

12 August, 2023

Final Delimitation Orders for Assam

Context: ECI published the final delimitation order for Assembly and Parliamentary Constituencies of the State of Assam.

Highlights:

Here are the main points summarizing the provided text:

- This process was in accordance with Section 8-A of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.
- The Commission reviewed and considered all 1222 representations received, addressing around 45% of the suggestions/objections in the final proposal.
- Some demands were found to be beyond constitutional and statutory provisions and were not accepted.
- All delimitations were based on the 2001 Census figures, as outlined in Article 170 and Article 82 of the Constitution.
- The total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of Assam remained 126, and 14 seats were allocated in the House of the People for the state.
- Changes in the number of seats cannot occur until the figures from the first census after the year 2026 are published, according to Articles 170 and 82.
- Scheduled Castes were allocated 09 seats in the Legislative Assembly and 1 seat in the House of the People.
- Additionally, 19 Assembly constituencies and two Parliament Constituencies were reserved for Scheduled Tribes, following the provisions of Article 330 and 332 of the Constitution of India.

Delimitation in India

- Following each Census, a Delimitation Act is enacted by Parliament under Article 82, leading to the division of territorial constituencies for both the Union and the States.
- As per Article 170, the Delimitation Act also applies to States, guiding the creation of territorial constituencies after each Census.
- Once the Act comes into effect, a Delimitation Commission is established by the Union government.
 - The Delimitation Commission, consisting of a retired Supreme Court judge, the Chief Election Commissioner, and the respective State Election Commissioners, is appointed by the President of India and operates in cooperation with the Election Commission of India.
- In 1950-51, the inaugural delimitation process occurred under the President's guidance, aided by the Election Commission.
- The year 1952 saw the implementation of the Delimitation Commission Act.
- Delimitation Commissions have been constituted on four occasions: in 1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002, following the Acts of 1952, 1962, 1972, and 2002.
- Notably, delimitation did not take place after the Censuses of 1981 and 1991.

Consumer Welfare Fund

Context: The Consumer Welfare Fund Guidelines have been updated to include the reimbursement of legal expenses for complainants after final adjudication.

- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 aims for efficient and affordable consumer dispute resolution through Mediation under Chapter V.
- The Consumer Protection (Mediation) Rules, 2020 were notified on July 15, 2020.
- The Consumer Protection (Mediation) Regulations 2020 were notified by the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission on July 24, 2020.
- Mediation Cells have been established by most Consumer Commissions, and mediators have been empanelled.
- Currently, there are 247 empanelled mediators in State Commissions and 1387 in District Consumer Commissions across India.
- The primary challenge hindering successful mediation is the mediator's fee.

Example: In a pending dispute worth ₹60,00,000 at the State Consumer Commission, individuals 'A' and 'B' seek mediation. The State Consumer Commission President, considering the facts and amount, sets a mediation fee of ₹25,000. After a successful mediation process, the dispute is resolved, leading to a settlement between 'A' and 'B'. As per the prescribed fee for successful mediation in the State Commission (₹5,000), the mediator will be paid ₹5,000. This fee will be sourced from the interest accrued on the Consumer Welfare (Corpus) Fund, which is established through contributions from both the State and the Department of Consumer Affairs.

CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 1986	PROVISIONS	CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 2019
No separate regulator	Regulator	Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to be formed
Complaint could be filed in a consumer court where the seller's (defendant) office is located	Consumer court	Complaint can be filed in a consumer court where the complainant resides or works
No provision. Consumer could approach a civil court but not consumer court	Product liability	Consumer can seek compensation for harm caused by a product or service
District: up to ₹20 lakh State: ₹20 lakh to ₹1 cr National: above ₹1 cr	Pecuniary jurisdiction	District: up to ₹1 cr State: ₹1 cr to ₹10 cr National: Above ₹10 cr
No provision	E-commerce	All rules of direct selling extended to e-commerce
No legal provision	Mediation cells	Court can refer settlement through mediation

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Consumer Welfare Fund

- Established under Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Act, 2017.
- Consumer Welfare Fund Rules (1992) merged into CGST Rules, 2017.
- Setup by Department of Revenue, operated by Department of Consumer Affairs.
- Objective: Promote and safeguard consumer welfare.
- Initiatives include Consumer Law Chairs/Excellence Centres in reputed institutions.
- Projects for spreading consumer awareness and literacy.
- Funded by penalties under Consumer Protection Act.

Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)

Context: The national-level Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses in the power network decreased from 22.3% in 2020-21 to 16.4% in 2021-22.

Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)

- Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) launched by Government of India in July 2021.
- **Objective:** Enhance power supply quality and operational efficiency in distribution sector.
- **Scheme outlay:** Rs. 3,03,758 crores with estimated Central Government Budgetary Support of Rs. 97,631 crores.
- **Aims:** Reduce national-level AT&C losses to 12-15%, eliminate ACS-ARR gap by 2024-25.
- **Duration:** Five years (FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26), with sunset date of March 31, 2026.
- **Components:** Part 'A' - Prepaid Smart Metering, System Metering, Distribution Infrastructure; Part 'B' - Training, Capacity Building, Enabling and Supporting Activities.
- Funds release linked to achieving results and reforms, DISCOMs must meet pre-qualifying criteria.
- Initiative underscores commitment to efficient power distribution, sustainable energy management, and consumer welfare.

Results Evaluation Framework (REF)

- RDSS includes Results Evaluation Framework (REF) for assessing performance and improvement.
- REF has two components: Pre-qualifying Criteria and Result Evaluation Matrix.
- Pre-qualifying Criteria for DISCOMs:
 - Publish un-audited quarterly accounts within 60 days for first two years.
 - Audited quarterly accounts within 45 days from the third year.
 - Publish audited annual accounts by December for first two years and by September from the third year.
 - No creation of new Regulatory Assets in latest tariff cycle.
 - State Government ensures 100% subsidy payment and wipes out remaining subsidy by project end.
 - Government entities pay 100% current electricity dues.
 - Progress in putting Govt. Offices on prepaid meters.
 - Payables to Creditors incl. Gencos \leq projected trajectory.
 - Issuance and implementation of tariff order and true-up.

AT&C Losses

- Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses are a key metric in the power distribution sector that indicates the overall efficiency of electricity transmission and distribution. These losses encompass both technical and commercial aspects of power supply and distribution.
- **Technical Losses Examples**
 - Heat dissipation due to resistance in power lines.
 - Energy loss caused by inductance and capacitance in equipment.
- **Commercial Losses Examples**
 - Electricity theft and tampering.
 - Meter inaccuracies leading to incorrect billing.
 - Inefficiencies in revenue collection and management.

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NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Hai Yang 24 Hao



What is Hai Yang 24 Hao?

Hai Yang 24 Hao is a Chinese naval vessel, part of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). It's 129 meters long, commanded by Commander Jin Xin, with a crew of 138. Currently making a "formal visit" to Colombo Port, Sri Lanka.

Classification: It could be classified under various categories such as frigate, destroyer or other types of naval vessels, but the exact classification isn't provided in the given information.

Purpose of Visit: The Hai Yang 24 Hao is on a "formal visit" to the Colombo Port in Sri Lanka.

Diplomatic Context: The visit of Hai Yang 24 Hao to Colombo comes exactly a year after a previous Chinese vessel's visit that caused diplomatic tensions between India and Sri Lanka.

Sarus crane



Species Identification:

- The Sarus crane (*Grus antigone*) is a large bird belonging to the crane family, Gruidae.
- It is known for its distinctive appearance, with a tall stature, long legs, and a red crown on its head.

Distribution:

- Sarus cranes are found in various parts of the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia and Australia.
- In India, they are particularly associated with wetlands, grasslands and agricultural fields.

Cultural Significance: Holds importance in India, declared Uttar Pradesh's state bird in 2014.

Habitat: Inhabits wetlands, grasslands, paddy fields; known for elaborate courtship displays.

Conservation Status:

IUCN Red List: Vulnerable.

Legal Protection: Listed under Schedule IV of Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972

Test Vehicle Mission (TV-D1)



What is Test Vehicle Mission (TV-D1)?

- The Test Vehicle Mission (TV-D1) is a critical component of India's human spaceflight program (Gaganyaan).
- It serves as a preliminary mission to test the functionality and effectiveness of the crew escape system.

Systems Tested during TV-D1:

- TV-D1 tests various systems crucial for the success of Gaganyaan at a sub-orbital level.
- The mission verifies processes like mid-air mission abort, parachute system deployment, and crew module recovery.

Launch Date: Planned for August or September.

Rocket Type: Single-stage liquid propellant.

Sub-orbital Level: Simulates human spaceflight aspects.

Reforming India's Criminal Justice



In a significant legislative move, the Indian government has introduced three pivotal bills in the Lok Sabha, namely the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and the Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023.

