

### DIGITAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES

According to a government notification, all reported births and deaths in the country will be digitally registered on the Centre's portal from October 1.



#### About Digital birth certificates:

- The **Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, 2023** that paves way for digital birth certificates
- It will be a **single document** to be used for **admission to educational institutions**, applications for driving licences, government jobs, passports or Aadhaar, voter enrolment, and registration of marriage, among others.
- The centralised database will also **update the National Population Register (NPR)**, ration cards, property registration and electoral rolls.
- It will be **compulsory for States to register births and deaths** on the Centre's Civil Registration System (CRS) portal and share data with the Registrar General of India (RGI).

#### What is the National Population Register?

- It is a **register containing details of persons** usually residing in a village or rural area or town or ward or demarcated area within a ward in a town or urban area.
- It was first prepared in 2010 and updated in 2015 under Sub-rule (4) of Rule 3 of the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, **framed under the Citizenship Act, 1955**.
- To incorporate the changes due to birth, death and migration, the NPR would be updated along with the House listing and Housing Operations of the forthcoming Census.
- The objective of the NPR is to **create a comprehensive database of usual residents** in the country.
- No document will be collected during this exercise.

## BHABHA ATOMIC RESEARCH CENTRE (BARC)

Senior nuclear scientist Vivek Bhasin recently assumed charge as the director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).



### About the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC):

- BARC is India's premier nuclear research establishment, having its headquarters in Trombay, Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- It operates under the Department of Atomic Energy, which the Prime Minister of India directly oversees.
- **History:**
  - Homi Jehangir Bhabha conceived the nuclear program in India.
  - Bhabha established the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) to carry out nuclear science research in 1945.
  - To intensify the effort to exploit nuclear energy for the benefit of the nation, Dr Bhabha established the Atomic Energy Establishment, Trombay (AEET), in January 1954 for a multidisciplinary research program essential for the ambitious nuclear program of India.
  - After the demise of Bhabha in 1966, AEET was renamed Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).

### Functions:

- It is engaged in research with the objective of generating knowledge and techniques for nuclear power production, the advancement of nuclear science, the use of radioisotopes in industry, health and agriculture and research in frontier areas of science and technology.
- It is responsible for the design and development of nuclear reactors, fuel cycle technologies, radiation protection, and safety systems.
- BARC also plays an important role in nuclear education and training. It offers various training programs for scientists, engineers, and technicians in the areas of nuclear science and technology.

## AYUSHMAN BHAV: MAY ALL BE FREE OF ILLNESS

### Context

- Ayushman Bharat programme was **started by the Government of India in 2018 to address the need for universal health coverage.**
- **In order to push the Ayushman Bharat programme further, a new campaign - Ayushman Bhav, was recently launched by the Government of India.**

### Ayushman Bharat Mission and Its Objectives

- **Ayushman Bharat PM Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)**
  - It is a **flagship health protection scheme launched by the Government of India in 2018.**
  - It aims to **provide universal health coverage to the poor and vulnerable sections of society** by ensuring access to quality healthcare services.
  - It has the **potential to transform the healthcare landscape** of the country by **reducing poverty, enhancing productivity, and promoting social justice.**

### Challenges of Ayushman Bharat Mission

- **Lack of Awareness**
- **Supply-Side Constraint**
- **Reimbursement Issues**

### Ayushman Bhav: A New Campaign

- It is not just about devising a new healthcare programme **the goal should be to make sure everyone benefits.**
- That is where the **new campaign Ayushman Bhav comes in.** It was launched by the President on September 13.
- It focuses on **comprehensive coverage, developing awareness about PM-JAY, creating health account IDs, and providing health services.**
- It will also include **disease screenings and management** of multiple illnesses such as tuberculosis, hypertension, sickle cell disease and diabetes in villages as well as urban wards.

## Objectives of Ayushman Bhav Campaign

- **In Line with the Antyodaya Principle**
  - Ayushman Bhav's primary mission is to reach over 6.45 lakh villages and 2.55 lakh gram panchayats.
- **To Enhance Ground Delivery Service**
  - Strengthening the groundwork for delivery of healthcare services, this campaign broadens Ayushman Bharat's reach using three core pillars:
    - **Ayushman Apke Dwar 3.0,**
    - **Ayushman Sabha,**
    - **Ayushman Mela.**
  - These pillars enhance service delivery by focusing on comprehensive coverage, collaborative awareness-building, and community-centred efforts.

## Conclusion

- In the context of optimum healthcare delivery vision, the unwavering pursuit of comprehensive healthcare coverage is not just a goal, it is a **commitment in the service of humanity in line with Indian ancient wisdom.**
- Ayushman Bhav is the embodiment of the same commitment to delivering healthcare. It **fosters the prospects of robust health for every citizen and the nation as a whole.**

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## [BILL TO DEMOTE ELECTION COMMISSIONERS' STATUS](#)

### Why in news?

- The special session of Parliament will witness the discussion on a Bill that seeks to regulate the appointment, service conditions, and office terms of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners.

