

GOVERNMENT POLICIES & INTERVENTIONS

1. Ban on the two-finger Test

❖ **Context:** Recently, the Supreme Court declared that any person conducting the 'two-finger test' on rape or sexual assault survivors will be found guilty of misconduct.

❖ **Court's Recent verdict:**

➤ The court said that the test is "regressive and invasive" and has "no scientific basis as it neither proves nor disapproves allegations of rape". It instead "re-victimises and re-traumatises women who may have been sexually assaulted."

➤ **2013 SC verdict:** In 2013 Lillu v. State of Haryana, the Supreme Court had held that the two-finger test violates the right of rape survivors.

➤ **Justice Verma Committee:** The Committee in 2013 has recommended the discontinuation of the two-finger test which is conducted to determine the laxity of the vaginal muscles. Justice Verma Committee was constituted to recommend amendments to the Criminal Law so as to provide for quicker trial and enhanced punishment for criminals accused of committing sexual assault against women.

❖ **About the Two-finger Test:**

➤ The two-finger test is an invasive, unscientific and regressive practice where two fingers are inserted in the vagina to assess the laxity of vaginal muscles and examine the hymen.

➤ The two-finger test or per vagina examination is conducted on alleged victims of sexual assault and rape to determine whether they are habituated to sexual intercourse.

❖ **Issues:**

➤ **Invalid for sexually active women:** The test is based on the incorrect assumption that a sexually active woman cannot be raped.

➤ **No evidential value in the investigation:** In the case of sexual assault, the doctor is required to mention marks of resistance and sign(s) of recent intercourse.

➤ **Doctor does not give his/her opinion about rape,** as rape is a legal term and not a medical diagnosis. It is for the investigating officer to conclude after their investigation whether or not rape was committed.

➤ **Therefore, it is undesirable to conduct the two-finger test** (on a victim of sexual assault), which has no evidential value in the investigation.

➤ **More victimisation:** The test instead re-victimises and re-traumatises women who may have been sexually assaulted and is an affront to their dignity.

❖ **Challenges in enforcing the Ban on the two-finger test:**

➤ **Lack of training & adherence to guidelines:** In 2014, the Union Ministry of Health issued 'guidelines and protocols' prescribing the application of the two-finger test. These guidelines were circulated to hospitals, but the doctors handling medico-legal cases apparently did not take the instructions seriously.

➤ **Lack of interconnection:** Interaction between the Health Ministry and the Home Ministry (or the police department) is limited. Further, the Health Department is not one of the pillars of the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS). ICJS is an extension of the Home Ministry's mission mode project, the Crime and Criminal Tracking and Network Systems (CCTNS), and is operational at each police station of the country.

❖ **Suggestions:**

➤ **Improved investigation with efficient institutional mechanism:** All departments which have a bearing on the investigation of offences or are stakeholders in the criminal justice system must come together periodically so that they can exchange best practices, latest developments in law, and court rulings. An institutional mechanism needs to be developed to ensure continuity of this process.

➤ **Congruence within ministries & departments:** The medico-legal section of the Health Department needs to be integrated with the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS).

➤ **Training:** Training capacity must also be reviewed, and communication channels improved to avoid the status quo.

➤ **Strict implementation:** There must be a strict implementation of the recommendation of the Justice Verma Committee about two-finger tests and regarding the collection of evidence.

❖ **Initiatives by the Government & the judiciary:**

➤ **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013:** It amended the Evidence Act to insert Section 53A that the evidence of a victim's character or of her previous sexual experience with any person shall not be relevant to the issue of consent or the quality of consent, in prosecutions of sexual offences.

➤ **Workshops:** The SC also ordered workshops to be held to communicate the appropriate procedure to determine sexual assault and rape.

➤ **Curriculum in medical schools:** SC also directed the government to review the curriculum in medical schools so ensure the practice is no longer used.

2. New TV Broadcast Guidelines:

❖ **Context:** Now satellite TV channels in India are required to broadcast at least 30 minutes of content daily on themes of national importance and of social relevance.

