the most disadvantaged — overruling E.V. Chinnaiah v. State of AP (2004), which had held the SC list is a homogeneous, indivisible category.



CLAT NOTE

Davinder Singh (2024) is among the most significant recent reservation developments — it affects how states design reservation within the SC category, but does *not* change SC eligibility itself, which remains governed by the 1950 Order and Article 341.

THE POLICY DEBATE — COMMISSIONS

COMMISSION	FINDING
KAKA KALELKAR (1955) & MANDAL (1980)	Recognised caste discrimination extends into non-Hindu communities; groundwork for OBC reservations for some Christian/Muslim communities — but not SC status
JUSTICE RANGANATH MISHRA (2007)	Recommended SC status be completely de-linked from religion and made religion-neutral, like ST status — caste disadvantage follows the person regardless of religion
JUSTICE K.G. BALAKRISHNAN (2022, ONGOING)	Three-member commission examining whether SC status should extend to those who converted to Christianity/Islam — its report is expected to be highly consequential



CLAT NOTE

Article 25 guarantees freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practise and propagate religion. A law that effectively penalises conversion by stripping protections raises a serious Article 25 question — though courts have so far held the 1950 Order does not restrict the right to convert, only the *consequences* of conversion for SC status.

 CRIMINAL LAW

Preparation vs. Attempt

A Foundational Criminal Law Distinction — The Proximity Test & Locus Poenitentiae

IN THE NEWS

The Supreme Court set aside an Allahabad High Court judgment which had held that grabbing a minor girl's breast and loosening the string of her clothing was only *preparation* for rape, not an *attempt*. A three-judge bench (CJI Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi and N.V. Anjaria) held this a "patently erroneous" application of settled law, restoring the Special POCSO Judge's summoning order under **Section 376 IPC r/w Section 18 POCSO** — the more serious charge of attempt to commit rape.

BACKGROUND

A complaint by the mother of an 11-year-old was filed under **Section 156(3) CrPC**. The Special POCSO Judge, Kasganj summoned the accused under Section 376 IPC r/w Section 18 POCSO. On revision, the Allahabad HC downgraded the charge to Section 354B IPC (assault with intent to disrobe) r/w Sections 9 & 10 POCSO, reasoning the acts were only preparation. The SC found this fundamentally flawed and restored the original charges. The case reached the SC via **suo motu cognisance** on a letter from Senior Advocate Shobha Gupta for the NGO 'We the Women of India.'



CLAT NOTE

Section 156(3) CrPC (now in the BNSS) lets a complainant approach a Magistrate directly to have the police directed to register and investigate a cognisable offence — an important tool against police inaction. The Magistrate does not investigate personally; they direct the police.

1

INTENTION (MENS REA)

The mental element — the decision or desire to commit an offence. **Intention alone is never punishable**; the law does not punish thoughts.

2

PREPARATION

Acts done to make commission possible — acquiring materials, selecting a target, planning. Generally **not punishable**, except in specific offences (e.g. waging war against the State, counterfeiting currency).

3

ATTEMPT

The accused moves from preparation into direct execution — acts sufficiently proximate to the completed offence that they are a criminal wrong in themselves. **Attempt is punishable.**

4

COMMISSION

The offence is actually committed — the *actus reus* is fully executed.

**CLAT NOTE**

The critical legal boundary is between **stages 2 and 3 — preparation and attempt**. Everything before attempt is generally unpunishable (with limited exceptions); everything from attempt onwards attracts liability. This is why courts spend so much effort drawing this line precisely.

WHAT IS "ATTEMPT"? — THE PROVISIONS

PROVISION	WHAT IT SAYS
SECTION 511 IPC (NOW BNS) sec 62	General provision on attempt — whoever attempts an offence punishable with life/imprisonment and does any act towards it is punished with up to one-half of the longest term, or fine, or both. Applies where no specific attempt provision exists.
SECTION 18, POCSO ACT 2012	Attempt to commit any POCSO offence — [REDACTED] This is why the trial court's Section 376 IPC r/w S.18 charge was appropriate.
SECTIONS 9 & 10, POCSO	Aggravated sexual assault (e.g. victim below 12, or accused in a position of trust). Punishment: 5–7 years plus fine.
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

THE LEGAL TEST — PROXIMITY

The primary test is **proximity** — how close, physically and causally, was the conduct to completing the offence? The accused must have moved beyond merely putting themselves in a position to commit the offence (preparation) to

actually executing the criminal intention in a manner directly connected to commission (attempt). The SC cited **State of Madhya Pradesh v. Mahendra alias Golu (2022)**:

MNEMONIC

Attempt = Execution of mens rea after preparation. Preparation establishes intent and creates conditions; attempt begins when the accused acts on that intent in a manner directly aimed at completing the offence.

TWO CRUCIAL PRINCIPLES



THE ROLE OF INTERRUPTION

External interruption does **not** convert attempt into mere preparation. If the accused reached the point of attempt but was stopped by third parties arriving, the offence of attempt is complete. Here, the accused stopped only because witnesses arrived (alerted by the victim's cries) — not by voluntary withdrawal.



LOCUS POENITENTIAE

Latin for "place of repentance" — the point up to which an accused can voluntarily abandon their purpose without liability for attempt. Once the threshold of attempt is crossed, there is **no locus poenitentiae**; voluntary withdrawal then does not undo the attempt. Here the withdrawal was compelled by external intervention, so the question did not arise.



CLAT NOTE

The **suo motu** dimension: the SC acted not on a formal appeal but on a letter, treating it as sufficient cause under Article 32 and its inherent powers as a court of record under Article 129, to prevent a grave miscarriage of justice.

 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Transgender Rights in India

From NALSA (2014) to the 2026 Amendment — Self-Identification vs. Medical Gatekeeping

IN THE NEWS

The **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026** reignited debate over state-defined welfare vs. individual autonomy. Civil rights groups criticise it for narrowing the definition of transgender persons and reinstating medicalised gatekeeping for identity recognition — effectively reversing some gains of the landmark **NALSA judgment (2014)**.

CONSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATION — FOUR PILLARS

14

ARTICLE 14 — EQUALITY

Equality before law; prohibits arbitrary classification.
Transgender persons cannot be treated as a lesser class.

15

ARTICLE 15 — NON-DISCRIMINATION

Prohibits discrimination on grounds of sex — interpreted to include gender identity and sexual orientation.

19

ARTICLE 19(1)(A) — EXPRESSION

Freedom of expression includes the right to express one's gender identity.

21

ARTICLE 21 — LIFE & LIBERTY

Dignity, privacy, bodily autonomy, and the right to self-determine gender identity.

Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017) — the nine-judge privacy judgment — added that gender identity and sexual orientation are core components of personal identity and therefore of the fundamental right to privacy. The State cannot compel a person to identify with a gender that does not match their deeply held sense of self.

THE NALSA JUDGMENT (2014) — THE TURNING POINT

National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India (2014) (Justices K.S. Radhakrishnan and A.K. Sikri) is the foundational case. It held: transgender persons are recognised as a **"third gender"** for all legal purposes; every person has the fundamental right to **self-perceived gender identity** — without surgery, hormones, or medical certification; and the State has **affirmative obligations** for social, educational and economic inclusion, including reservations. Grounded in Articles 14, 15, 19, 21 and international human rights obligations.



CLAT NOTE

NALSA's most radical holding — that **self-perceived gender identity is constitutionally protected** — was diluted by the Transgender Persons Act, 2019 (which reintroduced certification), and is diluted further by the 2026 Amendment.

Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India

2018

A 5-judge Bench struck down **Section 377 IPC** (consensual same-sex relations) as violating Articles 14, 15, 19 and 21 — sexual orientation and gender identity are intrinsic to personhood. The BNS, 2023 does not retain Section 377; the decriminalisation is preserved.

Jane Kaushik v. Union of India

2025

The State's failure to implement transgender protections amounts to **"omissive discrimination"** — discrimination through deliberate inaction. Held that **reasonable accommodation** is a binding obligation on both the State and private actors, including schools and employers.

LEGAL EVOLUTION — 2019 ACT VS. 2026 BILL

PARAMETER	TRANS PERSONS ACT, 2019	2026 AMENDMENT BILL
DEFINITION	Broad — trans-men, trans-women, intersex, genderqueer, kinnar, hijra, aravani, jogta	Narrowed — removes trans-men, trans-women, genderqueer; retains kinnar/hijra/aravani/jogta; adds eunuchs & victims of forced mutilation; excludes those based on sexual orientation
IDENTITY CERTIFICATE	DM issues based on self-application; surgery not required for "transgender" marker	DM must first obtain a designated Medical Board recommendation — reintroducing medicalised gatekeeping
POST-SURGERY	Optional certificate update	Mandatory revised certificate; medical institutions must report surgeries to the DM
WELFARE	NCTP; SMILE Scheme; Garima Greh (20+ shelters, 2,800+ beneficiaries)	Retained; higher penalties for exploitation (esp. of minors) — welcomed, but definition narrows the beneficiary pool

The narrowed definition is the most controversial change — by removing trans-men, trans-women and genderqueer persons while retaining only traditional socio-cultural categories and victims of forced mutilation, the Bill arguably **erases a large portion of India's gender-diverse population from legal protection**, contradicting NALSA.

TYPE	HOW IT WORKS
VERTICAL RESERVATION	Divides total seats into separate pools — SC, ST, OBC, General. Each community competes only within its pool. The primary reservations under Articles 15(4) & 16(4).
HORIZONTAL RESERVATION	Cuts across all vertical categories — a percentage within each vertical category for a cross-cutting group (women, PwD, or proposed transgender). A transgender SC candidate occupies their seat within the SC pool, with trans status giving priority within it.



CLAT NOTE

Karnataka became the first state to implement a **1% horizontal reservation** for transgender persons in civil services. Horizontal reservation is how women's reservations typically operate — frequently tested in CLAT. **Healthcare:** Ayushman TG Plus gives ₹5 lakh annual cover per beneficiary (NHA–MoSJE MoU), covering gender-affirming interventions; NEP 2020's Gender Inclusion Fund builds gender-neutral school infrastructure.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Women Officers & Permanent Commission

Gender Bias in the Armed Forces — ACRs, Constitutional Equality & Article 33

IN THE NEWS

The Supreme Court flagged **systemic gender bias** in the promotion and medical-fitness evaluation of women officers in the Armed Forces, while upholding their right to **Permanent Commission (PC)** and pensionary benefits.