Purpose:

- Replace British-era laws with modern legislations
- Transform the criminal justice system
- Prioritize justice over penalization

Replacements:

- Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 replaces Indian Penal Code, 1860
- Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 replaces Criminal Procedure Act, 1898
- Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023 replaces Indian Evidence Act, 1872

Changes Made:

- 313 amendments to strengthen the criminal justice system
- Repeal of provisions related to sedition
- Special provisions for speedy justice for women and children

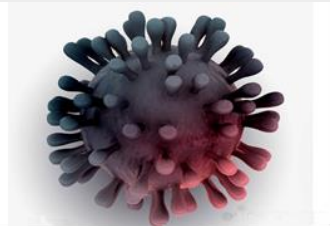


Digitalization Focus: Emphasis on digitalizing the entire criminal justice system

Parliamentary Process: Bills sent to Parliamentary Standing Committee for further deliberations.

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<p>EG.5 Variant</p> 	<p>Origin and Classification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Descendant of the Omicron lineage XBB.1.9.2. ➤ Designated a Variant of Interest (VOI) by the World Health Organization (WHO) on August 10, 2023. ➤ Previously monitored as a variant under monitoring since July 19. <p>First Reported and Countries Affected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EG.5 was first reported on February 17, 2023. ➤ Detected in a total of 48 countries as of August 9, 2023. <p>Impact in India: Detected as EG.5.1 in Maharashtra in May.</p> <p>Mutations and Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EG.5 carries additional F456L amino acid mutation in spike protein. ➤ Subvariant EG.5.1 has an additional spike mutation Q52H. <p>Global COVID-19 Situation: Over 769 million confirmed cases, 6.9 million deaths globally as of August 6, 2023.</p> <p>Recent trends: 1.5 million new cases, 2500 deaths in the last 28 days (July 10 to August 6, 2023).</p>
<p>Tea Mosquito Bug</p> 	<p>What is Tea Mosquito Bug?</p> <p>The Tea Mosquito Bug (<i>Helopeltis theivora</i>) is a pest that damages tea and fruit crops by feeding on plant sap. It was traditionally found in low elevation areas but has now extended its range to high elevation tea plantations due to changing climate conditions.</p> <p>Pest Impact: This bug feeds on plant sap by piercing leaves and fruits, causing deformation and damage, leading to reduced tea production and quality.</p> <p>Geographical Shift: The bug's expansion to higher altitudes, such as Tamil Nadu's Valparai hills, has led to a decline in tea production by about 50%.</p> <p>Plant Protection Code (PPC) introduced by Tea Board of India in 2014 removed many harmful pesticides from use in tea cultivation.</p> <p>Current PPC version (14) approves only seven pesticides for use in South India.</p> <p>Tea Cultivation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grown in tropical and subtropical climates. ➤ Requires deep, fertile, well-drained soil rich in organic matter. ➤ Major tea-producing states: Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh and Tripura.
<p>Places in News</p> <p>Indonesia's Aceh Province</p>	<p>Location: Aceh is located in the northern part of the island of Sumatra, Indonesia.</p> <p>Capital: Banda Aceh.</p> <p>Geographical Features: It is bordered by the Indian Ocean to the west, the Strait of Malacca to the east, and other provinces of Sumatra to the south.</p> <p>Natural Resources: The province is rich in natural resources, including oil, natural gas, and minerals.</p> <p>Tsunami Tragedy: Aceh was severely affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, which resulted in widespread devastation and loss of life.</p> <p>Historical Significance: Aceh has a unique historical background, having been a significant center of Islamic learning and trade in Southeast Asia.</p> <p>Islamic Courts: The province has its own Islamic courts that handle cases related to Sharia law, including family disputes, inheritance and morality issues.</p> <p>Natural Disasters: In addition to the 2004 tsunami, Aceh is prone to earthquakes and other natural disasters due to its location along tectonic boundaries.</p> 

POINTS TO PONDER

- ❖ **When was the first no-confidence motion moved and against which government?** -1963, against the government during the third Lok Sabha.
- ❖ **What is highest peak of Ecuador?** -Chimborazo.
- ❖ **How is Lymphatic Filariasis (LF) primarily transmitted?** -Mosquitoes.
- ❖ **Which regions are more susceptible to cloudbursts?** -Himalayas, Ghats, NE.
- ❖ **Which port achieved a 24-hour Turn Around time for Containers, matching global standards?** -JNPA

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