

The Supreme Court held that there is no reason to impose “additional restrictions” on the right to free speech of Ministers, and the government is not vicariously liable for disparaging remarks made by them, even if the comments are traceable to state affairs or meant to protect the government. “A statement by a Minister, even if traceable to any affairs of the state or for protecting the government, cannot be attributed vicariously to the government by invoking the principle of collective responsibility,” Justice V. Ramasubramanian held in the main judgment of the Constitution Bench.

The UNGA (United Nation General Assembly) ended 2022 by passing a resolution that asked the body’s highest court, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to render its opinion on the legal consequences of Israel’s prolonged occupation of Palestinian land. There are two possibilities when a referral is made to the ICJ, it can either lead to a settlement with a party withdrawing its case or it can lead to a trial followed by a verdict.

While its rulings are binding, the ICJ has no power to enforce them. The current six party right-wing coalition of Israel has five ultraorthodox and far right Jewish nationalist parties. There are fears that the new hard-line regime will bring damaging impacts for Palestinians as several of Mr. Netanyahu’s key allies, including most of the Religious Zionism party, are ultranationalist West Bank settlers.

The MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) has released draft amendments in relation to online gaming. The idea is to ensure that online games are in conformity with Indian laws and to safeguard users against potential harm. The proposals are aimed at safeguarding the interests of users by introducing set procedures and norms for verification and user engagement. Experts have welcomed the government’s initiative to bring online gaming under a central regulation.

The Supreme Court observed that all religious conversions cannot be presumed by a State to be illegal while agreeing to hear a Madhya Pradesh government appeal against a High Court decision freezing a mandatory provision requiring a person who desires to convert to another faith to give 60 days’ prior intimation to the District Magistrate. A Bench led by Justice M.R. Shah issued notice but refused to order an interim stay of the High Court order even as Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, for Madhya Pradesh, argued that “conversion in the country is based on marriage.”

India’s scientific community should work to make the country aatmanirbhar (self-reliant), Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday. He said fulfilling India’s requirements should be at the root of all inspiration for the scientific community. Addressing the 108th Indian Science Congress at Nagpur in Maharashtra through videoconference, Mr. Modi expressed happiness about the theme of the event this

SBI, ICICI BANK, HDFC BANK CONTINUE TO REMAIN DOMESTIC SYSTEMICALLY IMPORTANT BANKS (D-SIBS): RBI

1. D-SIBs are those interconnected entities, whose failure can impact the whole of the financial system and create instability i.e., they are ‘too big to fail.’ Concept of D-SIBs was adopted in aftermath of 2008 financial crisis.
2. D-SIBs are designated on basis of their Size; Interconnectedness; Lack of readily available substitutes or financial institution infrastructure; and Complexity. In order to be listed as D-SIB, a bank needs to have assets that exceed 2 percent of national GDP.
3. RBI first issued the framework for dealing with D-SIBs in 2014. D-SIBs framework requires RBI to disclose the names of banks designated as D-SIBs starting from 2015 and place these banks in appropriate buckets depending upon their Systemic Importance Scores (SISs). Based on bucket in which D-SIB is placed, additional common equity (CE) requirement must be applied to it.
4. CE Tier 1 requirement for SBI is 0.60% of Risk Weighted Assets, while it is 0.20% for ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank. Similarly, in case a foreign bank having branch presence in India is a Global Systemically Important Bank (G-SIB). It must maintain additional CET1 capital surcharge in India as applicable by rules concerning G-SIB.
5. **Advantages to SIBS**-Receive government support in times of financial distress and attract closer supervision and regulation from country’s central bank.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO IT (INTERMEDIARY GUIDELINES AND DIGITAL MEDIA ETHICS CODE) RULES, 2021 IN RELATION TO ONLINE GAMING

1. MeitY has invited public comments for draft amendments proposed. Draft has been prepared to ensure that online games should be offered in conformity with Indian laws.
2. **Key proposals in Draft rules Online game:** Game that is offered on Internet and is accessible by a user through a computer resource if he makes a deposit with expectation of earning winnings.
3. **Self-regulatory body (SRB)**-Only games that are cleared by SRB will be allowed to legally operate in India. This body will have a board of directors with five members from diverse fields including online gaming, public policy, IT, psychology, and medicine. It must ensure that registered games do not have anything which is not in interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state, etc.
4. Norms for Online gaming companies Cannot engage in betting on outcome of games. Appoint a compliance officer, nodal officer (act as liaison official with government and assist law enforcement agencies), and grievance officer (resolve user complaints). Mandatory KYC verification of players.
5. **India’s Online Gaming Industry**-Revenue of Indian mobile gaming industry is estimated to reach \$5 billion by 2025. Industry grew at a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of 38% in India (8% in China and 10% in US) between 2017-2020.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (MOEFCC) REFUSED TO SUSPEND FOREST CONSERVATION RULES (FCR), 2022

