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Current Affairs - 20 September 2025

WHAT ARE REGISTERED UNRECOGNISED POLITICAL PARTIES (RUPP)?



- These are the parties which are **either newly registered parties or those which have not secured enough percentage of votes in the assembly or general elections to become a state party, or those which have never contested elections since being registered.**
- **Despite not having official recognition, RUPPs enjoy certain benefits:**
 - **Tax exemption** under Section 13A of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
 - **Eligibility for common poll symbols** during elections. Common symbols are provided to RUPPs based upon an undertaking that they would put up “at least 5% of total candidates with regard to said Legislative Assembly election of a State”.
 - **Permission to nominate up to 20 ‘star campaigners’ for canvassing.**
- They are, however, required to:
 - **Contest elections periodically.**
 - **File annual audit accounts and contribution reports.**
 - **Disclose donations exceeding Rs. 20,000**, and ensure that no donations above Rs. 2,000 are accepted in cash.

What are Registered Parties?

- **Political parties** in the country are **registered with the ECI** under the provisions of **Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1951.**
- There are **many benefits of registering a party.**
 - Firstly, the **RPA allows political parties to accept contributions voluntarily offered to it by any person or company other than a government company.**
 - Apart from this, **candidates of registered parties get preference in allotment of election symbols.** Other candidates are identified as independents and do not get preference in symbol allocation.



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- **Tax exemption for donations** received under Section 13A of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
- Guidelines for registration of Political Parties mention that **if the party does not contest elections continuously for 6 years, the party shall be taken off the list of registered parties.**
- **Registered political parties, in course of time, can get recognition as a state party or national party** subject to the fulfilment of the conditions prescribed by the EC in the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, as amended from time to time.
- **Recognised political parties get to reserve a symbol and use it exclusively**, whereas unrecognised parties have to choose from a list of free symbols.
- Recognition also comes with **other benefits**, such as **free broadcast facilities** over Doordarshan and All India Radio, **more allowances for campaign expenditure**, and **free copies of electoral rolls before elections.**
- **Conditions for Recognition as a State Party:** A political party shall be treated as a recognised political party in a state **if it fulfils any of the following conditions**
 - The party has to **win 3 percent of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the state in the General Election.**
 - The party has to win **one Lok Sabha seat for every 25 Lok Sabha seats allotted for the state** in the General Election.
 - The party has to secure a **minimum of 6 percent of votes in a state**, and in **addition it has won one Lok Sabha or two Legislative Assembly seats in elections.**
 - The party has to secure **8 percent of votes in a state in the General Election to Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly.**

Conditions for Recognition as a National Party: A political party shall be treated as a national party **if it fulfils any of the following conditions:**

- Secure **at least 6 percent of votes polled in four or more states in the Lok Sabha or Assembly elections**, and, in addition, it has at least four members in the Lok Sabha.
- It also has to have **at least 2 percent of the total Lok Sabha seats and its candidates come from not less than three states.**
- It is **recognised as a state party in at least four states.**
- **Both national and state parties have to fulfil these conditions for all subsequent Lok Sabha or state elections.** Else, they lose their status.



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PROCESS OF VOTER NAME DELETION FROM THE ELECTORAL ROLL

- Under **Section 22 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950**, Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) can correct or delete names from electoral rolls, either on their own or upon application.
- Before deletion, they must conduct an inquiry, give the voter a chance to respond, and then issue an order.
- Names can be removed if the person has died, shifted residence, or is ineligible — such as being under 18 or not a citizen.

Applying for Voter Deletion

- Under the **Registration of Electors Rules, 1960**, electors can seek deletions through **Form 7**, used to object to inclusion or request removal of names.
- The form may be filed for one's own name or another elector in the same constituency.
- It can be downloaded from the Election Commission's voter portal (voters.eci.gov.in), submitted to the Booth Level Officer (BLO), or filed online via the **ECINet app**.

Filing Form 7 Online for Voter Deletion

- To file **Form 7** online, applicants must first create an account and link their phone number to their **EPIC number** on the voter portal or app.
- Only those registered in the same constituency can submit a Form 7 seeking deletion of a name from a particular constituency.
- The form requires the applicant's details — name, EPIC number, phone number — along with the name, EPIC (if available), and address of the person being objected to.
- Applicants must choose one of five reasons: death, underage, permanently shifted, already enrolled, or not an Indian citizen.
- No proof is required, but applicants must sign a declaration affirming the truth of their claim.
- The completed form can be submitted online or printed for offline submission to the Booth Level Officer (BLO).



