

GOVERNANCE

Policy for Declassification of War History

The Union Defence Minister has approved a policy on archiving, declassification, compilation and publication of war and operations histories by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

Key Points

Desirability of Authoritative Record:

- Timely publication of war histories would give people an accurate account of the events, provide authentic material for academic research and counter the unfounded rumours.
- The requirement of having war histories written with clear cut policy on declassification was recommended by the Kargil Review Committee, 2019 headed by K Subrahmanyam to analyse the lessons learnt and prevent future mistakes.
- Post Kargil conflict, a Group of Ministers (GoM) recommendations on national security, 2001 also mentioned the desirability of an authoritative war history.

Provisions of Policy:

- **Transfer of Record:** Each organisation under the MoD such as Services (Army, Airforce and Navy), Integrated Defence Staff, Assam Rifles and Coast Guard, will transfer the records, including war diaries, letters of proceedings and operational record books, etc., to the history division of MoD for proper upkeep, archival and writing the histories. The History Division will be responsible for coordination with various departments while compiling, seeking approval and publishing of war and operations histories.
- **Constitution of a Committee:** For compilation of war and operations histories, the policy mandates the constitution of a committee headed by Joint Secretary, MoD and composed of representatives of the Services, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and other organisations and prominent military historians, if required.
- **Timeline:** The policy sets clear timelines with regard to compilation and publication of war and operations histories.
 1. The committee should be formed within two years of completion of war and operations.
 2. Thereafter, collection of records and compilation should be completed in three years and disseminated to all concerned.
 3. The records should ordinarily be declassified (i.e. no more secret) in 25 years.
 4. Records older than 25 years should be appraised by archival experts and transferred to the National Archives of India once the war/operations histories have been compiled.
- **Responsibility for Declassification of Records:** This rests with the respective organisations as specified in the Public Record Act 1993 and the Public Record Rules 1997.
- **For Internal Consumption First:** The compiled history on wars and operations, within five years, will be for internal consumption first, and later the committee may decide to publicly release whole or parts of it, considering the sensitivity of the subject.

Declassification of Older Wars: The declassification of older wars like the 1962 war and Operation Bluestar is not automatic and will be taken up on a case by case basis by a committee to be constituted under the new policy.

2. Redefining Boundaries of UAPA: Delhi High Court

Recently, the Delhi High Court granted bail to student activists in a Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), 1967 case.

Key Points

High Court's Ruling:

- **Extent of Terrorist Activity:**
 1. Terrorist activity cannot be broadly defined to include ordinary penal offences. By doing so, it raised the bar for the State to book an individual for terrorism under the UAPA.
 2. The extent and reach of terrorist activity must travel beyond the effect of an ordinary crime and must not arise merely by causing disturbance of law and order or even public order. It must be such that it travels beyond the capacity of the ordinary law enforcement agencies to deal with it under the ordinary penal law.
- **Careful while Defining Unlawful Activities:**
 1. The courts must be careful in employing the definitional words and phrases used in Section 15 of UAPA in their absolute literal sense, they should differentiate clearly how terrorism is different even from conventional, heinous crime.

2. Section 15 of the UAPA defines “terrorist act” and is punishable with imprisonment for a term of at least five years to life. In case the terrorist act results in death, the punishment is death or imprisonment for life.
3. The court referred to how the Supreme Court itself, in case of Kartar Singh v State of Punjab 1994, flagged similar concerns against the misuse of another anti-terror law, the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1987 (lapsed in 1995).

● **Intent of Enacting UAPA:**

1. To bring terrorist activity within its scope, was, and could only have had been, to deal with matters of profound impact on the 'Defence of India', nothing more and nothing less.
2. It was neither the intent nor purport of enacting UAPA that other offences of the usual and ordinary kind, however grave, egregious or heinous in their nature and extent, should also be covered by UAPA.

● **Right to Protest:**

1. Observed that protests against Governmental and Parliamentary actions are legitimate; and though such protests are expected to be peaceful and non-violent, it is not uncommon for protesters to push the limits permissible in law.
2. The line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest (Article 19) and terrorist activity seems to be getting somewhat blurred.

