



Changes from IPC to Bharat Nyayik Samhita

Context: The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill, 2023 seeks to replace the IPC and introduces changes in areas like sedition, fake news, and mob lynching.

➤ Mob Lynching:

- Codifies offences related to mob lynching and hate-crime murders.
- Applies when a mob of five or more individuals commits murder based on factors such as race, caste, community, or personal belief.
- Punishment ranges from life imprisonment to death.

➤ Organised Crime:

- Marks the first time tackling organised crime is included in ordinary criminal law.
- Introduces a separate category of "petty organised crime" targeting everyday law and order issues.
- Punishments vary based on whether death is involved, ranging from mandatory minimum of five years to life imprisonment or death.

➤ Terrorism:

- Brings terrorism under ordinary criminal law, borrowing language from stringent Unlawful Atrocities Prevention Act.
- Definition of "terrorist" borrows from the Philippines Anti-Terrorism Act, 2020.
- The offence of terror financing is broader compared to the UAPA.

➤ Attempt to Suicide:

- Criminalizes attempts to commit suicide with the intent to compel or restrain public servants from discharging their duties.
- Prescribes a jail term up to one year with community service.

➤ Deletions:

- Repeals Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, criminalizing homosexuality and "unnatural" sexual activities.
- Omits the offence of adultery, previously declared unconstitutional in 2018.
- Fully removes Section 310 of the IPC, which labelled individuals as "thugs."

➤ Gender Neutrality:

- Makes offences dealing with procurement of a girl and kidnapping of minors to be gender-neutral.
- Applies gender neutrality to offences related to outraging the modesty of women and voyeurism for adults.

➤ Other Tweaks:

- Introduces a new provision criminalizing the publication of false and misleading information under the "fake news" category.
- Reintroduces the offence of sedition under a new name ("deshdroh") with a wider definition, encompassing aiding through financial means and encouraging separatist activities.
- Prescribes mandatory minimum sentences in various provisions, limiting judicial discretion.
- Offences related to causing damage to public property carry graded fines based on the extent of damage.

Parliament adjourned sine die

Context: The Winter Session of Parliament, starting on December 4, 2023, adjourned sine die on December 21, 2023, after 14 sittings over 18 days.

- During the recently concluded Parliament session, which began on December 4, 2023, and adjourned on December 21, 2023, significant legislative activities took place.

Here are some key highlights:

➤ Legislation Overview:

- In the Lok Sabha, 12 bills were introduced, 18 bills were passed, and 3 bills were withdrawn with the leave of the Lok Sabha.
- In the Rajya Sabha, 17 bills were passed, and 1 bill was withdrawn with the leave of the Rajya Sabha.
- The total number of bills passed by both Houses during the session was 19.

Adjournment	Prorogation	Dissolution
To suspend work in a sitting.	To postpone session (Budget/Monsoon/Winter).	To end Lok Sabha life.
Occurs at LS/RS.	Occurs at LS/RS.	Only Lok Sabha.
By Presiding Officer (Speaker/Chairman).	By President.	• By President. • By Term Expiry (5 Years) = Automatic.
Terminates Sitting of LS/RS.	Terminates Sitting + Session of LS/RS.	Terminates Sitting + Session + Life of Lok Sabha.
Not affect pending businesses/bills = Alive.	• Not affect pending businesses/bills = Alive. • All pending notices except for introducing bills = Lapse.	When Lok Sabha dissolved = businesses/bills that are: 1. Pending at first house (Lok Sabha) = Lapse. 2. Pending at first house (Rajya Sabha) = Alive. 3. Passed by first house (LS/RS) + Pending at second house (LS/RS) = Lapse. 4. Reached President (Pending Assent/Returned for reconsideration/Notified Joint Sitting) = Alive. 5. Pending bills/assurances to be examined by Committee on Govt Assurances = Alive.

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➤ **Supplementary Demands for Grants:**

- The First Batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants for 2023-24 and Demands for Excess Grant for 2020-21 were discussed, voted in full, and related Appropriation Bills were introduced, discussed, and passed by the Lok Sabha on December 12, 2023. The Rajya Sabha returned these Bills on December 19, 2023.

