

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

RELIGION AND RESERVATION

Recently, the Supreme Court orally observed that “**Reservation cannot be on the basis of religion**”. The apex court was hearing a challenge to the Calcutta High Court’s decision in May to strike down reservations granted to 77 classes — predominantly from the Muslim community — within the quota for Other Backward Classes (OBC).

Earlier, in November 2024, the Supreme Court denied Scheduled Caste (SC) status to a woman who had converted to Christianity.

Through these instances, the relationship between religion and reservations has once again been brought into focus. Since the Constitution of India came into force in 1950, both the Centre and the Supreme Court have attempted to define the extent to which religion can be considered for providing reservation benefits.

Religion as criteria for OBC reservations

- **Constitutional Framework for Religious Groups in Reservations**
 - There is no express prohibition on identifying religious groups as beneficiaries of OBC or Scheduled Tribe reservations.
 - However, such efforts have primarily been within the OBC category.
 - Article 16(4) of the Constitution empowers states to provide reservations for “any backward class of citizens” inadequately represented in state services.
 - Kerala has included Muslims within the OBC quota since 1956, followed by Karnataka in 1995 and Tamil Nadu in 2007.
- **Karnataka and the Role of Backward Classes Commissions**
 - In Karnataka, reservations for Muslims were introduced based on the Third Backward Classes Commission report (1990) chaired by Justice O. Chinnappa Reddy.
 - The report identified Muslims “as a whole” as socially and economically backward.

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

- Similarly, the Justice Rajender Sachar Committee report (2006) highlighted the “abysmally low” representation of Muslim OBCs in Central Government departments.
 - It emphasized that the benefits of backward class entitlements had yet to reach them.
 - **Indra Sawhney Judgment and Its Significance**
 - The Supreme Court’s **Indra Sawhney v Union of India** (1992) judgment clarified that OBC reservations aimed to address historical discrimination.
 - It ruled that while religion, race, caste, and other group identities were relevant, they could not be the sole criterion for granting reservations.
 - **This ensured backwardness was determined objectively.**
 - **Calcutta High Court Decision (2024)**
 - In May, 2024, the Calcutta High Court struck down OBC reservations for 77 classes, 75 of which were Muslim, as the reservations were granted without objective criteria to determine backwardness.
 - The court observed that religion appeared to be the sole basis for declaring these communities as OBCs, which violated the principles laid down in the Indra Sawhney case.
-

UNIFORM CIVIL CODE (UCC)

- A UCC would provide for one law for the entire country, applicable to all religious communities, in their personal matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption etc.
- In other words, UCC is a set of rules/regulations, which proposes to replace the personal laws based on the scriptures and customs of each major religious community in the country with a common set governing every citizen.

Constitutional position

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

- Article 44 of the Constitution lays down that the state shall endeavour to secure a UCC for citizens throughout the territory of India.
 - Article 44 is among the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP).
 - Directive Principles are not enforceable by court, but are supposed to inform and guide governance.

UCC debate in Constituent Assembly

- **Background of the UCC Debate**
 - On November 23, 1948, the Constituent Assembly debated a draft Article 35 (now Article 44) on the UCC, which was included in the DPSP.
 - The draft stated that the State would aim to secure a UCC for all citizens of India.
 - However, concerns were raised about its impact on religious communities, leading to its non-binding inclusion under the DPSPs.
- **Opposition to the UCC:** Several members expressed apprehensions.
 - Mohamad Ismail Sahib of the Indian Union Muslim League argued that a uniform code would not necessarily ensure harmony but could lead to discontent by interfering with personal laws.
 - Naziruddin Ahmad echoed similar concerns, stating that religious laws, deeply connected with beliefs and practices, should remain untouched.

KM Munshi's Support for the UCC

- **Supported UCC**
 - K. M. Munshi strongly advocated for the UCC, countering the criticism that it would be “tyrannical” to minorities.
 - He pointed out that even advanced Muslim countries had not treated personal laws as sacrosanct to hinder a civil code.
 - Munshi also addressed Hindu opposition to the UCC, particularly regarding laws on inheritance and succession, which were seen as part of religion.
 - He argued that without a UCC, gender equality could not be achieved.



