

ED'S POWER TO ARREST AND SEEK CUSTODY

Context

- The Madras High Court upheld the legality of a TN minister arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and his subsequent remand in judicial custody in a money-laundering case linked to a cash-for-jobs scam.
- The question central to the debate was whether the ED has the power to seek custody of a person arrested.

Enforcement Directorate (ED)

- The ED was established in the year 1956 as an 'Enforcement Unit' under the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.
- Later, in 1957, this Unit was renamed as 'Enforcement Directorate'.
- Presently, it is under the administrative control of the Department of Revenue (Ministry of Finance) for operational purposes.
- ED is responsible for enforcement of the Foreign Exchange Management Act 1999 (FEMA), and certain provisions under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002 (PMLA).
- The ED agency is essential to upholding law and order in India's financial system and safeguarding the rights of the populace.

Powers of ED

- The PMLA gives the ED the authority to detain those who are accused of committing economic crimes.
- The ED has the authority to conduct searches and seizures of assets and real estate that have been obtained unlawfully.
- Individuals and organisations whose bank accounts are suspected of being used for money laundering or other economic crimes may have their accounts frozen by the ED.
- Properties and assets that were acquired illegally may be seized by the ED.

Madras HC Ruling

- **The ED can subject any person** accused in a case booked under the PMLA to **custodial interrogation** and that the Minister can be taken into custody even after the expiry of 15 days from his arrest on June 14.
- The court accepted the argument that **ED officials are not police officers** as per the law laid down by the SC in Vijay Madanlal Choudhary v. Union of India (2022).
 - The SC designated ED officials to not be police officers only because the statements given to the latter in any criminal case would not be admissible in evidence before the trial court under the CrPC.

NATIONAL TELE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMME

Recently, the union health ministry said the Tele-Manas helpline under the National Tele Mental Health Programme has received over 200,000 calls since its launch in October 2022.



About National Tele Mental Health Programme:

- Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele MANAS) **has been launched during October 2022.**
- **Aims:** It aims to **provide free tele-mental health services all over the country round the clock**, particularly catering to people in remote or under-served areas.
- There are **42 active Tele Manas cells across 31 states and Union Territories.**
- The service is **accessible through the toll-free numbers** with options to choose **preferred languages** (20 languages included till now).
- **Services offered by Tele MANAS:**
 - **Tele counselling by trained counsellors.**
 - **Tele Consultation by Mental Health professionals** when required.
 - **Referral Services to other Mental Health Establishments** such as Medical Colleges, District Mental Health Program (DMHP) services and speciality institutes.

About National Mental Health Programme (NMHP):

- The Government of India has **launched the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) in 1982**, with the following objectives:
 - To **ensure the availability and accessibility of minimum mental healthcare** for all in the foreseeable future, **particularly to the most vulnerable** and underprivileged sections of the population;
 - To **encourage the application of mental health knowledge in general healthcare** and in social development;
 - To **promote community participation in the mental health service development** and to stimulate efforts towards self-help in the community.
- The **District Mental Health Program (DMHP) was launched under NMHP in the year 1996**. The DMHP was based on ‘Bellary Model’ with the following components:
 - **Early detection & treatment.**
 - **Training: imparting short-term training to general physicians for diagnosis and treatment of common mental illnesses** with limited number of drugs under guidance of specialist. The Health workers are being trained in identifying mentally ill persons.
 - **IEC: Public awareness generation.**
 - **Monitoring: the purpose is for simple Record Keeping.**

PRADHAN MANTRI FASAL BIMA YOJANA

The latest data tabled in the Parliament by Union Minister for Farmers’ Welfare shows that agriculture insurance premium has been going up while claims payment is down under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.



About Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana:

- It was **launched in 2016** and replaced all the prevailing yield insurance schemes in India.
- This scheme is **being administered by the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and**



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Farmers' Welfare under the Ministry of Agriculture, along with empanelled general insurance companies.

