GOVERNANCE

Censorship of Movies in India

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has recently sought public comments on its draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which proposes to bring back its "revisionary powers" over the Central Board of Film Certification. The new Bill will also "make the process of sanctioning of films for exhibition more effective, in tune with the changed times and curb the menace of piracy".

Key Points

Background:
- The Supreme Court of India (SC) in November 2000, had upheld a Karnataka High Court order which struck down the Centre's "revisional powers in respect of films that are already certified by the Board".
- However, the SC had opined that the Legislature may, in certain cases, overrule or nullify the judicial or executive decision by enacting an appropriate legislation".

Provision of Draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2021:
- **Granting Revisionary Powers:** The government on account of violation of Section 5B(1) of the Cinematograph Act, 1952 can order for "re-examination" by the certification board of an already certified film, following receipt of complaints.
1. Section 5B(1) deals with the principles for guidance in certifying films. It is derived from Article 19(2) of the Constitution and is non-negotiable.
2. Under Section 6 of the existing Cinematograph Act, 1952, the Centre is already empowered to call for the record of proceedings in relation to certification of a film and pass any order thereon.
3. The Central Government, if the situation warranted, has the power to reverse the decision of the Board.
- **Sub-division of Existing UA Category:** The provisions relating to certification of films under "unrestricted public exhibition (U/A)" category are proposed to be amended so as to sub-divide the existing UA category into age-based categories like U/A 7+, U/A 13+ and U/A 16+.
- **Film Piracy:** In most cases, illegal duplication in cinema halls is the originating point of piracy. At present, there are no enabling provisions to check film piracy in the Cinematograph Act, 1952. The draft Bill proposes to insert Section 6AA which prohibits unauthorised recording.
- **Punishment for Piracy:** Section 6AA of the draft legislation makes piracy a punishable offence.
1. The punishment of imprisonment for a term upto three years and with a fine which shall not be less than Rs 3 lakh but which may extend to 5% of the audited gross production cost or with both.
- The recommendations of the Justice Mukul Mudgal Committee of 2013 and the Shyam Benegal Committee of 2016 had also been considered while drafting the legislation.

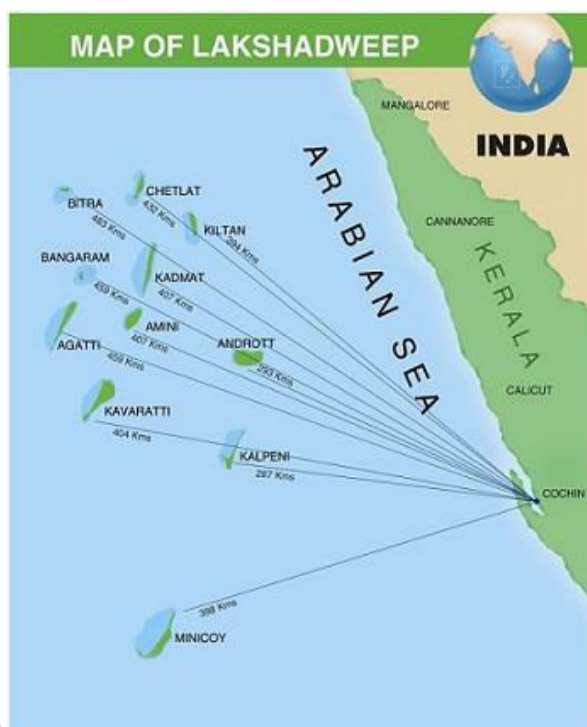**Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC):**
- It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, regulating the public exhibition of films under the provisions of the Cinematograph Act 1952.
- The Board consists of non-official members and a Chairman (all of whom are appointed by Central Government) and functions with headquarters at Mumbai.
- Films can be publicly exhibited in India (on cinema halls, T.V. channels) only after they have been certified by the Central Board of Film Certification.
- **At present, films are certified under 4 categories:** U, U/A, A& S.
2. Unrestricted Public Exhibition (U)
3. Unrestricted Public Exhibition - but with a word of caution that Parental discretion required for children below 12 years (U/A)
4. Restricted to adults (A)
5. Restricted to any special class of persons (S)

Provisions for Censorship:
- Article 19(2) of the Constitution authorises the government to impose, by law, reasonable restrictions upon the freedom of speech and expression in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.
- The Cinematograph Act, 1952 also provides for similar provisions as stated under Article 19(2).

