

KSG: NEWSPAPER CRUX

1ST NOVEMBER 2022

The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) has notified amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) on October 28. The draft generated considerable discussion and comment on the regulation of social media in India. This proposed amendments can be broadly classified into two categories.

The first category involved placing additional obligations on the social media intermediaries (SMIs) to ensure better protection of user interests while the second category involved the institution of an appellate mechanism for grievance redressal. Both have been notified to the Rules. The amendments call for the institution of Grievance Appellate Committees (GAC). The committee is styled as a three member council out of which one member will be a government officer (holding the post ex officio) while the other two members will be independent representatives. The GAC is required to adopt an online dispute resolution mechanism which will make it more accessible to the users.

China successfully launched the final module of its Tiangong space station, inching closer to its completion by the end of the year. The module, named Mengtian — or “dreaming of the heavens” — was launched on a Long March 5B rocket from the Wenchang launch centre on China's tropical island Hainan.

An internal study commissioned by the Ministry of Rural Development has argued for decentralisation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), allowing for more “flexibility” at the ground level. The Ministry recently made public the report of the sixth Common Review Mission, which surveyed seven States — Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Nagaland, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh — and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in February to assess the implementation of all rural development schemes, including the MGNREGS.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) empowered the District Collectors of two more districts in Gujarat — Mehsana and Anand — to grant citizenship certificates to the members of Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, Buddhist and Jain communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh. This is

UN SECURITY COUNCIL(UNSC) COUNTER TERRORISM COMMITTEE(CTC) ADOPTS DELHI DECLARATION

1.UNSC CTC's special meeting held in India ended with the adoption of Delhi declaration, which called for: Issuing new set of non-binding guiding principles in countering digital terrorism threat. Counter terrorist exploitation of Information and Communications Technology (like payment technologies and misuse of drones etc). Countering use of technologies for terrorist purposes, while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. Deepen engagement with civil society, including women's organizations, private-sector entities etc.

2.About CTC-It was established by UNSC resolution 1373 (2001) in the wake of the 11 September terrorist attacks in the United States. It comprises all 15 UNSC members. Mandate: Tasked with monitoring the implementation of steps to enhance countries' legal and institutional counter-terrorism abilities, at every level, locally and internationally.

3.These steps include, Criminalize the financing of terrorism, Suppress the provision of safe haven, Deny all forms of financial support for terrorist groups etc. Under resolution 1535 (2004), Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to assist the work of the CTC was established.

GOVERNMENT LAYS DOWN FOUNDATION STONE FOR C-295 TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING FACILITY

1.C295 aircraft is being built by the Tata-Airbus consortium for Indian Air Force. It is the first project of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India by a private company. It is also first time that C295 aircraft will be manufactured outside of Europe.

2.About C-295 aircraft-It is a transport aircraft with 5 to 10-tonne capacity. It can be used for quick reaction and para-dropping of troops and cargo. It will replace the IAF's ageing Avro-748 planes (inducted in early 1960s.) PM highlighted that aircraft manufacturing facility is a giant leap towards becoming self-reliant in aviation sector.

3.Other initiatives for promotion of aviation sector National Civil Aviation Policy 2016, which encompasses: UDAN scheme in which airline operators are incentivised to operate on under-served and unserved routes.

4.Airports Authority of India has leased out eight of its airports through PPP for operation, management and development on long term lease basis. Ministry of Civil Aviation announced leasing of land through open tenders for Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul services.

5.Civil aviation sector in India- India's aviation sector has become the third largest domestic aviation market in the world. India's airport capacity is expected to handle 1 billion trips annually by 2023. Indian aviation industry is dominated by private airlines and these include low cost carriers, who have made air travel affordable.

INDIA, GCC GROUP LIKELY TO START FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (FTA) NEGOTIATIONS NEXT MONTH

1.Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is union of six countries, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain. Headquarter: Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Basic objective: Coordination, integration and inter-connection between Member States in all fields. India has already implemented a FTA with the UAE in May this year.

2.India-GCC relations- Relations with gulf go back several millennia when Indian sailors, merchants, intellectuals etc. traversed Indian Ocean. Trade and Investments: Bilateral trade has increased to US\$154.73 billion in 2021-22 from US\$87.4 billion in 2020-21.

3.India and GCC signed a Framework Agreement for enhancing and developing economic cooperation in 2004. Oil and gas imports: Saudi Arabia & UAE are the leading sources of Crude Oil imports for India. Diaspora: GCC countries together host approximately 6.5 million Indians.

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not the first time the magistrates or collectors have been delegated such powers by the MHA. Similar orders were issued in 2016, 2018 and 2021 empowering District Magistrates in several districts of Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Punjab to grant citizenship certificates to migrants from the six communities who entered India on valid documents.

Brazilian leftist leader Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva narrowly defeated President Jair Bolsonaro in a runoff election, but the far right incumbent did not concede defeat on Sunday, raising concerns that he might contest the result. The Supreme Electoral Court declared Mr. Lula the next President, with 50.9% of votes against 49.1% for Mr. Bolsonaro. The inauguration is scheduled for January 1.

