

SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARD

Recently, Tamil author Rajasekaran (Devibharathi), Telugu writer T. Patanjali Sastry and Malayalam litterateur E.V. Ramakrishnan were among those named for the Sahitya Akademi Awards for the year 2023.



About the Sahitya Akademi Award:

- It is awarded for the **most outstanding books of literary merit** published in any of the major Indian languages recognised by the Akademi.
- Akademi gives **24 awards annually** to literary works in the languages it has recognized and an equal number of awards to literary translations from and into the languages of India.
- Besides the **22 languages** enumerated in the Constitution of India, the Sahitya Akademi has **recognised English and Rajasthani as languages** in which its programme may be implemented.
- The award, in the form of a casket containing an **engraved copper-plaque**, a shawl and **1,00,000 rupees** will be presented.

Key points about the Sahitya Akademi:

- It was formally inaugurated by the Government of India on 12 March **1954**.
- Sahitya Akademi, India's **National Academy of Letters**, is the central institution for literary dialogue, publication and promotion in the country and the only institution that undertakes literary activities in 24 Indian languages, including English.
- Though set up by the Government, the Akademi functions as an autonomous organisation.
- It was registered as a society under **the Societies Registration Act, 1860**.

WHAT IS THE BHOOMI RASHI PORTAL?



The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways recently said 1467 projects of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) have been brought under the Bhoomi Rashi Portal.

About the Bhoomi Rashi Portal:

- It is an **e-Governance initiative of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.**
- The portal intends **to expedite the process of land acquisition for National Highways.**
- It acts as a single-point platform for the online processing of land acquisition notifications to accelerate highway infrastructure development projects in India.
- This portal would enhance the efficiency of the land acquisition process, ensure transparency and accountability, and **result in the e-transfer of benefits directly to the accounts of the beneficiaries.**

Features:

- **Bilingual** application with **Hindi and English** for easy usability
- Preparation of **interface for adding basic details of project**, including land acquisition sanction details
- Preparation of **interface for Land Acquisition location**se. villages
- Interface for **generating land acquisition notification**
- Interface for **land Details**
- Interface for generation of notification: **organisational email IDS**
- Interface for **Objections and processing**
- Interface for **compensation determination** and finalisation
- Interface for land owners and affected parties
- Interface for **reports generation**
- The portal has been **integrated with the Public Financial Management System (PFMS) of the Ministry of Finance for depositing compensation** in the accounts of affected/ interested persons **on a real-time basis.**

BHARATIYA NAGARIK SURAKSHA (SECOND) SANHITA 2023

Why in News?

- The Lok Sabha passed three key Bills – Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita, 2023; the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita, 2023; and the Bharatiya Sakshya (Second) Bill, 2023 – to completely overhaul the country’s criminal laws.
- Piloting the Bills, Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah said these are aimed at indigenizing laws originally enacted by the British.
- This article focuses on the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita, 2023.

About Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita, 2023:

- The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS2) seeks to replace the **Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (CrPC)**.
 - The CrPC provides for the procedure for arrest, prosecution, and bail.
 - The CrPC was first passed in **1861** to address the problem of multiplicity of legal systems in India.
 - In 1973, the erstwhile act was repealed and replaced by the existing CrPC, and changes like anticipatory bail were introduced.
- The BNSS2 Bill proposes several changes in the existing provisions including those related to trials, investigation, etc.

Key Highlights of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha (Second) Sanhita, 2023 Bill:

- **Detention of undertrials:**
 - As per the CrPC, if an accused has spent half of the maximum period of imprisonment in detention, he must be released on personal bond.
 - This does not apply to offences punishable by death.
- **Medical examination:**
 - The CrPC allows medical examination of the accused in certain cases, including rape cases.

- Such examination is done by a registered medical practitioner on the request of at least a sub-inspector level police officer.
- **Forensic investigation:**
 - The BNSS2 mandates forensic investigation for offences punishable with at least seven years of imprisonment.
 - In such cases, forensic experts will visit crime scenes to collect forensic evidence and record the process on mobile phone or any other electronic device.
- **Signatures and finger impressions:**
 - The CrPC empowers a Magistrate to order any person to provide specimen signatures or handwriting.
 - The BNSS2 expands this to include finger impressions and voice samples.
- **Timelines for procedures:**
 - The BNSS2 prescribes timelines for various procedures.
 - For instance, it requires medical practitioners who examine rape victims to submit their reports to the investigating officer within seven days.

Criticism of the Bill:

- The BNSS2 allows up to 15 days of police custody, which can be authorised in parts during the initial 40 or 60 days of the 60- or 90-days period of judicial custody.
 - This **may lead to denial of bail for the entire period if the police have not exhausted the 15 days custody.**
- The power to attach property from proceeds of crime does not have safeguards provided in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.
- The CrPC provides for bail for an accused who has been detained for half the maximum imprisonment for the offence.
 - The BNSS2 denies this facility for anyone facing multiple charges. As many cases involve charges under multiple sections, this may limit such bail.
- The use of handcuffs is permitted in a range of cases including organised crime, contradicting Supreme Court directions.

NATIONAL COOPERATIVE EXPORTS LIMITED (NCEL)

Recently, the Union Minister of Cooperation informed the Lok Sabha about the National Cooperative Exports Limited.



