

INDIAN PENAL CODE TO NYAYA SANHITA: WHAT IS NEW, WHAT IS OUT, WHAT HAS CHANGED

Context

- Recently, Lok Sabha passed by voice vote the **three Bills that aim to overhaul the country's criminal justice system by replacing colonial-era laws.**
- **The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill 2023 has made several key changes in the Indian Penal Code it seeks to replace.**

Key Changes Introduced in the New Bills

- The bills have made changes to the **Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act, with the aim of transforming criminal justice system.**
- The colonial-era laws will be replaced by legislation with an Indian ethos:
 - The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, to replace the IPC;
 - Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, for CrPC; and
 - Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023, for the Indian Evidence Act.

New Offences Incorporated Under Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023

- **Deceitful Promise to Marry**
 - According to the new provision, **any deceitful means or promising to marry to a woman without any intention of fulfilling the same** has been criminalised.
 - **Deceitful means shall include** the false promise of employment or promotion, inducement, or marrying after suppressing identity.
- **New Provisions on Mob Lynching**
 - The BNS provisions **codify offences linked to mob lynching and hate-crime murders**, for cases when a mob of five or more individuals commits murder.
 - When the crime is **based on factors such as race, caste, community, or personal belief.** The provision has **punishment that extends from life imprisonment to death.**

- **New Provisions to Deal with Organised Crime**
 - For the first time, tackling organised crime is brought under the realm of ordinary criminal law.
 - In the new legislation, the punishment for attempt to commit organised crime and for committing organised crime is the same.
- **Incorporation of a Separate Category of Petty Organised Crime**
 - A separate category of petty organised crime has also been brought in, which criminalises theft, snatching, cheating, unauthorised selling of tickets, unauthorised betting or gambling, selling of public examination question papers.
- **New Addition on Terrorism**
 - Importing large parts of the language in defining terror activities from the stringent Unlawful Atrocities Prevention Act, the BNS brings terrorism under the ambit of ordinary criminal law.
- **Provision to Address the Attempt to Suicide**
 - The BNS introduces a new provision that criminalises attempts to commit suicide with the intent to compel or restrain any public servant from discharging his official duty.

Provisions Repealed Under Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023

- **Unnatural sexual offences (Article 377)**
 - Section 377 of the IPC, which criminalised homosexuality among other unnatural sexual activities, has been repealed under the BNS.
- **Adultery:** The offence of adultery, which was struck down by the SC as unconstitutional in 2018, has been omitted under the BNS.
- **Provision on Thugs**
 - The IPC under Section 310 criminalises those who have been habitually associated with any other or others for the purpose of committing robbery or child-stealing by means of or accompanied with murder.

Changes Added to the Existing Laws

- **Gender neutrality**
 - While rape laws continue to operate only for women, **the BNS has tweaked some other laws, especially those dealing with children, to bring gender neutrality.**
- **Fake news**
 - **The IPC currently contains Section 153B** which deals with imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration.
 - This commonly referred to as the hate speech provision, criminalises, among other aspects, causing disharmony or feelings of enmity or hatred or ill-will between communities.
- **Sedition**
 - Apart from a **name change from rajdroh to deshdroh**, the new provision **brings under its sweep aiding through financial means acts of subversive activities**, and those encouraging feelings of separatist activities.
- **Mandatory Minimum Sentence**
 - **Section 303 of the IPC prescribed a mandatory death sentence** for murder committed by a life-convict.
 - **The BNS has now tweaked this provision to prescribe a punishment of death or imprisonment for life**, which shall mean the remainder of that person's natural life.

Conclusion

- By adopting the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and related reforms, **India is not just changing the numbers, it is reclaiming its identity.**
 - **It is a paradox of India's criminal justice system which till today, bore the indelible marks of Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay or colonial legacy in other words.**
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CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL SECURITY FORCE (CISF)

The Union Home Ministry has approved the deployment of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in the Parliament complex, according to a government order.



