

## 1. General consent' for the CBI

### Topic: Polity and Governance

**In News:** Meghalaya has withdrawn consent to the CBI to investigate cases in the state, becoming the ninth state to have taken this step.

#### More on the Topic:

- The CBI is governed by The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, and it must mandatorily obtain the consent of the state government concerned before beginning to investigate a crime in a state.
- The CBI's position is in this respect different from that of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), which is governed by The NIA Act, 2008, and has jurisdiction across the country.
- The consent of the state government to CBI can be either case-specific or general.
- General consent is normally given by states to help the CBI in seamless investigation of cases of corruption against central government employees in their states.
- This is consent by default, in the absence of which the CBI would have to apply to the state government in every case, and before taking even small actions.



#### Why the states have withdrawn the consent?

- Traditionally, almost all states have given CBI general consent. However, since 2015 onward, several states have begun to act differently.
- At the time of withdrawing consent, all states alleged that the central government was using the CBI to unfairly target the opposition.

#### What does the withdrawal of general consent mean?

- It means the CBI will not be able to register any fresh case involving officials of the central government or a private person in the state without the consent of the state government.
- In **Vinay Mishra vs the CBI**, the Calcutta HC ruled that corruption cases must be treated equally across the country, and a central government employee could not be “distinguished” just because his office was located in a state that had withdrawn general consent.
- The HC also said that withdrawal of consent would apply in cases where exclusively employees of the state government were involved.
- CBI can use the Calcutta HC order to its advantage until if it is struck down by the SC.
- Even otherwise, the withdrawal of consent did not make the CBI defunct in a state — it retained the power to investigate cases that had been registered before consent was withdrawn.

- There is ambiguity on whether the CBI can carry out a search in connection with an old case without the consent of the state government. But the agency has the option to get a warrant from a local court in the state and conduct the search.
- Consent does not apply in cases where someone has been caught red-handed taking a bribe.
- the CBI could use the Calcutta HC order to register a fresh case in any state. Alternatively, it could file a case in Delhi and continue to investigate people inside these states.

### Role of central Government in the CBI in decision making?

- After the 2018 amendments to the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, the Centre has come to exercise power over the CBI not just administratively, but also legally.
- In 2018, the parliament made amendments to **Section 17A of the Act making it mandatory for the CBI to seek the Centre’s permission before registering a case of corruption against any government servant.**
- Earlier, the Centre had mandated that such permission was required only for officials of the level of joint secretary and higher.
- The **corruption cases registered by the CBI dropped by over 40 per cent** between 2017 and 2019.

Source: Indian Express

## 2. Kavach – Train Collision Avoidance System

### Topic: Science and Technology

**In News:** Indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection System Kavach is earmarked for aggressive rollout on 2,000 km in 2022-23.



### More on the Topic:

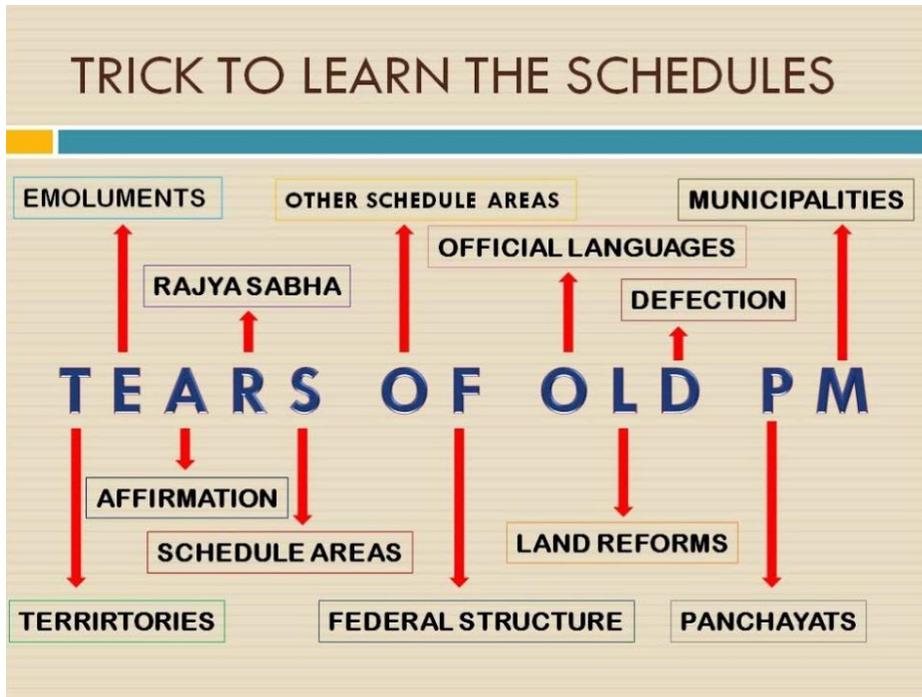
- KAVACH is India’s very own automatic protection system in development since 2012, under the name Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS), which got rechristened to Kavach or “armour”.
- It is a set of **electronic devices and Radio Frequency Identification devices** installed in locomotives, in the signalling system as well the tracks, that communicate to each other **using ultra high radio frequencies** to control the brakes of trains and also alert drivers, based on **the logic programmed** into them.
- One of its features is that by continuously refreshing the movement information of a train, it is able to send out triggers when a loco pilot jumps signal, called **Signal Passed at Danger (SPAD)**, a grave offence in railway operations with respect to safety, and the key to accidents like collision.

