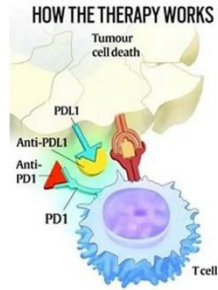


### CANCER THERAPY

In a medical trial, 12 patients in the United States were completely cured of rectal cancer without requiring any surgery or chemotherapy.



PD1 is a protein that regulates immune function and can sometimes keep T cells from killing cancer cells. The therapy in the trial used PD1 blockades, allowing T cells to kill cancer cells.

#### About:

- The trial used a monoclonal antibody called dostarlimab every three weeks for six months for the treatment of a particular kind of stage two or three rectal cancer.
- The trial showed that immunotherapy alone – without any chemotherapy, radiotherapy, or surgery that have been staples of cancer treatment – could completely cure the patients with a particular kind of rectal cancer called ‘mismatch repair deficient’ cancer.
- ‘Mismatch repair deficient’ cancer is most common among colorectal, gastrointestinal, and endometrial cancers. Patients suffering from this condition lack the genes to correct typos in the DNA that occur naturally while cells make copies.

#### PD1 blockades

- The immunotherapy belongs to a category called PD1 blockades that are now recommended for the treatment of such cancers rather than chemotherapy or radiotherapy.
- PD1 is a type of protein that regulates certain functions of the immune system, including by suppressing T cell activity, and PD1 blockade therapy looks to release the T cells from this suppression.

### NATIONAL e-VIDHAN APPLICATION (NeVA) SYSTEM

A delegation of MLAs from Gujarat visited the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly in June 2022 to learn about the novel e-Vidhan system for paperless



proceedings that has been recently adopted by the UP state assembly.

## About:

- The National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) is a system for digitising the legislative bodies of all Indian states and the Parliament through a single platform on which house proceedings, starred/unstarred questions and answers, committee reports etc. will be available.
- The NeVA system has been developed to make all the work and data related to legislative bodies available online for the use of both citizens and the members of Assemblies. It includes a website and a mobile app.

## Analysis:

- **Benefits:** This has been done for streamlining information related to various state assemblies, and to eliminate the use of paper in day-to-day functioning.
- **Challenges:** Access, particularly for legislators representing rural constituencies, to devices and reliable internet and electricity is an issue. Lack of training and heightened concerns over security are some more recent issues in the road to digitisation.

## Timeline:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned the idea of “One Nation One Legislative Platform” in November 2021.
- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla also said in early 2022 that the proceedings of all legislatures — both Houses of Parliament and state Assemblies and Legislative Councils — will be available on one platform by 2023.
- Nagaland became the first state to implement NeVA, in March 2022.
- **Has this been done elsewhere?** In December 2021, the Government of Dubai became the world’s first government to go 100 percent paperless. It announced all procedures were completely digitised.

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## BANGLADESH-INDIA PASSENGER BUS SERVICES

The passenger bus services between Bangladesh and India resumed after two years on June 10, 2022 with the flagging off of the bus from Dhaka to Kolkata.



## About:

- The flagging off marked the opening of the bus services through the Akhaura-Agartala and Benapole-Haridaspur Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) between the two countries.
- The bus services through the Dawki-Tamabil ICP will start after the necessary clearances are obtained between the two countries.
- Five routes were operational between India and Bangladesh before the services were suspended due to the Corona pandemic. Four routes including Dhaka-Kolkata-Dhaka, Dhaka-Agartala-Dhaka, Agartala-Dhaka-Kolkata-Agartala, and Dhaka-Khulna-Kolkata-Dhaka will become operational again. The Dhaka-Sylhet-Shillong-Guwahati-Dhaka route will open in due course.

## Train Services

- The opening of the bus-services comes less than two weeks after the passenger train service between the two countries were started on May 29 with the flagging off of the Maitree Express and Bandhan Express train between Dhaka-Kolkata and Kolkata-Khulna respectively.
- A new biweekly train named Mitali Express between New Jalpaiguri and Dhaka was also flagged off by the Railway Ministers of India and Bangladesh on 1st June.

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## NOTIFICATION ALLOWING LINKING OF AADHAAR & VOTER ID ISSUED

### In News:

- The central government has notified the rules allowing the linking of Aadhar numbers with electoral roll data.

