

## **1. Contempt of Court**

### **Why in News?**

- Supreme Court has said Kerala Government may face Contempt of Court in Sabarimala issue.

### **About:**

- In India, the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, divides contempt into civil contempt and criminal contempt.
- ‘Civil contempt’ is a ‘willful disobedience to any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other processes of a Court or willful breach of an undertaking given to the court’.
- ‘Criminal contempt’ is ‘the publication (whether by words, spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise) of any matter or the doing of any other act whatsoever which:
  1. Scandalises or tends to scandalise, or lowers or tends to lower the authority of, any court.
  2. Prejudices, or interferes or tends to interfere with the due course of any judicial proceeding.
  3. Interferes or tends to interfere with, or obstructs or tends to obstruct, the administration of justice in any other manner.’
- The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, very clearly states that fair criticism of any case which has been heard and decided is not contempt.
- The statute of 1971 has been amended by the Contempt of Courts (Amendment) Act, 2006 to include the defence of truth under Section 13 of the original legislation.
- Section 13 that already served to restrict the powers of the court in that they were not to hold anyone in contempt unless it would substantially interfere with the due process of justice, the amendment further states that the court must permit ‘justification by truth as a valid defence if it is satisfied that it is in public interest and the request for invoking the said defence is bona fide.’

## **2. NATGRID**

### **Why in News?**

- The Ambitious National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) project will be operational from December 31, 2020.

### **About:**

- It is an ambitious counter terrorism programme that was initiated post Mumbai 26/11 attack.
- It will utilise technologies like Big Data and analytics to study and analyse the huge amounts of data from various intelligence and enforcement agencies to help track suspected terrorists and prevent terrorist attacks.
- It will connect, in different phases, data providing organisations and users besides developing a legal structure through which information can be accessed by the law enforcement agencies.
- The database would be accessible to authorized persons from 11 agencies on a case-to-case basis, and only for professional investigations into suspected cases of terrorism.

## **3. Suez Canal**

### **Why in News?**

- 150<sup>th</sup> year of Suez Canal was celebrated recently.

### **About Suez Canal:**

- Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway in Egypt. It links the Mediterranean with the Red Sea through Isthmus of Suez. It was first opened in 1869 after a decade of construction.
- Strategically and economically it is one of the most important waterways in the world providing the shortest sea link between Asia and Europe.
- Its opening had provided alternative route to sea voyage between Europe and India. It had reduced the sea voyage distance between these two regions by about 7,000 kilometres without navigating around Africa.
- The canal was nationalized by Egypt in 1956 after brief war against the UK, France and Israel. The canal has been a significant income source for Egypt since then.



#### **4. ISA – Steel Conclave 2019**

##### **Why in News?**

- The Indian Steel Association supported by the Ministry of Steel, Government of India is organising the Second Edition of “ISA – Steel Conclave 2019” in New Delhi in November 2019.

##### **ISA – Steel Conclave:**

- The Conclave would feature discussions between senior industry leaders, government and consultants on innovations and technology, role of steel in construction & design, steel exports, capital goods, environmental management and other cutting-edge issues.
- The Conclave is a platform for the entire steel ecosystem and the related sectors to gain Valuable Insights.

##### **Indian Steel Industry:**

- India was the world’s 2nd largest producer of crude steel (106 MT) in the calendar year 2018. She is the largest producer of Direct Reduced Iron (DRI) or Sponge Iron in the world. India was the 3rd largest consumer of finished steel in 2018 in the world after China and the USA.

- The steel sector contributes around 2% of the country's GDP and employs around 25 lakhs persons in steel/allied sectors.
- She is also the 4th largest producer of iron ore in the world.
- India is the second-largest coal producer and importer, after China.
- 100 per cent FDI through the automatic route is allowed in the steel sector.

## **5. Prevention of Fraudulent Banking Practices**

### **Why in News?**

- The Ministry of Finance has taken a number of steps to eliminate fraudulent banking practices.

