

Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud said in open court that the Supreme Court Collegium was not in the know about certain “developments” concerning advocate Victoria Gowri when it recommended her for appointment as a judge of the Madras High Court on January 17. The court listed for urgent hearing on Tuesday a petition filed by a group of lawyers accusing her of “hate speech” against minorities.

Parliament failed to start the discussion on the Motion of Thanks to the President on Monday as Opposition members in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha continued their protests over the demand to constitute a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) to investigate the allegations of fraud against the Adani Group.

Indo-Pacific cooperation and trade were at the top of the agenda as Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly met External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar for the India-Canada Strategic Dialogue in Delhi. The visit is seen as an attempt by both sides to put bilateral ties back on track, after several turbulent years, and focused primarily on Canada’s newly released Indo-Pacific strategy that calls India an important partner. Significantly, the MEA press release made no mention of recent tensions over vandalism by suspected pro-Khalistani groups in Canada.

Data presented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) on Monday in the Lok Sabha revealed that the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) is currently functioning with less than 50% of its sanctioned strength, with commission officials disclosing that it is becoming increasingly difficult to undertake its function without the requisite staffers.

1.04 lakh the number of pregnant women in Assam last year who were teenagers, according to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Amid protests in Barak Valley, Morigaon and Dhubri, the crackdown on child marriage in Assam entered the fourth day on Monday, with the number of arrests rising to 2,441 against the 4,074 FIRs filed in the State.

600 kg the weight of ivory smuggled from Africa and caught by Vietnamese authorities over the past week. This has been the largest seizure of smuggled ivory in the country in more than four years. In 2018, the authorities had seized more than eight tonnes of ivory and pangolin scales in one of the country’s largest wildlife trafficking cases.

Malaysia held its 15th general election in November 2022 putting an end to the volatile political situation in the region. The election delivered the first hung Parliament of the country as none of the existing political coalitions secured a simple majority. The unity government led by Pakatan Harapan (PH), (The Alliance of Hope) under the premiership of Mr. Anwar Ibrahim formed the government even though it fell short of a majority with its 82 seats.

SUPREME COURT (SC) APPOINTED-COMMITTEE’S REPORT ON PROTECTING GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD (GIB) FROM OVERHEAD POWER LINES

1. SC had constituted a 3- member committee to determine technical feasibility of future underground power lines. Committee recommended to install bird diverters which are flaps installed on power lines that work like reflectors and are visible to flying birds from about 50 metres away.
2. In 2021, SC directed the power companies that all low-voltage power lines in areas demarcated as “priority and potential habitats of GIB” in Thar and Kutch deserts of Rajasthan and Gujarat should be underground.
3. “Priority zones” are areas where birds are known to live and “potential regions” are those where conservation programmes, such as breeding birds in captivity, are ongoing. However, state governments have not taken steps to comply with SC order as shifting overhead lines underground is expensive and impractical, and would hike the cost of solar power, undermining India’s commitment to green growth.
4. **About Great Indian Bustard-Habitat:** Endemic to Indian Sub-continent (Rajasthan has highest population). Arid and semi-arid grasslands, open country with thorn scrub, tall grass interspersed with cultivation. IUCN Status: Critically Endangered. Protection: Listed in Schedule I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, Appendix I of CITES. Threats to GIB: Hunting, habitat erosion, 'greening' projects that transform arid grasslands to wooded areas, etc.

BUDGET 2023-24 ANNOUNCED MISHTI (MANGROVE INITIATIVE FOR SHORELINE HABITATS & TANGIBLE INCOMES) SCHEME

1. MISHTI scheme aims at mangrove plantation along the coastline and on salt pan lands. It will operate through convergence between MGNREGS, CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority) Fund, and other sources.
2. **Significance of MISHTI scheme-**Prevent erosion and help stabilise coastline ecosystems. Achieving India’s Nationally Determined Contributions to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030. Mangrove are Salt-tolerant plant communities serving as a transition between marine and terrestrial environments.
3. They are found in tropical and sub-tropical intertidal regions characterized by: High Rainfall (between 1,000 to 3,000 mm), temperature range (26 degree - 35 degree Celsius) and calm water with sufficient sediments to set down roots. West Bengal have the highest mangrove cover.
4. Tree species that form a mangrove forest are broadly classified into True Mangroves and Mangroves Associates. True mangroves: Species that specifically grow in intertidal zones. Mangrove associates: Capable of occurring in either littoral or terrestrial habitats.
5. **Other initiatives for Mangroves-**India joined Mangrove Alliance for Climate during COP27. Central Sector Scheme under National Coastal Mission Programme on Conservation and Management of Mangroves and Coral Reefs.

SEBI NOTIFIES STRONGER FRAMEWORK FOR GREEN BONDS; INTRODUCES CONCEPT OF BLUE, YELLOW BONDS

1. In exercise of powers conferred under SEBI Act, 1992, SEBI (Issue and Listing of Non- Convertible Securities) (Amendment) Regulations, 2023 amends 2021 regulations to expand the scope of the definition of Green Debt Securities (GDS).
2. SEBI defines “**Green debt security**” as a debt security issued for raising funds to be utilised for projects like renewable and sustainable energy, clean transportation, sustainable waste management etc.
3. As per new framework, projects and assets categories under GDS has been expanded to incorporate Blue bonds: Comprises funds raised for sustainable water management including clean water and water recycling, and sustainable maritime sector including shipping, fishing, ocean energy and mapping etc.
4. **Yellow bonds:** Comprises funds raised for solar energy generation and upstream industries and downstream industries associated with it. Transition bonds: Comprises funds raised for transitioning to a more sustainable form of operations, in line with India’s Intended Nationally Determined Contributions.