WHAT THE SUPREME COURT FOUND

1

BIASED ACRS

Annual Confidential Reports of Short Service Commission Women Officers were routinely given casual "average" grades — driven by an assumption that women had no long-term career — while male officers informally received higher grades. This weakened women's service profiles for PC.

2

DENIED OPPORTUNITIES

Women were systematically denied training and career-enhancing postings available to men — then judged against men on criteria men alone had the chance to fulfil.

3

MEDICAL FITNESS BIAS

Medical fitness standards were not applied with the same rigour or consistency across genders during PC evaluation.

4

REMEDIAL DIRECTION

The Court directed that women whose ACRs were unfairly graded must have records reviewed and corrected *before* their PC applications are evaluated — a significant retrospective remedy.

CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

The Court held that including women for PC is a **constitutional obligation, not institutional grace**. Denying equal opportunity on gender grounds violates **Article 14** (equality), **Article 15** (no sex discrimination), and **Article 16** (equality of opportunity in public employment). **Article 39(a) (DPSP)** reinforces gender-neutral economic participation — adequate means of livelihood for men and women equally.



CLAT NOTE

Article 33 empowers Parliament to modify the application of fundamental rights for members of the Armed Forces, to ensure proper discharge of duties and discipline. This is why the military can have different rules from civilian institutions — and why fundamental-rights arguments operate differently in the armed-forces context.

1888**Military Nursing Service**

Women first joined the Indian military — the earliest formal role.

1958**Army Medical Corps**

Women granted regular commissions as doctors.

1992**Women Special Entry Scheme**

Non-medical, non-combat roles opened (Education, Law, Logistics, Engineers) on Short Service Commission basis.

2005**SSC Formalised**

Short Service Commission system formalised — a 14-year tenure and structured pathway.

2008**First Permanent Commission**

Women first granted PC in limited branches — JAG and Army Education Corps only.

2020**Babita Puniya v. Union of India**

Watershed SC ruling — mandated PC for women in all arms/services where SSC exists, enabling command roles across far more branches.

2021**NDA Opens to Women**

SC interim order allowed women to sit the National Defence Academy exam — dismantling a foundational entry barrier.

**CLAT NOTE**

Current status: women serve as fighter pilots (IAF), command warships (Navy), and hold PC across Army branches. However, core **combat arms — Infantry and Armoured Corps — largely remain closed** to women officers. The Army Act, 1950 historically restricted women to notified branches (Army Postal Service, JAG, AEC, Ordnance, Service Corps).

 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Adoptive Mothers & Maternity Leave

Maternity Leave as a Basic Human Right — Section 60(4), Code on Social Security

IN THE NEWS

The Supreme Court ruled that **adoptive mothers are entitled to maternity leave irrespective of the age of the adopted child**, declaring maternity leave a **basic human right** and urging the Union to recognise paternity leave as a social security benefit.

WHAT THE COURT STRUCK DOWN

The Court declared **Section 60(4) of the Code on Social Security, 2020** — which replaced the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 in November 2025 — **unconstitutional and discriminatory**. The provision had restricted the 12-week maternity benefit to mothers adopting children *below three months of age only*. The Court held this restriction arbitrary, impractical, and violative of fundamental rights.



CLAT NOTE

Adoption rarely involves infants below three months — the cut-off effectively denied the benefit to most adoptive mothers, defeating the very purpose of maternity protection. The ruling reads maternity leave into **Article 21** (dignity and the right to a meaningful family life) and aligns with **Article 42** (DPSP — just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief). The Court's call to recognise **paternity leave** signals a shift toward shared parental responsibility as a social-security goal.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Model Code of Conduct (MCC)

The Non-Statutory Code, Article 324 & Enforcement During Elections

IN THE NEWS

The ECI enforced the **Model Code of Conduct** following the announcement of Assembly elections to Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and the UT of Puducherry, along with bye-elections in several states.

WHAT IS THE MCC?

The MCC is a set of guidelines issued by the ECI to regulate the conduct of political parties, candidates and the government during elections. It comes into force **immediately upon announcement of the schedule** and remains operative until completion of the electoral process, including declaration of results. **Objective:** ensure free and fair elections by preventing the ruling party from misusing State machinery, public funds or official positions, and to maintain peace during campaigning.

STATUTORY BACKING — A CRITICAL DISTINCTION

**NO DIRECT STATUTORY BACKING**

The MCC is **not an Act of Parliament** nor subordinate legislation — it is a voluntary code built on political consensus, first informally applied during the 1960 Kerala Assembly elections and refined since.

324

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

The ECI enforces the MCC under **Article 324** — superintendence, direction and control of elections to Parliament, State Legislatures, and the offices of President and Vice-President.

**INDIRECT LEGAL ENFORCEMENT**

Many provisions overlap with statutory offences — bribery, intimidation and impersonation are punishable under the BNS, 2023 and the RPA, 1951. Section 123 RPA defines "corrupt practices."

**CORRECTIVE POWERS**

Though not law itself, the ECI can direct re-polling, cancel candidatures, or take other corrective action under its Article 324 powers.

**CLAT NOTE**

The MCC's **non-statutory nature** is one of its most frequently tested facts. Courts have consistently upheld the ECI's power to enforce it under Article 324 — the absence of a formal statute does not make it legally toothless. The MCC binds the ruling government at *both* Centre and the poll-bound state — the Centre cannot announce new schemes targeting voters in that state during its election.

Common Cause v. Union of India**1996**

The SC directed that the ECI has the power to issue and enforce the MCC under Article 324 — settling any doubt about its constitutional legitimacy.

S. Subramaniam Balaji v. Government of Tamil Nadu**2013**

Distribution of freebies by political parties does not as such violate the MCC, but the SC directed the ECI to frame guidelines — this remains a contested area of electoral law.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Appointment & Role of the Governor

Articles 153–159, President's Rule & the West Bengal Reception Controversy

IN THE NEWS

A controversy erupted after the President expressed displeasure over the absence of the Chief Minister and her ministers at the President's reception in West Bengal — raising questions about constitutional protocol and reigniting debate about the Governor's role as the constitutional link between the Centre and states. All Presidential visits are governed by 'Blue Book' a confidential document prepared by Ministry of Home Affairs

CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK — ARTICLES 153 TO 159

ARTICLE	PROVISION
ARTICLE 153	Every state must have a Governor. The 7th Amendment (1956) allows one person to be Governor of two or more states simultaneously.
ARTICLE 154	The executive power of the state is vested in the Governor — exercised directly or through subordinate officers.
ARTICLE 155	The Governor is appointed by the President via warrant — a Union nominee, not elected. Since the President acts on the Council of Ministers' advice (Art. 74), the Centre effectively decides.
ARTICLE 156	Holds office during the pleasure of the President — removable/transferable at any time without reasons. Normal term: 5 years, continuing until a successor takes over; may resign to the President.
ARTICLE 157	Qualifications — citizen of India; at least 35 years of age.
ARTICLE 158	Conditions — not a member of Parliament/State Legislature (a legislator appointed Governor vacates their seat); no other office of profit; rent-free residence; emoluments fixed by Parliament, not reducible during term.
ARTICLE 159	Oath to faithfully execute office and preserve, protect and defend the Constitution — administered by the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court (or <u>senior-most judge</u>). <i>in absence of Chief Justice of the High Court</i>



CLAT NOTE

The Governor's oath is administered by the **Chief Justice of the High Court** — *not* the CJI. Frequently tested. Compare the President's oath, administered by the **CJI** under Article 60.

The President can remove a Governor without assigning reasons, but the power **cannot be exercised arbitrarily, capriciously, or unreasonably** — not merely because the Governor belongs to a different political persuasion. The Governor is entitled to be heard. A judicial check on the "pleasure of the President" doctrine.

ESTABLISHED CONVENTIONS

Outsider Rule: by convention, the Governor is appointed from outside the state for neutrality.

Consultation with CM: the President is expected to consult the state's Chief Minister before appointment — but this convention is frequently not followed, and no provision makes it mandatory.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS ON GOVERNORS

COMMISSION	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
SARKARIA (1983)	Governor should be an eminent person from outside the state, not in recent active politics; mandatory consultation with CM, VP and Speaker; no removal before 5 years except in rare compelling circumstances; not associated with any political party at appointment
VENKATACHALIAH (2002)	Governors should normally complete their 5-year term; if removed early, the Centre should consult the CM; the convention of consulting the CM before appointment should be made a constitutional requirement
PUNCHHI (2007)	Delete the "pleasure of the President" doctrine; Governor removable only via a state-legislature resolution (similar to Presidential impeachment); fixed and secure term



CLAT NOTE

Commission recommendations are **advisory, not binding** — the "pleasure of the President" doctrine remains intact. CLAT tests the difference between what the Constitution says and what reform bodies propose (current law vs. recommended reform).

ARTICLE 356 — PRESIDENT'S RULE

On a report from the Governor or otherwise, if the President is satisfied a state's government cannot be carried on per the Constitution, the President may assume the state government's functions. Frequently misused; the SC in **S.R. Bommai v. Union of India (1994)** curtailed misuse: majority must be tested on the **floor of the House**, not the Governor's subjective assessment; the proclamation is subject to **judicial review**; and the federal structure is part of the Basic Structure and cannot be destroyed.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Appointment & Powers of the Lieutenant Governor

Part VIII (Articles 239–241), Article 239AA & the Delhi Governance Disputes

IN THE NEWS

The constitutional relationship between elected UT governments and Lieutenant Governors — particularly in **Delhi** — continues to generate controversy, making it one of the most actively litigated areas of Indian constitutional law. **LG is appointed by the President**

CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK — PART VIII

Unlike state Governors (Part VI, Articles 153–167), UT administration falls under **Part VIII — Articles 239 to 241**.

Article 239: every UT is administered by the President through an Administrator. Since the President acts on the Council of Ministers' advice (Art. 74), the LG is effectively chosen by the Centre — making the LG a **direct representative of the Centre**, unlike a state Governor who has some formal independent standing.

Tenure: like a Governor, the LG holds office during the "pleasure of the President" — removable at any time without assigned reasons, with no constitutionally specified grounds.