1. MoEFCC denied National Commission for Scheduled Tribes’ (NCST) request to suspend FCR 2022, claiming that they do not dilute Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 as determined by tribal panel. In October 2022, NCST formed a working group to investigate whether rules violated any provisions in FRA and if they infringed upon rights of tribal people.
2. **Forest Conservation Rules, 2022**- Rules have been issued in exercise of powers conferred under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and in supersession of Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2003. Prescribe procedure to be followed for forest land to be diverted for non-forestry uses. Constitution of an Advisory Committee, a regional empowered committee at each of integrated regional offices and a screening committee at state/UT level.
3. States given responsibility of settling forest rights of forest dwellers and allowing diversion of forest land.
4. **Concerns raised by NCST**-Against FRA, 2006 that requires governments to seek consent of forest dwellers before allowing a project on their traditional lands. Clause on obtaining Gram Sabha consent is missing from it before diverting forest land for a project, thereby weakening local people say in project.
5. **About NCST**-It is a Constitutional body under Article 338A. It aims to protect and promote constitutional, socio-economic, legal, and civil

year, which combines sustainable development with women empowerment.

\$ 115 billion, Iraq's oil revenues in 2022, a four-year high following a collapse in prices during the COVID-19 pandemic. The country is the second largest producer within the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). There was a spike in revenue following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and OPEC producers' reluctance to increase production.

9.05 number of Odisha's State Food Security Scheme (SFSS) beneficiaries who will receive five kg of rice per month free of cost for the next 12 months, according to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. The initiative, set to begin on January 23, will entail a total expenditure of ₹185 crore which will be met by the state exchequer.

28 civilians of the ethnic Fulani group killed by volunteer militia groups supporting Burkina Faso's army, according to a local rights group. Burkina Faso's Fulani people have been increasingly targeted by the military because they are suspected of supporting the country's extremist rebels that have been inflicting violence on the country for years.

In a rare gesture, King Charles III of the United Kingdom held a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday and discussed India's G-20 Presidency and "digital public goods". Mr. Modi and King Charles III, who is expected to be coronated on May 6, also focussed on the Commonwealth of Nations and ways to strengthen it further.

The Supreme Court asked the Centre what would happen to the small and traditional fishermen in the State of Tamil Nadu if "affluent" purse seine fishermen on mechanised boats are allowed to operate beyond the 12 nautical mile territorial waters and end up catching hundreds of tonnes of fish. The court is hearing a petition filed by 'Fishermen Care' to stay a Tamil Nadu government order of February 17, 2020, which had banned the large nets used to catch schools of fish in the deep waters of the sea.

rights of STs in country. It consists of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson and three other members appointed by President by warrant under his hand and seal.

NO RHINOS POACHED IN ASSAM IN 2022

1. Assam recorded zero poaching of Rhinoceros for the first time in nearly 45 years in 2022.
2. **About Rhinoceros**-There are 5 species of rhinos in the world: White rhino, Black rhino, Sumatran rhino, Greater one horned rhino and Javan rhino. Sumatran, Javan and Black rhinos are listed as critically endangered. White rhino is near threatened; and Greater one-horned rhino (Indian rhino) is vulnerable.
3. Javan and Indian rhinos have only one horn, whereas all other rhino species have two horns. Rhino horn is made up of keratin - protein which forms the basis of our hair and nails. Habitat: Tropical and subtropical grasslands, savannas and shrublands, tropical moist forests, deserts and shrublands.
4. **Threats:** Horn poaching for medicinal value, habitat loss. Indian Rhinos are Asia's largest species of rhino. They are found in India (Assam, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh), Nepal and Bhutan.
5. **Steps taken for rhino conversion in India**-Indian Rhino Mission 2020 to increase rhino population in Assam to 3,000 by establishing populations in seven protected areas. Special Rhino Protection Force constituted by Assam to check rhino poaching and related activities.

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS CENTRE'S DECISION ON DEMONETISATION

1. In 4:1 verdict, SC upheld Central government's 2016 notification of demonetisation of ₹1,000 and ₹500 denomination notes under Section 26(2) of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act 1934.
2. **SC Observations**-Under Section 26 (2), government has power to demonetise any series of bank notes and it was not limited to one series alone. There was consultation between government and RBI six months prior to demonetization. Action of demonetisation and time period given for currency exchange were not hit by doctrine of proportionality.
3. In 1978, only three days and further extension of five days were given to exchange old notes for new whereas in 2016, 52 days were given to public. However, dissenting judge objected to demonetisation process as it was based on a mere notification in official gazette, instead of a plenary legislation in Parliament.
4. Demonetisation is act of stripping legal tender status of a currency unit. In 2016, it was carried out to reduce corruption and black money in economy. Earlier in 1978, government demonetized Rs 1,000, Rs 5,000, and Rs 10,000 notes under High Denomination Bank Note (Demonetisation) Act, 1978.
5. **Section 26(2) of RBI Act,1934**-On recommendation of Central Board (RBI), Central Government may, by notification in Gazette of India, declare that, with effect from such date as may be specified in notification, any series of bank notes of any denomination shall cease to be legal tender save at such office or agency of Bank and to such extent as may be specified in notification.



“No one can beat you ever, if you are competing with your ownself.”

DR. Khan
(KSG)