About the National Cooperative Exports Limited:

- It was set up by the **Ministry of Cooperation** under the **Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002**.
- It will provide a **complete ecosystem for the promotion of exports** mainly of Agri commodities for the benefit of our farmers, in which India has a comparative advantage.
- All cooperative societies from the level of primary to apex that are interested in exports are eligible to become members.
- The NCEL has provision of two kinds of members namely:
 - **Ordinary Members:** The following shall be eligible to become ordinary members of the NCEL: -
 - Any **multi-state co-operative society** or any co-operative society registered or deemed to be registered under any law relating to co-operative societies for the time being in force in any State or UT;
 - The **National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC)** established under the National Co-operative Development Corporation Act, 1962
 - **No individual shall be eligible** to become an ordinary member of the NCEL.
 - **Nominal or associate member:** The society may, in the interest of the promotion of its business, admit any person, including cooperative banks, as a nominal member or associate member.
- This society will focus on exporting the surpluses available in the Indian cooperative sector by accessing wider markets beyond the geographical contours of the country.

MAJOR DHYAN CHAND KHEL RATNA AWARD

India's badminton stars Chirag Shetty and Satwik Sai Raj Rankireddy won the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna award announced by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports recently.



About Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award:

- Named after the hockey wizard Major Dhyan Chand (1905–79), an Indian legendary field hockey player, the "Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award" (erstwhile Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratan Award) is the **highest sporting honour in India**.
- Instituted in 1991–1992, the award is **conferred annually by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**, Government of India.

Eligibility:

- The spectacular and most **outstanding performance in the field of sports and games** at the international level, i.e. Olympic/Asian/Commonwealth/World Games/Championships/World Cup and equivalently recognized international tournaments, **by a sportsperson over a period of four years immediately preceding** the year during which the award is to be given.
- **During the years when Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and Asian Games** are held, the **achievements of the sportspersons in these Games and other abovementioned tournaments up to the conclusion of the Olympic Games/Commonwealth/Asian Games, as the case may be, will also be considered**.
- **Sportspersons** who have been **penalised or against whom an enquiry is pending or ongoing for the use of drugs/substances** banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) will **not be eligible** for the award.
- **General Conditions:**
 - **No award** will be made **for a second time** to the same person.

- There will be **only one award every year** to be given to an individual sportsperson. This condition will be **relaxed only in exceptional circumstances**.
- The award **may be given posthumously** if such an occasion arises.
- **The Government of India may cancel or annul the award** for any recipient for **specific reasons**, including doping.
- **Benefits:** The award will consist of the following:
 - A cash amount of **₹25,00,000**, which is exempt from income tax and wealth tax.
 - A **Certificate of honour** to each sportsperson.
 - **One medal** to each sportsperson.

INDIA'S AI MISSION: CENTRE TO STEP UP COMPUTE CAPACITY, OFFER FREE SERVICES TO STARTUPS

Why in News?

- As part of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Mission to develop its own 'sovereign AI', the Centre is looking to build computational capacity in the country and offer compute-as-a-service to India's startups.

India's AI Mission:

- The PM of India at the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Summit 2023 (New Delhi) announced that India will launch an artificial intelligence (AI) mission.
- **The aim of this mission will be to establish sufficient AI compute power in the country.** This will help India's innovators and startups get better facilities.
- Under this mission, AI applications in agriculture, healthcare and education-related sectors will be promoted.

What is the Centre's Plan to Step up Compute Capacity under the AI Mission?

- According to the Union Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), the Centre is looking to build computational capacity in the country and offer compute-as-a-service to India's startups.

- The capacity building will be done **both within the government and through a public-private partnership (PPP) model.**
- **In total**, the country is looking -
 - To build a compute capacity of anywhere between 10,000 GPUs (graphic processing units) and 30,000 GPUs under the PPP model, and
 - An additional 1,000-2,000 GPUs through the PSU Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).
- The government is also **exploring various incentive structures for private companies** to set up computing centres in the country, ranging from
 - **A capital expenditure subsidy model** which has been employed under the semiconductor scheme,
 - A model where companies can be incentivised depending on their operational expenses, to offer them a “usage” fee.

What is the Significance of Building Computing Capacity?

- **Computing capacity** or compute is among the **most important elements of building a large AI system** apart from algorithmic innovation and datasets.
 - **It is also one of the most difficult elements to procure** for smaller businesses looking to train and build such AI systems.
- **Given that AI is being seen as a crucial economic driver** in the years to come, the government plans to substantially beef up the country’s computing capacity.
- To expedite such additions, the government **plans to invite the private sector** by offering it incentives.
- **The government’s idea is to create a digital public infrastructure (DPI)** out of the GPU assembly it sets up.
 - By this, **startups can utilise its computational capacity for a fraction of the cost**, without needing to invest in GPUs which are often the biggest cost centre of such operations.

WHAT IS THE SECURITIES APPELLATE TRIBUNAL (SAT)?

The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) recently quashed a SEBI order banning Future Retail Chairperson and some other promoters from the securities market for one year in an insider trading case.



- It is formed as a **statutory and autonomous body** as per the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Act, 1992.
- It was mainly established to **hear appeals against orders passed by the SEBI or by an adjudicating officer** under the SEBI Act.
- The SAT hears appeals **against the following orders**:
 - Orders issued by the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** in relation to cases filed before it.
 - Orders **issued by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)** in relation to cases filed before it.
 - Hear the orders **passed by SEBI**.
- **Composition: SAT consists of one Presiding Officer and such number of Judicial and Technical members** as the Central Government may determine.
 - The person so appointed as the **presiding Officer** should meet the **following requirements**:
 - The retired or sitting judge of the Supreme Court
 - Chief Justice of the High Court
 - Judge of the High Court, who has completed at least seven years of service as a judge in a high court.
 - **Judicial Member: Judge of the High Court** for at least five years of service
- **Who can make an appeal?**
 - **Every person aggrieved by the order of the SEBI or adjudicating officer** is liable to make an appeal to the SAT.