❖ **What is the requirement for public service broadcasting?**

- It is **obligatory** under the guidelines for all TV channels, **including private channels**, to **undertake public service broadcasting** for a **minimum period of 30 minutes** in a day on themes of national importance and of social relevance.
- The government has argued that since “**airwaves/ frequencies are public property**” they need to be used in the best interest of the society.
- Once the guidelines are implemented, the **Ministry will monitor the channels** for the broadcast of this content.
- The condition applies to all channels, **except those specifically exempted**.
- The exemption may apply to **wildlife channels** and **foreign channels**, besides **live telecasts** in the case of sports channels.
- Broadcast companies will be **allowed to uplink foreign channels** from Indian teleports, which would create employment opportunities and make India a teleport hub for other countries, officials.
- ❖ **Definition of national interest for this purpose**
- The guidelines have identified **eight themes** of national importance and of social relevance:
 - ✓ education and spread of literacy;
 - ✓ agriculture and rural development;
 - ✓ health and family welfare;
 - ✓ science and technology;
 - ✓ welfare of women;
 - ✓ welfare of the weaker sections of the society;
 - ✓ protection of environment and of cultural heritage; and
 - ✓ National integration.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- ❖ **Russia's withdrawal from Kherson:**
- ❖ **Context:** Russian Defence minister Sergei Shoigu announced Russia would pull out its troops from the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson, the first and only regional capital to be captured by Russian forces since they invaded Ukraine in late February.
- ❖ **Why Kherson is an important location geographically and how did Russia take control over it? What are the reasons for Russia's retreat from the region? Is the withdrawal a tactical or a strategic move by Moscow?**
- **Where is Kherson and why is it important?**
- Geographically, Kherson is a strategic location for Russia and Ukraine. Situated in the northwest of the Dnipro River, the province shares borders with Donetsk, Crimea and the Black Sea.
- With Moscow capturing Crimea in 2014, the occupation of Kherson in March 2022 has benefited Russia in transferring its military from Crimea to counter Ukraine.
- It provides access to Odesa and Black Sea ports in the west and serves as the main route to secure southern Ukraine. For Ukraine, regaining Kherson is significant to protect its population in Kalanchak and Chaplynka districts and also to recapture Crimea. Kherson is also an important region for its agricultural produce, with irrigation channels.
- ❖ **How did Kherson come under Russia's control?**
- In early March 2022, Kherson was captured by Russia through intense fighting. The battle of Kherson proved to be the starting point to capturing and occupying the southern part of Ukraine while the battles for Kharkiv and Kyiv in the north progressed. Russia's hold over Kherson since March 2022 enabled Moscow to capture the key port cities — Mariupol in the Sea Azov, and Odesa, thus expanding control.
- Kherson's irrigation canals were used as defence positions, creating a strong line preventing Ukraine's counter-attacks. Russia also had positioned its soldiers in Kherson and stockpiled the ammunition.
- ❖ **Why has Moscow announced its withdrawal from Kherson?**
- There are three reasons behind the move.
- First is the mobilisation failure. When Russia was advancing rapidly in capturing the southern and northern cities of Ukraine, its military personnel and weapon systems started to run thin. Russia then pursued a partial mobilisation as the next strategy to circumvent its on-ground limitations. The failure of new recruits added an additional challenge to Russia to keep its hold against the Ukraine counter-offensive in Kherson.
- Secondly, the inability of Russia to govern Kherson. Despite imposing martial law, Russia could not effectively rule Kherson; the three-level security in the occupied areas could not enforce Russia's control on the ground.
- Third, Ukraine's expanding counter-offensive. Until August, Ukraine was supplied only with short-range and low-grade weapons by the West. Later, Ukrainian soldiers received military training; as Moscow continued its onslaught, the West upgraded its support with medium to high-range weapons systems such as the Howitzers, HIMARS, air defence systems, battle tanks and drone technologies.
- It came from the U.S., the U.K. and Germany, whereas Russia's procurement was slow and limited to Shahed drones. This helped Ukraine recapture Russian occupied areas including Izyum, northeast, southeast of Kharkiv, Izyum-Sloviansk, Kupiansk in Eastern Ukraine, and northwest Kherson in the south. On the other hand, Russia has been facing challenges in augmenting its military hardware on the battleground.
- ❖ **Is the withdrawal final, or a tactical move by Russia?**