CLAT NOTE

Inserted by 69th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1991

Article 239AA is the single most important provision for the Delhi LG controversy. The three excluded subjects — **public order, police, and land** — are what make Delhi's governance fundamentally different from a full state. CLAT passages on Centre-State relations frequently use Delhi as a case study.

THE SUPREME COURT ON DELHI GOVERNANCE

Govt of NCT of Delhi v. Union of India (Constitution Bench)

2018

The LG is **bound by the aid and advice** of the Delhi Council of Ministers on matters within the Assembly's legislative competence. The LG has independent power only on the three reserved subjects and where a provision specifically requires it. The LG and elected government must work collaboratively; differences referred to the President cannot be a routine tool to stall governance.

A 5-judge Bench held the elected Delhi government has control over **civil services** (IAS officers) — except public order, police and land — because a democratically elected government must control the bureaucracy implementing its policies, else collective responsibility becomes meaningless.

**CLAT NOTE**

In direct response to the 2023 Services verdict, Parliament passed the **GNCTD (Amendment) Act, 2023** — restoring control over services to the LG/Centre. The amendment was challenged and remains under judicial scrutiny — a live example of the legislature responding to a judicial ruling.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Committee of Privileges & Parliamentary Privileges

Articles 105 & 194 — Freedom of Speech in the House & Breach of Privilege

IN THE NEWS

The Lok Sabha Speaker officially reconstituted the **Committee of Privileges** — the parliamentary panel responsible for safeguarding the rights and immunities of the House and its members — making this a timely moment to understand the full framework of parliamentary privileges in India.

WHAT ARE PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES?

Special rights, immunities and powers enjoyed by Parliament as an institution and by MPs individually — so legislators can perform their constitutional duties freely, without external interference, intimidation, or legal action for what they say or do in Parliament. **Article 105** provides privileges at the Union level; **Article 194** extends similar privileges to State Legislatures.

PROVISION	WHAT IT SAYS
ARTICLE 105(1)	Members of Parliament shall have freedom of speech in Parliament
ARTICLE 105(2)	No MP shall be liable to any court proceedings for anything said or any vote given in Parliament or any committee
ARTICLE 105(3)	Other privileges shall be as defined by Parliament by law; until so defined, those enjoyed by the UK House of Commons at the commencement of the Constitution



CLAT NOTE

Freedom of speech under **Article 105(2)** is **absolute** within Parliament — it cannot be questioned in any court. This is fundamentally different from the *qualified* freedom under Article 19(1)(a) for ordinary citizens (subject to reasonable restrictions under 19(2)). An MP cannot be sued for defamation for anything said in Parliament, even if false or malicious. The Article 105 vs. Article 19 distinction is a high-frequency CLAT question.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE & CONTEMPT OF THE HOUSE

A **breach of privilege** occurs when any act violates the rights/privileges/immunities of Parliament or its members. Examples: publishing false or distorted reports of proceedings; obstructing a member from attending; bribing or improperly influencing a vote; threats over parliamentary conduct; misbehaving in the precincts. **Contempt of the**

House is broader — any act that obstructs Parliament in its functions or brings it into disrepute, even without a specific privilege breach.

THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

ASPECT	DETAIL
LOK SABHA	15 members nominated by the Speaker
RAJYA SABHA	10 members nominated by the Chairman
FUNCTIONS	Examines whether a breach/contempt occurred; calls witnesses; conducts a quasi-judicial inquiry; submits findings & recommendations to the House
KEY LIMITATION	No independent power to punish — it only recommends; final action rests with the House, which may accept, reject, or modify
DEFECTION MATTERS	Under the Tenth Schedule & 1985 Rules, the Speaker may refer defection-disqualification petitions to the Committee for preliminary inquiry



CLAT NOTE

Most privilege notices are rejected — punitive action is rare. The Committee's role is **investigative and recommendatory, not adjudicatory**. Note: **Article 105** privileges apply to Parliament; **Article 194** to State Legislatures — both are tested.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Ladakh — Statehood & Sixth Schedule

The Leh-Kargil Demand, UT Reorganisation & Autonomous District Councils

IN THE NEWS

Protests across Leh and Kargil — jointly by the **Leh Apex Body (LAB)** and the **Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA)** — demanded full statehood for Ladakh, inclusion under the **Sixth Schedule**, a dedicated Public Service Commission, and two Parliamentary seats. The aim: protect local land rights, cultural identity, and democratic representation.

HOW DID LADAKH BECOME A UT?

Ladakh was carved out of the former state of J&K under the **Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**, following the effective abrogation of **Article 370**. Under the reorganisation: J&K became a **UT with a Legislature**; Ladakh became a **UT without a Legislature** — placing all significant legislative and executive power with the Centre and the LG.

This created a **"representation deficit"**: Ladakh previously had four MLAs in the J&K Assembly; now all major decision-making rests with unelected bureaucrats and the Centre via the LG. The **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs)** for Leh and Kargil remain the primary elected bodies, but lack the legislative authority, financial autonomy, and executive powers of a full state assembly.

WHAT IS THE SIXTH SCHEDULE?

The **Sixth Schedule** (Article 244(2) read with Article 275(1)) establishes an autonomous administrative framework for tribal areas in four northeastern states — **Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram** — preserving their social, cultural and customary practices within the constitutional framework.

ADC

AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS

Tribal areas organised into Autonomous Districts, each with a District Council. The Governor may divide multi-tribe districts into Autonomous Regions with separate Regional Councils, and can alter/create/merge district boundaries.

30

COMPOSITION & TENURE

Up to 30 members — 26 elected by adult franchise, 4 nominated by the Governor — 5-year tenure. Exception: the Bodoland Territorial Council (Assam) has 46 members (2003 Memorandum of Settlement).

§

LEGISLATIVE POWERS

ADCs can legislate on land, forests (excl. reserved), water, jhum cultivation, village administration, marriage/divorce, inheritance, social customs, and money-lending/trading by non-tribals — all requiring the Governor's assent.



JUDICIAL & FISCAL

ADCs can constitute village courts for tribal disputes; the Governor defines HC jurisdiction over them. They manage primary schools, dispensaries, markets, roads; collect land revenue and certain taxes.



CLAT NOTE

Immunity from ordinary legislation: Acts of Parliament or State Legislatures do not automatically apply to Sixth Schedule areas — they may be modified or barred. The Ladakh demand is significant because the Sixth Schedule currently applies *only* to the four northeastern states; extending it to Ladakh (a UT) would be a notable constitutional step. Distinguish the **Fifth Schedule** (other tribal areas, Governor-administered) from the **Sixth Schedule** (NE autonomous councils) — frequently tested.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Chief Election Commissioner — Removal Process

Article 324(5), Constitutional Independence & the 2023 Reform Act

IN THE NEWS

Opposition parties considered a formal motion for the removal of the CEC over allegations of biased conduct — reigniting the debate about the **independence of the Election Commission of India** and the constitutional safeguards protecting the CEC's tenure.

WHY IS THE CEC'S INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTIONALLY PROTECTED?

The ECI is a permanent constitutional body under **Article 324**. The SC in **Indira Nehru Gandhi v. Raj Narain (1975)** held free and fair elections to be part of the **Basic Structure**. If the CEC could be removed easily, a ruling party could threaten removal whenever the Commission issued unfavourable directions — fatally compromising electoral integrity. Removal is therefore deliberately difficult.

CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS — ARTICLE 324(5)

The CEC shall not be removed from office except in the **same manner and on the same grounds as a Supreme Court Judge**.

Service conditions of the CEC shall not be varied to their **disadvantage after appointment**.

Other Election Commissioners and Regional Commissioners can be removed **only on the CEC's recommendation** — preventing pressure on junior colleagues as leverage against the CEC.

Grounds for removal are limited to only two: **proved misbehaviour** and **incapacity**.



CLAT NOTE

While widely called "impeachment" in political discourse, the Constitution reserves "impeachment" **exclusively for the President** (Article 61). For SC judges, HC judges, and the CEC, the correct term is "**removal**" — a high-frequency CLAT question.

1

INITIATING THE MOTION

Must be signed by at least **100 MPs (Lok Sabha)** or **50 MPs (Rajya Sabha)**. Submitted to the Speaker/Chairman, who decides admission — the presiding officer can reject at the admission stage.

2

INQUIRY COMMITTEE

Three-member committee: a **SC Judge**, a **HC Chief Justice**, and an **eminent jurist**. Quasi-judicial inquiry — evidence examined, witnesses heard, CEC given full opportunity to present their defence.

3

COMMITTEE REPORT

If charges not proved → motion dropped. If misbehaviour/incapacity found → report submitted to the initiating House.

4

SPECIAL MAJORITY

Must pass both Houses: an **absolute majority of total membership** AND a **two-thirds majority of members present and voting** — both in the same session.

5

PRESIDENTIAL ORDER

Both Houses pass the motion → a formal address is presented to the President, who issues the removal order. Not a discretionary act.

THE 2023 REFORM ACT

Following **Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India (2023)** — where the SC held the existing appointment process lacked independence and directed a committee including the CJI — Parliament passed the **CEC and Other ECs (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023**. Key points: replaces the 1991 framework; salary/benefits equivalent to an SC Judge; tenure of 6 years or until 65, no re-appointment; the CJI was notably **excluded** from the Select Committee — replaced by PM, Leader of Opposition, and a Cabinet Minister nominated by the PM.

Jan 25, 1950

ECI ESTABLISHED (NATIONAL VOTERS' DAY SINCE 2011)

1993

PERMANENT 3-MEMBER STRUCTURE (CEC + 2 ECS)

6 yrs/65

TENURE: 6 YEARS OR AGE 65, WHICHEVER EARLIER

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Punjab-Rajasthan Water Sharing Dispute

Sutlej River Royalty, Indus Waters Treaty, the 1981 Agreement & Article 262

IN THE NEWS

Punjab's Chief Minister demanded **₹1.44 lakh crore from Rajasthan** as compensation for drawing 18,000 cusecs of water from the Sutlej River since 1960 — citing a colonial-era royalty agreement and Punjab's rapidly worsening groundwater crisis.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

1920s

Colonial Arrangement

Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner struck a deal with undivided Punjab — Bikaner could draw Sutlej water through the **Gang (Bikaner) Canal** in exchange for regular royalty payments, which continued until ~1960.

