

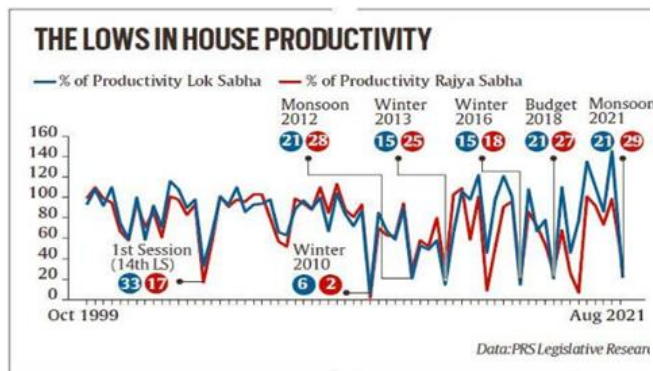
A DISRUPTION-MUKT PARLIAMENT

Context

- The Monsoon session of Parliament ended four days ahead of schedule, after continued disruptions over issues like price rise, suspension of 27 MPs, the Enforcement Directorate's action against some of the opposition leaders etc.
- This is the **seventh consecutive time** the parliament session has been cut short.
- Such state of affairs is fundamentally **detrimental to democracy** because the basic job of Parliament is to give voice to people, debate policies and legislate through proposed bills.

Background

- Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha were adjourned sine die and saw the passage of **seven and five bills**, respectively, during the monsoon session which was to end on August 12.
- While Lok Sabha saw a total of 16 sittings that lasted for 44 hours and 29 minutes, the **upper house** met for 38 hours with as many as **47 hours lost** due to disruption.



Reasons for declining parliamentary productivity

- **Lost fervor (passion):** If parliamentarian comes prepared to the House and disruption occurs too often, their enthusiasm evaporates which results in popular and poor intervention than a substantive one.
- For instance, humour, poetry, some emotional appeal and few philosophical quotations which certainly impacts the quality of debates negatively.
- **Feigned (insincere) efforts:** Many opposition members argue vehemently to send the bill to relevant standing committee for better scrutiny.
- **Less emphasis on quality debate:** Although disruptions have become common, they continue to get reported without fail and disruptors often bask in the media limelight. As against this, those

who make a reasonably good speech- well-argued and supported by statistics, examples or case studies rarely get adequate attention which too hampers the interest of parliamentarians.

- **Role of media:** Moreover owing to depleting interest of readers, the space allocated for parliamentary proceedings in both, print and electronic media is shrinking fast.
 - For instance, inadequate coverage of Question Hour or Zero Hour compared to the past.
 - Debates on bills are also subject to brief and sketchy reporting.

Way forward

- **Presiding officers emulating (imitating) courts of law:** The presiding officers can conduct in-camera proceedings in their chambers to insulate at least the Zero Hour and Question Hour from getting disrupted.
 - While the House remains force-adjourned, presiding officers can also order in-camera hearing of questions of MPs and replies of ministers.
- **Fixed Schedule:** The parliamentary schedule is can be also be revised as follows:
 - A calendar of sittings could be announced at the beginning of each year for limited flexibility.
 - The rules should be amended to ensure that the House is summoned if a significant minority (say 25% or 33%) of members gives a written notice.
- **Incorporate best practices (UK Model):** The British Parliament allocates 20 days a year when the agenda is decided by the opposition. The PM is bound by a constitutional convention to respond to questions directly posed to him by MPs.
- **Drafting new Index:** Parliamentary disruption index should be created as a measure to monitor disruptions in legislatures and check indiscipline. It would also lead to availability of more time for debate and discussion on issues before the House.

CSIR GETS FIRST WOMAN DIRECTOR GENERAL N KALAISELVI

In News:

- N Kalaiselvi, an electrochemical scientist, has become the first woman director general of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), breaking yet another glass ceiling in the country's scientific bodies.



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- The CSIR is India's premier public sector R&D organisation, controlling a number of state-run institutions across the country.

Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR):

• About:

- It was set up in 1942 as an autonomous body (under the Societies Registration Act, 1860).
- CSIR is now the largest government funded multi-disciplinary industrial research and development (R&D) organisation in India.
- It comes under the administrative supervision of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India.
- The R&D activities of CSIR include aerospace engineering, structural engineering, ocean sciences, life sciences, metallurgy, chemicals, mining, food, petroleum, leather and environmental science.
- CSIR is headquartered in New Delhi.
- **CSIR@80: Vision and Strategy 2022 - New CSIR for New India:** Under this, the CSIR's vision is to pursue -
 - Science which strives for global impact,
 - The technology that enables innovation-driven industry,
 - The technology that fosters multidisciplinary leadership, catalysing inclusive economic development for the people of India.
- **Some major achievements of CSIR:**
 - Designed India's first ever parallel processing computer, **Flosolver**.
 - Developed a versatile portable PC-based software '**Bio-Suite**' for bioinformatics.
 - Design of 14-seater plane '**SARAS**'.
 - Established first ever in the world '**Traditional Knowledge Digital Library**' accessible in five international languages, English, German, French, Japanese and Spanish.
 - In 2009, completed the sequencing of the **Human Genome**.
 - In 2011, successfully tested India's 1st indigenous civilian aircraft, **NAL NM5** made in association with National Aerospace Laboratories and Mahindra Aerospace.

- In 2020, initiated clinical trials to evaluate Sepsivac's efficacy to reduce mortality rate in COVID-19 patients.