### Representation of People Act

- The Parliament passed two laws to provide a legal framework for the conduct of elections:
  - The Representation of the People Act, 1950,
  - The Representation of the People Act, 1951
- The 1950 Act provides for
  - allocation of seats and delimitation of constituencies for elections,
  - qualifications of voters,

- preparation of electoral rolls.
- The 1951 Act regulates the actual conduct of elections and by-elections. It provides for the conduct of elections and offences and disputes related to elections.
- It also deals with the registration of political parties, the qualifications and disqualifications for membership of the Houses.

## News Summary

- The government has issued four notifications to give effect to the electoral reforms enacted late last year.
- The Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021 was passed by Parliament late last year.
- These notifications have amended the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 and Conduct of Election Rules, 1961.

## Changes made

- **Linking of voter ID with Aadhaar**
  - The notification specifies April 1, 2023 as the date on or before which every person whose name exists in the electoral rolls **may** intimate his Aadhaar number.
  - Voluntary linkage of voter ID with Aadhaar to weed out bogus and duplicate entries in electoral rolls.
    - The government has said that the linking of Aadhaar numbers to electoral rolls is voluntary.
    - However, privacy experts have pointed out that there is an absence of choice in the forms.
    - The only exception is for those who don't have a Aadhaar number.
    - Any false declaration is liable to prosecution. Hence, this becomes a mandatory provision for linking Aadhaar with electoral rolls.
- **To ease the enrolment schedule for first-time voters**
  - The notification allows four qualifying dates in a year — January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1 —for those above 18 years, to register themselves as voters.
    - The Representation of the People Act currently allows voter registration for those who have attained the age of 18 only once.
    - Only those who have attained the age of 18 years as on January 1 of that year or before is eligible to be enrolled in the voters' list.

- Due to only one cut-off date, a person turning 18 years on January 2 cannot be registered and needs to wait for the next year.
- Now enrolment of first-time voters will be allowed four times a year.
- Amendment to Section 14(b) of the RP Act was done for this purpose.
- **Make voting by special procedure gender neutral**
- Currently, an Army man's wife is entitled to be enrolled as a service voter, but a woman Army officer's husband is not allowed.
- Section 60 of the RPA refers to "such wife being ordinarily residing with that person" for allowing enrolment as a service voter.
- Hence, the proposal is to make this provision gender neutral.
- It is believed that the Act will now be amended to replace the word "wife" with "spouse".
- This was implemented by amending Section 20(6) of the Act.
- **More power to Election Commission (EC)**
- The amendment seeks to empower the EC to requisition premises for any purpose related to elections and not just for creating polling stations and storage of ballot boxes.
- The amendment to Section 160(1)A of the RP Act has been done to empower the EC in this regard.

### **Previous attempt to link voter card and Aadhaar number**

- The EC had in 2015 taken up linking of voter card and Aadhaar number as part of its National Electoral Roll Purification and Authentication Programme.
- Around 32 crore Aadhaar numbers were seeded at that time.
- However, this initiative was halted by the Supreme Court in August 2015 via its famous protection of privacy judgement in the Puttaswamy case.
- This Puttaswamy case had challenged the validity of Aadhaar scheme and Aadhaar Act, 2016".
- In August 2015, the Supreme Court passed an interim order in this case.
- The order prohibited Aadhaar from being used for any purpose other than the state-facilitated distribution of food grain and cooking fuel such as kerosene and LPG.
- The ECI, in 2019, approached the Law Ministry with a fresh proposal seeking changes in the electoral laws for the seeding of voter cards with Aadhaar number.



# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



- The ministry had asked the Election Commission to list the safeguards built into the electoral roll data platform.
- Upon listing the safeguards by EC, Law Ministry, in 2020, gave the go-ahead.

**Possible reasons behind the linkage of Aadhar with Voter ID:**

- Improving the accuracy of the electoral rolls, by weeding out duplication and misrepresentation in electoral rolls;
  - Assistance in the ECI’s plans to implement advanced mechanisms such as electronic and internet-based voting;
  - Giving ‘remote’ voting rights to domestic migrants; and
  - To facilitate proxy voting which may require Aadhaar backing for voter verification.
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