1960

Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)

Signed between India and Pakistan (World Bank guarantor). Eastern rivers (Sutlej, Beas, Ravi) allocated to India; western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) primarily to Pakistan. Water-sharing among Indian states became an internal matter — Rajasthan stopped royalty payments.

1981

Tripartite Agreement

Signed by Punjab, Haryana & Rajasthan under PM Indira Gandhi from 17.17 MAF total of the Ravi-Beas system. Rajasthan 8.6 MAF (largest share — acute scarcity + Indira Gandhi Canal); Punjab 3.5 MAF; Haryana 3.5 MAF; Delhi & J&K remainder.

2004

Punjab Termination Act

Punjab enacted legislation unilaterally cancelling inter-state water agreements. The SC (on Presidential Reference under Art. 143 in 2016) declared the Act **unconstitutional** — a state cannot unilaterally abrogate nationally brokered agreements.

The Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal was envisaged in the 1981 agreement to carry Punjab's share to Haryana. Punjab completed its section; Haryana's section remains incomplete — a separate but related dispute before the SC for decades. Punjab's **riparian principle claim**: since Rajasthan is a non-riparian state (the Ravi, Beas and Sutlej do not naturally flow through it), its largest-share allocation is inequitable, especially given Punjab's groundwater depletion crisis.

PROVISION	ROLE
ARTICLE 262	Empowers Parliament to provide by law for adjudication of disputes relating to inter-state rivers or river valleys
INTER-STATE RIVER WATER DISPUTES ACT, 1956	Statutory mechanism under Article 262 — provides for setting up an Inter-State River Water Disputes Tribunal to adjudicate disputes not resolved by negotiation
ARTICLE 131	SC has original jurisdiction in disputes between states — but Article 262(2) bars the SC from exercising jurisdiction in disputes where the ISRWD Act applies; the Tribunal is the exclusive forum
INDIRA GANDHI CANAL	Originally the Rajasthan Canal — draws from the Harike Barrage (confluence of Sutlej & Beas), stretches over 649 km into the Thar Desert, the lifeline of western Rajasthan



CLAT NOTE

Article 262 is a key federal provision — it empowers Parliament to create a separate dispute-resolution mechanism for water disputes, explicitly **barring the SC's jurisdiction** where the ISRWD Act applies. This is one of the few constitutional provisions that explicitly limits the SC's original jurisdiction. The Indus Waters Treaty is also the world's longest-running, most successful water-sharing treaty — tested in international relations and environment sections.

TECHNOLOGY & LAW

Digital Laws, Child Protection & Disability Rights

IT Act, DPDP, POCSO Online, Social Media Bans & RPwD — India's Evolving Digital Legal Framework

IN THE NEWS

A cluster of March 2026 developments — the **DPDP Act, 2023**'s child-data provisions, state proposals for social media bans for minors, a CBFC accessibility mandate, and the **Prabhu Kumar SC ruling** on disability and public employment — form a connected picture of how Indian law is evolving to protect vulnerable groups in the digital age.

THE CENTRAL DIGITAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILDREN

LAW	KEY CHILD-PROTECTION PROVISIONS
IT ACT, 2000	Section 67B: imprisonment up to 5 years (first offence) / 7 years (repeat) for child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Section 69A: Central Govt can block websites. Section 79: "safe harbour" for intermediaries — platforms not liable for third-party content if they act as passive conduits and comply with due diligence; non-compliance means loss of protection.
IT RULES, 2021	OTT content classified U / U/A 7+ / U/A 13+ / U/A 16+ / A; parental controls mandatory; CSAM takedown within 3 hours of government/court order; Significant Social Media Intermediaries (SSMIs — over 50 lakh users) must appoint Chief Compliance Officer, Nodal Person & Resident Grievance Officer. 2026 Amendment: platforms must label AI-generated/deepfake content (Synthetically Generated Information — SGI).
DPDP ACT, 2023	Child = under 18. Verifiable parental/guardian consent required before processing any child's data. No tracking, behavioural monitoring or targeted advertising directed at children. Penalties for violation: up to ₹250 crore — among the highest in the Act.
POCSO ACT, 2012	Online grooming criminalised. CSAM storage/distribution a specific offence. Intermediaries legally obligated to report child sexual offences on their platforms to law enforcement.
JJ ACT, 2015	Addresses online facilitation of child exploitation — trafficking and luring through digital platforms.

CLAT NOTE

The **Sahyog Portal** (Union Home Ministry) is a centralised mechanism for government-intermediary collaboration on content takedown and law enforcement — it has been used to direct takedown of 85 URLs of unregistered, non-compliant offshore platforms.

Karnataka proposed a social media ban for children under 16; **Andhra Pradesh** for under 13 — citing addiction, mental health, cyberbullying, and **dark patterns** (UI designs that manipulate users into spending time, sharing data, or making purchases without full understanding). Both mirror global moves — Australia became the first country to enact a nationwide ban for under-16s. But there is a fundamental constitutional obstacle.

List I

ENTRY 31 — POSTS & TELEGRAPHS

Telecommunications, including Internet, is a Union subject under Entry 31 (Posts & Telegraphs) of the Union List (Seventh Schedule). States have no legislative competence to regulate social media or the Internet.



THE CONFLICT

Any state legislation banning social media for minors would likely be struck down as ultra vires — the state lacks jurisdiction. The appropriate route is central legislation, e.g. an amendment to the IT Act or DPDP Act.

DISABILITY RIGHTS — PRABHU KUMAR V. STATE OF HIMACHAL PRADESH (2026)

The SC held that the State cannot impose an arbitrary **upper limit** on disability percentage for public employment when the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016** prescribes only a *minimum* threshold of 40% benchmark disability for eligibility. The appellant had 90% locomotor disability, had cleared the ADA examination, but was denied appointment solely because the state imposed a 60% upper cap. The SC overturned the HC's ruling (which had relied on *V. Surendra Mohan v. State of Tamil Nadu, 2019*) — declaring the upper cap arbitrary, unconstitutional, and incompatible with the RPwD Act.



CLAT NOTE

The **RPwD Act, 2016** was enacted to fulfil India's obligations under the **UNCRPD (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006)**, which India ratified in 2007 as one of the earliest signatories. The Act adopts a **social model** of disability (barriers created by society, not the individual). The **CBFC Accessibility Mandate (March 2026)**: from 15 March 2026, all films certified must include audio descriptions (for visual impairments) and same-language subtitles/closed captions (for hearing impairments) — directly implementing the RPwD Act's accessibility provisions.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

FCRA Amendment Bill, 2026

Foreign Contribution Regulation — NGO Asset Management & Accountability

IN THE NEWS

The Union Government announced the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026** to bridge critical legal gaps in managing assets created through foreign funds received by NGOs, and to strengthen accountability for NGO functionaries.

BACKGROUND — WHAT IS FCRA?

The **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010** governs the receipt and utilisation of foreign contributions (money, articles, or securities from foreign sources) by individuals, associations, and companies in India. A prior FCRA 2010 Amendment Act (2020) had significantly tightened the framework — limiting sub-grants, mandating receipt in a designated SBI branch in New Delhi, and disqualifying public servants from FCRA registration.

THE 2026 AMENDMENT — KEY PROPOSED CHANGES

1

DESIGNATED AUTHORITY — ASSET MANAGEMENT

Creates a legal mechanism to deal with assets created using foreign contributions when an organisation's FCRA registration is suspended, cancelled, or not renewed. The "designated authority" can take over management during suspension and dispose of (sell) assets after cancellation — with proceeds directed to the **Consolidated Fund of India**.

2

NGO FUNCTIONARY ACCOUNTABILITY

Clearer provisions for personal liability of office bearers and key functionaries who facilitated FCRA violations — addressing situations where organisations wound up or changed leadership to escape accountability.

**CLAT NOTE**

The FCRA is a frequent CLAT GK topic. India's regulatory stance on foreign funding to civil society organisations balances **Article 19(1)(c)** (freedom of association) with national security and financial integrity concerns. The 2020 Amendment was challenged before the SC — the Court upheld most provisions in **Noel Harper v. Union of India (2022)**. The **Consolidated Fund of India** (Article 266) is the government's primary account through which all authorised expenditure is made.

● INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

WTO MC14 — Yaoundé, Cameroon

14th Ministerial Conference — No Consensus, E-Commerce Moratorium & Agriculture Divide

IN THE NEWS

The 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) in Yaoundé, Cameroon ended **without consensus** — primarily due to deep divisions over the e-commerce moratorium and agricultural subsidies. India cautioned against using "transparency" norms as disguised trade retaliation against developing nations' domestic policies.

ABOUT THE WTO — KEY FACTS

1995 ESTABLISHED (MARRAKESH AGREEMENT)	1948 GATT — PREDECESSOR	166 MEMBERS (98% OF WORLD TRADE)	Geneva HEADQUARTERS, SWITZERLAND
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The WTO **succeeded GATT** (which covered only goods) — adding services and intellectual property. India has been a member since 1995 and was part of GATT since 1948. The **Ministerial Conference** is the highest decision-making body, meeting every two years.

KEY WTO AGREEMENT	WHAT IT COVERS
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights — patents, copyright, trademarks globally
TRIMS	Trade-Related Investment Measures — prevents certain investment rules that distort trade
AOA	Agreement on Agriculture — disciplines on agricultural subsidies, market access, and export competition
MFN PRINCIPLE	Most Favoured Nation — any trade advantage given to one member must be given to all members
E-COMMERCE MORATORIUM	A 1998 interim agreement not to impose customs duties on electronic transmissions — contentious for developing nations that argue it costs them tariff revenue

⚖ CLAT NOTE

India has consistently opposed the permanent extension of the e-commerce moratorium, arguing it benefits technology-exporting developed nations while denying developing countries tariff revenue from digital trade.

India's position: **MFN must not become a tool of asymmetric trade advantage** where developing nations are forced to open markets without reciprocity.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

India–EU Free Trade Agreement

Two Decades in the Making — \$136 Billion Trade Relationship Formalised

IN THE NEWS

India and the EU signed the **India-EU Free Trade Agreement** — a landmark deal nearly two decades in the making. With bilateral trade at **\$136 billion**, the EU contributing 16% of India's FDI, and the FTA expected to unlock **\$75 billion** in additional exports, this is one of India's most significant trade agreements.