- **Aim:** To support production in agriculture by providing affordable crop insurance to ensure comprehensive risk cover for crops of farmers against all non-preventable natural risks.
- The scheme provides coverage for the entire cropping cycle, from pre-sowing to post-harvest and midseason adversities.

Objectives:

- Providing financial support to farmers suffering crop loss/damage arising out of unforeseen events;
- Stabilizing the income of farmers to ensure their continuance in farming;
- Encouraging farmers to adopt innovative and modern agricultural practices;
- **Eligibility criteria:**
 - The scheme is compulsory for loanee farmers availing Crop Loan /KCC account for notified crops.
 - The Scheme would be optional for non-loanee farmers.

Insurance Coverage:

- Under this scheme, the insurance cover is limited to specific crops and agricultural risks related to crop yield.
- The list of notified crops includes food crops (i.e., cereals, millets, and pulses), oilseeds, annual commercial crops, and annual horticultural crops.
- **General Exclusions:** Losses arising out of war and nuclear risks, malicious damage and other preventable risks shall be excluded.
- **Premiums:**
 - There will be a uniform premium of only 2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all Rabi crops.
 - In the case of annual commercial and horticultural crops, the premium to be paid by farmers will be only 5%.

MODES OF LOSING INDIAN CITIZENSHIP

External Affairs Minister recently said more than 17.50 lakh people have given up their Indian citizenship since 2011.



About Modes of losing Indian Citizenship:

- The Citizenship Act 1955 lays down the three modes by which an Indian citizen, whether a citizen at the commencement of the Constitution or subsequent to it, may lose their citizenship. These are,
 - **By Renunciation:**
 - An Indian Citizen of full age and capacity can renounce his Indian citizenship by making a declaration to that effect and having it registered.
 - But if such a declaration is made during any war in which India is engaged, the registration shall be withheld until the Central Government otherwise directs.
 - When a male person renounces his citizenship, every minor child of him ceases to be an Indian citizen.
 - Such a child may, however, resume Indian citizenship if he makes a declaration to that effect within a year of his attaining full age, i.e., 18 years.
 - **By Termination:**
 - If a citizen of India voluntarily acquires citizenship of another country, then the citizenship of India gets terminated.
 - This provision does not apply during times of war.
 - If any question arises as to whether, when, or how any person has acquired the citizenship of another country, it is to be determined by such authority and in such manner as may be prescribed by the rules.
 - **By Deprivation:**
 - It is a compulsory termination of citizenship of India.
 - A citizen of India by naturalization, registration, domicile and residence may be deprived of his citizenship by order of the Central Government if it is satisfied that:

- The **citizen** has obtained the citizenship by means of fraud, false representation, or concealment of any material fact;
 - The citizen has **shown disloyalty to the Constitution** of India;
 - The citizen has **unlawfully traded or communicated with the enemy during a war**;
 - The **citizen has, within five years after registration or neutralization, been imprisoned in any country for two years**;
 - The citizen has been **ordinarily resident out of India for seven years**;
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WHAT IS HYGROELECTRICITY?

Researchers have successfully developed a technology called hygroelectricity, which can generate electricity from humid air.



About Hygroelectricity:

- Hygroelectricity is the **generation of electricity from the humidity of the air**.
- It is a **type of renewable energy** that has the potential to be a major source of power in the future.
- **How it works?**
 - The key to harvesting electricity from humid air lies in a **tiny device comprising two electrodes and a thin layer of material filled with nanopores**.
 - **These nanopores**, each less than 100 nanometres in diameter, **allow water molecules from the air to pass through the device**.
 - As these molecules move from an upper chamber to a lower chamber, they interact with **the edges of the nanopores, leading to a buildup of electric charge imbalances** between the chambers.
 - This process **effectively transforms the device into a miniature battery**, generating continuous electricity.
- **Just as clouds create electrical charges and give rise to lightning bolts during storms, this revolutionary device converts air humidity into usable electricity.**

- **Advantage of Hygroelectricity:** Unlike other renewable energy sources such as solar and wind, **air humidity is continuously available, making it a sustainable reservoir of energy.**

What is an electrode?