➤ **Landmark Criminal Justice Bills:**

- Three landmark bills related to the criminal justice system were passed by both Houses: Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023; Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023; and Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023. These bills replace the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.

- **Major Bills Passed:**

- The Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023
- The Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023
- The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023
- The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2023
- The Repealing and Amending Bill, 2023
- The National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second (Amendment) Bill, 2023
- The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023
- The Press and Registration of Periodicals Bill, 2023
- The Telecommunications Bill, 2023

➤ **Rajya Sabha Discussions:**

- One Short Duration Discussion under Rule 176 on the Economic situation in the country was held in the Rajya Sabha.
- **Productivity:** The productivity of Lok Sabha was approximately 74%, and that of Rajya Sabha was approximately 79%.

Credit Ratings of an Economy

Context: The Finance Ministry released a document titled "Re-examining Narratives: A Collection of Essays," offering alternative perspectives on economic policy for India's growth and development priorities, according to Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran.

➤ **Creditworthiness Indicator:**

- Sovereign ratings reflect the creditworthiness of governments.
- They inform global investors about a government's ability and willingness to repay debt.

➤ **Impact on Borrowing Costs:**

- Comparable to an individual's credit rating, sovereign ratings influence a country's ability to borrow money.
- Governments with lower ratings pay higher interest rates, affecting their borrowing costs.

➤ **Effect on Businesses:**

- Businesses in a country are impacted by sovereign ratings, as the government is considered a safe investment.
- Low sovereign ratings result in higher interest rates for businesses borrowing from global investors.

➤ **Development Implications:**

- Developing countries, often lacking capital, face challenges utilizing their natural resources effectively.
- Poor sovereign ratings hinder their ability to borrow money, affecting productivity and poverty alleviation.

➤ **Key Rating Agencies:**

- **Moody's:**

- Established in 1900, Moody's is the oldest credit rating agency.
- Issued its first sovereign ratings just before World War I.

- **Standard & Poor's:**

- Originated in the 1920s as Poor's Publishing and Standard Statistics, precursor to S&P.
- Rates government bonds globally.

- **Fitch:**

- One of the main globally recognized agencies.
- Considers factors such as foreign ownership in the banking sector in its assessments.

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➤ **Government's Criticism of Rating Agencies:**

- **Methodology Critique:**
 - Rating methodologies are criticized as opaque and potentially discriminatory against developing economies.
 - Certain assessments, like reliance on high foreign ownership in the banking sector, may disadvantage developing nations.
- **Opaque Expert Selection:**
 - The selection of experts for rating assessments lacks transparency, adding complexity to interpretation.
- **Lack of Clarity in Weights:**
 - Rating agencies do not clearly convey the assigned weights for each parameter considered.
 - Qualitative aspects and subjective assessments, such as governance indicators, are points of contention.
- **Subjective Appraisals and Governance Indicators:**
 - Excessive reliance on subjective appraisals, like the composite governance indicator, is criticized.
 - The use of qualitative overlay and reliance on perception-based surveys raises concerns about one-size-fits-all assessments.
- **Weight of Governance Indicator:**
 - The government argues that the composite governance indicator's influence surpasses other macroeconomic fundamentals in determining credit rating upgrades.
 - Criticizes the indicator for being constructed from perception-based surveys and not solely relying on hard economic data.

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

International Monetary Fund



Recently, the Union Finance Ministry addressed concerns arising from a scenario-based assessment by the International Monetary Fund report suggesting India's government debt might reach 100% of GDP by 2027-28 in adverse scenarios.

About International Monetary Fund:

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is a **United Nations institution** that works to strengthen its member countries economically.
- It was created in **1944** as part of the **Bretton Woods Agreement** and currently has **190** member countries.
- Its headquarter is in **Washington, D.C.**
- Its aim is to foster global monetary cooperation, secure **financial stability**, facilitate international trade, promote high employment, achieve sustainable economic growth, and **reduce poverty worldwide.**
- **India is a founder member** of the International Monetary Fund.

