

## 1. Prevention of Corruption Act

Topic: Polity and Governance

# Prevention of Corruption Act



### Bribery

#### What is new

- Giving a bribe is now an offence, punishable by a 7-year prison term
- Except when one is forced to give a bribe. But it should be reported within seven days
- Bribe is termed 'undue advantage', defined as 'gratification other than legal remuneration'

#### What it was

- No specific provision, except as abetment

*It could empower the public to refuse to give a bribe but seven-day limit may not be enough. As to what happens if citizen's report of coercion is not registered by the police is unclear*



### Pre-investigation approval

#### What is new

- Police officer cannot begin probe without prior approval of relevant authority or govt (except when caught red-handed)

#### What it was

- No such provision in the Act, but a rule similar to it was struck down by Supreme Court

*Protection formerly available to officials of rank of joint secretary and above (before SC struck it down) is extended to all public servants*



### Sanction for prosecution

#### What is new

- Sanction needed for prosecuting former officials for offences done while in office
- Centre may notify guidelines for sanction
- Decision on request for sanction within 3 months, which may be extended by a month"

#### What it was

- Sanction was required under PCA for serving officers only

*Sanction for IPC offences covered both serving and retired officers. Guidelines and time-limit may help make sanction process easier*



### Criminal misconduct

#### What is new

- Only be two forms of criminal misconduct.
- Misappropriation of property entrusted to public servant
- Intentionally enriching oneself illicitly

#### What it was

- There were five kinds: omitted ones are taking bribe habitually, getting anything free or at a concession, obtaining pecuniary advantage for oneself or for another without public interest

*This is to protect public servants from being wrongly prosecuted for official decisions. Earlier it was a crime to "obtain advantage to a private party without public interest"*



### Forfeiture of property

#### What is new

- Section introduced for Special Court under this Act to attach and confiscate property

#### What it was

- This was not done under the Prevention of Corruption Act, but under a 1944 ordinance through civil courts

*This helps avoid a fresh procedure to confiscate property obtained through corruption, enables court conducting trial to do so itself*

**In News:** The Supreme Court on Thursday held that direct evidence of demand or acceptance of bribe is not necessary to convict a public servant under the Prevention of Corruption Act and that the such fact can be proved through circumstantial evidence.

### More on the Topic

- The Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 is an **Act of the Parliament of India enacted to combat corruption in government agencies and public sector businesses in India.**
- The Central and the State Government is empowered to appoint Special Judges to try the following offences:
- Any offence punishable under this Act.
- Any conspiracy to commit or any attempt to commit or any abetment of any of the offences specified under the Act.
- A Special Judge, while trying any offence punishable under the Act, shall exercise all powers and functions exercised by a District Judge under the Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance, 1944.

