

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT M VENKAIAH NAIDU WRITES: WE SHOULD SHED COLONIAL LEGACY BY CREATING CONTENT IN MOTHER LANGUAGES

Context

- The article highlights the critical need to preserve mother languages in the light of International Mother Language Day being observed recently.
- Mother's tongue/language is defined as the first language a child is exposed to from the time of birth and this language is first naturally acquired by humans.

International Mother Language Day

- **About:** The day is celebrated on the 21st of February every year to preserve and promote linguistic diversity and promoting mother tongue-based multilingual education.
 - UNESCO has been celebrating this day since 2000.
- This year's theme, "**Multilingual education — a necessity to transform education,**" underscores the importance of using multiple languages in framing an impactful system of education.

Critical Need to Celebrate Mother Language Day

- The **grim situation** all over the world with 40 per cent of the speakers of 6,700 languages not having access to education in their mother tongue underlines pressing need to preserve natal languages.
- It is also significant in the Indian context because of the **threat westernisation** poses to the survival of as many as **42** of our **dialects** and languages which have **fewer than 10,000 users**.
- The UNESCO also expresses concern that a **monolingual system of education** may **impact negatively learning performance**, and the development of socio-emotional and foundational literacy skills.
 - Thus, multilingual education has pivotal role in **upholding cultural and linguistic diversity**.

Attempts to Promote Mother Language in India

- The Nobel Prize-winning physicist C V Raman said, "We must teach science in our mother tongue. Otherwise, science will become an activity in which all people can't participate."

- **Mahatma Gandhi**, in **Young India in 1921**, expressed concerns that the foreign medium has turned our children into crammers and imitators.
 - The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land.
- The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** - a farsighted document, which advocates education in one's mother tongue right from the primary-school level.
 - The PM of India while addressing the **first** anniversary of the NEP also hailed the AICTE's landmark decision to permit **BTech programmes in 11 native languages**.
 - He added that the NEP's emphasis on mother tongue as the medium of instruction will **instill confidence** in students belonging to **poor, rural and tribal**
- The **UGC** also in a welcome move, written to governors and CMs of various states to give a fillip to measures for the promotion of mother tongue education in colleges and universities.
- The Staff Selection Commission (SSC) has also decided to **conduct examinations in 13 Indian languages** in addition to Hindi and English.
- Similarly, the Supreme Court's decision to make **verdicts accessible in all Indian languages** is of great significance.

Constitutional Provisions Related to Mother Language in India

- **Article 29 (Protection of interests of minorities)**: It gives all citizens right to conserve their language and prohibits discrimination on the basis of language.
- **Article 120 (Language to be used in Parliament)**: It provides for use of Hindi or English for transactions in Parliament but gives the right to members of Parliament to express themselves in their mother tongue.
- **Article 350A (Facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at primary stage)**: It provides that it shall be the endeavour of every State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups.
- **Article 350B (Special Officer for linguistic minorities)**: The President should appoint a special officer for linguistic minorities to investigate all matters relating to the constitutional safeguards for linguistic minorities and to report to him/her such matters.

WHAT IS 'JAADUI PITARA'?

Union Education Minister recently launched an innovative learning material for foundational years of children called "Jaadui Pitara".



About 'Jaadui Pitara':

- The 'Jaadui Pitara' or 'Magic Collection' is a **play-based learning material for children in the age group of three to eight years.**
- It is launched by the **Union Ministry of Education.**
- It has been **designed on the motto of "learning through play"**, as envisaged in the new **National Education Policy (NEP).**
- It **comprises of playbooks, toys, puzzles, posters, flashcards, storybooks, and worksheets, as well as reflecting the local culture, social context, and languages.**
- It is **designed to pique curiosity and accommodate the diverse needs** of learners at the foundational stage.
- It is **developed under the curricular goals of National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS)** as recommended by the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.**
- The resources on 'Jaadui Pitara' will be **digitally available on DIKSHA platform – portal and mobile app.**
- The **pitara is available in 13 Indian languages.**

What is the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS)?

- It is **one of the four National Curriculum Frameworks (NCFs).**
- It is **India's first-ever integrated Curriculum Framework for children between ages 3-8.**
- It is a **direct outcome of the 5+3+3+4 'curricular and pedagogical' structure that NEP 2020 has recommended for School Education.**
- **NCF-FS has been developed by NCERT** through an extensive consultative process with States & Union Territories up to grass root level and various institutions and organizations.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURE FOR ZAID (SUMMER) CAMPAIGN

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister chaired the National Conference on Agriculture for Zaid (Summer) Campaign-2023 in New Delhi.



About National Conference on Agriculture for Zaid (Summer) Campaign:

- The objective of the Zaid conference is to review and assess the crop performance during the preceding crop seasons and fix crop-wise targets for the summer season in consultation with State Governments.

What are Zaid crops?