About the Central Industrial Security Force:

- It was established after the recommendation of the **Justice Mukherjee Commission**.
- It was set up by an Act of Parliament on **March 10, 1969**.
- It is **one of seven Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)** under the **Ministry of Home Affairs** — the other six being the Border Security Force, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the Sashastra Seema Bal, the Assam Rifles, the National Security Guard, and the Central Reserve Police Force.
- It is headed by an Indian Police Service officer with the rank of **Director-General**.
- **Mandate:**
 - Initially, its remit was restricted to protecting **government-owned industries**, but this was expanded to include **joint-ventures** and private undertakings in 2009.
 - It also **provides consultancy services** to the **private sector**.
 - The force is deployed in over 350 locations across the country, in diversified areas such as atomic energy and space installations, sea-ports, steel plants, coal fields, hydro-electric and thermal power plants, defence production units, fertiliser and chemical industries, RBI's note-printing mints, heritage monuments such as the Taj Mahal.
- It has the largest percentage of women in its force, in comparison to all other CAPFs.
- Presently, CISF is also providing security to the protected persons classified as Z Plus, Z, X, Y.

WHAT IS THE WINTER SOLSTICE?



India prepares for the longest night of the year on December 22, a phenomenon known as the Winter Solstice.

About Winter Solstice:

- The winter solstice marks the **shortest day of the year**.
- The **Earth is tilted 23.4 degrees** on its axis, so if the Earth's pole is pointing towards or away from the Sun during the day, the arc the Sun travels through will rise and fall during the year.
- Winter Solstice happens **when one of the Earth's poles is far away from the Sun**.
- It falls on **December 21 or 22 in the Northern Hemisphere** and **June 20 or 21 in the Southern Hemisphere**.
- The word solstice is derived from the Latin word solstitium, where 'sol' means Sun and 'stitium' means to stop.
- During the winter solstice, the **days are the shortest**. The duration of daylight will **vary across countries**.
- The winter solstice is **significant in many cultures** since it marks the symbolic death and rebirth of the Sun. **Ancient monuments like Stonehenge are aligned with the sunrise or sunset on the winter solstice**.

RASHTRAPATI NILAYAM

The President of India inaugurated various tourist attractions at Rashtrapati Nilayam recently.



About Rashtrapati Nilayam:

- Rashtrapati Nilayam (literally the "**President's House**"), originally known as **Residency House**, is the **official retreat of the President** of India.
- It is **located** in Secunderabad Cantonment in **Hyderabad, Telangana**.
- It is **one of the Presidential retreats** in India and the **only one present in Southern India**.

History:

- The Residency House was **constructed in 1860** as the country house of the **British Resident**.
- It also served as a place of refuge, given its secure location, amid several battles.
- **After Hyderabad's annexation in 1948**, it became the **President's retreat** and used as the **Southern Sojourn** of the President of India.
- The **President stays at the residence at least once a year and conducts official business**.
- It was **also used as a guest house for visiting dignitaries**.

President's Retreats:

- While the **Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi is the official residence** of the President, there are **two retreats** for the head of state in India.
- Rashtrapati Nilayam is one, and the **other is Rashtrapati Niwas at Mashobra in Shimla**.



PM-AJAY SCHEME

Recently, the Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment informed the Rajya Sabha about the PM-AJAY scheme.

About PM-AJAY Scheme:

- **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM- AJAY)** is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- It is a merged scheme of three Centrally Sponsored Schemes, namely **Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana(PMAGY)**, **Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP)**, and **Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY)**.
- **Objectives:**
 - The main objective of the scheme is to **increase the income of the target population** by way of various income generating schemes, skill development and infrastructure development.

- To reduce the poverty among the target population and bring them above the poverty lines.
 - **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - The Scheduled Castes persons **living below the poverty lines** are eligible for getting benefits under this scheme.
 - In case of Infrastructure Development, the villages **having 50% or more SC population** are eligible for grants under the Scheme.
 - It is being implemented since 2021-22 as **three components**, which are as under: -
 - Development of SC dominated villages into an ‘Adarsh Gram’
 - Grants-in-aid for District/State-level Projects for socio-economic betterment of SCs’
 - Construction of Hostels in Higher Educational Institutions
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WHAT IS CHANNA BARCA?