\$136B BILATERAL TRADE 	16% EU SHARE OF INDIA'S FDI 	\$75B EXPECTED NEW EXPORTS 	99% INDIA'S EXPORT ACCESS BY VALUE 	92.1% INDIA'S TARIFF CONCESSIONS (TARIFF LINES) 
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KEY PROVISIONS

GOODS TRADE

Immediate zero-duty access for labour-intensive exports. Phased tariff elimination over 5–10 years for sensitive industrial goods. Car imports: 110% → 10% (annual 250k quota); EVs excluded.

AGRICULTURE

EU gets preferential access for Indian tea, coffee, spices, fresh fruits & processed food. India excluded: dairy, cereals, poultry, soymeal — protecting domestic food security.

SERVICES

EU opened 144 sub-sectors to Indian IT/ITES, professional services & education. India committed to 102 sub-sectors. AYUSH practitioners can serve in EU states.

CBAM

EU assured India of MFN treatment under CBAM (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism). India secured that climate standards cannot become disguised trade barriers.

Mobility framework: EU committed to a framework for Intra-Corporate Transferees (ICTs), Contractual Service Suppliers, and Independent Professionals. Social Security Agreements prevent double contributions for Indian professionals in EU states.



CLAT NOTE

MFN (Most Favoured Nation): WTO principle — any trade advantage given to one member must be given to all. **TRQ (Tariff Rate Quota):** lower tariff up to a set quantity, higher tariff beyond. **CBAM:** EU's mechanism to impose carbon costs on imports from countries without equivalent carbon pricing — India has opposed it as a trade barrier. Negotiations began in 2007, stalled a decade, and relaunched in 2022 amid EU diversification away from China.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

India-Finland Strategic Partnership

Raisina Dialogue 2026 — Digitalization, Sustainability & 6G Collaboration

IN THE NEWS

President of Finland **Alexander Stubb** visited India as Chief Guest at the **11th Raisina Dialogue 2026** — during which India-Finland relations were upgraded to a **Strategic Partnership in Digitalization and Sustainability**, alongside the launch of the Raisina Science Diplomacy Initiative (SDI).

KEY AGREEMENTS SIGNED

- Migration and Mobility Partnership** — framework for Indian tech professionals to work in Finland.
- Environmental Cooperation (Renewal)** — covering bioenergy, waste-to-energy, green hydrogen, wind, solar, and small hydro.
- Joint Task Force on 6G** — University of Oulu (Finland) partnering with India's Bharat 6G Alliance.
- Cross-sectoral Joint Working Group on Digitalization** — HPC, 5G, 6G, Quantum Computing, and AI.
- Indo-Finland Startup Corridor** — Indian startups at Finland's Slush event; Finnish startups at India's Startup Mahakumbh.
- World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF) 2026** — India (MoEFCC) and Finland (SITRA) to co-host in India.

RAISINA DIALOGUE 2026 — KEY FACTS

PARAMETER	DETAIL
LAUNCHED	2016 by MEA in collaboration with Observer Research Foundation (ORF)
NATURE	India's premier geopolitics and geo-economics conference — comparable to Germany's Munich Security Conference and Singapore's Shangri-La Dialogue
EDITION	11th, New Delhi, March 2026
THEME	"Samskara — Assertion, Accommodation, Advancement"
KEY OUTCOMES	Raisina SDI (Science Diplomacy Initiative), acknowledgment of multipolar world, UNSC reform calls, maritime security — securing Indian Ocean, Red Sea and Indo-Pacific supply chains

CLAT NOTE

Trade target: **double bilateral trade by 2030** leveraging the India-EU FTA momentum. Finland is one of the top-ranked countries in the World Happiness Report (2nd in 2026) and consistently ranks at the top of global education indices — connections worth noting for GK MCQs.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

BRICS Presidency 2026

India Holds the Chair — STI, AI & Digital Public Infrastructure for the Global South

IN THE NEWS

India assumed the **BRICS Presidency 2026** under the theme *"Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability"* — bringing Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) to the forefront of the bloc's agenda.

ABOUT BRICS — KEY FACTS

2001

BRIC Coined

Economist Jim O'Neill coined "BRIC" to describe emerging economies — Brazil, Russia, India, China.

2006

First Formal Meeting

Leaders of Russia, India & China met at sidelines of G8; first BRIC Foreign Ministers' meeting at UNGA.

2009

Inaugural BRIC Summit

Yekaterinburg, Russia.

2010

South Africa Joins

Becomes BRICS.

2024

BRICS+ Expansion

Five original members + Egypt, UAE, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Iran inducted.

49.5%

SHARE OF GLOBAL POPULATION

40%

SHARE OF GLOBAL GDP

26%

SHARE OF GLOBAL TRADE

Structure: Rotating annual chairmanship — no permanent secretariat, no formal charter. Three pillars: Political & Security, Economic & Financial, People-to-People Cooperation. **New Development Bank (NDB):** HQ in Shanghai; established 2015 by BRICS for infrastructure and sustainable development; membership expanded to Bangladesh, UAE, Uruguay, Egypt, and others.

INDIA'S 2026 BRICS PRESIDENCY — FOCUS AREAS

AI and Deep-Tech Collaboration among BRICS+ nations.

Technology Transfer from advanced to developing BRICS members.

Digital Public Infrastructure — sharing India's UPI, Aadhaar, DigiLocker models with other BRICS nations.

STI as the central theme — aligning with India's IndiaAI Mission and National Quantum Mission.



CLAT NOTE

BRICS's overarching objective: reform global governance and provide alternatives to Western-dominated institutions like the IMF and World Bank. The 2025 BRICS Rio de Janeiro Declaration marked a shift toward deep-tech collaboration and Global South leadership. BRICS does *not* have a permanent secretariat or formal charter — unlike the UN, WTO, or IMF.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Lipulekh Pass — India-China Trade & Nepal's Objection

Border Trade Resumption, Treaty of Sugauli & the Kalapani-Limpiyadhura Dispute

IN THE NEWS

Border trade through the **Lipulekh Pass** in Uttarakhand is set to resume in June 2026 after a six-year hiatus — halted in 2019-20 due to COVID-19 and border tensions. Nepal **strongly opposes** the move, reiterating its claim over the Kalapani-Lipulekh-Limpiyadhura region.

ABOUT LIPULEKH PASS — KEY FACTS

PARAMETER	DETAIL
LOCATION	Kumaon region, Uttarakhand — near the trijunction of India, Nepal & China
CONNECTS	Uttarakhand with Tibet (China)
HISTORICAL ROLE	Ancient trade route between the Indian subcontinent and the Tibetan plateau; gateway for Kailash Mansarovar Yatra
FIRST OPENED FOR TRADE	1992 — India's first border post opened with China for trade
INFRASTRUCTURE	Motorable road completed in 2020 (pre-2020: mules and sheep)
RESUMPTION BASIS	August 2025 India-China diplomatic agreement to reopen three Himalayan routes — Lipulekh, Shipki La, and Nathu La

THE TERRITORIAL DISPUTE WITH NEPAL

The dispute rests on the **Treaty of Sugauli (1816)**, signed after the Anglo-Nepalese War, which established the Kali River (also called Mahakali/Sharda) as the western boundary of Nepal with British India. Nepal and India disagree on where the Kali River originates — each interpretation places Kalapani-Lipulekh-Limpiyadhura on a different side. Nepal released a new official map in 2020 including this region — India rejected it as "artificial enlargement."



CLAT NOTE

Galwan Valley Clash (June 2020) — violent face-off between Indian and Chinese troops in Galwan Valley, Ladakh (first casualties in 45 years) — led to border trade suspension beyond COVID. **Panchsheel Agreement (1954)** — India-China agreement on 5 Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (mutual respect for sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference, equality & mutual benefit, peaceful coexistence) — still governs India-China diplomatic discourse. India's first three Himalayan trade posts: Lipulekh/Uttarakhand (1992), Shipki La/Himachal Pradesh (1994), Nathu La/Sikkim (2006).

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Durand Line — Afghanistan-Pakistan Tensions

The 1893 Colonial Boundary, TTP & the Ghazab Lil Haq Cross-Border Operation

IN THE NEWS

The disputed **Durand Line** has witnessed escalating clashes between Afghan Taliban forces and Pakistani troops over border fencing, the presence of the **Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)**, and deportation of Afghan refugees — culminating in a cross-border Pakistani retaliatory operation called "Ghazab Lil Haq."

ABOUT THE DURAND LINE — KEY FACTS

PARAMETER	DETAIL
LENGTH	2,640 km — separating Pakistan and Afghanistan
ESTABLISHED	1893 — agreement between Sir Mortimer Durand (British colonial administrator) and Abdur Rahman Khan (Emir of Afghanistan)
PURPOSE	Demarcate spheres of influence between British India and the Afghan Emirate; buffer against Russian expansion during the "Great Game"
KEY PASSES	Khyber Pass, Spin Ghar (White Mountains)
EXTENT	From the Karakoram Range (near China) in the northeast to the Registan Desert (near Iran) in the southwest
INDIA-AFGHANISTAN	India invested over \$3 billion in Afghanistan — Salma Dam (Afghan-India Friendship Dam), Afghan Parliament building; Taliban takeover (2021) created uncertainty



CLAT NOTE

SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation): Both India and Pakistan are SCO members; Afghanistan is an observer. Regional security in South and Central Asia is a key SCO agenda item — connecting the Durand Line dispute to multilateral diplomacy. The Durand Line was never accepted by Afghanistan as a permanent international boundary — every Afghan government since 1947 has questioned its legitimacy. Pakistan considers it the established international boundary.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

India-Japan CEPA, World Bank, Exercise LAMITIYE & Canada Visit

Key Bilateral & Multilateral Quick Developments — March 2026

IN THE NEWS

Four international developments in March 2026 — the 7th Joint Committee on the India-Japan CEPA, World Bank Middle East conflict aid, Exercise LAMITIYE-2026 with Seychelles, and Canadian PM Mark Carney's strategic reset visit to India.