- The devices also continuously relay the signals ahead to the locomotive, making it useful for loco pilots in low visibility, especially during dense fog.

Source: Indian Express

### 3.8<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Indian Constitution

Topic: Polity and Governance



**In News:** The Bihar Chief Minister said his government would revive its long-pending demand for inclusion of Bhojpuri in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, so that it can be accorded the status of an official language.

**More on the Topic:**

- The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India lists the official languages of the Republic of India.
- **The Eight Schedule consists of the 22 languages namely (1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Gujarati, (4) Hindi, (5) Kannada, (6) Kashmiri, (7) Konkani, (8) Malayalam, (9) Manipuri, (10) Marathi, (11) Nepali, (12) Oriya, (13) Punjabi, (14) Sanskrit, (15) Sindhi, (16) Tamil, (17) Telugu, (18) Urdu (19) Bodo, (20) Santhali, (21) Maithili and (22) Dogri.**
- Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution. Sindhi language was added by the 21st Amendment Act of 1967.
- Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali were included by the 71st Amendment Act of 1992.
- Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.

Source: Indian Express

## 4. India has abstained on a US-sponsored UN Security Council resolution

Topic: International Relations

### UN Security Council members

**5** permanent members



US



China



UK



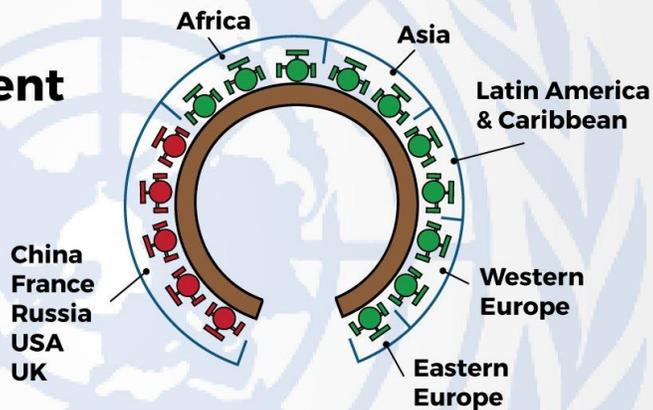
Russia



France

**10** non-permanent members

- Permanent members - 5 seats
- Elected members - 10 seats



Each year, the General Assembly elects five non-permanent members for a two-year term. The 10 non-permanent seats are distributed on a regional basis.

**In News:** The India has abstained on a US-sponsored UN Security Council resolution that deplores Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

**More on the Topic:**

- It asked the council to **set up an international commission of enquiry into Russia's actions in Ukraine.**
- The resolution added that Russia shall immediately withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

- It also asked Moscow to immediately reverse the decision related to the status of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.
- 32 countries, or nearly two-thirds of the Council voted for the resolution.
- India was among 13 countries of the 47-member council elected from UN members that abstained from the resolution, along with China, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Sudan, Uzbekistan and Venezuela.
- Russia which chaired the meeting of the UNSC vetoed the resolution.
- The resolution did not pass since Russia vetoed it.