- Zaid or summer crops are grown in the short season between Kharif and Rabi crops, between March and July.
- These crops are mostly **grown on irrigated lands** and therefore, the farmers do not wait for the monsoon.
- Zaid crops require warm soil and high temperatures (cooling at night) to grow.
- Most of the vegetables and hybrid cereals are grown in the zaid season.
- **Major crops:** Paddy, corn; pumpkin, cucumber, tomato; almonds, peanuts, cashews; Gram, lentils, etc.
- **Cultivation areas in India:** Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu.
- Zaid crop is significant for farmers as it gives fast cash to the farmers and is also known as a gap-filler between two chief crops, Kharif and Rabi.

MALABAR NAVAL EXERCISE



The Malabar naval exercise, the most visible manifestation of the expanding military interoperability among the Quad countries, will be conducted off Australia for the first time this August.

About Malabar naval exercise:

- It was started in 1992 as a bilateral naval exercise between India and US navy.

- The first Malabar Exercise in the Bay of Bengal took place in 2007.
- It was expanded into a trilateral format with the inclusion of Japan in 2015.
- In 2020, the Australian Navy joined the Malabar Exercise, making it a quadrilateral naval exercise.
- The aim of the Malabar Exercise of **India, the US, Japan and Australia** is to coordinate for a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.
- It takes place annually in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Oceans alternatively.
- This exercise includes a diverse range of activities such as fighter combat operations and maritime interdiction operations.

Other Joint Maritime Exercises of India

- **IBSAMAR:** It is a maritime exercise held by India, South Africa, and Brazil.
- **SIMBEX:** India and Singapore.
- **SLINEX:** India and Sri Lanka.

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS 2022: CLASS TEACHING FOR 3 TO 8-YEAR-OLDS TO BE PLAY-BASED, TEXTBOOK-FREE

Why in News?

- The National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Skills 2022 aims to meet a key focus area of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 - to improve foundational skills of students.
- With this in mind, the Minister for Education recently released learning and teaching material called the “**jaadui pitara**” or magical box for foundational stage of schooling.

What Exactly is the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for Foundational Skills 2022?

- **Background:**
 - As early childhood care and education (ECCE) lays the groundwork for life-long learning and development, the new **5+3+3+4 curricular structure** that integrates ECCE for all children aged 3 to 8, was included in the **NEP 2020**.

- With the foundational stage (3-8 years) of education as the **first stage** in the 5+3+3+4 Curricular, pre-primary school children (classes I-II) have entered the formal schooling system in India for the **first time**.
- In order to lay the framework, the government, in October 2022, unveiled the **first NCF for the foundational stage** in accordance with the NEP-2020.
 - The NCF 2022 is based on the recommendations of the **National Steering Committee** (chaired by K Kasturirangan).
- The NCF for the foundational stage will be followed by its editions for higher classes, as well as teacher and adult education, in the future.
- **The NCF for foundational skills 2022:**
 - The new framework includes the '**panchakosha**' concept for education of children aged 3 to 8, with five components -
 - Physical development (sharirik vikas),
 - Development of life energy (pranik vikas),
 - Emotional and mental development (manasik vikas),
 - Intellectual development (bauddhik vikas), and
 - Spiritual development (chaitisik vikas).
 - It provides for the holistic overall transformation of the curriculum of the ECCE that will enable **positive transformation of the school education** system of India, including pedagogy.
 - It uses '**play**' at the core of the approaches to curriculum organisation, as children learn best through play.
 - Hence, NCF will enable the achievement of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy for all children.

SENIOR LAWYER DESIGNATION

- The Central government is seeking to change guidelines for the designation of senior lawyers.
- These guidelines were issued by the Supreme Court in the aftermath of its 2017 ruling in the case of 'Indira Jaising vs. Union of India'.

Who are Senior advocates/lawyers in India?

- Under Section 16 of the **Advocates Act 1961** two classes of advocates are classified; Senior Advocate and Junior or those who are not designated as seniors.
- The Senior advocates play the role of legal experts in India who have significant knowledge in the field of law.
- They are associated with many prominent cases as they are good contributors to the principle of Rule of Law.

What are the legal provisions related to the Designation of Senior Counsel?

- Section 16(2) of the **Advocates Act, 1961** and Rule 2(a) of **Order IV of the Supreme Court Rules, 1966** provide certain guidelines to be followed for the designation of a senior counsel.
- As per these provisions:
 - The Chief Justice and other judges of the concerned court should believe that a particular advocate is fit to hold the position of a senior advocate.
 - The concerned advocate should have exceptional legal expertise and knowledge of the law.
 - The consent of such an advocate should be obtained prior.
 - The selection should be on the sole ground of his knowledge and expertise in the area of law.

What are the restrictions imposed on a Senior Advocate?