INDIA-JAPAN CEPA — 7TH JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING

CEPA	Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement — covers goods, services, investment, IPR, movement of natural persons, and customs procedures. More comprehensive than an FTA.
IN FORCE SINCE	August 2011 — India's first major FTA/CEPA with an advanced economy in Asia
TARIFF COVERAGE	Abolition of tariffs on over 94% of items traded over 10 years
INDIA'S OTHER CEPAS	South Korea, UAE (2022). FTAs with ASEAN, Sri Lanka, Nepal

WORLD BANK — MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT AID

The World Bank fast-tracked aid for countries impacted by the US-Israel-Iran conflict — warning rising commodity prices and logistical disruptions strained emerging economies. India noted vulnerabilities: **88.2% crude oil import dependence (FY25)**, much transiting through the Strait of Hormuz.

WORLD BANK FACT	DETAIL
ESTABLISHED	1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference, USA
INITIALLY CALLED	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) — focused on post-WWII reconstruction
BEGAN OPERATIONS	1946
CURRENT FOCUS	Eradicate extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity
MEMBERS	189 countries
TO JOIN	Must first be an IMF member
INDIA'S MEMBERSHIP	Member of 4 of the 5 World Bank Group institutions — not a member of ICSID
HQ	Washington D.C., USA (same as IMF — both Bretton Woods institutions); WTO is in Geneva, established 1995, not a Bretton Woods institution

EXERCISE LAMITIYE-2026 — INDIA-SEYCHELLES

An Indian Armed Forces contingent participated in the **11th edition of LAMITIYE-2026** — India's joint military exercise with Seychelles aimed at strengthening defence cooperation and operational coordination. Seychelles is a key partner in India's **SAGAR vision** — "Security and Growth for All in the Region" — India's framework for maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean.

CANADA PM MARK CARNEY — VISIT TO INDIA

Mark Carney (who replaced Trudeau as PM after the Liberal Party leadership change in early 2025) paid an official visit to India — marking a strategic reset after a period of serious diplomatic tensions triggered by allegations in September 2023 related to the killing of **Hardeep Singh Nijjar** (a Canadian Sikh separatist designated a terrorist under Indian law) on Canadian soil. India rejected the allegations as "absurd and motivated." Both countries had expelled senior diplomats and India suspended visa services. The Carney visit signals both sides' intent to move past the controversy and refocus on substantive bilateral engagement.



CLAT NOTE

Khalistan refers to a proposed independent Sikh homeland carved out of Punjab — a movement that peaked in the 1980s and was militarily suppressed. Today it has minimal support within India but retains vocal support among sections of the Sikh diaspora in Canada, UK, and Australia. India designates several Khalistan-linked organisations as terrorist under **UAPA, 1967**. The Nijjar killing was the most serious India-Canada diplomatic episode in their history.

ECONOMY & FINANCE

Economy & Finance

Semiconductors, Critical Minerals, FATF, Biopharma SHAKTI & AgriPV

IN THE NEWS

March 2026's economy section covers India's semiconductor milestone, critical minerals strategy, FATF crypto enforcement, the Biopharma SHAKTI scheme, and agri-photovoltaics — all part of India's push toward strategic self-reliance and clean energy.

1. INDIA'S FIRST SEMICONDUCTOR ATMP FACILITY — SANAND, GUJARAT

The PM inaugurated India's first **Semiconductor Assembly, Test, Marking & Packaging (ATMP)** facility in Sanand, Gujarat — set up by **Micron Technology (USA)**, marking India's first commercial semiconductor chip production.

\$52B INDIA'S SEMICONDUCTOR MARKET (2024-25)	\$100-110B PROJECTED MARKET BY 2030	~10% INDIA'S DOMESTIC SEMICONDUCTOR SUPPLY	60%+ TAIWAN'S SHARE OF GLOBAL SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING
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India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) — nodal agency; ISM 2.0 announced in Union Budget 2026-27. Operates through four schemes: Semiconductor Fabs, Display Fabs, Compound Semiconductors & ATMP/OSAT, and the Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme. Indigenous initiatives: **SHAKTI and VIKRAM** processors (Digital India RISC-V programme); **DHRUV64** — fully indigenous 64-bit microprocessor by C-DAC for 5G, IoT & industrial automation; Microprocessor Development Programme (MDP); Chips to Startup (C2S) programme.

2. NATIONAL CRITICAL MINERAL MISSION (NCMM)

Critical minerals — lithium, cobalt, nickel, rare earth elements, graphite, PGEs — are essential for clean energy, defence, electronics, and digital infrastructure. Nearly 100% of India's lithium and cobalt is imported. **NCMM outlay: ₹34,300 crore over 7 years.** GSI tasked with 1,200 exploration projects (2024-25 to 2030-31). India auctioned 200 mineral blocks in FY2025-26 — highest ever. **KABIL** (Khanij Bidesh India Limited) operationalised a 15,703-ha lithium block in Argentina's Catamarca province. **Mission Samudra Manthan:** proposed mission for offshore hydrocarbon exploration (88.2% crude import dependence, FY25). Circular economy: ₹1,500 crore recycling scheme; Budget 2025 exempted customs duties on cobalt powder, Li-ion battery scrap, and 12 critical minerals.

3. FATF — INDIA'S ACTIONS AGAINST OFFSHORE VASPS

The March 2026 FATF report highlighted India's enforcement against **Offshore Virtual Asset Service Providers (oVASPs)**. **FATF:** Financial Action Task Force — established 1989 by G7 Paris Summit; HQ Paris; 40 members (India since 2010); publishes "grey list" and "black list." India's actions: Virtual Asset Lab for automated web surveillance; FIU-IND mandated Principal Officers of VASPs to be physically based in India (PMLA accountability);

NIA/CBI/ED probing cybercrime hubs in Myanmar-Thailand, Cambodia, Laos where trafficked Indians were forced into crypto scams; **Sahyog Portal** directed takedown of 85 URLs of unregistered offshore platforms.

4. BIOPHARMA SHAKTI SCHEME

Union Budget 2026-27 introduced **Biopharma SHAKTI** — *Strategy for Healthcare Advancement through Knowledge, Technology, and Innovation* — to revolutionise India's domestic production of biologics and biosimilars by shifting from traditional animal testing to **Non-Animal Methodologies (NAMs)** such as organoids. Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers (Department of Pharmaceuticals). Aligns with the **National Biopharma Mission (NBM), 2017** — targeting a USD 100 billion global biotech industry and 5% of global pharmaceutical share.

5. AGRI-PHOTOVOLTAICS (AGRIPV) / PM-KUSUM

Budget 2026-27 nearly doubled PM-KUSUM allocation to ₹5,000 crore. **PM-KUSUM** (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan), launched 2019 by MNRE, promotes solar energy in agriculture — reducing dependence on diesel for irrigation. Three components: (A) decentralised solar plants (up to 2 MW) on barren/fallow land; (B) solarisation of standalone agricultural pumps; (C) solarisation of grid-connected agricultural pumps. **AgriPV** (Agri-Photovoltaics) places solar panels over crops — generating energy while reducing water evaporation and extending growing seasons simultaneously.

● ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Environment & Ecology

Microplastics, GIB Chick, Chambal Sanctuary, NDC 3.0 & Biodiversity Framework

IN THE NEWS

March 2026's environment section covers India's plastic regulation milestone, the Great Indian Bustard's first inter-state captive chick transfer, the Chambal Sanctuary sand-mining crisis, India's NDC 3.0 submission, and the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework report.

1. MICROPLASTICS — CHENNAI BEACH STUDY

A study found Chennai's beach sediments have lower microplastic abundance than global averages — but nylon fibres pose *disproportionately severe* ecological risk, showing polymer type matters more than mere abundance.

India's first legal definition of microplastics: Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2024 — solid plastic particles between **1 to 1,000 microns**. PWM Rules 2025: all plastic packaging must carry QR codes/ barcodes for waste tracking. **EPR 2.0:** Category I (Rigid Plastics) must include 40% recycled content by 2026-27 — "Polluter Pays" principle. Global: UN Global Plastics Treaty under negotiation; EU phased ban on intentionally added microplastics; IMO 2026 plan on plastic pellet transport.

2. GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD (GIB) — CHICK HATCHED IN GUJARAT

A GIB chick was hatched in Gujarat's Kutch via the "jumpstart" approach — first inter-state initiative (MoEFCC, Rajasthan & Gujarat Forest Depts, WII) under **Project GIB (2016)**. About GIB: Rajasthan's state bird; India's most critically endangered bird; one of the heaviest flying birds; found primarily in Rajasthan's Thar Desert; omnivorous; vulnerable to power-line collisions due to lack of frontal vision; four bustard species in India (Lesser Florican, Bengal Florican, Macqueen's Bustard, GIB).

PROTECTION STATUS	CLASSIFICATION
IUCN RED LIST	Critically Endangered
CITES	Appendix I
CMS (BONN CONVENTION)	Appendix I
WILDLIFE (PROTECTION) ACT, 1972	Schedule I — highest protection



CLAT NOTE

In **MK Ranjitsinh v. Union of India (2021, ongoing)**, the SC ordered undergrounding of power lines in GIB habitat — balancing renewable energy (solar panel power lines in Thar) against species conservation. The Court applied the **Precautionary Principle** (uncertainty → burden on the proposing party) and **Public Trust Doctrine** (State holds natural resources in trust for the public and future generations).

3. NATIONAL CHAMBAL SANCTUARY — ILLEGAL SAND MINING

The SC took **suo motu cognisance** to protect the **National Chambal Gharial Wildlife Sanctuary** from rampant illegal sand mining by the "sand mafia." Key facts: India's first and only **tri-state protected area** (Rajasthan, MP, UP); ~5,400 sq km along 600 km of the Chambal (total 960 km); home to gharials, Gangetic river dolphins, red-crowned roof turtles, and Indian skimmers (all critically endangered). Illegal sand mining violates the MMDR Act 1957, Environment Protection Act 1986, and Wildlife Protection Act 1972. SC's invocation of Article 32 and the constitutional right to a healthy environment (read into Article 21 via Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar, 1991 and MC Mehta judgments).

4. INDIA'S NDC 3.0 (2031-2035) & KEY CLIMATE COMMITMENTS

The Union Cabinet approved India's updated **NDC 3.0** for 2031-2035 for the UNFCCC under the Paris Agreement. A **Nationally Determined Contribution** is a country's official climate action plan — self-determined, time-bound, updated every 5 years with increasing ambition.

