



F-11 1<sup>ST</sup>FLOOR,USMAN COMPLEX, BATLA HOUSE CHOWK,JAMIA NAGAR OKHLA

M: +919910410042, +918588058088, +919810196093

Website: [www.iasmentor.weebly.com](http://www.iasmentor.weebly.com), e-mail: [iasmentor87@gmail.com](mailto:iasmentor87@gmail.com)

**CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**(8<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> JULY 2018)**



IAS MENTOR is education center for Academic & Competitive examination. IAS MENTOR offers IAS/PCS Exam preparation classes.

**Mission**

To bring Socio-Economic justice through most powerful weapon 'EDUCATION'

**Description**

IAS MENTOR is an education center founded by MR.SAHBAN ALI, Advocate, Ex. Founding Member & Director of Education360.Pvt .Ltd, one of the best teachers & mentors for CIVIL SERVICES EXAMS- I.A.S./P.C.S. & his brother SUBHAN ALI selected for I.E.S

Interview (UPSC), selected in RRB as Senior Section Engineer, Selected in DDA , M.Tech (IIT Delhi), B.Tech. (Civil) JMI, New Delhi.

---

Address: F-11 Usman Complex, Batla House Chowk, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi

Contact No.: 09910410042, 08588058088

[www.iasmentor.weebly.com](http://www.iasmentor.weebly.com)

## Law Commission of India

What is Law Commission?

- Law Commission of India is **neither a constitutional body nor a statutory body.**
- Law Commission of India is an executive body established by an order of the Government of India. Its major function is to work for legal reform. The Commission is established for a fixed tenure and works as an advisory body to the Ministry of Law and Justice
- The **first Law Commission** was established during the British Raj era in 1834 by the Charter Act of 1833 (**Chairman- Lord Macaulay**). After that, three more Commissions were established in preindependent India.
- The **first Law Commission of independent India was established in 1955.** The **Chairman** of this Commission was **Mr. M. C. Setalvad**, who was also the **First Attorney General of India (ARTICLE -76)**. The term of this Commission was established as **three years**. Since then, 20 more Commissions have been established. 21<sup>ST</sup> Law Commission (2015-18)- Former Supreme Court judge **Balbir Singh Chauhan** was appointed **Chairman of the 21st Law Commission**. Law Commissions have so far submitted **276 reports**.

## Currency Derivatives

Context: **The Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX), the country's largest commodity bourse in terms of market share, is planning to enter the currency derivatives segment.**

**What are currency derivatives?**

- Currency derivatives are exchange-based futures and options, **one can use a currency future contract to exchange one currency for another at a future date at a price decided on the day of the purchase of the contract.**

**What is MCX?**

- Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) as the name suggests is an exchange like BSE and NSE where commodities are traded. It is a platform for commodity traders that facilitate online trading, settlement and clearing of commodity futures transactions, thereby providing a platform **for risk management (hedging)**.
- It was established in November 2003 under the regulatory framework of FMC (Forward Markets Commission) In 2016, the **FMC was merged with SEBI** and MCX as an exchange falls under the regulatory purview of SEBI.

## Gujarat government grants religious minority status to Jews

Context: Gujarat Government has granted religious minority status to Jews living in the state.

- Facts for Prelims: **Gujarat is third state** in India to grant religious minority status to Jews after **West Bengal and Maharashtra**.
- **The Synagogue Judah Hyam Hall** is the only place of worship in Delhi for Jews.
- Constitution of India has not defined word 'Minority' and only refers to 'Minorities' but it speaks of those 'based on religion or language' and rights of minorities have been spelt out in Constitution in detail.

---

Address: F-11 Usman Complex, Batla House Chowk, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi  
Contact No.: 09910410042, 08588058088

• Six religious communities, viz. **Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) and Jains** have been notified in Gazette of India as minority communities by Union Government all over India.