14.7 percentage, the drop in sugar production year on year in India, the world's major sugar producer, to 4.05 lakh tonnes in the first month of the 202223 marketing season. Mills had manufactured 4.75 lakh tonnes of sugar during October in the 202122 marketing season. The sugar marketing season runs from October to September.

₹6.19 lakh crore, the fiscal deficit — the difference between expenditure and revenue — during the first half (April September) of the financial year. Controller General of Accounts data shows that the government's total receipts, including taxes, stood at ₹12.03 lakh crore or 52.7% of the Budget estimate for 2022-23.

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the government not to register any fresh FIRs under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which criminalises sedition, even as the government said it is re-examining the colonial provision and "something may happen" in the Winter Session of Parliament.

Scientists associated with the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS) and the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) have welcomed the recent approval by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change for the environmental release of genetically modified (GM) mustard hybrid for cultivation. Terming the decision a landmark, the scientists said it will break a logjam on the release of GM food

4.Importance of GCC for India-Crucial for India's energy requirements. Market for Indian products. UAE is India's third largest trading partner. Sustained flow of remittances. Cooperation for political stability and security in the region.

INDIA'S 33RD ELEPHANT RESERVE TO COME UP IN UTTAR PRADESH

1.Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change gave its nod to Terai Elephant Reserve (TER), spread over 3,000 square kilometre in Dudhwa-Pilibhit region in Uttar Pradesh. The area also includes: Dudhwa Tiger Reserve Pilibhit Tiger Reserve and comprise forest areas of the Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary, Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary TER will conserve four wild species - tiger, Asian elephant, swamp deer and one-horned rhinoceros in the entire landscape.

2.About Elephant reserves-Elephant reserves were declared as an administrative category by government to demarcate large landscapes that hold elephants and their movements. Notified under centrally sponsored scheme Project Elephant. Two recently notified ERs include Lemru in Chhattisgarh and Agasthyalai in Tamil Nadu.

3.3All 33 elephant reserves put together cover a total area of nearly 80,000 sq km. Tamil Nadu and Assam have the highest number of ERs (5 each) followed by Kerala (4) and Odisha (3). Threats to Elephants: Man-elephant conflict, habitat loss and fragmentations, poaching and the loss of genetic viability resulting from small population size and isolation.

4.Indian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) is recognized as a National Heritage Animal of India Included in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and in Appendix I of CITES. IUCN Status: Endangered. As per the last count in 2017, India has 29,964 elephants. Karnataka has highest number of elephants, followed by Assam and Kerala.

5.Other initiatives for protection of Elephants-Project Elephant - Under the project, government provides technical and financial help to states to save elephants. Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE), an international effort for conservation of elephants in Asia and Africa.

UNDERSTANDING BLACK MAGIC AND SUPERSTITION IN INDIA

1.Recently, two women were killed as part of "ritualistic human sacrifices" in Kerala. As per the 2021 NCRB report, six deaths were linked to human sacrifices, while witchcraft was the motive for 68 killings. Superstition is a belief or way of behaving that is based on fear of the unknown and faith in magic or luck. Black magic means type of magic which is believed to use the power of the devil in order to help or harm another person.

2.Reasons for superstitions-Cultural beliefs or religious practices. Unscientific and irrational practices such as faith healing, quackery, and misinformation regarding medical procedures. Patriarchal norms and attempts to deprive women of land and property and to take revenge where women refuse sexual advances.

3.Suggestions to deal with superstitions-Setting up special courts for providing speedy trial in all cases. Preventing violence through swift response of police administration. Meaningful reform to increase awareness among the masses through information campaigns. Roping in community/religious leaders to debunk the myths surrounding such practices.

4.Presently, there exists no nationwide legislation to deal with superstitious practices, black magic, or human sacrifice. There are state specific laws like Prevention of Witch Practices Act—Bihar. Certain sections of the Indian Penal Code enlist penalties applicable for such incidents like Section 302 (punishment for murder) takes cognisance of human sacrifice.

5.Section 295A (Deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) discourages such practices. Provisions under Drugs and Magic Remedies Act of 1954 aim to tackle the debilitating impact of various superstitious activities.

HUMAN ENDOGENOUS RETROVIRUSES(HERVs)

1.According to new study, HERVs make up around eight percent

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crops.

The war raging in Ukraine and other overlapping crises are taking a toll on labour markets worldwide, the UN said, suggesting a “sharp” slowdown was already under way. In a fresh report, the International Labour Organization cautioned that the outlook for global labour markets has deteriorated in recent months.

of the human genome. About HERVs They represent footprints of previous retroviral infection and have been termed “fossil viruses”.

2. Retrovirus is a type of virus that has RNA instead of DNA as its genetic material. E.g. HIV virus. They have been inherited by successive generations and it is possible that some have conferred biological benefits. However, several HERVs have been implicated in certain cancers and autoimmune diseases.