- Russia's new mobilisation has failed to stop the advancing of Ukraine forces. The challenges to remobilise its defence systems and the shortage of weapons must have played a role in Russia's withdrawal.
- With Ukraine strengthening its military capacity through support from the West, upgrading from land-based to air-based to heavy battle tanks, Russia is facing a challenge to hold its occupied territories in Ukraine.
- However, this is not the first time Moscow is making a withdrawal, after an initial onslaught. The attack on Ukraine's capital Kyiv was an initial strategy of Russia. Later, Moscow shifted its strategy from capturing Kyiv to concentrating on eastern Ukraine.
- Similarly, Russia also withdrew from its strategy to capture Kharkiv. Controlling Donetsk and Luhansk have become a significant objective.
- Withdrawal from Kherson exposes a serious gap in Russia's strategy to hold southern Ukraine. However, it also underlines its strategy — to withdraw under serious attack or resistance by the Ukrainian forces — as it happened in Kyiv and Kharkiv.

PRELIMS

1. Celebrating Parampara

- ❖ **Context:** The 26th edition of Natya Tarangini's Parampara festival, organised by Kuchipudi exponents Raja and Radha Reddy, will be held for three days from November 12 at Raja Radha Rangmanch at the Natya Tarangini Institute of Performing Arts in Delhi.
- Each year's edition is based on a particular theme, featuring solo and jugal bandi concerts by artistes from India and abroad. The lineup for this year's edition includes concerts by both Carnatic and Hindustani musicians, panel discussions and talk/conversation among young artistes (to be conducted virtually). The series will begin with Ustad Amjad Ali Khan's sarod recital followed by Kuchipudi performances by Raja-Radha Reddy).
- On day two Aruna Sairam (Carnatic vocal) will perform followed by Rama Vaidyanathan's Bharatanatyam performance. The festival concludes with Aditi Mangaldas (kathak) and Jeyateerth Mevundi (Hindustani vocal and abhang) performances.

2. ISRO's Indigenously developed Cryogenic Engine

- ❖ **Context:** ISRO successfully conducted the hot test of CE20 cryogenic engine for the LVM3 at its test facility in Mahendragiri.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully conducted the hot test of CE20 cryogenic engine, which has been indigenously developed for LVM3, previously called the GSLV-Mk3.
- CE20 cryogenic engine is indigenously developed for LVM3.
- This will enhance the LVM3 payload capability up to 450 kg with additional propellant loading.
- The major modifications carried out on this test article compared to previous engines were introduction of Thrust Control Valve (TCV) for thrust control.
- The LVM3 is the heaviest launch vehicle of ISRO.
- Recently, the LVM3 launch vehicle placed 36 satellites of OneWeb - this was LVM's first commercial launch.
- ❖ **About LVM3**
- The Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3), previously referred to as the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk3), is a three-stage medium-lift launch vehicle developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- Primarily designed to launch communication satellites into geostationary orbit, it is also due to launch crewed missions under the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme.
- GSLV Mk III has a higher payload capacity than its predecessor, GSLV Mk II.
- ISRO changed the name of GSLV Mk3 to LVM 3 after the successful launch of LVM3-M2 mission.

3. Nadaprabhu Kempegowda

- ❖ **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra of India arrived in Bengaluru to unveil the 108-feet tall bronze statue of 'Nadaprabhu Kempegowda, credited to be the city's founder.
- ❖ **Who was Nadaprabhu Kempegowda?**
- Nadaprabhu Kempegowda, a 16th century chieftain of the Vijayanagara empire, is credited as the founder of Bengaluru.
- He marked its territory by erecting towers in four corners of the proposed city.
- Kempegowda is also known to have developed around 1,000 lakes in the city to cater to drinking and agricultural needs.
- He was from the dominant agricultural Vokkaliga community in south Karnataka

4. Veerangana Sewa Kendra

- ❖ **Context:** The Indian Army with a motto of "Taking Care of Our Own, No Matter What" launched a single window facility named the "Veerangana Sewa Kendra" (VSK) for welfare and grievances redressal of veer-naris.
- The project was inaugurated by President Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA).
- Veerangana Sewa Kendra (VSK) caters for registering grievances with tracking, monitoring and regular feedback to the applicant.
- Veer-naris / Next of Kin will have multiple means for approaching the VSK through telephone, SMS, WhatsApp, Post, e-mail and walk-ins to seek assistance.