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GEOGRAPHY

Rising Sea Levels

Recently, a study has projected that sea levels will rise around Lakshadweep Islands due to the impact of global warming.It will affect airport and residential areas that are quite close to the present coastline.India's smallest Union Territory, Lakshadweep is an archipelago consisting of 36 islands with an area of 32 sq km.

Key Points

Sea Level Rise (SLR):

- SLR is an increase in the level of the world's oceans due to the effects of climate change, especially global warming, induced by three primary factors: Thermal Expansion, Melting Glaciers and Loss of Greenland and Antarctica's ice sheets.
- Sea level is primarily measured using tide stations and satellite laser altimeters.

SLR is Linked to Three Primary Factors:

- **Thermal Expansion**: When water heats up, it expands. About half of the sea-level rise over the past 25 years is attributable to warmer oceans simply occupying more space.
- **Melting Glaciers**: Higher temperatures caused by global warming have led to greater-than-average summer melting of large ice formations like mountain glaciers as well as diminished snowfall due to later winters and earlier springs.That creates an imbalance between runoff and ocean evaporation, causing sea levels to rise.
- **Loss of Greenland and Antarctic Ice Sheets:** As with mountain glaciers, increased heat is causing the massive ice sheets that cover Greenland and Antarctica to melt more quickly, and also move more quickly into the sea.

Rate of SLR:

- **Global:** Global sea level has been rising over the past century, and the rate has accelerated in recent decades. The average global sea level has risen 8.9 inches between 1880 and 2015. That's much faster than in the previous 2,700 years.Also, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released 'The Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate' in 2019 which underlined the dire changes taking place in oceans, glaciers, and ice-deposits on land and sea.
- **Regional:** SLR is not uniform across the world. Regional SLR may be higher or lower than Global SLR due to subsidence, upstream flood control, erosion, regional ocean currents, variations in land height, and compressive weight of Ice Age glaciers.

Consequences of SLR:

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- **Coastal Flooding**: Globally, eight of the world's 10 largest cities are near a coast, which is threatened by coastal flooding.
- **Destruction of Coastal Biodiversity**: SLR can cause destructive erosion, wetland flooding, aquifer and agricultural soil contamination with salt, and lost habitat for biodiversity.
- **Dangerous Storm Surges**: Higher sea levels are coinciding with more dangerous hurricanes and typhoons leading to loss of life and property.
- **Lateral and Inland Migration**: Flooding in low-lying coastal areas is forcing people to migrate to the higher ground causing displacement and dispossession and in turn a refugee crisis worldwide.
- **Impact on Infrastructure:** The prospect of higher coastal water levels threatens basic services such as internet access.
- **Threat to Inland Life:** Rising seas can contaminate soil and groundwater with salt threatening life farther away from coasts.
- **Tourism and Military Preparedness:** Tourism to coastal areas and military preparedness will also be negatively affected by an increase in SLR.

Steps taken to Tackle SLR:
- **Relocation**: Many coastal cities have planned to adopt relocation as a mitigation strategy. For example, Kiribati Island has planned to shift to Fiji, while the Capital of Indonesia is being relocated from Jakarta to Borneo.
- **Building Sea Wall:** Indonesia's government launched a coastal development project called a Giant Sea Wall or "Giant Garuda" in 2014 meant to protect the city from floods.
- **Building Enclosures**: Researchers have proposed Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED), enclosing all of the North Sea to protect 15 Northern European countries from rising seas. The Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Irish Sea, and the Red Sea were also identified as areas that could benefit from similar mega enclosures.
- **Architecture to Steer Flow of Water**: Dutch City Rotterdam built barriers, drainage, and innovative architectural features such as a "water square" with temporary ponds.

Vulnerability of India:
- India's 7,516-kilometre-long coastline includes 5,422 kilometres of coastline on the mainland and 2,094 kilometres on the islands belonging to nine states and four Union Territories.
- The coastline accounts for 90% of the country's trade and it spans 3,331 coastal villages and 1,382 islands.

India's Efforts:
- **Coastal Regulation Zone:**
1. The coastal areas of seas, bays, creeks, rivers, and backwaters which get influenced by tides up to 500 m from the high tide line (HTL) and the land between the low tide line (LTL) and the high tide line were declared as Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) in 1991.
2. The latest regulation also takes into account rising sea-levels due to global warming.
- **National Action Plan on Climate Change:**
1. It was launched in 2008 by the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change.
2. It aims at creating awareness among the representatives of the public, different agencies of the government, scientists, industry and the communities on the threat posed by climate change and the steps to counter it.