Similipal Tiger Reserve



Recently, the Union Minister of State for Environment told the Rajya Sabha that the rare black tigers (pseudo-melanistic) have been documented only in the Similipal Tiger Reserve in Odisha.

About Similipal Tiger Reserve:

- Similipal National Park is a **tiger reserve** and **national park** in the Mayurbhanj district of **Odisha**.
- It is part of the **Similipal-Kuldiha-Hadgarh Elephant Reserve.**
- Similipal Reserve boasts the **world's highest sightings of melanistic or black**, tigers, known for their exceptionally dark skin due to increased pigment levels.
- It is surrounded by high plateaus and hills, the highest peak being the twin peaks of **Khairiburu** and **Meghashini.**
- It was declared a 'Tiger Reserve' in the year **1956** and brought under the 'Project Tiger' in **1973.**
- **Flora:** Similipal has **1078 plant species**, including **94 types of orchids**, with Sal trees being the most common.
- **Fauna:** Animals in the area include **leopards**, gaurs, **elephants**, langurs, deer, bears, mongooses, flying squirrels, **porcupines**, turtles, monitor lizards, pythons, sambar deer, **pangolins** and more.

Kisan Diwas



➤ Kisan Diwas or **National Farmers' Day**, is celebrated on **December 23rd** every year to honor India's farmers and the **fifth Prime Minister of India, Chaudhary Charan Singh.**

- **In 2001**, the government decided to celebrate Singh's birth anniversary as Kisan Diwas to recognize his contributions to the agriculture sector and the welfare of farmers.
- He earned the moniker '**Champion of India's Peasants**' for his relentless efforts in uplifting farmers and agricultural development nationwide.
- He played a crucial role in introducing significant reforms such as the Debt Redemption Bill of **1939** and the **Land Holding Act of 1960** in Uttar Pradesh.
- Initiatives related to the farmers are- direct cash transfers, sustainable farming promotion, **irrigation projects**, state-led agricultural activities, **subsidized fertilizers**, indigenous cattle conservation, **crop insurance**, **soil health** management, and farmer credit through **Kisan Credit Card.**

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Paat Mitro



Recently, the Ministry of Textiles launched the 'Paat-Mitro' app with aiming to empower jute farmers by providing them with a technological platform.

About Paat Mitro:

- Paat-Mitro is a **mobile application** developed by the **Jute Corporation of India Limited (JCI)**.
- The app is **designed to support jute farmers** by providing information about agronomy, **Minimum Support Prices** and the latest agricultural practices.
- The app is available in **six languages** and all functionalities are **free of cost**.
- It also **allows farmers to track the status** of their payments for the raw jute sold to JCI under MSP Operation.
- The app highlights key features such as **jute grading details, farmer-focused schemes for eye care, weather forecasts, JCI purchase centers' locations** and a chatbot for farmers' inquiries.

Place in News

Papua New Guinea

Recently, India sent relief material worth \$1 million for the people affected by a volcanic eruption in Papua New Guinea.

Papua New Guinea (Capital: Port Moresby)

Location: Papua New Guinea is an island country situated between the Coral Sea and the South Pacific Ocean in the south-western Pacific Ocean.

Boundaries: It shares its border with **Indonesia** (West), **Australia** (South) and **Solomon Islands** (East).

Physical Features:

- The **Sepik River** is the longest river on the island of New Guinea and the second largest in Oceania by discharge volume.
- **Mount Wilhelm**, nestled in the Bismarck Range, stands as Papua New Guinea's highest peak.
- The country has **active volcanoes**, with around 60% of them being active.



POINTS TO PONDER

- ❖ Who will be the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations next January, 2024? - **French President Emmanuel Macron**
- ❖ Abolition of titles is being discussed in which of the article of the Indian Constitution? - **Article 18**
- ❖ Which schemes were merged to form Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY)? - **PMAGY, SCSP and BJRCY**
- ❖ Where is Rashtrapati Nilayam, the official retreat of the President of India, located? - **Secunderabad Cantonment in Hyderabad, Telangana**
- ❖ What does the term 'Chilla-i-Kalan' refer to in Kashmir? - **A 40-day period of harsh winter**

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