- Judaism:
- Judaism originated in the Middle East over 3500 years ago founded by Moses,
- Jews trace their history back to Abraham.
- most important religious document is the Torah.
- Jewish traditional or oral law, the interpretation of the laws of the Torah, is called **halakhah**.
- Spiritual leaders are called Rabbis.
- Jews worship in Synagogues.
- They follow Hebrew calendar.

### ‘Institutions of Eminence’

Context: **Government declares 6 educational ‘Institutions of Eminence’; 3 Institutions from Public Sector and 3 from Private Sector shortlisted.**

The institutions selected are:

Public Sector: **(i) Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, Karnataka; (ii) Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, Maharashtra; and (iii) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.**

Private Sector: **(i) Jio Institute (Reliance Foundation), Pune under Green Field Category; (ii) Birla Institute of Technology & Sciences, Pilani, Rajasthan; and (iii) Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal, Karnataka.**

Implications of the decision:

- Each ‘Public Institution’ selected as ‘Institution of Eminence’ will get financial assistance up to **Rs. 1000 Crore over a period of five years.**
- These Institutions shall be provided with greater autonomy to admit foreign students up to 30% of admitted students; to recruit foreign faculty upto 25% of faculty strength;
- to offer online courses upto 20% of its programmes.
- They will also be allowed to enter into academic collaboration with top 500 in the world ranking Institutions without permission of UGC;
- free to fix and charge fees from foreign students without restriction;
- complete flexibility in fixing of curriculum and syllabus, among others.

**N Gopalaswami committee** was constituted to select 20 institutes of higher education in India that will be developed into “world-class” institutes.

Institutions of Eminence scheme:

- The institutes of eminence scheme under the **Union human resource development (HRD) ministry** aims to project Indian institutes to global recognition.
- The 20 selected institutes will enjoy complete academic and administrative autonomy.
- The government will run 10 of these and they will receive special funding.
- The selection shall be made through challenge method mode by the Empowered Expert Committee constituted for the purpose.

- Only higher education institutions currently placed in the top 500 of global rankings or top 50 of the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) are eligible to apply for the eminence tag.
- The private Institutions of Eminence can also come up as greenfield ventures provided the sponsoring organisation submits a convincing perspective plan for 15 years.

### Global Housing Construction Technology Challenge

**Context:** The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is set to launch the **Global Housing Construction Technology Challenge** as part of the technology sub-mission of PMAYU.

#### Global Housing Construction Technology Challenge:

- The challenge aims to provide more dynamism to the scheme. It will **invite ideas from across the globe for alternative technologies that go beyond the brick-and-mortar building model used widely in Indian construction.**
- The four parameters in the global challenge would be **time, cost, quality, and sustainability.** The technology will have to be better than the existing ones on all these four fronts.
- It will be tested in geographically different urban areas across the country with varying terrains such as say hilly, plain, or earthquake-prone. The winning technologies would be used to build mass houses, in a tie-up with the states, for the economically weaker sections and low-income groups under the affordable housing project vertical of PMAY-U.

#### PMAY- Urban:

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) Programme launched by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA)**, in Mission mode envisions provision of Housing for All by 2022.

Under the scheme, the government is providing an **interest subsidy of 6.5% on housing loans** which can be availed by beneficiaries **for 15 years from start of loan date.**

### Asian Development Bank (ADB)

**Context:** Centre and ADB signed \$84 million loan for water supply in Bihar.

#### About ADB:

- It is a regional development bank established on 22 August 1966 and is headquartered in Philippines. It aims to facilitate economic development of countries in Asia. It also aims for an Asia and Pacific free from poverty.

#### Membership:

- The bank admits the members of the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP, formerly known as the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East)** and non-regional developed countries.
- Currently, it has 67 members – of which 48 are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside.

#### Voting:

- ADB was modelled closely on the World Bank, and has a similar weighted voting system where votes are distributed in proportion with member's capital subscriptions.

### Funding:

- ADB raises funds through bond issues on the world's capital markets.
- ADB also rely on its members' contributions, retained earnings from its lending operations, and the repayment of loans.
- Japan holds the largest proportions of shares at 15.67%. The United States holds 15.56%, China holds 6.47%, India holds 6.36%, and Australia holds 5.81%.