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CAG FLAGS FRAUD IN STATE SCHEMES VIA AI AUDITS

- The CAG of India emphasised the growing role of **artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML)** in detecting fraud during audits of state beneficiary schemes.
- Digitisation of audit processes is now the CAG's top priority to enable **remote audits, reduce hassles for executives, ensure timely reporting, and expand coverage** — including 100% checks of GST and Income Tax databases.
- **Use of AI/ML in Fraud Detection**
 - AI/ML-based forensic audits have already exposed numerous fraudulent cases across states.
 - These tools could **save states significant financial resources** currently being siphoned off through fraudulent practices.
 - A key application of remote audits will also include identifying tampering of electronic documents.

Digitisation of Financial Management Systems

- **Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS),**
 - IFMIS is a digital, web-based platform used by government entities to automate and integrate various financial functions like budgeting, accounting, payments, and reporting.
- **Works and Accounts Management Information System (WAMIS),**
 - WAMIS is a comprehensive digital system for managing construction projects, covering their entire life cycle from inception to completion.
 - Developed by C-DAC, it tracks and monitors financial transactions, links them to physical progress, etc.
- **Government e-Procurement Platform (GePNIC),**
 - GePNIC is a software system developed by India's National Informatics Centre (NIC) for conducting all stages of the government procurement process for goods, services, and works.



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- e-voucher systems, and
- **Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP).**
 - DILRMP is a Central Sector Scheme launched by the GoI to computerize, digitize, and modernize all land records and registration processes across the country
- However, the maturity level of these applications varies significantly across states, though digitisation has already improved the finalisation of Monthly Civil Accounts.

Remote Audits Across Departments

- The CAG has successfully conducted remote audits in areas such as **GST, stamp and registration, e-procurement, works, and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes.**
- The next goal is to extend remote auditing to all government departments with digitised records.
- **Auditing Local Governments**
 - There is need to audit Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), as nearly 15 cities contribute more than 50% of India's GDP.
 - Cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad alone account for 30% of GDP and could add 1.5% to annual growth if efficiencies improve.

Conclusion

- Initiatives such as **SNA SPARSH** will strengthen cash management, while schemes like **Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment** will help states build IT-driven financial infrastructure.
 - It is therefore imperative for states to **continuously adopt and integrate advanced digital tools**, including artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), into their public financial management frameworks.
 - Such integration will not only enhance **transparency and accountability** but also significantly improve **efficiency in governance.**
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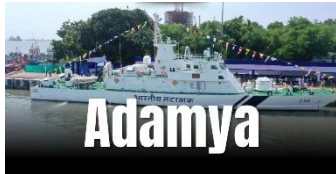
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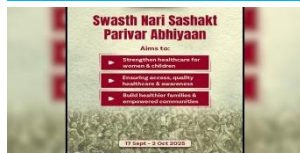
ADAMYA FAST PATROL VESSEL



• It is the first ship of the **eight in series Adamya-class Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs)**

- **'Adamya' meaning 'indomitable'** is a projection of ICG's will and commitment in ensuring safe, secure, and clean seas towards the maritime interest of the Nation.
- **Developed by:** It has been designed and built indigenously by **Goa Shipyard Limited**.
- **Features of Adamya Fast Patrol Vessel**
 - **Carrying Capacity:** It displaces approx. 320 tons.
 - It is propelled by two 3000 KW diesel engines to attain a **maximum speed of 28 Knots** along with an endurance of 1500 nm at economical speed.
 - It is the first ship fitted with indigenously developed two **Controllable Pitch Propellers and gearboxes offering superior manoeuvrability**, operational flexibility and enhanced performance at sea.
 - Its weaponry includes a 30 mm CRN 91 gun and two 12.7 mm stabilized remote controlled machine guns, all supported by fire control systems.
 - The vessel also features an **Integrated Bridge System, Integrated Platform Management System**, Automated Power Management System and augmenting operational efficiency & automation.