- A senior advocate is not permitted to appear without an Advocate-on-record or any junior.
- He/she is refrained from drafting pleadings or affidavits before any court or authority mentioned under Section 30 of the act.
- He/she shall not accept directly from a client any brief or instructions to appear in any Court.
- A senior cannot file any pleading or represent his client neither can draft an application by his own handwriting.
- The senior advocate must maintain a code of conduct, different from the other advocates.

What is Indira Jaising Case?

- India's first woman Senior Advocate Indira Jaising filed a petition in SC challenging the existing process of designation.

- She termed this process as opaque, arbitrary and fraught with nepotism and sought greater transparency in the process of designating.
 - As a result, the Apex Court decided to lay down guidelines for itself and all High Courts on the process of designating senior advocates.
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ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET

Recently, the Tamil Nadu Wildlife Crime Control Bureau imposed a fine of Rs 2.5 lakh on a film actor for keeping two Alexandrine parakeets at his residence.



About Alexandrine parakeet:

- It is named after Alexander the Great, who transported numerous birds from Punjab to various European and Mediterranean countries and regions.
- These birds are highly intelligent and are known to be **excellent talkers**, making them very popular pets.
- These parakeets are **diurnal social birds**. They usually live in small flocks but form larger groups in areas where food is abundant or at communal roosts.
- They are widespread in **South and South-East Asia** where they live in forests, woodlands, agricultural lands, and mangrove forests.
- **Conservation status:**
- **IUCN: Near Threatened**
- **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule IV**

Key facts about the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

There are **Six Schedules** in this act. These Schedules give a different standard of protection.

- The Listed breeds and types of animals in **Schedule I and part II of Schedule II** get **supreme protection**. Offences under these are prescribed the highest penalties.
- For example Himalayan Brown Bear, Indian Elephant etc.
- The Listed breeds and types of animals in **Schedule III and Schedule IV** are also secured, but the **penalties are comparatively much lower**.
- For example, Barking Deer, Falcons, Kingfisher, Tortoise etc.

- **Schedule V** includes the animals which can be hunted.
 - For example, Common Crow, Mice, Rats, Fruit Bats etc.
 - The **plants, trees and crops mentioned in Schedule VI** are banned from Cultivation and Planting. For example, Kuth, Red Vanda, Pitcher Plant etc.
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BOKANG-BALING HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

Residents of Pithoragarh district's Dharchula town recently staged a protest against the proposed Bokang-Baling Hydroelectric Project.



About Bokang-Baling Hydroelectric Project:

- It is a proposed hydroelectric project on river Dhauliganga in the Pithoragarh district in Uttarakhand.
- It has a proposed installed capacity of 165 MW.
- The project involves the construction of a concrete gravity dam of 65 m from river bed level and an underground Power House.
- The project is being implemented by THDC India Limited.

Dhauliganga river:

- **Origin:** It rises in the vicinity of the Niti Pass in the border regions between Garhwal region of Uttarakhand and southwestern Tibet.
- It is one of the important tributaries of Alaknanda, the other being the Nandakini, Pindar, Mandakini, and Bhagirathi.
- It meets the Alaknanda River (the major source stream of the Ganges river) at Vishnuprayag in Uttarakhand.
- **Length:** The length of this river is about 94 km.
- Tapovan, which is famous for its hot springs, is located on the banks of Dhauliganga.

THDC India Limited:

- THDC India Limited (Formerly Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Limited) is a company jointly owned by the Government of India and the Government of Uttar Pradesh.
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- It was registered as a **Public Limited Company** in 1988 under the **Companies Act 1956** to operate and maintain the **Tehri Hydro Power Complex** and other Hydro Projects.
- It is a **Mini Ratna Category-I Enterprise**.

WHAT IS THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES IN PARLIAMENT?

Rajya Sabha Chairman recently asked the committee of privileges to investigate the alleged breach of privilege by 12 opposition lawmakers for repeatedly entering the well of the House, shouting slogans, and obstructing its proceedings.



About Committee of Privileges:

- This committee consists of **15 members in Lok Sabha** (10 in case of Rajya Sabha) nominated by the Speaker (Chairman in case of Rajya Sabha).
- In the **Rajya Sabha**, the deputy chairperson heads the committee of privileges.
- **Powers and Functions:**
- The committee **examines every question involving a breach of privilege** of the House or of the members or of any Committee thereof referred to it by the House or by the Speaker/Chairman.
- It also **determines with reference to the facts of each case whether a breach of privilege is involved and makes suitable recommendations** in its report.
- It also **states the procedure to be followed by the House in giving effect to its recommendations**.
- When a question of privilege is referred to the Committee by the House, **the report of the Committee is presented to the House by the Chairman or**, in his absence, by **any member of the Committee**.
- The **Speaker/Chairman may refer to the Committee any petition regarding the disqualification of a member on the ground of defection for making a preliminary inquiry** and submitting a report to him.
- The **procedure to be followed by the Committee in these cases** is so far as may be the same as in applicable to questions of breach of privilege.