- Veer naris are employed as VSK staff to maintain inherent connect and empathy with the beneficiaries.
- The VSK is one of its kind initiative by the Indian Army towards extending genuine care and support to its widows and veer-naris.
- ❖ **About AIWA**
- Army Wives Welfare Association or AWWA is an association that works for the welfare of the spouses, children and dependents of Army personnel.
- The association was officially registered as a Welfare Society with the Registrar of Societies in 1966.
- All wives of army men are beneficiaries of AWWA.
- However, AWWA as a functionary body exists only from the Corps level upwards.
- Below the Corps level the AWWA presides through its Family Welfare Organizations (FWO).
- 5. **Indian Biological Data Center:**
- ❖ **Context:** Union Minister of State, Ministry of Science and Technology dedicated to the nation India's first national repository for life science data-'Indian Biological Data Center' (IBDC) at Faridabad, Haryana.
- IBDC is mandated to archive all life science data generated from publicly-funded research in India.
- It has been established at Regional Centre of Biotechnology (RCB), Faridabad with a data 'Disaster Recovery' site at National Informatics Centre (NIC), Bhubaneswar.
 - The National Informatics Centre (NIC) is a department under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
 - The NIC provides infrastructure, IT Consultancy, IT Services.
- It has a data storage capacity of about 4 petabytes and houses the 'Brahm' High Performance Computing (HPC) facility.
- The computational infrastructure at IBDC is also made available for researchers interested in performing computational-intensive analysis.
- IBDC has started nucleotide data submission services via two data portals viz.
 - The Indian Nucleotide Data Archive (INDA) and
 - Indian Nucleotide Data Archive - Controlled Access (INDA-CA)
- It also hosts an online Dashboard for the genomic surveillance data generated by the INSACOG labs.
 - The dashboard provides customized data submission, access, data analysis services, and real-time SARS-CoV-2 variant monitoring across India.
- IBDC is committed to the spirit of data sharing as per FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) principles.

ANSWER WRITTING

Q. India has the potential to be the next space hub for the world. Highlight India's achievements and challenges in realization of its space capabilities.

Answer: From launching small rockets of just 30-70 kg payloads to carrying 4,000 kg payloads to outer space, Indian space journey has been refreshingly audacious. ISRO today is amongst the top six government space agencies in the world.

Potential of the space sector in India:

- India's space sector accounts for 2% of the global space economy, but can aim to touch 8% on the back of hard work by the private sector with hand-holding from ISRO.
- The new space policy, which is expected to be unveiled soon, is expected to remove most of the constraints faced by private players.
- India has the potential to have hundreds of space entrepreneurs and the future of India will be scripted by young Indians (demographic dividend).

Achievements in space sector:

- PSLV: The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) is India's 3rd generation launch vehicle, and also the first launch vehicle by India that is equipped with liquid stages.
- Chandrayan 1: Chandrayaan-1 was India's first moon mission. Although the mission was concluded after communication was lost with the spacecraft in 2009, it still managed to give India's space program a major boost.
- Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM): MOM or Mangalyaan was India's 1st interplanetary mission. The mission made India the 1st Asian country, and the fourth in the world after ROSCOSMOS, NASA, and the European Space Agency, to get to the planet.
- GSLV: The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) too is a space launch vehicle designed to launch satellites and other space objects into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbits. A 3-stage launcher with strap-on motors, GSLV has the capability to put a heavier payload in orbit than the PSLV.
- Cryogenic Engine: Cryogenic engines use liquid oxygen as the oxidizer and liquid hydrogen as the fuel. Only the US, Japan, France, Russia & China had this technology. Now India stands neck to neck with them.
- NETRA Project: Project NETRA is an early warning system in space to detect debris and other hazards to Indian satellites.