INDIA'S CLIMATE TARGET	COMMITMENT
NET ZERO	By 2070
NON-FOSSIL ENERGY CAPACITY	500 GW by 2030
EMISSIONS INTENSITY REDUCTION	45% by 2030 (vs. 2005 levels)
NON-FOSSIL ELECTRICITY SHARE	50% by 2030



CLAT NOTE

Paris Agreement (2015) — adopted at COP21; aims to limit warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, pursuing 1.5°C; India ratified 2016. **UNFCCC** — parent treaty, adopted at Rio Earth Summit 1992; COP is the supreme body; COP29 held in Baku, Azerbaijan (2024). **CBDR** — Common But Differentiated Responsibilities — developed nations bear greater responsibility for historical emissions; India consistently invokes CBDR. **KMGBF** (Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, CBD COP15, 2022): halt biodiversity loss by 2030; "30x30 target" — conserve 30% of world's land and marine areas by 2030.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Science & Technology

AI Sovereignty, LIGO-India, Quantum Mission, CALM-Brain, AssamSAT & India's Nuclear Programme

IN THE NEWS

Six science and technology developments in March 2026 — AI sovereignty, LIGO-India delays, quantum teaching labs, CALM-Brain mental health repository, AssamSAT earth-observation satellites, and India's 3-stage nuclear power programme.

1. AI SOVEREIGNTY / INDIAAI MISSION

India's **IndiaAI Mission** drives AI sovereignty — independent control over compute infrastructure, data, algorithms, and governance. India expanded national compute capacity to over **58,000 GPUs** via the IndiaAI Compute Portal. Indigenous foundational AI models: **Sarvam AI** and **BharatGen Param2** (multilingual, integrated with India's Digital Public Infrastructure). Private sector commitments: Reliance Industries (USD 110 billion over 7 years); Adani Group (USD 100 billion for renewable-powered AI data centres by 2035). AI in warfare: Israel's "Where's Daddy?" AI tool; AI-powered **C4ISR** (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance) systems are reshaping modern warfare.

2. LIGO-INDIA — GRAVITATIONAL WAVE OBSERVATORY

India's **LIGO-India** (Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory) in Hingoli, Maharashtra faces implementation delays despite a 2030 completion assurance. Part of the global gravitational-wave detection network (LIGO USA + Virgo Italy). Gravitational waves — ripples in spacetime from massive cosmic events like colliding black holes — were first directly detected in 2015, earning the **Nobel Prize in Physics 2017**.

3. NATIONAL QUANTUM MISSION — TEACHING LABS

Under the **National Quantum Mission (NQM)** — approved 2023, ₹6,003 crore over 8 years — 23 academic institutions approved to establish quantum teaching laboratories; 100+ proposals under evaluation. Four verticals: quantum computing, communication, sensing, and materials — the next frontier in cryptography and secure communications with direct national security implications.

4. CALM-BRAIN — MENTAL HEALTH DIGITAL REPOSITORY

India's first digital repository of major psychiatric disorders — an open-source database compiling brain structure and function data in psychiatric conditions. Developed jointly by **NIMHANS** and **NCBS-TIFR** under the Rohini Nilekani Centre for Brain and Mind (CBM). Democratises mental health research — making data accessible to researchers across India and globally.

Assam became the first Indian state to float a tender for a group of earth-observation satellites — at least **5 satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** (160–2,000 km altitude). Carrying **Synthetic Aperture Radars (SAR)** to penetrate Assam's heavy cloud cover. State disaster management will get direct, real-time data access (currently dependent on the National Remote Sensing Centre — NRSC). Aligns with **IN-SPACe** (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre) — established under Space Policy 2023 to enable private sector participation in space.

6. INDIA'S 3-STAGE NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAMME

Formulated by **Dr. Homi Bhabha** to harness India's resources — limited uranium, but the world's 3rd largest thorium reserves.

1

STAGE 1

Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) using natural uranium — producing plutonium as a byproduct.

2

STAGE 2

Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs) using Stage 1 plutonium — producing more fissile material and converting thorium to uranium-233.

3

STAGE 3

Advanced Heavy Water Reactors using uranium-233 from thorium — achieving a thorium-based self-sustaining fuel cycle.

NUCLEAR MILESTONE	DETAIL
SMILING BUDDHA (1974)	India's first nuclear test at Pokhran, Rajasthan — making India the 6th nuclear-capable nation
OPERATION SHAKTI / POKHRAN-II (1998)	5 nuclear tests including a thermonuclear bomb — under PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee
NO FIRST USE (NFU) POLICY	India will not use nuclear weapons first in a conflict
NPT	India is NOT a signatory — views it as discriminatory between nuclear "haves" and "have-nots"
INDIA-US 123 AGREEMENT (2008)	Civilian nuclear cooperation despite India not signing NPT
NSG MEMBERSHIP	Pending — China has blocked India's membership

DEFENCE & SECURITY

Defence & Internal Security

S-400, INS Taragiri, IONS Maritime Exercise & Defence Vision 2047

IN THE NEWS

Four major defence developments in March 2026 — the S-400 Triumph induction, commissioning of INS Taragiri, India's IONS maritime chairmanship, and the unveiling of Defence Forces Vision 2047.

1. S-400 TRIUMF AIR DEFENCE SYSTEM — 'SUDARSHAN'

India fast-tracked induction of its remaining S-400 squadrons. Key facts: **USD 5.43 billion deal (2018)** for five squadrons; three squadrons fully operational (western & northern borders); final two squadrons by end 2026. Range: missiles covering 40–400 km, simultaneously tracking **300 targets and engaging 36 at once**. **Operation Sindoor**: S-400 successfully intercepted hostile cross-border drones and missiles. Complements DRDO's Ballistic Missile Defence system and indigenous **Project Kusha** (Extended Range Air Defence System). The deal triggered **CAATSA** (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) concerns — India received a waiver, reflecting the strategic importance of the India-US relationship.

2. INS TARAGIRI — PROJECT 17A STEALTH FRIGATE

The Indian Navy commissioned **INS Taragiri** — the 4th stealth frigate under **Project 17A**. Built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL), Mumbai; over 75% indigenous content involving a supply chain of 200+ MSMEs; aligns with Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence. Project 17A: 7 advanced stealth guided-missile frigates, all named after Indian mountain ranges — INS Nilgiri, Himgiri, Udaygiri, Taragiri, Dunagiri, Vindhyagiri, Mahendragiri. A **frigate** is a versatile medium-sized warship for anti-submarine (ASW), anti-air (AAW), and anti-surface warfare (ASuW) — primarily escorting aircraft carriers.

3. IONS MARITIME EXERCISE (IMEX) TTX 2026

The Indian Navy hosted the **IONS Maritime Exercise Table Top Exercise (TTX) 2026** in Kochi — 12 member nations (Bangladesh, France, Kenya, Maldives, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, etc.). Focused on piracy, maritime terrorism, and illegal trafficking. India assumed the **Chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)** for 2026-2028 — returning to leadership after a 16-year gap. IONS (est. 2008 on India's initiative) promotes cooperative maritime security. Connects to India's **SAGAR** vision and broader Indo-Pacific strategy.

4. DEFENCE FORCES VISION 2047

The Defence Minister unveiled "**Defence Forces Vision 2047: A Roadmap for a Future-Ready Indian Military**". Goals: transform India's military into an integrated, agile, multi-domain force by 2047 (centenary of independence); focus on AI, drones, cyber warfare, and space capabilities; strengthen jointness among Army, Navy & Air Force via **theatre commands** — integrated operational structures combining tri-service assets under a single commander for

a geographic theatre (the most significant structural military reform since independence). Target: self-reliant, world-class military by 2047 aligned with Viksit Bharat.

● HISTORY, CULTURE & HERITAGE

History, Culture & Heritage

Kakori Train Action, Mahad Satyagraha, Dandi March, Thirumangai Alvar & Gyan Bharatam

IN THE NEWS

Five heritage moments in March 2026 — the Kakori Train Action centenary, Mahad Satyagraha's 99th anniversary, the Dandi March's legacy, the return of a Thirumangai Alvar bronze from Oxford, and the Gyan Bharatam manuscript mapping survey.

1. KAKORI TRAIN ACTION, 1925

On **9th August 1925**, revolutionaries including **Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, Chandrashekhar Azad, and Rajendra Lahiri** intercepted the 8-Down train (Shahjahanpur to Lucknow) near Kakori station and looted the government treasury — to fund the **Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)** (founded 1924 in Kanpur).

Background: disillusionment after the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement (1922) and Jallianwala Bagh Massacre (1919) drove young nationalists to armed struggle. **Kakori Conspiracy Case (1925)**: 18-month trial — Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, Rajendra Lahiri, and Thakur Roshan Singh were **hanged in December 1927**; Chandrashekhar Azad escaped.

2. MAHAD SATYAGRAHA — 99TH ANNIVERSARY / SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT DAY

20th March 2026 marked the 99th anniversary of the Mahad Satyagraha — now observed as **Social Empowerment Day**. Background: S.K. Bole passed a 1923 Bombay Legislative Council resolution mandating public water sources be opened to the Depressed Classes; Mahad Municipal Council adopted it in 1924 but caste resistance blocked implementation. **The Satyagraha (1927)**: **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar** led a peaceful march to the Chavdar Tank (Chowdar Tale) in Mahad and drank from it — asserting Dalits' legal and moral right to public water, breaking a centuries-old caste taboo. Upper-caste groups attacked protestors and symbolically "purified" the tank with cow dung. Ambedkar publicly burned the Manusmriti in December 1927. **Legal victory (1937)**: Bombay HC ruled in Ambedkar's favour. The Mahad Satyagraha is considered **India's first organised civil rights movement** — directly informing Articles 14, 15, 17 (abolition of untouchability), and 21 of the Constitution. Article 17 is backed by the **Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955** and the **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989**.

3. DANDI MARCH, 1930

Led by **Mahatma Gandhi** to oppose the British salt tax through civil disobedience. Gandhi chose salt because it was a universal daily necessity, making the injustice relatable to every Indian. **Started**: 12th March 1930, Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad. **Concluded**: 6th April 1930 at Dandi, Gujarat — covering 240 miles (386 km) with 78 initial followers (the movement swelled nationwide). Gandhi broke the **Salt Act, 1882** by picking up natural salt from the seashore. **Regional parallels**: C. Rajagopalachari at Vedaranyam (Madras Presidency); K. Kelappan at Calicut-Payyanur (Malabar). Launched the **Civil Disobedience Movement** — the most widespread mass movement before the Quit India Movement (1942).