CROSS & CLIMB
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition



CROSS & CLIMB
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

- Highlighting discrimination against women in Hindu law, Munshi stated that a civil code was essential to elevate the position of women to equality with men, as enshrined in the Fundamental Rights.
 - **UCC and National Unity**
 - Munshi linked the UCC to national integration, urging the Muslim members to abandon an “isolationist outlook.”
 - He emphasized that religion should be confined to its legitimate sphere, while the rest of life must be regulated to unify and strengthen the nation.
 - He argued that the UCC would not be tyrannical to minorities but instead foster a stronger, consolidated nation.
-

EXERCISE SLINEX



Exercise SLINEX 2024 (Sri Lanka–India Exercise) will be conducted from 17 to 20 Dec 24 at Visakhapatnam under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command.

- It is a **bilateral naval exercise** conducted between **India and Sri Lanka**.
- It was **initiated in 2005**, SLINEX is a significant series of bilateral naval exercises that have strengthened maritime cooperation between India and Sri Lanka over the years.
- The 2024 edition aims to further **reinforce the strong maritime ties** between India and Sri Lanka while promoting a safe, secure and rules-based maritime environment.
- The 2024 exercise will be held in two phases - the **Harbour Phase and the Sea Phase**.
- **Participating Units:**
 - **From India:** Indian Naval Ship INS Sumitra, a Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel of the Eastern Fleet, along with a Special Forces team.
 - **From Sri Lanka:** SLNS Sayura, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, with an embarked Special Forces team.



CROSS & CLIMB
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition



CROSS & CLIMB
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

- During the harbour phase, participants will engage in professional and social exchanges to strengthen mutual understanding. The Sea Phase will feature **joint exercises**, including Special Forces operations, gun firings, communication drills, seamanship practices, navigation evolutions and helicopter operations.
- Over the years, SLINEX has expanded in scope, enabling both navies to enhance interoperability and share best practices.

CHARAK INITIATIVE



Under the guidance of the Ministry of Coal, Singrauli-based Coal India arm Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) has rolled out the 'CHARAK' initiative.

- **Community Health: A Responsive Action for Koylanchal (CHARAK)** is an innovative health-centric Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.
- This project is aimed at providing free treatment for the patients suffering from identified Life-Threatening diseases belonging to **Economically Weaker Sections** of the Singrauli region.
- **Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL)** will provide free treatment of identified **life-threatening diseases** at its dedicated hospital or at specialised empanelled hospitals across the country.
- **Eligibility:** Residents of Singrauli and Sonbhadra districts having annual family **income below Rs. 8 Lakhs** from all sources will be eligible for benefits under this scheme.
- **Diseases covered:** Under this scheme, Malignancy, TB and related complications, HIV and related complications, Cardiovascular diseases, Organ Transplant, burns with contractures leading to permanent disability, Liver disorders, sudden hearing loss, ARDS, Acute Surgical Emergencies, Neurological Disorders, Neurovascular disorders, Accidental trauma, Serious handicap, Multisystem disorders, Connective Tissue disorders, Sudden vision loss etc.

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR REMOVAL OF A JUDGE?



• Under Articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution of India, a **Supreme Court** or **High Court** judge can be removed by the **President** on grounds of ‘**proved misbehaviour**’ or ‘**incapacity**’.

The motion must be passed in both Houses of Parliament:

- By a **majority of the total membership** of the House, and
- By a **two-thirds majority** of the members **present and voting** in the same session (Special Majority).
- The Constitution of India does **not** **define** the terms ‘**proved misbehaviour**’ or ‘**incapacity**’. However, the **Supreme Court** has clarified through its judgments that actions such as **wilful misconduct, corruption, lack of integrity**, or offences involving **moral turpitude** constitute misbehaviour.
- **Incapacity** refers to a medical condition that includes **physical or mental limitations** preventing the judge from performing duties effectively.

Detailed Procedure Under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968

The procedure for removal of judges is elaborated in the **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968**, which requires:

- A **motion for removal** to be signed by **at least 50 members** in the **Rajya Sabha** or **100 members** in the **Lok Sabha**.
- The **Chairman of the Rajya Sabha** or the **Speaker of the Lok Sabha** has the discretion to **admit or reject** the motion after consultation.
- If admitted, a **three-member committee** is constituted, comprising:
 - A Supreme Court Judge,
 - A High Court Judge, and
 - A distinguished jurist.