Assam Forest Department officials recently intercepted a smuggling attempt involving over 500 'Channa Barca' fish valued at Rs 4.5 crore at Dibrugarh airport.



About Channa Barca:

- Channa Barca, also known as the **Barca Snakehead**, is a **primitive predatory fish** and member of the family Channidae.
- “Pipli Cheng” or “Cheng Garaka” is the **local name** for Channa Barca.
- **Distribution:**
 - It is **endemic to the upper Brahmaputra river basin** in **northeastern India and Bangladesh**.
 - In India, it is restricted to the states of **Assam and Nagaland** in northeastern India but is **scarce and never collected in numbers**.
- **Habitat:**
 - It **inhabits vertical burrows around** the margins of **wetlands**, which typically become dry during the winter months.

- The fish use them as refuges during the dry winter months, emerging to hunt and breed while the habitat is flooded.
 - Since it is a **rare, ornamental fish**, it is in **high demand** in the international market and is **susceptible to illegal trade**.
 - **Conservation Status:** Overall, it has been assessed as data deficient by the IUCN, and in 2014, it was **assessed by the IUCN as critically endangered** due to habitat loss.
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WHO PREQUALIFIES 2ND MALARIA VACCINE

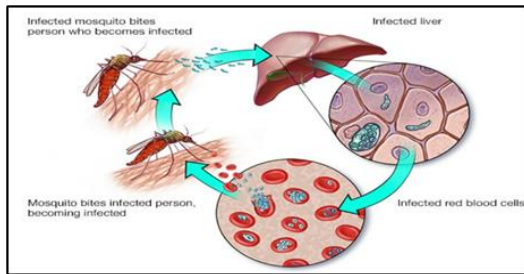
Why in the News?

- The World Health Organization (WHO) added the R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccine, developed by Oxford University and manufactured by Serum Institute of India, to its list of prequalified vaccines.

About Malaria:

- Malaria is a disease caused by the **Plasmodium parasite**.
- The parasite can be spread to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes.
- There are many different types of plasmodium parasite, but only 5 types cause malaria in humans.
 - **Plasmodium falciparum** – mainly found in Africa, it's the most common type of malaria parasite and is responsible for most malaria deaths worldwide.
 - **Plasmodium vivax** – mainly found in Asia and South America, this parasite causes milder symptoms than Plasmodium falciparum, but it can stay in the liver for up to 3 years, which can result in relapses.
 - **Plasmodium ovale** – fairly uncommon and usually found in West Africa, it can remain in your liver for several years without producing symptoms.
 - **Plasmodium malariae** – this is quite rare and usually only found in Africa.
 - **Plasmodium knowlesi** – this is very rare and found in parts of southeast Asia.

How Does Malaria Spread?



- The plasmodium parasite is spread by **female Anopheles mosquitoes**, which are known as "night-biting" mosquitoes because they most commonly bite between dusk and dawn.

- Once a person is bitten, the parasite enters the bloodstream and travels to the liver.
 - The infection develops in the liver before re-entering the bloodstream and invading the red blood cells (RBCs).
- The parasites grow and multiply in the RBCs. At regular intervals, the infected blood cells burst, releasing more parasites into the blood.
- If a mosquito bites a person already infected with malaria, it can also become infected and spread the parasite on to other people.
 - However, **malaria does not spread directly from person to person.**

Symptoms of Malaria:

- Signs and symptoms of malaria may include:
 - Fever, Chills, General feeling of discomfort, Headache, Nausea and vomiting, Diarrhea, Abdominal pain, Muscle or joint pain, Fatigue, Rapid breathing, Rapid heart rate, Cough.

Steps Taken by India to Eradicate Malaria:

- Since 2000, India cut malaria cases by more than half and the number of malaria deaths by more than 66%.
- In 2016, India introduced its first **National Framework for Malaria Elimination** (2016-2030).
 - It has a vision of a **malaria-free country by 2027 and elimination by 2030.**
- In 2019, the **Government of India increased funding by more than 25% for the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme** and increased support as a donor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.