Significance of the Ruling:

- This is the first instance of a court calling out alleged misuse of the UAPA against individuals in cases that do not necessarily fall in the category of “terrorism” cases.
- According to data provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs in Parliament in March, a total of 1126 cases were registered under UAPA in 2019, a sharp rise from 897 in 2015. Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967
- UAPA was passed in 1967. It aims at effective prevention of unlawful activities associations in India.
- Unlawful activity refers to any action taken by an individual or association intended to disrupt the territorial integrity and sovereignty of India.
- The Act assigns absolute power to the central government, by way of which if the Centre deems an activity as unlawful then it may, by way of an Official Gazette, declare it so. It has death penalty and life imprisonment as highest punishments.
- Under UAPA, both Indian and foreign nationals can be charged. It will be applicable to the offenders in the same manner, even if crime is committed on a foreign land, outside India.
- Under the UAPA, the investigating agency can file a charge sheet in maximum 180 days after the arrests and the duration can be extended further after intimating the court.
- The 2004 amendment added “terrorist act” to the list of offences to ban organisations for terrorist activities, under which 34 outfits were banned. Till 2004, “unlawful” activities referred to actions related to secession and cession of territory.
- In August, Parliament cleared the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill, 2019 to designate individuals as terrorists on certain grounds provided in the Act. The Act empowers the Director General of National Investigation Agency (NIA) to grant approval of seizure or attachment of property when the case is investigated by the said agency. The Act empowers the officers of the NIA, of the rank of Inspector or above, to investigate cases of terrorism in addition to those conducted by the DSP or ACP or above rank officer in a state.

GEOGRAPHY

Early Southwest Monsoon

After arriving at the Kerala Coast two days behind the schedule, the Southwest Monsoon has hit early across some areas of south peninsular and central India.

Key Points

Cause of Early Monsoon:

- Cyclone Yaas, formed in the Bay of Bengal in May, helped in bringing the crucial southwest monsoon winds over the Andaman Sea. As a rule-of-thumb, the monsoon makes its onset over Kerala roughly ten days after it makes its advent over the south Andaman sea.
- After delaying in Kerala, fast progress was mainly due to strong westerly winds from the Arabian Sea, and also the formation of a low-pressure system over the North Bay of Bengal, that currently lies over eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

- An off-shore trough, prevailing between Maharashtra and Kerala, has helped the monsoon arrive early over Karnataka, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra and southern Gujarat.

Further Progress:

- Over Northwest India, the monsoon becomes active only when the monsoon currents - either from the Arabian Sea or the Bay of Bengal - reach the region. As it is not expected to happen soon, the monsoon progress will remain slow.
- Also, a stream of mid-latitude westerly winds is approaching Northwest India, which will hinder the monsoon advancement in the immediate coming days.

Early Monsoon and Rainfall Quantum:

- The time of monsoon onset over a region has no direct impact on the rainfall quantum received during the season, or in the monsoon's progress.
- For instance, the monsoon took 42 days in 2014 and 22 days in 2015 to cover the entire country. Even with such distinct ranges, India recorded deficient rainfall during both years.

Impact on Summer-Sown Crops: The early arrival of monsoon rains in central and northern India will help farmers accelerate sowing of summer-sown crops such as paddy rice, cotton, soybean and pulses, and may boost crop yields too.

Indications of Climate Change:

- The onset of the monsoon over various parts of the country each year can be ahead of time, in time or late. These variations are generally considered normal, given the complexity of the monsoon.
- However, climate experts have linked extreme weather events like intense rainfall over a region within a short time span or prolonged dry spell during the four months (June-September) as indications of climate change.

Monsoon in India

About:

- The climate of India is described as the 'monsoon' type. In Asia, this type of climate is found mainly in the south and the southeast.
- Out of a total of 4 seasonal divisions of India, monsoon occupies 2 divisions, namely:
 1. The southwest monsoon season - Rainfall received from the southwest monsoons is seasonal in character, which occurs between June and September.
 2. The retreating monsoon season - The months of October and November are known for retreating monsoons.