CROSS & CLIMB
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition

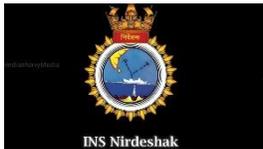


CROSS & CLIMB
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

- The committee investigates the allegations. If the judge is **cleared** of misconduct or incapacity, the motion is dropped and not pursued further.
- If the committee finds the judge **guilty** of misbehaviour or incapacity, the report is tabled in **both Houses of Parliament**, where the motion must be passed by a **special majority**.
- An address is presented to the president for removal of the judge.
- Finally, the President passes an order removing the judge.

INS NIRDESHAK



INS Nirdeshak is set to be commissioned on December 18 at the Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam.

- INS Nirdeshak is the second ship under the Survey Vessel (Large) Project of the Indian Navy.
- It is designed to conduct **hydrographic surveys**, assist in **navigation** and support **maritime operations**.
- It is built by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata**.
- It reflects India's commitment to **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** (self-reliant India) with over **80% indigenous content**.
- **Legacy:** INS Nirdeshak represents the **reincarnation** of the **erstwhile INS Nirdeshak**, which served the Indian Navy for **32 years** with distinction until its **decommissioning on December 19, 2014**.
 - The name 'Nirdeshak', meaning '**Pathfinder**', signifies its role in charting the seas with precision.

Key Specifications:

- **Displacement:** Approx. **3400–3800 tons**.
- **Length:** 110 meters.
- **Speed:** Capable of achieving speeds **exceeding 18 knots**.
- **Endurance:** Can remain at sea for **over 25 days**.

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

- **Propulsion:**
 - It is driven by **two marine diesel engines**.
 - It is equipped with **fixed-pitch propellers**.
 - **Construction Technology:**
 - Built using '**Integrated Construction**' technology.
 - Adheres to standards of the **Indian Register of Shipping (IRS)**.
 - **State-of-the-Art Equipment:** INS Nirdeshak is equipped with advanced **hydrographic and oceanographic** survey systems to conduct precise underwater mapping:
 - Hydrographic Data Acquisition and Processing Systems.
 - Advanced Satellite-Based Navigation and Communication Systems.
 - Sub-surface Sensors for detailed underwater terrain charting.
 - Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs) and Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs).
 - These technologies enable **high-accuracy hydrographic surveys**, making the vessel a key asset for the Navy.
-

INDIA'S FIRST DIABETES BIOBANK



India has established its first diabetes biobank at the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF) in Chennai, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

- The diabetes biobank is a **repository of biological samples** collected from different populations to aid scientific research. It is designed to:
 - **Collect, process, store and distribute biospecimens** to support ongoing and future studies.
 - House blood samples for various forms of diabetes, including **Type 1 diabetes, Type 2 diabetes and gestational diabetes**.

Current Affairs - 17 December 2024

About Diabetes:

- **Diabetes** is a **chronic disease** that occurs when the **pancreas** is unable to produce insulin or when the body cannot use insulin effectively. **Insulin** is a hormone that helps regulate **blood glucose levels**.
- If the body fails to produce or use insulin properly, it results in **high blood glucose levels**, a condition known as **hyperglycemia**. Over a long period, **hyperglycemia** can cause significant **damage to various organs and tissues**.
- It is a **major cause** of critical health conditions such as **blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks, stroke and lower limb amputations**.
- **Epidemiological Study on Diabetes in India:** This study, conducted between **2008 and 2020**, sampled **1.2 lakh individuals** across the country. The participants included **33,537 urban residents** and **79,506 rural residents** from **31 States and Union Territories**.

Types of Diabetes:

- **Type 1 Diabetes:** It is an **autoimmune condition** where the body's **immune system** destroys the **insulin-producing beta cells** in the pancreas. As a result, the body produces **very little or no insulin**.
 - The **common symptoms** of Type 1 diabetes include: Excessive urination (**polyuria**), Extreme thirst (**polydipsia**), Constant hunger, **Unexplained weight loss, Vision changes, Fatigue**
 - **Type 2 Diabetes:** It results from the body's **ineffective use of insulin**, even though it may produce the hormone.
 - The **symptoms** of Type 2 diabetes are often **less severe** compared to Type 1. Therefore, the disease may remain **undiagnosed for several years**, leading to delayed treatment.
 - **Gestational Diabetes (GDM):** GDM refers to **high blood glucose levels** that develop during **pregnancy**. It can lead to **complications** for both the **mother** and the **child**.
-