Way Forward
- The Paris Agreement provides a clear vision on limiting global warming and thus, SLR.
- Some of the other steps in this direction would include:
1. Switching from fossil fuels to clean alternatives like solar and wind energy.
2. Instituting carbon taxes on industries and subsidies for reducing the carbon footprint.
3. Carbon sequestration by geo-engineering and natural methods like restoring peatland and wetland areas to capture existing greenhouse gases.
4. Afforestation and reducing deforestation.
5. Subsidizing research on climate change.

POLITY

Petition to Poll Results

Recently, the West Bengal Chief Minister has filed an election petition in the Calcutta High Court challenging the Assembly election result of Nandigram constituency.

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Key Points
Election Petition:
- The Election Commission's role ends with the declaration of results, after that, an election petition is the only legal remedy available to a voter or a candidate who believes there has been malpractice in an election.
- Such a person can challenge the result through an election petition submitted to the High Court of the state in which the constituency is located.
- Such a petition has to be filed within 45 days from the date of the poll results; nothing is entertained by courts after that.
- Although the Representative of the People Act (RP Act) of 1951 suggests that the High Court should try to conclude the trial within six months, it usually drags on for much longer, even years.

Grounds on which Election Petition be Filed (Section 100 of the RP Act):
- On the day of the election, the winning candidate was not qualified to contest.
- The winning candidate, his poll agent or any other person with the consent of the winning candidate has indulged in a corrupt practice.
- Improper acceptance of the nomination of the winning candidate or improper rejection of a nomination.
- Malpractice in the counting process, which includes improper reception, refusal or rejection of any vote, or the reception of any vote which is void.
- Non-compliance with the provisions of the Constitution or the RP Act or any rules or orders made under the RP Act.

If Verdict is in favour of the Petitioner (Section 84 of the RP Act):
- The petitioner may ask that the results of all or the winning candidates may be declared void.
- In addition to that, the petitioner may also ask the court to declare her (in case the petition is filed by a candidate) or any other candidate as the winner or duly elected.
- So the verdict on an election petition, if found in favour of the petitioner, may result in a fresh election or the court announcing a new winner.

History of Election Results Declared Void:
- The most famous being the Allahabad High Court verdict of 1975 which set aside Indira Gandhi's election from Rae Bareli constituency, four years earlier, on grounds of corrupt practice.

Provisions under RP Act 1951
- It regulates the actual conduct of elections and by-elections.
- It provides administrative machinery for conducting elections.
- It deals with the registration of political parties.Section 123 of the RP Act has a detailed list of what amounts to corrupt practice, including bribery, use of force or coercion, appeal to vote or refrain from voting on grounds of religion, race, community, and language.
- It specifies the qualifications and disqualifications for membership of the Houses.
- It provides provisions to curb corrupt practices and other offences.
- It lays down the procedure for settling doubts and disputes arising out of elections.

INTERNAL SECURITY

Creation of Integrated Triservice Theatre Commands

Recently, a high-level committee has been formed for the consultations on the creation of integrated triservice theatre commands.The committee will examine all issues and find a way forward before a formal note on their creation is sent to the Cabinet Committee on Security.

Key Points
About the Move:
- The move was necessitated due to some aspects like bringing in paramilitary forces (which is under Home Ministry) under the purview of the theatre commands and financial implications that may arise in the process of integration.
- The proposed Air Defence Command plans to integrate all air assets of the armed forces while the Maritime Theatre Command plans to bring in all assets of Navy, Coast Guard as well as coastal formations of Army and Air Force under one umbrella.
- On land, the Army's Northern command and Western Command would be converted into 2-5 theatre commands.

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Integrated Theatre Command:

- An integrated theatre command envisages a unified command of the three Services, under a single commander, for geographical theatres (areas) that are of strategic and security concern.
- The commander of such a force will be able to bear all resources at his disposal — from the Army, the Indian Air Force, and the Navy — with seamless efficacy.
- The integrated theatre commander will not be answerable to individual Services.
- Integration and jointness of the three forces will avoid duplication of resources. The resources available under each service will be available to other services too.
- The Shekatkar committee (in 2015) had recommended the creation of 3 integrated theatre commands — northern for the China border, western for the Pakistan border, and southern for the maritime role.