### Board of Governors:

- It is the highest policy-making body of the bank.
- It is composed of one representative from each member state.
- The Board of Governors also elect the bank's President who is the chairperson of the Board of Directors and manages ADB.
- The Alternate Board of Governors are nominated by Board of Governors of ADB's 67 to represent them at the Annual Meeting that meets formally once year to be held in a member country.

### Loans:

- It offers both Hard Loans and Soft loans. The ADB offers "hard" loans from ordinary capital resources (OCR) on commercial terms, and the Asian Development Fund (ADF) affiliated with the ADB extends "soft" loans from special fund resources with concessional conditions.

## Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2018

*Context: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sent the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2018, to the Union cabinet for approval, to replace the related Ordinance.*

### Highlights of the Bill:

- It provides for stringent punishment including death penalty for those convicted of raping girls below the age of 12 years.
- The minimum punishment in case of rape of women has been increased from rigorous imprisonment of seven years to 10 years, extendable to life imprisonment.
- In case of rape of a girl under 16 years, the minimum punishment has been increased from 10 years to 20 years, extendable to imprisonment for rest of life, which means jail term till the convicts' "natural life".
- The punishment for gang rape of a girl below 16 years will invariably be imprisonment for the rest of life of the convict, another official said.
- Stringent punishment for rape of a girl under 12 years has been provided with the minimum jail term being 20 years which may go up to life in prison or death sentence.
- Gang rape of a girl under 12 years of age will invite punishment of jail term for the rest of life or death.
- The measure also provides for speedy investigations and trial. The time limit for investigation of all cases of rape has been prescribed, which has to be mandatorily completed within two months.
- The deadline for the completion of trial in all rape cases will be two months. A six month time limit for the disposal of appeals in rape cases has also been prescribed. There will also be **no provision for anticipatory bail** for a person accused of rape or gang rape of a girl under 16 years.

---

Address: F-11 Usman Complex, Batla House Chowk, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi

Contact No.: 09910410042, 08588058088

- It has also been prescribed that a court has to give notice of 15 days to a public prosecutor and the representative of the victim before deciding bail applications in case of rape of a girl under 16 years of age.

#### Need for a stringent law:

- The number of reported cases of rapes of children increased in India by 82% in 2016 compared to 2015.
- A climate of violence, social and economic insecurity, alienation, and a progressive undermining of the status of women and children seem to have given an impetus to carry out crimes against women and children.

#### Way ahead:

- It is not the severity of the punishment but the certainty and uniformity of it which will reduce crime. Even for capital punishment to work as a deterrent, the fairness of the investigation, the certainty of conviction, and the speed of the trial are vital. With the police and judicial independence being under a cloud, especially after the incidents in Kathua and Unnao, the deterrent value of capital punishments.

## Eat Right Movement

Context: Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has unveiled 'The Eat Right Movement' with a view to get industry on board for implementation of draft food labelling regulation.

Eat Right Movement: The movement aims to cut down salt/sugar and oil consumption by 30% in three years.

It is built on two broad pillars of 'Eat Healthy' and 'Eat Safe'.

#### About FSSAI:

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has been established under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 which consolidates various acts & orders that have hitherto handled food related issues in various Ministries and Departments.
- It was created for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.
- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is the Administrative Ministry for the implementation of FSSAI.

#### Composition:

- The Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) are appointed by Government of India. The Chairperson is in the rank of Secretary to Government of India.

#### Food Safety and Standards (Labeling and Display) Regulations 2018:

- The proposed regulations will prescribe the labeling requirements of pre-packaged foods and display of essential information on premises where food is manufactured, processed, served and stored.
- The draft Regulation also states that HFSS (high in fat, sugar or salt) food products shall not be advertised to children in any form.

---

Address: F-11 Usman Complex, Batla House Chowk, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi

Contact No.: 09910410042, 08588058088

- It also introduces labelling of genetically modified (GM) food.