SWASTH NARI, SASHAKT PARIVAR ABHIYAAN



- It is aimed at **strengthening healthcare services for women and children** across India, with a focus on improving **access, quality care, and awareness**.
- It is an initiative by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)** and the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)**,



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- It encourages active participation from **private hospitals and healthcare professionals** to foster inclusive healthcare delivery.
- **Objectives of Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan**
 - **Enhance Women's Health** Through Comprehensive Screening and Services
 - Promote **Family Well-Being** via Maternal and Child Care
 - Foster Behaviour Changes Through Education
 - Encourage Community Participation and Public Awareness
- **Implementation Strategy**
 - **Nationwide Health Camps with Real-Time Monitoring** : It will organise more than one lakh health camps across Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and Community Health Centres, coordinated and tracked through the **SASHAKT portal**.
 - **Multi-Platform Outreach for Awareness**: This abhiyan aims to leverage **Doordarshan, All India Radio (AIR), and social media** campaigns to maximise public awareness and participation
 - **Volunteer and Nikshay Mitra Engagement**: The campaign expands participation through Nikshay Mitras and volunteers, who support tuberculosis eradication efforts and community health initiatives.

WAVES BAZAAR 2.0: EMPOWERING DIGITAL CONTENT CREATORS

- India's media and entertainment industry is undergoing rapid transformation, driven by digitisation, global collaborations, and the growing power of independent creators.
- To strengthen this momentum, the Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Ministry launched **WAVES Bazaar** in January 2025 as a hybrid content marketplace.
- Now, the portal is entering its **second phase**, introducing **online pitching sessions, secure viewing rooms, and AI-based matchmaking tools** to empower content creators and make India a global content hub.

About WAVES Bazaar



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- WAVES Bazaar is a **government-backed initiative** that connects creators, investors, production houses, OTT platforms, distributors, and financiers on one digital platform.
- It was designed as a **networking and marketplace hub** covering films, television, animation, gaming, music, advertising, sound design, radio, and podcasts.
- The platform has already:
 - Onboarded over **6,000 creators and sellers**, and **5,500 buyers and companies**.
 - Enabled **2,000+ projects** to go live.
 - Generated over **Rs. 1,300 crore in business leads** during its first summit in Mumbai.
 - Facilitated **Rs. 100 crore worth of investment discussions** via editions in Toronto and Melbourne.
 - Attracted buyers and delegations from **40+ countries**.

Significance for India's Creative Economy

- The second phase of WAVES Bazaar is designed to:
 - **Democratize content creation** by giving small and independent creators access to the same opportunities as established players.
 - **Boost India's position as a global content hub**, with stronger participation in international festivals and co-productions.
 - **Diversify beyond films** into music, gaming, animation, and short-form content.
 - **Attract investments** and build sustainable collaborations for long-term growth.
- The I&B Ministry envisions WAVES Bazaar as a **flagship initiative in India's digital cultural economy**, aligning with the government's broader goals of enhancing the country's soft power and creative exports.

Challenges and Future Outlook

- While the initiative has generated strong momentum, its success will depend on:
 - Ensuring robust **data security and intellectual property protection** in viewing rooms.
 - Expanding access to **regional creators** who often lack digital infrastructure.



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THE SAUDI-PAKISTAN PACT IS A DODGY INSURANCE POLICY

- The signing of the **Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA)** between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in Riyadh on September 17, 2025, marks a **significant development in the geopolitics of Southwest Asia**.
- Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, joined by Field Marshal Asim Munir, **symbolised not just bilateral cooperation but also an attempt to reshape regional security equations**.
- While the **pact may be hailed as a victory of future aspirations over past experience**, its sustainability and effectiveness remain deeply contested.
- Hence, **it is necessary to examine the history of Saudi–Pakistani defence ties, the current calculations of both parties, and the wider consequences, particularly for India**.

Regional Implications: India’s Position

- The SMDA **inevitably raises questions about its impact on India**.
 - As the world’s third-largest oil importer and a key Saudi partner, India occupies a unique position.
 - It is **Saudi Arabia’s second-largest trading partner**, with a diaspora highly valued for its professionalism and political neutrality.
 - **Since 2014, New Delhi has cultivated strong ties with Riyadh**, ranging from defence cooperation to intelligence sharing.
 - Notably, **Saudi officials have emphasised balancing relations with both Pakistan and India**, explicitly acknowledging India’s nuclear status and strategic weight.
 - **Riyadh reportedly kept New Delhi informed about the SMDA**, suggesting a desire to avoid alienating a vital partner.
 - **For India, the agreement serves as a reminder to remain vigilant**, deepen engagement across the Arabian Sea, and strengthen its own strategic presence in West Asia.
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