Views in favour of Integration:

- The integrated theatre commander will not be answerable to individual Services, and will be free to train, equip and exercise his command to make it a cohesive fighting force capable of achieving designated goals.
- The logistic resources required to support its operations will also be placed at the disposal of the theatre commander so that it does not have to look for anything when operations are ongoing.
- This is in contrast to the model of service-specific commands which India currently has, wherein the Army, Air Force and Navy all have their own commands all over the country. In case of war, each Service Chief is expected to control the operations of his Service through individual commands, while they operate jointly.

Views against Integration:

- There has been no occasion, during actual warfare, when the three services have not operated with commendable cooperation.
- Faraway land war and medium to high intensity wars are a distant possibility.
- With increased communication networks, interaction between three organizations is easy, they can come on board, can plan without much consideration of spatial distance, so there is no need for a new organisation.
- Domain knowledge of the integrated force commander is likely to be limited in respect of the other two Services components under his command, thereby limiting his ability to employ them in the most suitable manner and at the appropriate time.

Current Situation:

- The Indian armed forces currently have 17 commands. There are 7 commands each of the Army and the Air Force. The Navy has 3 commands.Each command is headed by a 4-star rank military officer.
- There is one joint command in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.It is the first Tri-Service theatre command of the Indian Armed Forces, based at Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar Islands of India.
- The other tri-service command, the Strategic Forces Command (SFC), looks after the delivery and operational control of the country's nuclear assets.

Recent Developments:

- The appointment of the CDS (Chief of Defence Staff) and the creation of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) are momentous steps towards the integration and advancement of defence forces.
1. **CDS:** It is the single-point military adviser to the government as suggested by the Kargil Review Committee in 1999.
2. **Department of Military Affairs:** Work exclusively pertaining to military matters will fall within the purview of the DMA. Earlier, these functions were the mandate of the Department of Defence (DoD).
- The Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat has operationalised the third Joint Logistics Node (JLN) in Mumbai.These JLNs will provide integrated logistics cover to the Armed Forces for their small arms ammunition, rations, fuel, general stores, civil hired transport, aviation clothing, spares and also engineering support in an effort to synergise their operational efforts.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Herbicide Tolerant (HT) Bt Cotton

The illegal cultivation of Herbicide Tolerant (HT) Bt cotton has seen a huge jump as the sale of illegal seed packets has more than doubled from 30 lakh in 2020 to 75 lakh in 2021.

Key Points

Bt Cotton:

- Bt cotton is the only transgenic crop that has been approved by the Centre for commercial cultivation in India.
- It has been genetically modified (GM) to produce an insecticide to combat the cotton bollworm, a common pest.

Herbicide Tolerant Bt (HTBt) Cotton:

- The HTBt cotton variant adds another layer of modification, making the plant resistant to the herbicide glyphosate, but has not been approved by regulators.
- Fears include glyphosate having a carcinogenic effect, as well as the unchecked spread of herbicide resistance to nearby plants through pollination, creating a variety of superweeds.

Need for Using HTBt Cotton:

- **Saves Cost:** There is a shortage of the labour needed to do at least two rounds of weeding for Bt cotton. With HTBt, simply one round of glyphosate spraying is needed with no weeding. It saves Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 8,000 per acre for farmers.
- **Support of Scientists:** Scientists are also in favour of this crop, and even the World Health Organization (WHO) has said it does not cause cancer. But the government has still withheld approval for HTBt.

Issues Emanating from Illegal Sale of HTBt Cotton:

- As it is not approved by the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), illegal sale takes place in Indian markets.
- Farmers are at risk with such illegal cotton seed sale as there is no accountability of the quality of seed, it pollutes the environment, the industry is losing legitimate seed sale and the government also loses revenue in terms of tax collection.
- It will not only decimate small cotton seed companies but also threatens the entire legal cotton seed market in India.

Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee:

- The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) functions under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).
- It is responsible for the appraisal of activities involving large-scale use of hazardous microorganisms and recombinants in research and industrial production from the environmental angle.
- The committee is also responsible for the appraisal of proposals relating to the release of genetically engineered (GE) organisms and products into the environment including experimental field trials.
- GEAC is chaired by the Special Secretary/Additional Secretary of MoEF&CC and co-chaired by a representative from the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).

Way Forward

- Regulators only limit their checking/regulation to licensed dealers and seed companies while illegal activity of HT seed sales is carried mostly by unorganised and fly-by-night operators. Thus, focus must be shifted to catching them and taking exemplary and strong punitive action.
- Collective action of both centre and state government is required. The Centre has made the policy to ban this variant. But it is the State governments that must also work in tandem with the central government.
- Environmental impact assessment should be carried out by independent environmentalists, as farmers do not and cannot assess the long-term impact of GM crops on ecology and health.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM

IN-EUNAVFOR Joint Naval Exercise

The maiden Indian Navy - European Union Naval Force (IN-EUNAVFOR) Exercise is being conducted in Gulf Of Aden.