### Ease of Doing Business Ranking of States

Context: *Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, has released the final rankings of States in Ease of Doing Business.*

Performance of states:

- The top rankers are Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Haryana. Jharkhand and Gujarat stood fourth and fifth respectively.
- Delhi is placed at 23rd among 34 states and Union territories. Its rank also worsened from 18th in 2016.
- Karnataka has occupied the eighth spot, against 13th in 2016.

### BRAP- 2017

### The rankings are based on the performance of states in implementing the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP).

- *DIPP, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the World Bank conducted an annual reform exercise for all States and UTs under the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP).*
- The aim of this exercise is to improve delivery of various Central Government regulatory functions and services in an efficient, effective and transparent manner.
- The reform plan includes 372 recommendations for reforms on regulatory processes, policies, practices and procedures spread across 12 reform areas including labour regulation enablers; contract enforcement; registering property; inspection reform enablers; single window system; land availability and allotment; construction permit enablers etc.
- BRAP 2017 includes two new sectors i.e. Healthcare and Hospitality.
- India climbed up 29 spots to the 100th position out of 190 surveyed countries in the World Bank's ease of doing business (EDB) index 2018.

### First Chairman of Rajya Sabha to sign an MOU:

*Rajya Sabha has, for the first time in 76 years since it came into being, entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a foreign counterpart for promoting interparliamentary dialogue.*

- Shri Venkaiah Naidu, has, in the process, become the first Chairman of Rajya Sabha to sign such an agreement when he inked an MOU with the visiting President of the Senate of the Republic of Rwanda, Mr. Bernard Makuza.

### World Population day

- July 11 was established as World Population Day in 1989 by the United Nations and since then it has been celebrated on this date every year.
- The United Nations recognises World Population day as an important event to spread information of population-related issues across the globe.

---

Address: F-11 Usman Complex, Batla House Chowk, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi  
Contact No.: 09910410042, 08588058088

- Theme for 2018: World Population day will run on the theme “Family Planning is a Human right” this year.

**Aim of World Population Day:**

- Almost on the verge of completing three decades now, the internationally celebrated event aims to spread awareness on issues such as overpopulation, under-population and birth control. The world population is currently pegged at around 7 billion and according to UN reports is growing at a fast pace, adding 83 million people every year.

## **Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention**

*Context: In a bid to eliminate the need for manual scavenging, the Centre has launched a challenge asking innovators, NGOs, research institutions, companies and cities to propose technology and business solutions to clean urban sewers and septic tanks without human entry. The challenge will be part of the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention to be held on October 18 this year.*

- The objectives are to identify technological and business process innovations, endorse viable business models suitable for cities of different sizes and geographies, and pilot test shortlisted technologies and solutions in select project cities and bridge the gap between innovators or manufacturers and beneficiaries such as urban local bodies and citizens.

**Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention:**

- It will be launched at the 150th anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi. It will be a first-of-its-kind International Sanitation Convention.
- Ministers from over 70 countries will be invited and taken on a ‘Gandhi Trail’ in Gujarat. The government will use the occasion to “showcase its performance” and “success story” in the Swachh Bharat programme in the past four years, which was launched on October 2, 2014, and have a face-to-face dialogue with the world leaders to share their experiences on sanitation programmes.

## **Target Olympic Podium Scheme**

*The Mission Olympic Cell has included the entire Indian hockey team in the Target Olympic Podium Scheme, rewarding the players for their silver medal-winning performance at the Champions Trophy.*

Significance of the move:

- Athletes from different sports have been included in Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) individually but it is first instance that an entire team has been made beneficiary of the financial assistance scheme.

**Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)**

- It was launched by Ministry of Sports within the ambit of National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) It aims at identifying and supporting potential medal prospects for upcoming Olympic Games.
- It will provide selected sportspersons customized training at institutes having world class facilities and also other necessary support is being provided to the elite athletes. It will also provide a benchmark for selection of athletes on par with international standards.