#### **Why did India abstain?**

- India wants **to maintain a balance between the Western bloc led by the US, and Russia, since it has strategic partners on both sides.**
- Recently, India abstained on a procedural vote on whether to discuss the issue of Ukraine.
- India said that it is deeply disturbed by the recent turn of developments in Ukraine.
- It also advocated diplomacy, urging the parties concerned to return to the negotiating table.
- Apart from the **India-Russia defence and strategic partnership, Russia is India's most trusted P-5 ally** when it comes to blocking intrusive resolutions on Kashmir.
- India requires Russia's assistance to manage its continental difficulties through defence supplies, helping it return to central Asia, working together at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or exploring opportunities for collaboration in Afghanistan.

#### **Arguments Against India's Abstain:**

- Far from helping us, Putin has turned a blind eye to China's many acts of aggression against India.
- It was Russia that kept us out of Afghan peace negotiations in the very recent past.
- Russia did little to help us when China raised Kashmir at the UNSC in 2019 and 2020. It was the US and European countries that helped then – going against their own human rights principles.
- Arms supplies are frequently long-delayed, and Putin had used the delays to up the prices, sometimes even double them. By contrast, the French deliveries of the Rafael jets have been comparatively speedy.

#### **Way Ahead:**

- The contemporary Indian strategic landscape mandates that India balances the two sides, but doing so without a subtle Russia tilt may not be feasible at this point of time.
- India's position shows the unmistakable indication that when it comes to geopolitics, New Delhi will choose interests over principles.
- While India's hesitation to take a stand against Russia is understood, New Delhi must now consider whether its aspirations to be a leading power can be achieved without having a clear position on a conflict that threatens global security.

**Source: The Hindu**

## 5. Project ARYA

### Topic: Government Schemes

**In News:** Prime Minister has launched Project Arya in different states.

#### More on the Topic:

- ARYA project aims to attract and empower the Youth in Rural Areas to take up various Agriculture, allied and service sector enterprises for sustainable income and gainful employment in selected districts,
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has initiated this programme.
- The project is implemented via Krishi Vigyan Kendras (One in each district).
- Training given in Apiary, Mushroom, Seed Processing, Soil testing, Poultry, Dairy, Goatry, Carp-hatchery, Vermi-compost etc

Source: PIB



**Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare,  
Government of India**



**Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture (ARYA)**

- Attract and empower the youth in rural areas.
- Take up various agriculture, allied and service sector enterprises for sustainable income and gainful employment.
- Emphasis on processing, value addition, marketing and networking.
- Entrepreneurship and value chain management.
- 200-300 youth per district are involved to 25 KVKs in 25 states. ARYA is to be expanded in 75 more districts

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## 6. Medicinal Marijuana

### Topic: Environment and Ecology

**In News:** Costa Rica has legalised medicinal marijuana use.

#### More on the Topic:

- The law also legalises the cultivation and industrial production of hemp. Recreational marijuana use continues to be prohibited.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), cannabis is a generic term used to denote marijuana, hemp, weed etc and several other psychoactive preparations of the plant *Cannabis sativa* and other plants in *Cannabis* super family.
- In India, there are no restrictions on cultivation and procurement of cannabis for medical and scientific purposes.
- The legislature left seeds and leaves of the cannabis plant out of the ambit of the NDPS Act.
- The Act establishes Narcotics Control Bureau as the apex drug law enforcement agency and empowers them to oversee the implementation of of NDPS Act and also the other International conventions related to the it.
- For holding a small quantity, the prescribed punishment is rigorous imprisonment for up to six months, fine of Rs. 10,000 or both.



**Source: Indian Express**

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#### MCQs:

1. Which of the following statement/s is/are true?

1. Rigvedic Aryans knew gold, silver and copper whereas Indus Valley people knew only copper and iron.

2. Rigvedic Aryans had domesticated the horse whereas there is no evidence of Indus Valley people having aware of this animal.

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only



- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans: b**

**2. Which one of the following assumes importance in being a good link between the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats?**

- (a) Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve
- (b) Nallamala Forest
- (c) Nagarhole National Park
- (d) Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve

**Ans: a**

**3. Which of the following gives 'Global Gender Gap Index' ranking?**

- (a) World Economic Forum
- (b) UN Human Rights Council
- (c) World Economic Forum
- (d) World Health Organization

**Ans: a**

**4. Which of the following statement/s are true?**

**1. TRAFFIC is a bureau under United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).**

**2. The mission of TRAFFIC is to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature.**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans b**



**5. Local self-government can be best explained as an exercise in ?**

- (a) Federalism
- (b) Democratic decentralization
- (c) Administrative delegation
- (d) Direct democracy

**Ans: b**