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Key Points

Participants: Along with Indian Navy, other naval forces are from Italy, Spain and France.The naval exercise included advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises, tactical manoeuvres, Search & Rescue, and other maritime security operations.

Aim: To enhance and hone their war-fighting skills and their ability as an integrated force to promote peace, security and stability in the maritime domain.

Significance:

- EUNAVFOR and the Indian Navy converge on multiple issues including counter piracy operations and protection of vessels deployed under the charter of World Food Programme (UN WFP).
- The two navies also have regular interaction through SHADE (Shared Awareness and Deconfliction) meetings held annually at Bahrain.SHADE is an international operational counter piracy platform, convened in Bahrain.It aimed to encourage partners for sharing information, assessing the evolution of trends, best practices and to de-conflict operations amongst counter-piracy actors in the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman and the Western Indian Ocean.
- It also underscores the shared values in ensuring freedom of seas and commitment to an open, inclusive and a rules-based international order.
- Concurrently, a virtual "Information sharing Exercise" is also being conducted between the Indian Navy Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region and Maritime Security Centre-Horn of Africa, an integral part of EUNAVFOR.

Major Indian Maritime Exercises

Name of the Exercise	Name of the Country
SLINEX	Sri Lanka
Bongosagar and IN-BN CORPAT	Bangladesh
JIMEX	Japan
Naseem-Al-Bahr	Oman
Indra	Russia
Za'ir-Al-Bahr	Qatar
Samudra Shakti	Indonesia
Indo-Thai CORPAT	Thailand
IMCOR	Malaysia
SIMBEX	Singapore
AUSINDEX	Australia
Malabar Exercise	Japan, and the USA

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. Discuss the basic principles of the communitarianism school of thought.

Ans:

Introduction

Communitarianism is a social and political philosophy that emphasizes the importance of community in the functioning of political life, in the analysis and evaluation of political institutions, and in understanding human identity and well-being.

Body

- According to communitarians, a healthy community, and not the maximization of individual choices, is the desirable goal of public decision-making.

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- They regard any individual as inherently situated in society. It is within society that individuals have their being and acquire their identity. Society and other human beings are a prerequisite for human life and happiness.In a way, communitarians accord higher priority to society over the individual.
- Communitarians value courteous dialogues on public issues, reasoned analysis of problems, and dispassionate individual decision-making.
- According to them, laws will be effective only when they are based on a moral consensus that aims at specific goals.
- The goals which governments need to pursue are healthy citizenry, environmental protection, reducing crimes, and strengthening community solidarity.
- They do not, however, advocate any form of collectivist or dictatorial ideology. What they have in mind is a global community–with all its diversities–of the information age.

Conclusion

- This view is in sharp contrast with the economic theory of the market in which individual self-interest acts as the driving force with the myriad individual decisions getting coordinated by an invisible hand.
- In contrast, communitarians argue that consideration for others, altruism, loyalty, community-based attachments, and other group-based sentiments are at the base of social life.

DAILY QUIZ

Q1. Who wrote the book 'The History of the war of Indian Independence'?
   a. Surendranath Banerjee
   b. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar
   c. Rash Behari Bose
   d. Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Q2. Consider the following statements :
   1. The Chief Secretary in a State is appointed by the Governor of that State.
   2. The Chief Secretary in a State has a fixed tenure.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   a. 1 only
   b. 2 only
   c. Both 1 and 2
   d. Neither 1 nor 2

Q3. Consider the following statements with reference to monoclonal antibody:
   1. They are made by cloning a unique white blood cell.
   2. They are used to treat many diseases, including some types of cancer.
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. With reference to recently discovered new subgenus of cricket 'Jayanti', consider the following statements:
   1. It was found in the Khangkhui Lime Caves of Arunachal Pradesh.
   2. Males of the new Jayanti subgenus cannot produce sound and their females don't have ears.
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

Q5. With reference to Indian pangolin (Manis crassicaudata), consider the following statements:
   1. It is naturally found in India only.
   2. It is widely distributed in India, except the arid region, high Himalayas and the North-East.
   3. It has been listed as "endangered".
Which of the given above statements is/are correct?
   a. 2 and 3 only
   b. 3 only
   c. 1 and 2 only
   d. 1, 2 and 3