Factors Influencing South-West Monsoon Formation:

- The differential heating and cooling of land and water creates a low pressure on the landmass of India while the seas around experience comparatively high pressure.
- The shift of the position of Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) in summer, over the Ganga plain (this is the equatorial trough normally positioned about 5°N of the equator. It is also known as the monsoon-trough during the monsoon season).
- The presence of the high-pressure area, east of Madagascar, approximately at 20°S over the Indian Ocean. The intensity and position of this high-pressure area affect the Indian Monsoon.
- The Tibetan plateau gets intensely heated during summer, which results in strong vertical air currents and the formation of low pressure over the plateau at about 9 km above sea level.
- The movement of the westerly jet stream to the north of the Himalayas and the presence of the tropical easterly jet stream over the Indian peninsula during summer.
- Tropical Easterly Jet (African Easterly Jet).
- El Nino/Southern Oscillation (SO): Normally when the tropical eastern south Pacific Ocean experiences high pressure, the tropical eastern Indian Ocean experiences low pressure. But in certain years, there is a reversal in the pressure conditions and the eastern Pacific has lower pressure in comparison to the eastern Indian Ocean. This periodic change in pressure conditions is known as the SO.

INDIAN HERITAGE

Humayun's Tomb: Mughal Architecture

Recently, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) notified that all centrally protected monuments, sites, and museums across the country including the Humayun's Tomb will reopen for visitors from 16th June 2021. Humayun's tomb in Delhi is a fine specimen of the great Mughal architecture.

Key Points

Humayun's Tomb:

About:

- This tomb, built in 1570, is of particular cultural significance as it was the first garden-tomb on the Indian subcontinent.
- It inspired several major architectural innovations, culminating in the construction of the Taj Mahal.
- It was built under the patronage of Humayun's son, the great Emperor Akbar.
- It is also called the 'dormitory of the Mughals' as in the cells are buried over 150 Mughal family members.
- It is an example of the charbagh (a four quadrant garden with the four rivers of Quranic paradise represented), with pools joined by channels.
- The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recognized it as a World Heritage Site in 1993.

Mughal Architecture:

• **About:**

1. This is a building style that flourished in northern and central India under the patronage of the Mughal emperors from the mid-16th to the late 17th century.
2. The Mughal period marked a striking revival of Islamic architecture in northern India. Under the patronage of the Mughal emperors, Persian, Indian, and various provincial styles were fused to produce works of unusual quality and refinement.
3. It became so widespread especially in north India that these can be seen further in the colonial architecture of Indo-Saracenic style.

• **Important Features:**

1. **Mixed Architecture:** It was a blend of Indian, Persian, and Turkish architectural style.
2. **Diversity:** Different types of buildings, such as majestic gates (entrances), forts, mausoleums, palaces, mosques, sarais, etc.
3. **Building material:** Mostly, red sandstone and white marble were used.
4. **Speciality:** Specific features such as the Charbagh style of the mausoleums, pronounced bulbous domes, slender turrets at the corners, broad gateways, beautiful calligraphy, arabesque, and geometric patterns on pillars and walls, and palace halls supported on pillars.
5. The arches, chhatri, and various styles of domes became hugely popular in the Indo-Islamic architecture and were further developed under the Mughals.

Some Examples:

- **Taj Mahal:** Built by Shah Jahan between 1632 and 1653, in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. UNESCO recognized the Taj Mahal as a World Heritage Site in 1983. It is located in Agra.
- **Red Fort:** Built by Shah Jahan in 1638 when he decided to move the capital from Agra to Delhi. It was the residence of Mughal rulers. UNESCO designated it as the World Heritage Site in 2007.
- **Jama Masjid:** Built by Shah Jahan in Delhi. The construction was completed in 1656.
- **Badshahi Mosque:** Built during the reign of Aurangzeb. At the time of completion in 1673, it was the largest mosque in the world. It is located in Lahore, capital of the Pakistani province of Punjab.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM

Indo-Thai CORPAT

Recently, the 31st edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy was conducted in the Andaman sea close to the Strait of Malacca.

Key Points

Naval Exercise:

- India and Thailand have been carrying out CORPAT along their International Maritime Boundary Line twice a year since 2005.
- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Saryu, an indigenously built Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel and Thailand's Ship HTMS-Krabi, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both navies participated in the CORPAT 31st edition.