**Offences under the PCA along with their punishments:**



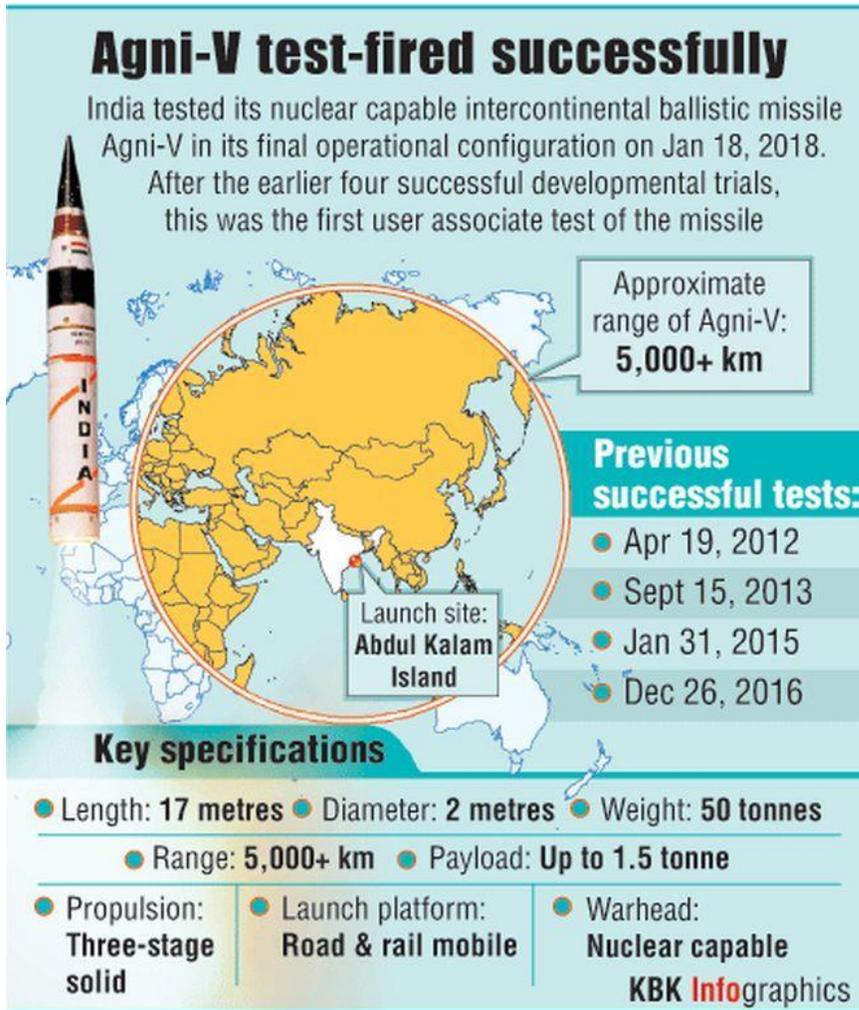
- **Taking gratification other than legal remuneration** in respect of an official act, and if the public servant is found guilty shall be punishable with imprisonment which shall be not **less than 6 months extendable up to 5 years and shall also be liable to fine.**
- **Taking gratification in order to influence public servant**, by corrupt or illegal means, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which **shall be not less than three years extendable up to seven years and shall also be liable to fine.**
- **Taking gratification, for exercise of personal influence with public servant** shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall be not less than **six months extendable up to five years and shall also be liable to fine.**
- Any public servant, who commits **criminal misconduct shall be punishable with imprisonment** for a term which shall be not less than one year extendable up to 7 years and shall also be liable to fine.

#### **2018 amendments to the act:**

- Giving bribe is a specific and a direct offence.
- Those convicted of taking bribes **can be imprisoned for three to seven years besides being fined.**
- It makes a provision for providing **protection to 'coerced' (forced to pay a bribe) bribe-givers** if the matter is reported to the concerned law enforcement agencies within a week.
- It redefines **criminal misconduct and will now only cover misappropriation of property and possession of disproportionate assets.**
- It proposes a 'shield' for government servants, including those retired, from prosecution by making it mandatory for investigating agencies such as the Central Bureau of Investigation to take **prior approval from a competent authority before conducting an enquiry against them.**
- However, it states that such permissions shall not be necessary for cases involving the arrest of a person on the spot on the charge of accepting or attempting to accept any undue advantage for himself or for any other person.
- In any corruption case against a public servant, **the factor of "undue advantage" will have to be established.**
- **The trial in cases pertaining to the exchange of bribes and corruption should be completed within two years.** Further, even after reasoned delays, the trial cannot exceed four years.
- It covers **bribe-giving commercial organisations to be liable for punishment or prosecution.** However, charitable institutions have been left out of its ambit.
- It provides powers and procedures for the attachment and forfeiture of a corruption-accused public servant's property.

**Source: Indian Express**

## 2. Agni-5 Nuclear Capable Missile



**Topic: Science and Technology**

**In News:** A successful flight test of India's long-range surface-to-surface nuclear capable ballistic missile, Agni-5, was undertaken recently.

**More on the Topic:**

- The latest test comes a few days after Chinese and Indian troops clashed at the Line of Actual Control in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.



- Agni-5 can strike targets at ranges of **5,000 to 5,500 km, which puts major cities in China, including the capital Beijing, within its range.**

#### **About Agni 5 Missile:**

- The nuclear-capable missile, which uses a **three-stage solid-fuelled engine**, has been developed by India's Defence Research and Development organisation (DRDO).
- The development of Agni missiles started in early 1980 under the **Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme.**
- **Medium to Intercontinental versions of Agni missile systems 1 to 5 have varying ranges** starting from 700 km for Agni-1 to 5000 km and above for Agni-5.
- In June 2021, DRDO successfully tested **Agni P, a canisterised missile** with a range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 km.
- This means that the missile can be launched from road and rail platforms, making it easier for it to be deployed and launched at a quicker pace.
- Agni-6 is also said to be under development, with a range starting at 8000 km.