---

Address: F-11 Usman Complex, Batla House Chowk, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi  
Contact No.: 09910410042, 08588058088



- Under it, Sports Authority of India (SAI) and federations, which are members of Mission Olympic Cell (MOC), will be nodal agencies for disbursement of fund. They will make payments directly to beneficiary person and institution concerned on behalf of athletes.

**Abinav Bindra Committee** was constituted to identify and support potential medal prospects for 2020 and 2024 Olympic Games under the scheme.

- The Mission Olympic Cell is a dedicated body created to assist the athletes who are selected under the TOP Scheme.
- The MOC is under the Chairmanship of the Director General, Sports Authority (DG, SAI).
- The idea of the MOC is to debate, discuss and decide the processes and methods so that the athlete receives best assistance. The MOC also focuses on selection, exclusion and retention of athletes, coaches, training institutes that can receive TOPS assistance.

### Telecom Commission approves net neutrality

**Context:** Telecom Commission (a group within India's Department of Telecom) has approved the recommendations made by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on net neutrality. The move aims to ensure that all web traffic is treated fairly, and that internet service providers won't block, throttle, or favor any content or services (with a few reasonable exceptions).

The rules:

- As per the net neutrality rules in India, mobile operators, internet providers and social-media and internet companies cannot engage in, or seek, preferential treatment as there will now be prohibition on any kind of interference in the treatment of content, including practices like blocking, degrading, slowing down or granting differential speeds or treatment to any content.
- Any efforts to create zero-rated platforms have now been blocked.
- Zero-rated platforms, which had earlier been tried (by companies such as Airtel and Facebook) but barred, offer only a certain category of services and websites as free, thus creating paid layers and stifling competition and innovation.
- Under net neutrality, online access is unrestricted and non-discriminatory.
- The only exceptions are new and emerging services such as autonomous driving, telemedicine or remote-diagnostic services, which may require prioritised internet lanes and faster-than-normal speeds.
- A committee will look into the possible exceptions for "critical services" which will also be defined keeping in view the basic tenets of net neutrality.

### UNSC Resolution 2427

**Context:** The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has adopted Resolution 2427. The resolution has won unanimous approval of the 15 members of the council.

What is Resolution 2427 all about?

- The resolution is aimed at further crystalizing the protection of children in armed conflicts, including by combating their recruitment by non-State armed groups and treating formerly recruited children primarily as victims.

## European Bank for Reconstruction & Development

**Context:** India has joined the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) as the 69th shareholder, paving the way for more joint investment with Indian companies across the EBRD's regions.

- The EBRD's board of governors, which represents all existing shareholders, voted unanimously in favour of the country's application in March 2018.

- Position of India:

India takes a **shareholding in the EBRD but will not be a recipient of EBRD financing**. But it may benefit indirectly through EBRD projects or if Indian companies invest alongside the bank.

About EBRD:

### **What is the EBRD?**

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is an international financial institution that supports projects in over 30 countries, from Eastern Europe to central Asia and the southern and eastern Mediterranean. Investing primarily in private sector clients whose needs cannot be fully met by the market, the EBRD promotes entrepreneurship and fosters transition towards open and democratic market economies.

### **What is the EBRD's mandate?**

The mandate of the EBRD stipulates that it must only work in countries that are committed to democratic principles. Respect for the environment is part of the strong corporate governance attached to all EBRD investments.

### **Who owns the EBRD?**

The EBRD is owned by 65 countries and two intergovernmental institutions: the European Union and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

### **How is the EBRD governed?**

The powers of the EBRD are vested in the Board of Governors to which each member appoints a governor, generally the minister of finance. The Board of Governors delegates most powers to the Board of Directors, which is responsible for the EBRD's strategic direction. The President is elected by the Board of Governors and is the legal representative of the EBRD. Under the guidance of the Board of Directors, the President manages the EBRD's work.