- An electrode is a **solid conductor that conducts electricity to and from an electrolyte**, which is an electrically conductive solution or molten salt.
- Electrodes are **used in** many different applications, including **batteries, electrochemical cells, and electroplating.**

What are nanopores?

- Nanopores are **tiny holes that are typically on the order of a few nanometres** in diameter.
- They can be **found in a variety of materials**, including biological cells, synthetic membranes, and even graphene.

ZERO FIRS: A FRESH CHALLENGE FOR POLICE IN MANIPUR

Why in News?

- Hundreds of zero FIRs registered in police stations across Manipur and the stalled investigations in these cases are among key challenges the state police are facing.

What is an FIR?

- The term first information report (FIR) is **not defined** in the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) 1973 or in any other law.
- In police regulations or rules, **information recorded under Section 154 of CrPC is known as FIR.**
- **Section 154** states that every information relating to the commission of a cognizable offence, if given orally to an officer in charge of a police station, shall be reduced to writing.
 - **A copy of the information** (as recorded) shall be given (free of cost) to the informant.

What is a Zero FIR?

- A zero FIR can be filed in any Police Station by the victim, irrespective of their residence or the place of occurrence of crime.
- A police station that receives a complaint regarding an alleged offence committed in the jurisdiction of another police station, registers an FIR and then transfers it to the relevant police station for further investigation.
 - No regular FIR number is given and after receiving the Zero FIR, the relevant police station registers a fresh FIR and starts the investigation.
- It came up after the recommendation in the report of the Justice Verma Committee set up after the 2012 Nirbhaya gang rape case to suggest amendments to the Criminal Law.
- The objective of a Zero FIR is to ensure the victim doesn't have to run from pillar to post to get a police complaint registered.
- The provision is meant to provide speedy redressal to the victim so that timely action can be taken after the filing of the FIR.

Issue of zero FIRs in Manipur:

- Filed in huge scale:
 - In the state, which has seen nearly 3 months of violence, thousands of zero FIRs have been registered across the state.
 - For example, 202 zero FIRs have been registered at Saikul (a foothill area bordering Meitei-dominated areas) police station since the start of the violence.
 - These are mostly in cases where there has been violence in Kuki-dominated areas.
 - In some other police stations like Churachandpur police station (over 1,700 zero FIRs), Kangpokpi police station (over 800) many more such FIRs have been registered.
- Why is police investigation a challenge?
 - Investigating cases of such transferred FIRs is a challenging process, exacerbated by tensions in the state.
 - For example, police personnel (IO) from one community cannot go to another community's area and it is hard to proceed with the investigation without meeting the victim.

WHAT IS THE DOUBLE ASTEROID REDIRECTION TEST (DART) MISSION?

Months after the Double Asteroid Redirection Test (Dart) mission crashed into asteroid Dimorphos, the Hubble telescope recently observed boulders escaping out.



About DART Mission:

- NASA's DART mission was a spacecraft designed to test a method of deflecting an asteroid for planetary defense, using the "kinetic impactor" technique (in simplest terms means **smashing a thing into another thing**).
- DART was the **first-ever** space mission to demonstrate asteroid deflection by kinetic impactor.
- The target of the spacecraft was a **160-meter-wide** asteroid known as Dimorphos, which is a moonlet in orbit around the larger asteroid, Didymos.
- It was **launched in November 2021**.
- DART spacecraft **successfully collided with Dimorphos on 26 September 2022**, altering the asteroid's orbit by 33 minutes.
- It is the **first-time** humanity intentionally changed the motion of a celestial object in space.

What are Boulders?

- It is a **geological term** for a rock fragment that is larger than **25.6 centimetres (10.1 inches)** in diameter.
- Boulders can be made up of various types of rocks, including igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks.
- The **composition** of a boulder depends on the geology of the area in which it formed.