### **Highlights:**

- The Government has issued a "Framework for timely detection, reporting, investigation, etc. relating to large value bank frauds" to Public Sector Banks (PSBs) for systemic and comprehensive checking of legacy stock of their non-performing assets (NPAs), which provides that:
- All accounts exceeding Rs. 50 crore, if classified as NPAs, be examined by banks from the angle of possible fraud, and a report placed before the bank's Committee for Review of NPAs on the findings of this investigation;
- Examination be initiated for wilful default immediately upon reporting fraud to RBI; and
- Report on the borrower be sought from the Central Economic Intelligence Bureau in case an account turns NPA.
- Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 has been enacted to deter economic offenders from evading the process of Indian law by remaining outside the jurisdiction of Indian courts. Read more on the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act in CNA dated 6th Jan, 2019.
- PSBs have been advised to obtain certified copy of the passport of the promoters/directors and other authorised signatories of companies availing loan facilities of more than Rs. 50 crore and, decide on publishing photographs of wilful defaulters, in terms of the instructions of RBI and as per their Board-approved policy and to strictly ensure rotational transfer of officials/employees. The heads of PSBs have also been empowered to issue requests for issue of Look Out Circulars.
- For enforcement of auditing standards and ensuring the quality of audits, the Government has established the National Financial Reporting Authority as an independent regulator.

- Instructions/advisories have been issued by Government to PSBs to decide on publishing photographs of wilful defaulters, in terms of RBI's instructions and as per their Board-approved policy, and to obtain certified copy of the passport of the promoters/directors and other authorised signatories of companies availing loan facilities of more than Rs. 50 crore.

## **6. Exercise Za'ir-Al-Bahr (Roar of the Sea)**

### **Why in News?**

- Joint Exercise between the Qatari Emiri Navy and the Indian Navy, Za'ir-Al-Bahr (the Roar of the Sea).

### **Exercise Za'ir-Al-Bahr:**

- The inaugural edition of the bilateral exercise between the Indian Navy and the navy of Qatar (Qatari Emiri Navy) is being conducted in November 2019 at Doha.
- Exercise Za'ir-Al-Bahr 2019 would strengthen cooperation and enhance interoperability between the two navies. The Exercise will include a three-day Harbour Phase and a two-day Sea Phase. The activities during the harbour phase will include a seminar, professional interaction, official visits, and sports fixtures along with social and cultural events.
- The Sea Phase will include a Tactical Maritime Exercise involving the domains of Surface Action, Air Defence, Maritime Surveillance and Interdiction Operation and anti-terrorism.
- Indian Navy Guided Missile Stealth Frigate INS Trikand and Patrol Aircraft P8-I are participating in the event.
- INS Trikand is one of the frontline frigates of the Indian Navy equipped with a versatile range of weapons and sensors. The P8-I Maritime Patrol Aircraft incorporates the latest technology for Maritime Surveillance.

## **7. SARAS IITF 2019**

### **Why in News?**

- The Union Minister for Rural Development inaugurates the SARAS IITF 2019.

### **SARAS IITF 2019:**

- SARAS Mela is an initiative by the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India with an objective to bring the rural women SHG members formed under

DAY-NRLM, in one platform to showcase their skills, sell and build linkages with potential market players.

- SARAS Mela not only provides a platform to these SHG women, but it also provides a national level exposure to understand the demand and taste of the urban customers in metros.
- The SARAS IITF Mela is organized by the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) along with DAY-NRLM, MoRD.
- Items for display and sale include natural food items, handicraft, handloom, etc.
- Artisans from various states participate in the event.

## **8. President's Colours**

### **Why in News?**

- The President of India and the Supreme Commander of Indian Armed Forces awarded the President's Colours to the Indian Naval Academy.

### **President's Colour:**

- President's Colour is a visible symbol of excellence and is earned through dedication and worthy contribution both during war and peace.
- The Indian Navy became the first amongst the three services to be presented with the President's Colours on 27 May 1951, by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India.
- The President's Colours have thus far in the Indian Navy been awarded to Southern Naval Command, Eastern Naval Command, Western Naval Command, Western Fleet, Eastern Fleet and the Submarine Arm.

## **9. Special Protection Group**

### **Why in News?**

- The SPG (Special Protection Group) cover for the Gandhi family, who had been under the tightest possible security after former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in 1991 by bombers of the Lankan terror group LTTE.