## Global Innovation Index

**Context:** Global Innovation Index 2018 has placed India at the 57 position among 130 countries. GII is jointly released by Cornell University, INSEAD and World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). GII ranks 126 economies based on 80 indicators.

### **GII 2018:**

The GII 2018 marks the 11th edition of the GII, and the beginning of its second decade providing data and insights gathered from tracking innovation across the globe.

- This year's edition, is dedicated to the theme of Energizing the World with innovation. It analyses the energy innovation landscape of the next decade and identifies possible breakthroughs in fields such as energy production, storage, distribution, and consumption.
- It also looks at how breakthrough innovation occurs at the grassroots level and describes how small-scale renewable systems are on the rise.

**Performance of India:**

- This year, India has moved up 3 places as compared to 60th rank in GII 2017 and emerged as top-ranked economy in Central and South Asia. It has consistently moving up on global ranking from 81st in 2015 to 57th this year.
- India is a top performer in the lower middle income group, where it is ranked at fifth position. It is the most innovative country in its region of central and southern Asia.
- In the indicators that capture the quality of innovation inputs and outputs, India is ranked second after China in the lower and upper middle income group combined.
- However, India has fared badly on indicators such as ease of starting business, political stability and safety, overall education and environmental performance.

Other countries:

- Switzerland is at the top. Since 2011, Switzerland has been ranked at the top every year.
- This year, Netherlands follows at second place and Sweden at third. The US drops down to sixth from fourth last year.
- Four of the top five innovation clusters are in Asia, based on patents and publishing.
- San Francisco is the only innovation cluster outside Asia among the top five.
- Tokyo is at the top, and two of the top five clusters are in China.
- China, at 17, broke into the world's top 20 most-innovative economies.
- On a new indicator – mobile-app creation – Cyprus, Finland and Lithuania emerged as global leaders in development of mobile apps relative to GDP.

### **Section 497 of the IPC**

**Context:** Opposing a plea which called for the Section 497 of the IPC to be scrapped, the Centre recently told the Supreme Court that adultery must remain a punishable offence to protect the sanctity of marriage.

**What is Section 497?**

- Section 497 of the 158-year-old IPC says, “Whoever has sexual intercourse with a person who is and whom he knows or has reason to believe to be the wife of another man, with out the consent or connivance of that man, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of rape, is guilty of the offence of adultery, and shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to five years, or with fine, or with both. In such case the wife shall not be punishable as an abettor.”

**Why Section 497 should not be scrapped?**

The provisions of law, under challenge in the present writ, have been specifically created by the legislature in its wisdom, to protect and safeguard the sanctity of marriage, keeping in mind the unique structure and culture of the Indian society.

- Striking down Section 497 which provides for punishment only to a man for having extra-marital sexual ties with the wife of another man, will destroy the institution of marriage.

- Striking down section 497 of IPC and Section 198(2) of the CrPC will prove to be detrimental to the intrinsic Indian ethos which gives paramount importance to the institution and sanctity of marriage.
- The apex court had earlier on three separate occasions, in 1954, 1985 and 1988, upheld the constitutionality of Section 497.

### The plea:

- A plea has been filed in the Supreme Court which called for the Section 497 of the IPC to be scrapped, contending **it does not treat men and women equally**. It contended that Section 497 was “prima facie unconstitutional on the grounds that it discriminates against men and violates Article 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution”.
- The plea also said the **provision also indirectly discriminated against women by holding an erroneous presumption that they are the property of men.**
- The petitioner had also challenged Section 198(2) of CrPC, which deals with the prosecution for offences against marriages.

### Way ahead:

Many countries have decriminalised adultery. IPC is the creation of England when they ruled over India for nearly 200 years and it is they who inserted Section 497 as a penal offence. What is more surprising is that England itself has decriminalised adultery and does not treat it as a criminal offence! It is high time that this law is revisited even in India and amended to meet the present circumstances. Either both of them should be punishable or no one. It cannot be anybody's case that the man alone should be sent behind bars for committing adultery while the woman be held just not liable at all and allowed to escape unpunished and unchecked.