The **Ashmolean Museum, Oxford** returned a 16th-century bronze of **Saint Thirumangai Alvar** — identified as originating from the Soundararaja Perumal temple, Tamil Nadu, via 1957 French Institute of Pondicherry archival photographs by the **India Pride Project**. Thirumangai Alvar: the 12th and last Alvar saint; Tamil poet-saint devoted to Lord Vishnu; originally named Kaliyan; military commander under the Chola empire; his compositions form part of the **Nalayira Divya Prabandham** (4,000-verse Tamil Vaishnava canon). India has no standalone Cultural Property Repatriation Act — repatriations proceed via diplomatic channels and the **UNESCO Convention 1970** on illicit import/export/transfer of cultural property. **ASI** (est. 1861 under Alexander Cunningham) is the nodal body under the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958**.

5. GYAN BHARATAM MISSION — MANUSCRIPT MAPPING SURVEY

The Ministry of Culture launched a 3-month nationwide survey to map India's approximately **1 crore manuscripts** — the world's largest such collection — compiled into a national digital repository under the **Gyan Bharatam Mission**. Survey conducted from district level upwards; manuscripts geotagged for conservation; Gyan Bharatam app used by survey teams. State-level committees chaired by Chief Secretaries; district-level by DMs.

● AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS & IMPORTANT DAYS

Awards, Appointments & Important Days

Jnanpith, Sahitya Akademi, World Happiness Report & Key Days — March 2026

IN THE NEWS

Awards and key observances in March 2026 — the 60th Jnanpith Award to R. Vairamuthu, the 2025 Sahitya Akademi Awards, the World Happiness Report 2026, and a cluster of important national and international days.

1. JNANPITH AWARD — R. VAIRAMUTHU (60TH AWARD)

Eminent Tamil lyricist and author **R. Vairamuthu** selected for the **60th Jnanpith Award** — only the 3rd Tamil writer to receive it, and the 1st recognised specifically for Tamil poetry. Previous Tamil recipients: Akilan (1975) and Jayakanthan (2002). Vairamuthu also holds the Sahitya Akademi Award (2003) for his novel *Kallikattu Ithikasm*, Padma Shri (2003) and Padma Bhushan (2014). **About the Jnanpith Award:** Instituted 1961 by Bharatiya Jnanpith (est. 1944 by Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain & Rama Jain); India's highest literary honour; first conferred 1965 to G. Sankara Kurup (Malayalam); first woman: Ashapura Devi (Bengali, 1976); first English winner: Amitav Ghosh (2018); covers all 22 Eighth Schedule languages + English (from 2013); since 1982 awarded for lifetime contribution; no posthumous awards.

2. SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS 2025

Sahitya Akademi (est. 1954) — India's 2nd highest literary honour (after Jnanpith); autonomous institution under Ministry of Culture; awarded annually. 2025 awards across 24 languages — 8 poetry, 4 novels, 6 short story, 2 essays, 1 literary criticism, 1 autobiography, 2 memoirs. Notable winners: **Navtej Sarna** (former diplomat) — English novel *Crimson Spring*; **Mamta Kalia** — Hindi memoir *Jeete Jee Allahabad*; **Sa Tamilselvan** — Tamil literary criticism *Thamiz Sirukathaiyin Thadangal*.

3. WORLD HAPPINESS REPORT 2026

Published by the **Oxford Wellbeing Research Centre** in partnership with Gallup and UNSDSN — released on the **UN International Day of Happiness (20th March)**. Key findings: Finland remains world's happiest country for the **9th consecutive year**; Iceland (2nd), Denmark (3rd). **India ranked 116th** out of 147 countries — marginal improvement from 118th in 2025. International Day of Happiness: est. by UN in 2012; 20th March chosen for the vernal equinox — when day and night are approximately equal everywhere, symbolising universal balance.

DAY	DATE	KEY FACTS
WORLD TB DAY	24th March	Marks Robert Koch's 1882 discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis. WHO Theme 2026: 'Yes! We Can End TB!'. India carries the world's highest TB burden. Launches: TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (100 Days), TB Mukht Bharat App, TB Mukht Urban Ward Initiative.
WORLD WATER DAY	22nd March	Coordinated by UN-Water; proposed at Rio Earth Summit 1992; first observed 22 March 1993. Supports SDG 6 — Clean Water & Sanitation by 2030. Theme 2026: 'Water and Gender.'
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY	8th March	Observed since 1975; recognised by UNGA in 1977. UN Theme 2026: 'Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls.' Traditional colours: Purple (justice), Green (hope), White (purity). Jal Mahotsav 2026 launched from Gujarat as 'Sujalam Shakti Diwas.'
NATIONAL VACCINATION DAY	16th March	Commemorates India's first Oral Polio Vaccine dose in 1995 (Pulse Polio Programme). Highlights: 98.4% full immunisation by Jan 2026; nationwide HPV vaccination launched in 2026; indigenous Td vaccine launched 2026.
NATIONAL SCIENCE DAY	28th February	Commemorates CV Raman's discovery of the Raman Effect (1928) — earned him the Nobel Prize in Physics (1930), the first Nobel Prize won by an Asian. Designated as National Science Day in 1986; first celebrated 1987. Theme 2026: 'Women in Science: Catalyzing Viksit Bharat.'
SHAHEED DIWAS	23rd March	Honours Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru & Sukhdev Thapar — hanged 23 March 1931 at Lahore Central Jail in the Lahore Conspiracy Case (killing of J.P. Saunders in retaliation for Lala Lajpat Rai's death).
SHYAMJI KRISHNA VARMA	30th March (death anniversary)	Born 4 Oct 1857, Mandvi, Kutch. Founded Indian Home Rule Society (1905) and India House (1905) in London — nurturing Savarkar, Madam Bhikaji Cama, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya. Founded 'The Indian Sociologist.' Died 30 March 1930 in Geneva. Memorial: Kranti Teerth, Mandvi.
SAVITRIBAI PHULE	10th March (death anniversary)	Born 3 Jan 1831, Satara. India's first female teacher — opened first girls' school in Pune (1848) with Jyotiba Phule. Founded Mahila Seva Mandal. Died 10 March 1897 nursing plague patients.
GURU HARGOBIND SAHIB JI	22nd March (Jyoti-Jyot Diwas)	6th Sikh Guru; established Saint-Soldier (Miri-Piri) tradition; built Akal Takht (1606); imprisoned by Jahangir in Gwalior Fort; secured freedom of 52 Hindu kings — called 'Bandi Chhor Daata.' His release coincided with Diwali — celebrated as Bandi Chhor Divas.

SPORTS & MISCELLANEOUS

Sports & Miscellaneous Quick Facts

India Wins T20 World Cup 2026, Bhavasagara, Preah Vihear, Orange Economy & More

IN THE NEWS

India won the **ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026** and several important quick-fact topics round out the March edition — from the Bhavasagara deep-sea repository to the Preah Vihear temple conflict and the Orange Economy.

1. INDIA WINS ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP 2026

India defeated New Zealand by **96 runs** in the final at Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad — India's largest ever T20 World Cup victory margin. Player of the Match: **Jasprit Bumrah**; Player of the Tournament: **Sanju Samson**. India became the **first team to win three ICC Men's T20 World Cup titles** (2007, 2024, 2026), the first to successfully defend the title, and the first to win on home soil. The ICC Men's T20 World Cup: organised by the ICC; first held 2007; generally every two years; prize pool 2026: **USD 13.5 million** (winners: USD 3 million). India's ICC Rankings (March 2026): Men's T20Is & ODIs — No. 1; Tests — No. 4. Women's T20Is & ODIs — No. 3.

2. BHAVASAGARA — NATIONAL REPOSITORY FOR DEEP-SEA FAUNA

The **Centre for Marine Living Resources & Ecology (CMLRE)**, Kochi (Ministry of Earth Sciences) — its "Bhavasagara" Referral Centre officially designated as India's **National Repository for Deep-Sea Fauna** — a milestone in marine conservation and biodiversity documentation.

3. PREAH VIHEAR TEMPLE — CAMBODIA-THAILAND CONFLICT

The **Preah Vihear Temple** — a masterpiece of Khmer architecture — faces severe structural degradation after military skirmishes. Key facts: ancient Hindu temple atop a 525-metre cliff in the Dangrek Mountains; built during reigns of Suryavarman I and Suryavarman II (who also built Angkor Wat); originally dedicated to Lord Shiva, later transitioned to Buddhism; **UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2008**. Territorial dispute: 1904 treaty placed it in Thailand; 1907 French map placed it in Cambodia; **ICJ ruled in 1962** that the temple belongs to Cambodia — reaffirmed in 2013; under Cambodian administration.

4. IRAN-ISRAEL-US CONFLICT — INDIA'S ENERGY SECURITY

The conflict disrupted global supply chains. India directed refiners to increase LPG production under the **Essential Commodities (EC) Act, 1955**. Key vulnerability: India's 88.2% crude oil import dependence (FY25) through the Strait of Hormuz. Rising oil prices → imported inflation, rupee depreciation, and higher subsidy fiscal stress. LPG = Liquefied Petroleum Gas (propane and butane); CNG = Compressed Natural Gas (primarily methane).

The Ministry of I&B launched: **National AI Skilling Initiative** (future-ready workforce); **MyWAVES** (broadcasting and digital content platform); Advanced EPG with in-built satellite tuners. **Orange Economy** (Creative Economy): a production model where value derives from intellectual property, creativity, and cultural capital — music, film, design, fashion, digital content. India's creative economy is a growing contributor to GDP and employment.

6. BHARAT ELECTRICITY SUMMIT 2026

Held in New Delhi under the theme "Electrifying Growth. Empowering Sustainability. Connecting Globally." Policy dialogue on India's electricity transformation — renewable energy, grid modernisation, and energy access. **Bharat Cleantech Manufacturing Platform** launched at BCF 2025 — projected USD 120-150 billion cleantech market by 2030.