It is backed by the former long-ruling coalition Barisan Nasional (BN) (National Front) led by the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). The consociational democracy model adopted by Malaysia was successful up until 1969. But after the unprecedented racial riot in 1969, the Barisan Nasional (BN) embarked upon a model of politics to promote only Malay rights. This was unleashed by the UMNO which had a hegemonic political position in the ruling BN coalition.

The UMNO used the Malaysian state as an apparatus to institutionalise Malay dominance, Malay language, Islam, and Malay culture in the public sphere. However, by pursuing pro-Malay public policies, the UMNO has severely damaged the social fabric of Malaysia. The unveiling of a 'cumulative marginalisation' facilitated the escalation of an ethnic uprising in Malaysia.

The sooner there is normalisation in India-China relations, the better it would be for the world, Russian Ambassador to India Denis Alipov said, adding that a weak Pakistan would not be better for the region, India or Afghanistan, and Russia would not do anything detrimental to India in its relations with Islamabad.

The state and society cannot ignore hate crime for one day it may come knocking on their doors, the Supreme Court warned on Monday. "If you ignore hate crime, it will come on to you, and then innocent lives will be lost," a Bench led by Justice K.M. Joseph said.

In a major milestone, the naval variant of the indigenous light combat aircraft (LCA) landed on the first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, on Monday. This is also the maiden landing of a fixed wing aircraft on the carrier. The LCA's feat was followed by the landing and take-off by a twin engine MiG-29K fighter jet.

India's energy demand has significantly increased and in the coming years, it will reach 11% of the global demand as against 5% currently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said while inaugurating the India Energy Week (IEW), 2023 here on Monday.

China's government said on Monday it had "lodged solemn representations" with the U.S. over the shooting down of a surveillance balloon that had drifted for several days over the continental U.S. Beijing has acknowledged the balloon was from China, but denied it was for surveillance, instead describing it as a "civilian airship" used for meteorology.

5. **Significance of the move**-Gives more clarity regarding what is considered 'green', thus preventing 'greenwashing'. Help in attracting sustainable finance. Aligns extant framework for GDS with updated Green Bond Principles (GBP) recognised by IOSCO.

PRESIDENT APPOINTS FIVE NEW JUDGES TO SUPREME COURT (SC) AFTER CENTRE'S APPROVAL

1. Accepting the recommendation made by SC collegium, Centre notified the appointment of 5 Judges. With these appointments, working strength of SC will rise to 32 against sanctioned strength of 34. Sanctioned strength is prescribed by law made by Parliament (Article 124 (1)).
2. Chief Justice of India (CJI) and Judges of SC are appointed by President under Article 124 (2) of Constitution based on Memorandum of Procedure (MoP). Under MoP, Union Minister of Law, Justice, and Company Affairs consider the recommendations forwarded by CJI.
3. Collegium system is the way by which judges of SC and HC are appointed and transferred. SC collegium is a five-member body, which is headed by incumbent CJI and comprises four other senior-most judges of the court at that time.
4. Collegium system has evolved with Three Judges case First Judges Case, 1981 (S P Gupta Case): SC ruled that recommendation made by CJI to President can be refused for "cogent reasons", thereby giving greater say to executive.
5. **Second Judges Case, 1993 (SC Advocates on Record Association (SCARA) vs Union of India)**: CJI only need to consult two senior-most judges over judicial appointments and transfers. Third Judges Case, 1998: CJIs should consult with four senior-most SC judges to form his opinion on judicial appointments and transfers.

GOVERNMENT TO PUSH PRODUCERS TO USE RECYCLED STEEL AS 50% INPUT BY 2047: MINISTRY OF STEEL

1. During International Indian Material Recycling Conference, Ministry of Steel stated that it will push primary steel producers to use 50 percent of their input from scrapped/recycled steel by 2047 to achieve circular economy goal. Currently, level of recycled steel usage in primary steel production is only around 10 percent.
2. Overall, recycled steel contributes to 22.5 percent of domestic total steel production of 140 million tonnes. Steel scrap recycling plants are primarily characterised by huge electric furnaces into which scrap steel is fed for producing high-quality steel. Importance of steel scrap recycling Reduces CO2 emissions in steel sector and promotes circular economy.
3. Circular economy entails markets that give incentives to reusing products, rather than scrapping them and then extracting new resources.
4. Saves energy and precious natural resources, ultimately contributing to fight against climate change. Every tonne of steel scrap that is recycled saves 1.1 tonnes of iron ore, 630 kg of cooking coal and 55 kg of limestone.
5. Help in achieving vision of 300 million tonnes per annum (MnTPA) steel production in India by 2030. Challenges: Difficult to ensure that scrap steel meets necessary quality criteria for reuse; Difficult in moving and storing large amounts of steel scrap; Processing steps are extremely energy-intensive etc.
6. **About Steel scrap recycling policy (2019)**-It promotes 6Rs principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover, Redesign and Remanufacture through scientific handling, processing, and disposal of all types of recyclable scraps. Produce high quality ferrous scrap for quality steel production thus minimizing dependency on imports.



"God edits your fate daily."

DR. KHAN
(KSG)