- **Justice Malimath Committee report on reforms in the criminal justice system had suggested making section 497 gender-neutral.**

## Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)

**Context:** Dr. TCA Raghavan is the new Director General (DG) of Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA).

**Appointment:** He was selected by Governing Body and Governing Council of ICWA headed by Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu.

### What is ICWA?

- It was established in 1943 by group of Indian intellectuals as think tank. It was established **as non-official, non-political and non-profit organisation under Registration of Societies Act 1860.**
- It was declared institution of national importance by Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), 2001 enacted by Parliament. The **Vice President of India is the ex-officio President of ICWA,** while the **Minister of External Affairs is its Vice-President.**
- ICWA is devoted exclusively for the study of international relations and foreign affairs. Vice President of India is its ex-officio President.
- It had conducted historic international conferences like Asian Relations Conference in 1947 under leadership Sarojini Naidu and United Nations and New World Order in 1994.

## India pips France to become world's 6th largest economy

**Context:** India has now become world's sixth-largest economy, pushing past France, according to the updated World Bank figures for 2017.

### Large economies:

- The US remains the world's largest economy followed by China, Japan, Germany and Britain.

### India's performance:

India is reclaiming its place as a growth leader after a short slowdown. Just in the last decade, India has doubled the size of its economy outpacing that of France. While India's GDP has risen by an average 8.3% over the decade, that of France's actually declined by 0.01%. To add more perspective, in the past 10 years India's GDP grew by 116.3% while France witnessed a 2.8% decline in GDP. Certainly, this tells us that India is gaining economic size consistently and is emerging as one of the powerhouses.

### Why this position may not be significant?

- When compared with \$2.582 trillion for France, India's GDP stood at \$2.597 trillion at 2017 end. However, India has an estimated per capita income of \$7,060 while France has \$43,720, some six times more than that of India. India ranks at the 123th position when it comes to per capita income at PPP while France ranks at the 25th position. An average Indian is far poorer than the average Frenchman if one uses this yardstick.
- The size of the economy is linked to the size of geography, its population, and workforce. India has a population of 1.34 billion while France has 67 million. If one talks about the prosperity of the people in an economy, PPP is the right metric to look at. One reason why India has a much lower PPP compared with France is the difference in population (per capita is the total size of the economy divided by the total number of people in that country).

### Challenges ahead for India:

Employment scenario in the country is disturbing. Almost 80% of all Indians rely on the informal sector to make a living — a large chunk of them are still dependent on farming, the contribution of which to the economy has shrunk from 50% at the time of independence to 15-16% now.

Output hasn't increased but farming still constitutes one of the largest areas of employment. That's one reason why the poor remain poor and live in distress. Even today, India doesn't have solid payroll data but the unemployment rate is believed to be quite high. China, UK, and Germany have a 3-4% unemployment rate while France has close to a nine percent rate.

Till recently, India was home to the largest number of poor in the world but it got rid of the dubious title. Nigeria has about 87 million people in extreme poverty, compared with India's 73 million.

### Way ahead:

In April earlier this year, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected India to grow at 7.4% in 2018 and 7.8% in 2019, leaving its nearest rival China behind respectively at 6.6 and 6.4% in the two years. However, while debating a course correction, India will have to repair its fault lines even as it gains economic muscle.

## Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018

**Context:** Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) has launched Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2018 (SSG 2018).

About Swachh Survekshan Grameen:

- SSG is a rural cleanliness survey to rank all states and districts on basis of qualitative and quantitative evaluation.
- The objective of SSG 2018 is to undertake ranking of states and districts on basis of their performance attained on key quantitative and qualitative Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G) parameters.

Survey:

- The SSG 2018 will be conducted by independent survey agency in all districts from 1st to 31st August 2018. It will also take feedback from over 50 lakh citizens on SBM related issues through direct interaction as well as online feedback. The top performing states and districts are expected to be awarded on 2nd October 2018.