### **Special Protection Group (SPG):**

- It was raised in 1985 with the intention to provide proximate security cover to the Prime Minister, former Prime Ministers and their immediate family members.



- SPG officers are ingrained in high leadership qualities, professionalism, knowledge of proximate security and inculcate the culture of leading from the front, in collaboration with the IB and State/ UT police forces.
- SPG officers are trained to offer, if necessary, the supreme sacrifice to ensure that the sacred task assigned to the organization by the Government is fulfilled at all costs.

## **10. NBFCs under IBC**

### **Why in News?**

- The corporate affairs ministry, after consultation with RBI issued a notification specifying the categories of financial service providers (FSPs) that can be taken up for resolution under the "generic framework" of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.

### **Why NBFCs under IBC?**

- Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies have been under stress ever since Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services Ltd (IL&FS) defaulted on loan repayments last year.
- The IL&FS Crisis affected the financial stability of the NBFC sector by creating a liquidity crunch.
- The move is likely to help distressed NBFCs to draw up a resolution plan under IBC. Potential investors may also prefer the protection offered by the legal process.

### **Section 227 of the IBC:**

- This allows the Central government to notify FSPs or categories of FSPs for the purpose of insolvency and liquidation proceedings.

### **New Rules:**

- As per the new rules, only a regulator will be allowed to refer a non-bank lender or housing financier to a bankruptcy tribunal, unlike in the case of companies that can approach a tribunal on their own, or can be dragged into one either by lenders or operational creditors such as material suppliers.

### **What is a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)?**

- A Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956.
- These are financial institutions that offer various banking services but do not have a banking license.
- They can engage in the business of loans and advances.
- They can acquire shares/stocks/bonds/debentures/securities issued by Government or other marketable securities of a like nature, leasing, hire-purchase, insurance business, chit business
- It does not include any institution whose principal business is that of agriculture activity, industrial activity, purchase or sale of any goods (other than securities) or providing any services and sale/purchase/construction of immovable property.
- A non-banking institution which is a company and has principal business of receiving deposits under any scheme or arrangement in one lump sum or in instalments, is also a non-banking financial company (Residuary non-banking company).

## **11. Avalanches in Siachen**

### **Why in News?**

- Four Indian Army personnel and two civilian porters were killed after they were hit by an avalanche in the northern part of the Siachen Glacier.

### **Avalanche:**

- An avalanche is the downward motion of a large mass of snow/ice on a slope with high speed and great force causing widespread destruction on its way downhill and in the valley region below. The downward motion may be in the form of gliding or sliding along the slope like a rock fall, or flowing along the ground like fluid or whirling through the air like a whirl wind.
- The Factors that contribute to avalanche formation
  - ✓ Snow
  - ✓ Nature of ground
  - ✓ Meteorological or weather conditions



## Types of Avalanches

- ✓ Loose Snow Avalanche
- ✓ Slab Avalanches
- ✓ Air born/powder Avalanche

## Avalanche Prone Areas in India:

- Snow and Avalanche problem is a problem of high-altitude mountainous regions
- It ranges from Northern parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Hills of Uttaranchal and up to Sikkim in the East.

## Avalanche Disasters in India

- Snow avalanches occur frequently in the Northern Himalayan ranges of J&K, H.P. and Uttarakhand.
- The incidence is much less in the eastern and north-eastern Himalayas because the dense forest and vegetation cover in these areas, act as a binding force and inhibit the slippage of snow mass.
- An average of 50 to 60 human lives are lost and assets worth millions of Rupees are destroyed every year due to avalanches.

## Avalanche Hazard Mitigation:

- Avalanche is a recurring phenomenon. Avalanche hazard mitigation can be done through Active and Passive methods.
- Passive methods include increasing awareness about the avalanche hazard, timely forecasting the avalanche danger and imparting training on safety and rescue method.
- Active methods include control of avalanches by structures, afforestation of formation zones and controlled release of avalanches.

## Snow & Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE):

- Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE) is working in avalanche forecasting, artificial triggering and structural control in snowbound mountainous areas.
- SASE also participated in the Indian Antarctic Programme with research activities on the areas of Antarctic snow cover/ ice sheet surface energy balance and melt estimation.