

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**Community Radio Stations and SWEEP**

In a first of its kind initiative, the ECI has reached out to over 150 Community Radio stations from across the country to help educate and inform the voters. The main purpose of the workshop was for training and capacity building of Community Radios for voter education and awareness.

Community Radio Stations

- Community radio is a radio service offering a third model of radio broadcasting in addition to commercial and public broadcasting.
- They serve geographic communities and communities of interest.
- They broadcast content that is popular and relevant to a local, specific audience but is often overlooked by commercial or mass-media broadcasters.
- Community radio stations are operated, owned, and influenced by the communities they serve.

Why need community radios?

- Community radio plays an important role in dissemination of information about government schemes and policies to the common people in local languages.
- India is a land of diversity in terms of language, social practices, dialects and culture, a community radio can be a powerful tool to revive culture and languages that are dying.
- It can help give voice to the voiceless in the backward community.
- About Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP)
- It is the flagship program of the Election Commission of India for voter education, spreading voter awareness and promoting voter literacy in India.
- Since 2009, it has been working towards preparing India's electors and equipping them with basic knowledge related to the electoral process.
- SVEEP is designed according to the socio-economic, cultural and demographic profile of the state as well as the history of electoral participation in previous rounds of elections and learning thereof.

Article 370

The constitutional relationship between J&K and the Indian Union has been the subject of numerous discussions in recent times. Recently, Jammu and Kashmir, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said that the relationship between the Union and the State would be over if Article 370 of the Constitution is revoked.

What is Article 370?

- Article 370 of the Indian Constitution is a 'temporary provision' which grants special autonomous status to Jammu & Kashmir.
- Under Part XXI of the Constitution of India, which deals with "Temporary, Transitional and Special provisions", the state of Jammu & Kashmir has been accorded special status under Article 370.
- All the provisions of the Constitution which are applicable to other states are not applicable to J&K.

Important provisions under the article:

- According to this article, except for defence, foreign affairs, finance and communications, Parliament needs the state government's concurrence for applying all other laws. Thus the state's residents live under a separate set of laws, including those related to citizenship, ownership of property, and fundamental rights, as compared to other Indians.
- Indian citizens from other states cannot purchase land or property in Jammu & Kashmir.
- Under Article 370, the Centre has no power to declare financial emergency under Article 360 in the state. It can declare emergency in the state only in case of war or external aggression. The Union government can therefore not declare emergency on grounds of internal disturbance or imminent danger unless it is made at the request or with the concurrence of the state government.

- Under Article 370, the Indian Parliament cannot increase or reduce the borders of the state.
- The Jurisdiction of the Parliament of India in relation to Jammu and Kashmir is confined to the matters enumerated in the Union List, and also the concurrent list. There is no State list for the State of Jammu and Kashmir.
- At the same time, while in relation to the other States, the residuary power of legislation belongs to Parliament, in the case of Jammu and Kashmir, the residuary powers belong to the Legislature of the State, except certain matters to which Parliament has exclusive powers such as preventing the activities relating to cession or secession, or disrupting the sovereignty or integrity of India.
- The power to make laws related to preventive detention in Jammu and Kashmir belong to the Legislature of J & K and not the Indian Parliament. Thus, no preventive detention law made in India extends to Jammu & Kashmir.
- Part IV (Directive Principles of the State Policy) and Part IVA (Fundamental Duties) of the Constitution are not applicable to J&K.

How should the centre counter the growing unrest in the region?

- Focus on investing in J&K's infrastructure.
- Absence of an effective information and communication plan has hobbled the government's ability to respond even when it is on the moral high ground. This must be immediately corrected.
- Standard operating procedures must require the use of lethal force only when there is an imminent threat to life and property, force should be used proportionately and not as a punitive measure.
- What is needed at the moment is the deployment of new socio-cultural resources, and a new operational culture to wind down the militancy without alienating more locals who could either join or influence their relatives and friends to join various terrorist organisations.
- Lethal force should be the last resort, used only when lives are threatened. Promptly investigating allegations of abuses and prosecuting those responsible is key to resolving this mess.
- Externally, wide-ranging peace talks between India and Pakistan, the Indian administration and 'azaadi' groups is needed and internally, peace-building on the ground by multiple stakeholders involved is necessary.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)

In the wake of growing threats and acts of terrorism across the world, India and Bolivia have called for an early finalization of Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT).

Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism

- CCIT is a proposed treaty which intends to criminalize all forms of international terrorism and deny terrorists, their financiers and supporters access to funds, arms, and safe havens.
- The CCIT was proposed by India in 1996.
- CCIT provides a legal framework which makes it binding on all signatories to deny funds and safe havens to terrorist groups.
- The original draft that was tabled in 1996 included following major objectives:
- To have a universal definition of terrorism that all 193-members of the UNGA will adopt into their own criminal law
- To ban all terror groups and shut down terror camps
- To prosecute all terrorists under special laws
- To make cross-border terrorism an extraditable offence worldwide.

ISSUES RELATED TO INTERNAL SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

International Solar Alliance

Bolivia has joined the framework agreement establishing International Solar Alliance (ISA).

India is reaching out to the 'Lithium Triangle' in South America- Argentina, Bolivia and Chile seeking the rare metal Lithium to realize its goal.

About International Solar Alliance

- The ISA is an alliance of more than 121 countries, most of them being sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
- The primary objective of the alliance is to work for efficient exploitation of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- The alliance is a treaty-based inter-governmental organization.
- The alliance is also called International Agency for Solar Policy and Application (IASPA).
- The ISA is to be headquartered in India.
- The initiative was launched by PM Modi at the India Africa Summit and a meeting of member countries ahead of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris in November 2015.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES**Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA)**

EPCA comes out with parking management plan for Delhi. In report, agency flags free parking on public land, multiplicity of agencies to be key cause of congestion and parking menace.

Some of the key recommendations listed in the report are:

- Implementing agencies are unanimous that residential parking will have to be regulated and managed.
- Parking spill over from residential buildings will require management.
- Multiplicity of responsibility is at the core of the problems of governance in the city and parking regulations must not add to this.
- Pricing for residential parking should be determined jointly by the local agency and RWA/shop-keepers association but it must be based on the principle of charging differential and higher rates for additional cars.
- The local parking plan must ensure that there is provision for movement of emergency vehicles and green areas, parks and footpaths may not be allowed to be used for parking.
- The Delhi Police may be directed to greatly improve enforcement against illegal and unauthorised parking through state-of-the art equipment, including cameras and automated challans.

Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA):

- EPCA was constituted with the objective of 'protecting and improving' the quality of the environment and 'controlling environmental pollution' in the National Capital Region. The EPCA also assists the apex court in various environment-related matters in the region.
- EPCA is Supreme Court mandated body tasked with taking various measures to tackle air pollution in the National Capital Region. It was notified in 1998 by Environment Ministry under Environment Protection Act, 1986.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Everything is created twice. First in mind, then in reality.