## National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

**Context:** NCPCR has come up with a model fee

About NCPCR:

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) was set up in March 2007 under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005.
- It works under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women & Child Development.
- the Child is defined as a person in the 0 to 18 years age group.

The Commission's Mandate is to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## Social Media Hub

**Context:** The Supreme Court has taken a strong note of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry's decision to set up a social media hub for monitoring online data and said that it will be like creating a surveillance state. These observations were made by the court based on a petition filed.

Concerns over the proposed Social media hub:

- The petition alleged that though the stated aim of the project was to enable the government to understand the impact of social media campaigns on welfare schemes and improve the reach of such campaigns, the project had two aspects — “mass surveillance apparatus that aims at collecting and analysing huge volumes of data, and profiling people based on that” and “utilising this data to predict the mood of people online and issue responses, including those targeted at individuals or groups”.
- The social media analytical tool is expected to ‘listen’ to conversations on all major digital channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Tumblr, as well as blogs and news channels.

---

Address: F-11 Usman Complex, Batla House Chowk, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi

Contact No.: 09910410042, 08588058088

- Therefore, the petition contended that “such intrusive action on the part of the government, is not only without the authority of law, but also infringes fundamental right to freedom of speech under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.” The move is violative of Articles 14, 19(1)(a) and 21.

#### What is Social media communication hub?

- The hub proposes to monitor social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and even email) handles at the very local level in multiple languages to carry out “sentiment analysis”, track down the influence-making social media users and to categorise the conversations on social media into positive, negative and neutral sections.
- It also aimed to track real time the way social media receives news on government’s schemes and announcements and also political events.

#### Benefits:

- This information would help the government in formulating policies, schemes or rectify any flaws in their implementation at the ground level so that the ultimate beneficiary who is the common man is benefited and has a direct way to communicate any complaints regarding the same to the Government.

#### Social media managers:

- As per the proposal, the project is meant to strengthen the social media division and recruit social media managers to be deployed in 712 districts of the country. Each district will have one social media manager who will be entrusted with the tasks of keeping a close eye on the regional and local media, collecting data of regional media and of local events, providing content for social media and supporting media units at the regional level for social media publicity.

#### Role of social media managers:

- These social media managers will also monitor local editions of newspapers, local cable channels, local audio channels (FM) and key local social media handles for important local developments. They will make a daily analysis report incorporating local sentiments to be sent to region head in the PIB as well as the media hub (command centre).

**Concerns:** The proposal to set up such a hub had turned controversial, as many called it an indirect measure to “snoop” on and influence voters.

## Purvanchal Expressway

**Context:** The 354-km Purvanchal Expressway project, the country’s longest, is on stream with the Uttar Pradesh government awarding the eight packages of the project to five companies — PNC Infratech Limited, Gayatri Projects, GR Infra, Oriental Structural Engineering and Apco Infra.

#### About Purvanchal Expressway:

- The project, which will connect Lucknow with Ghazipur, will start from Chand Sarai area near NH-56 in Lucknow and is estimated to cost around Rs 23,000 crore.
- It will also be connected to Varanasi through a separate link road. Once completed, the Purvanchal Expressway will provide uninterrupted connectivity to 9 districts of Lucknow, Ghazipur, Amethi, Ajamgarh, Faizabad, Barabanki, Mau, Ambedkar Nagar and Sultanpur.

- It would provide seamless access to the national capital Delhi via the 302-km long Lucknow-Agra expressway and the 165-km Agra-Greater Noida Yamuna

Expressway.

- The Project is being implemented on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Mode.

What is EPC model?

- EPC is a model of contract between the government and private sector players for public infrastructure building. Under this system, the entire project is funded by the government.
- The EPC entails the contractor build the project by designing, installing and procuring necessary labour and land to construct the infrastructure, either directly or by subcontracting.
- Under EPC model the contractor is legally responsible to complete the project under some fixed predetermined timeline and may also involve scope for penalty in case of time overrun.
- Under EPC, all the clearances, land acquisition and regulatory norms have to be completed by the government itself.