Challenges in space sector:

- Contribution to GDP: India spends about \$ 1.5-2 billion on the space sector, but the resultant contribution to the GDP is not to the tune of investment made.
- Space Expenditure: According to Economic Survey 2020-21, India still lags behind US, China & Russia in terms of space expenditure. The US spends 10 times more while China's expenditure was 6 times more than India's space expenditure.
- Grievance Redressal: India has poor grievance redressal & dispute settlement mechanism. The void was seen in Antrix – Devas cancelled satellite deal.
- Brain Drain: Thousands of skilled engineers pass out each year and many migrate to other countries due to limited opportunities within the country. According to a government survey of 2008, 36% of scientists at NASA are Indians.
- Regulatory Issues: Lack of predictable policy & regulatory environment is hurting the involvement of the private sector in the space economy.
- FDI: Mandatory sectoral approvals for FDI in the sector are a huge road-block.

Way Forward:

- Establishing new partnerships with other space organisations and private entrepreneurs.
- Bringing in a business platform that helps shorten rocketry and satellite development time to achieve first-time-right quality for successful launches.
- Improved regulatory clarity would mean fewer barriers of entry for private firms and better synergies between ISRO and private collaborators.
- Opening up ISRO testing facilities to the private sector.

The space sector plays a dual role in the national security strategy. It is vital from the strategic autonomy perspective and is also an enabler for the country's socio-economic development. Therefore, appropriate steps must be taken to contain the issues plaguing the space economy.

MCQs

- Consider the following statements:
 - Kherson is situated in the northwest of the Dnipro River, the province shares borders with Donetsk, Crimea and the Black Sea.
 - It provides access to Odesa and Black Sea ports in the west and serves as the main route to secure southern Ukraine.

Which among the above statements are correct?

 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 & 2**
 - None of the above
- Consider the following statements regarding G20 Summit:
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Bali for the G-20 leadership summit from November 14 to 16.
 - The motto of G20 summit, 2022 is "Recover Together, Recover Stronger".

Which among the above statements are correct?

 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 & 2**
 - None of the above
- Consider the following statements:
 - The India- U.S. CEO forum was chaired jointly by Commerce and Industry Minister.
 - Bilateral trade between the countries had risen to \$120 billion in FY22 from \$80.5 billion in FY21.

Which among the above statements are correct?

 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 & 2**
 - None of the above
- The city/region of Kherson, recently seen in news, is located in the region of —
 - Middle East
 - Central Asia
 - Europe**
 - South East Asia
- Which of the following countries are members of G-20?
 - Argentina
 - Turkey
 - UAE
 - India

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
 - b) 2,3 and 4 only
 - c) **1, 2 and 4 only**
 - d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
6. Who of the followings is the Founder of Bengaluru?
- a) Edwin Lutyens
 - b) Otto Konigsberger
 - c) **Kempe Gowda I**
 - d) Krishnadev Raya
7. Consider the following Statements about ISRO.
1. Chandrayan – 2 will be launched to study the origin & evolution of moon.
 2. Aditya – 1 is india's first solar launch to study solar coroner.
 3. GAGAN launched by Ministry of Civil Aviation is for GPS aided GEO Augmented Navigation.
 4. Recently ISRO launched 36 One-Web's satellite using its PSLV Rocket.
- Select the correct answer using the codes below
- a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2, 3 and 4 only
 - c) **1, 2 and 3 only**
 - d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
8. Consider the following statements regarding provisions of the Protection Of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO). Which of the statements is INCORRECT ?
- a) The Act calls for mandatory reporting of sexual offences.
 - b) A false complaint with intent to defame a person is also punishable under the Act
 - c) "Children" according to the Act are individuals aged below 18 years.
 - d) **The primary body tasked with implementing the provisions of the Act is the Ministry of Women and Child Development.**
9. What is the provision to safeguard the autonomy of the Supreme Court of India?
1. While appointing the Supreme Court Judges, the President of India has to consult the Chief Justice of India.
 2. The Supreme Court Judges can be removed by the Chief Justice of India only.
 3. The salaries of the Judges are charged on the Consolidated Fund of India to which the legislature does not have to vote.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) 3 only
 - d) **1 and 3 only**
10. Consider the following statements.
1. India's first national repository for life science data- 'Indian Biological Data Center' (IBDC) inaugurated at Faridabad, Haryana.
 2. IBDC is committed to the spirit of data sharing as per FAIR – (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Recyclable) principles.
 3. The National Informatics Centre (NIC) is a department under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
- Select the correct answer using the codes below
- a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **1 and 3 only**
 - d) 1, 2 and 3