Aims:

- To keep part of the Indian Ocean safe and secure for commercial shipping and international trade.
- To ensure effective implementation of the United Nations Conventions on Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS). UNCLOS specify regulations regarding protection and conservation of natural resources, conservation of marine environment, prevention and suppression of illegal, unregulated fishing activity, drug trafficking, piracy, exchange of information in prevention of smuggling, illegal immigration and conduct of search and rescue operations at sea.

In line with India's SAGAR Vision: As part of Indian Government's vision of Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR), the Indian Navy has been involved in assisting countries in the Indian Ocean Region with Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Surveillance, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), and other capacity building and capability-enhancement activities, on their request.

Other Military Exercises between India and Thailand:

1. Exercise MAITREE (Army).
2. Exercise SIAM BHARAT (Air Force).

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. Though food wastage is a global problem, India stands a chance to convert this into an opportunity, if it can address it properly. Comment.

Ans:

Introduction

- Despite adequate food production, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation has reported that about 190 million Indians remain undernourished. The same report highlights that around 40% of the food produced in India is either lost or wasted.
- This food wastage, however, isn't limited to one level alone but perforates through every stage; from harvesting, processing, packaging, and transporting to the end stage of consumption.

Body

Challenge of Food Wastage

- **Pre-Consumption Losses:** Nearly 40% of the food produced in India is wasted every year due to fragmented food systems and inefficient supply chains.
- **Food Wastage At Households:** There is also a significant amount of food waste generated in our homes. As per the Food Waste Index Report 2021, a staggering 50 kg of food is thrown away per person every year in Indian homes.
- **Greenhouse Gases Emission:** This excess food waste usually ends up in landfills, creating potent greenhouse gases which have dire environmental implications.
- **Supply-Chain Management Issues:** Some problems in the Indian food supply chain include inefficiency of government programs, lack of transparency in revenue generation, insufficient storage facilities, and lack of comprehensive and accurate inventories.

Way Forward: Turning Crisis into Opportunity

- **Behavioral Change:** According to various reports food waste attributed to households and their irresponsible consumption patterns means that change needs to begin in our own homes.
- **Food Bank Concept:** Edible food should be made available every day, for free, at the latest in the last opening hour, so it can be picked up and consumed by those in need.
- **International Precedents:** We can look to best practices and laws in countries like France, Norway, Denmark, UK, etc., in order to check spoilage and destruction of edible food waste in India. For example, in France, supermarkets prioritize the reduction, reuse, and recycling of extra food.
- **Technological Investment:** It is important that technology is adopted at every stage of the supply chain to overcome this problem. Planning in the supply chain can improve with technology, reducing transit time in shipping and logistics. In addition, multiple government initiatives are also assisting in building infrastructure for the food industry.

Conclusion

It is estimated that the value of food wastage in India is around ₹92,000 crores per annum. Therefore, if the food wastage problem is addressed properly, India stands a chance to convert this into an opportunity.

DAILY QUIZ

Q1. The term commonly used to describe a full moon that is at perigee, or when the moon is at its closest position to Earth along its orbit, is

- a. Blood-moon
- b. Super-moon**
- c. Blue-moon
- d. Harvest-moon

Q2. The committee headed by TK Viswanathan was in news recently, is related to:

- a. assessment of vaccine wastage in India
- b. managing a super cyclone successfully
- c. coronavirus health insurance
- d. cybercrimes especially online hate speech**

Q3. With reference to Sakhi – One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a centrally-sponsored initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- 2. It is intended to support women including girls below 18 years of age affected by violence both in private and public spaces.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2**
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q4. Consider the following statements about the Minamata Convention:

- 1. It was signed in 2013 and entered into force in 2017.
- 2. It is a UN treaty coming under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- 3. India is a party to the Minamata Convention.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 and 3 only**
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 2 only
- d. 3 only

Q5. Which one of the following pairs (Type of pathogen: Disease) is correctly matched?

- a. Virus: Lyme disease
- b. Bacteria: Herpes
- c. Protozoa: Sleeping Sickness**
- d. None of the above