News Summary:

• About N Kalaiselvi:

- Hailing from a small town in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, Kalaiselvi has risen through the ranks in the CSIR and also became the **first woman scientist to head the CSIR-Central**

• Other notable women scientists of India:

- Earlier, woman scientist Renu Swarup served as secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology.
- Muthayya Vanitha and RituKaridhal headed ISRO's Chandrayaan-2 mission as its project director and mission director, respectively.
- Another scientist, V R Lalithambika was in 2018 picked as the director of the directorate of human space programme to oversee the Gaganyaan project (India's maiden human spaceflight mission).
- Besides, Mangala Mani, known as the 'polar woman of ISRO', was the space agency's first woman scientist to spend more than a year in Antarctica in 2016.

LIKE FOR LIKE, INDIA'S BEST EVER CWG PERFORMANCE

In News:

- The 2022 edition of the Commonwealth Games – Birmingham came to an end
- Australia is to host the next edition of the Commonwealth Games in 2026.

The Commonwealth

- The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 independent and equal countries.
- The last two countries to join the Commonwealth were Gabon and Togo in 2022.
- The Commonwealth's roots go back to the British Empire. But today any country can join the modern Commonwealth.
- The member governments have agreed to shared goals like development, democracy and peace.

Background:

- **The early Commonwealth**

- Over time different countries of the British Empire gained different levels of freedom from Britain. Semi-independent countries were called Dominions.
- Leaders of the Dominions attended conferences with Britain from 1887.
- Later, at the 1926 Imperial Conference, Britain and the Dominions agreed that they were all equal members of a community within the British Empire.
- They all owed allegiance to the British king or queen, but the United Kingdom did not rule over them.
- This community was called the British Commonwealth of Nations or just the Commonwealth.

- **Birth of the modern Commonwealth**

- After its independence in 1947, India wanted to become a republic which didn't owe allegiance to the British king or queen.
- However, it also wanted to stay a member of the Commonwealth.
- The London Declaration of 1949 said that republics and other countries could be part of the Commonwealth.
- Thus, the modern Commonwealth of Nations was born.

Commonwealth Games

- The Commonwealth Games is an international, multi-sport event involving athletes from the Commonwealth of Nations.
- The first official Commonwealth Games (called the British Empire Games) were held in 1930 in Canada.
- Since 1930, the Games have taken place every four years, except in 1942 and 1946 (due to World War II).
- India hosted the game in 2010.

News Summary

- After 11 days of action-packed sport, Commonwealth Games 2022 came to an end.

Key Highlights:

- **India's performance**
- India ended with 61 medals, which is five less than last edition's tally of 66.

Toppers Table					
		G	S	B	T
1	Aus	67	57	54	17
2	Eng	57	66	53	17
3	Canada	26	32	34	9
4	India	22	16	23	6
5	NZ	20	12	17	4

India's best CWG performance

India's 61 medals at 2022 games might seem well short of the 101 won in the Delhi Commonwealth Games in 2010. India's 22 gold medals are also below the 26 won at Gold Coast four

years ago.

- Despite this, analysts believe this is actually India's best CWG performance.
- This is because many disciplines in which India had strength, were missing at 2022 games.
 - Shooting, archery, Greco-Roman wrestling and tennis were not part of the CWG 2022.
- This time, medals came from areas such as athletics, steeplechase, Lawn bowls etc. These are disciplines where India had not performed well in the past.
- **India's lesson from CWG**
 - The Commonwealth Games programme is evolving faster, with some radical changes proposed for the next edition in Victoria, Australia.
 - Hence, there is need for India to start looking beyond shooting and wrestling for medals.
 - Athletics, swimming, cycling, gymnastics, wrestling, and canoeing, together account for 50% of the total medals on offer at the Olympics.
 - The top Olympic nations follow a strategy to channel all their energy into these heavy-medal sports for a major chunk of their tallies.
 - However, of the six, India can only claim to be a serious player globally in wrestling.

MONEY LAUNDERING

The Enforcement Directorate has attached properties worth about ₹47,099 crore in 515 money laundering cases related to frauds in public and private sector banks during 2014-2022, according to the Finance Ministry.



About:

- Also, out of the aforementioned 515 cases, 137 cases pertain to the bank frauds wherein amount involved is more than ₹100 crore in each case. In certain cases of loan fugitives, the ED has also attached assets worth ₹19,312 crore up to July 29, 2022” under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.
- The figure is 85.5% of the defrauded amount of ₹22,586 crore in these cases.
- According to the Reserve Bank of India, the public and private banks recovered ₹8,39,452 crore from 2014-15 to 2021-22 in the Non-Performing Asset (NPA) accounts, including those reported as frauds.

INTERNATIONAL MOBILE EQUIPMENT IDENTITY (IMEI)

With rising cases of mobile phone snatching in the national capital, the Delhi Police is now planning to close ranks with internet service providers and the department of telecommunications to block stolen or robbed phones.



About:

- This will be done by using the device’s International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number.
- The International Mobile Equipment Identity or IMEI is a unique number that is used to identify a device on a mobile network. It has 15 digits, and is like your phone’s unique identity.
- When you use the internet or place a call through your cellular service provider, then this number is used to verify the identity of your device.
- If you have a dual SIM phone, then you will have two IMEI numbers, one for each slot.

FAOS FOOD PRICE INDEX (FPI)

Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla believes “inflation is going to drop rapidly” and prices of commodities used in the manufacture of electric vehicles “trending down in six months”.



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About:

- What he's projecting is already happening in food. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Food Price Index (FPI) averaged 140.9 points in July, 8.6% down from its previous month's level and marking the steepest monthly drop since October 2008.
 - The FPI – a trade-weighted average of international prices of key food commodities over a base period value, taken at 100 for 2014-16 – hit an all-time-high of 159.7 points in March, the month that followed the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24.
 - The latest index reading is the lowest since the 135.6 points of January, before the still-ongoing war.
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