### Election Commission of India:

- Election Commission is a permanent and independent body.
- By **Article 324** of the Constitution of India, it is vested with the power of conducting elections to

- **Parliament,**
- **State Legislatures,**
- **Office of President and Vice-President of India.**

### **Appointment and Tenure of Commissioners:**

- The Constitution does not lay down a specific legislative process for the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners.
- **Article 324(2)** says appointment of CEC and other ECs shall be subject to provisions of any law made by the Parliament.
- However, no such law has been framed so far.
- **The President makes the appointment on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister.**
- They have **tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years**, whichever is earlier.
- They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme Court of India.
- The CEC can be removed from office except in same manner and on the same grounds as a judge of the Supreme Court.
- The Constitution has **not debarred the retiring Election Commissioners from any further appointment by the Government.**

### **Key highlights of the bill**

- **Removed CJI from the panel**
- The bill seeks to replace the Chief Justice of India with a cabinet minister nominated by the Prime Minister in the committee for selection of the CECs and ECs.
- It also makes the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha a member of the selection committee.
- **Criteria**
- The bill says the ECI will consist of a CEC and other ECs from among people:
  - who hold or have held the post equivalent to Secretary to the Government of India; and

- shall be persons of integrity, who have knowledge of and experience in management and conduct of elections.
  - **Process**
    - First, a **Search Committee**, headed by the Cabinet Secretary and including two members not below the rank of Secretary, having knowledge and experience in matters relating to elections, **shall prepare a panel of five persons**.
    - This will then be sent to the **Selection Committee**.
  - The selection committee will be chaired by the PM and will include the Leader of Opposition or leader of the single largest Opposition party in Lok Sabha and a Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.
  - The Selection Committee may consider any other person apart from those included in the Search Committee's panel.
  - **Terms & tenure**
    - The terms of the CEC and ECs **remain unchanged**, at six years or until they reach the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
    - **The Bill says the salary of the CEC and ECs would be equivalent to the Cabinet Secretary.**
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## WORLD SPICE CONGRESS (WSC)

Recently, the 14th edition of the World Spice Congress (WSC) began at Vashi in Navi Mumbai.



### About World Spice Congress (WSC):

- It was planned and conceived in 1990 as a forum for discussion and interaction between the importers and exporters of spices.
- It is the **conglomeration of the global spice industry** that has become the most apt platform to deliberate the concerns and considerations of the sector over its three-decades-long presence.
- Since its inception, it has been Organized **under the leadership of the Spices Board, Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, Government of India.

- The **theme of the WSC 2023** is **VISION 2030: S-P-I-C-E-S**, which stands for sustainability, productivity, innovation, collaboration, excellence and safety.

## Key facts about the Spices Board of India

- It was constituted on 26th February 1987 under **the Spices Board Act 1986** with the merger of the erstwhile Cardamom Board (1968) and Spices Export Promotion Council (1960).
- It is functioning under **the Ministry of Commerce & Industry**.
- It is responsible for the export promotion of the 52 scheduled spices and the development of Cardamom (Small and large).
- The Board is a link between the Indian exporters and the importers abroad.
- **Main Functions**
  - Research, Development and Regulation of domestic marketing of Small & Large Cardamom
  - Post-harvest improvement of all spices
  - Promotion of organic production, processing and certification of spices
  - Development of spices in the North East
  - Provision of quality evaluation services

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## WHAT IS THE BASIC STRUCTURE DOCTRINE?

Chief Justice of India recently refused to speak on the Basic Structure Doctrine at a public function, saying he would rather express through his judgments and not through a public pronouncement outside the court.



### About Basic Structure Doctrine:

- In 1973, a 13-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court (SC) ruled in **Kesavananda Bharati State of Kerala** that **Article 368 of the Constitution does not enable Parliament to amend the basic framework of the document**.
- The historic ruling came to be known as the “basic structure” doctrine — a **judicial principle that the Constitution has certain basic features that cannot be altered or destroyed by amendments by Parliament**.

- Over the years, various facets of the basic structure doctrine have evolved, forming the basis for judicial review of Constitutional amendments.

## How did it evolve?

- In I.C. Golak Nath v. State of Punjab (1967), the SC held that Parliament could not curtail fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution.
- The then government enacted a series of constitutional amendments following successive rulings against it.
- The 24th Constitutional (Amendment) Act, 25th Constitutional (Amendment) Act, and 29th Constitutional (Amendment) Act gave Parliament uncontrolled power to alter or even abolish any fundamental right.
- The Kesavananda Bharati case was the culmination of a conflict between the judiciary and the then-Indira Gandhi-led government.

## Kesavananda Bharati vs State of Kerala (1973):

- The case is also known as the Fundamental Rights Case.
- In 1970, Kesavananda Bharti, the head of a math in Kerala, challenged the Kerala Land Reforms Act related to restrictions on the management of religious property.
- The case was heard by the largest-ever Constitution Bench of 13 judges.
- It upheld the validity of the 24th Constitutional Amendment Act (1971) and stated that Parliament is empowered to abridge or take away any of the Fundamental Rights.
- As per 24th C.A.A., Constitutional Amendments were not considered laws under Article 13. This amendment gave unlimited power to the Parliament to amend or repeal any part of the Constitution of India.
- However, the Court laid down a new doctrine of the ‘basic structure’ (or ‘basic features’) of the Constitution.
- The SC in the Kesavananda Bharti case held that although Parliament has the power to amend any part of the Constitution, it could not use this power to alter or destroy its “basic structure.



- **The Court propounded** what has come to be known as the “**Basic Structure of the Constitution**”.
  - Thus, this landmark judgment **meant that every provision of the Constitution could be amended**, but these amendments **could be subjected to judicial review to ascertain that the Basic Structure** of the Constitution remains intact.
  - **The Parliament reacted** to this judicially innovated doctrine of ‘basic structure’ **by enacting the 42nd Amendment Act (1976)**.
  - **This Act amended Article 368 and declared that there is no limitation on the constituent power of Parliament**, and no amendment can be questioned in any court on any ground, including that of the contravention of any of the Fundamental Rights.
  - **However, the SC in the Minerva Mills case(1980) invalidated this provision as it excluded judicial review, which is a ‘basic feature’ of the Constitution.**
  - **Again in the Waman Rao case (1981), the SC adhered to the doctrine of the ‘basic structure’ and further clarified that it would apply to constitutional amendments enacted after April 24, 1973.** It is the date of the judgement in the Kesavananda Bharati case.
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