#### **India's Nuclear Doctrine:**

- India follows the **doctrine of 'credible minimum deterrence' and 'No First Use'** which are pivotal points of India's nuclear doctrine, first published in 2003.
- This basically means **India would never use nuclear weapons first in a conflict situation** but only as retaliation, and the arsenal maintained is to only deter the possibility of an attack on India.

**Source: PIB**

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### **3. EU adopts global minimum 15% tax on big business**



### Topic: International Relations

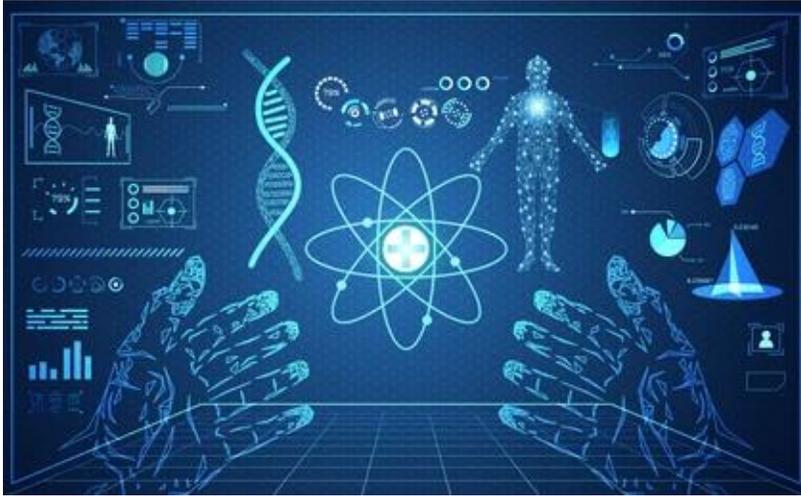
**In News:** The European Union has adopted a plan for a global minimum 15% tax on big business.

#### More on the Topic:

- Agreement on Global Minimum Tax (GMT) was drawn up under **Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Sharing (BEPS) from Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and G20.**
- The newly-approved plan was drawn up under with the guidance of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) .
- It is joined by **142 countries, including India** to reform international taxation rules and stop governments racing to cut taxes in a bid to attract companies.
- **The global minimum tax is only one part**, known as Pillar Two, of the OECD agreement.
- **The first pillar, which provides for the taxation of companies where they make their profits to limit tax evasion**, primarily targets digital giants.
- It requires an international agreement which is not yet finalised.

#### Why Minimum Taxation:

- Corporation tax is usually based on a company's profits.
- But often **they might be able to pay less depending on where their offices are registered** or how they invest in their business.
- Tax havens would no longer exist since taxes avoided in haven would be collected at home.



## 4. DNA Fingerprinting

**Topic: Science and Technology**

**In News:** Union Delhi Police has used DNA Finger printing to rule out one of the murder cases recently.

**More on the Topic:**

- DNA fingerprinting was first developed in 1984 by Alec Jeffreys in the UK, after Jeffreys discovered that no two people could have the same DNA sequence. Within three years of the discovery, the UK achieved the world's first conviction based on DNA evidence in a case of rape and murder.

**How DNA Finger Printing is done?**

- Each person's DNA, except for identical twins, is unique.
- By **analyzing selected DNA sequences (called loci)**, a crime laboratory can develop a **profile to be used in identifying a suspect**.
- DNA can be extracted from many sources, such as **hair, bone, teeth, saliva, and blood**.
- Because there is DNA in most cells in the human body, even a minuscule amount of bodily fluid or tissue can yield useful information. Samples may even be extracted from used clothes, linen, combs, or other frequently used items.
- Beyond its accuracy, DNA fingerprinting can also sift through crime scene evidence in different ways, previously unavailable to investigators.
- For instance, **advanced DNA fingerprinting can make separate prints of various individuals even from a sample mixture found at the crime scene**.

**Source: Indian Express**

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## 5. Bharat Series (BH) Registration Mark

**Topic: Polity and Governance**



**In News:** The MoRTH (Ministry of Road, Transport, and Highways) wanted to change this and has launched the Bharat Series number plates across the country in 2021.

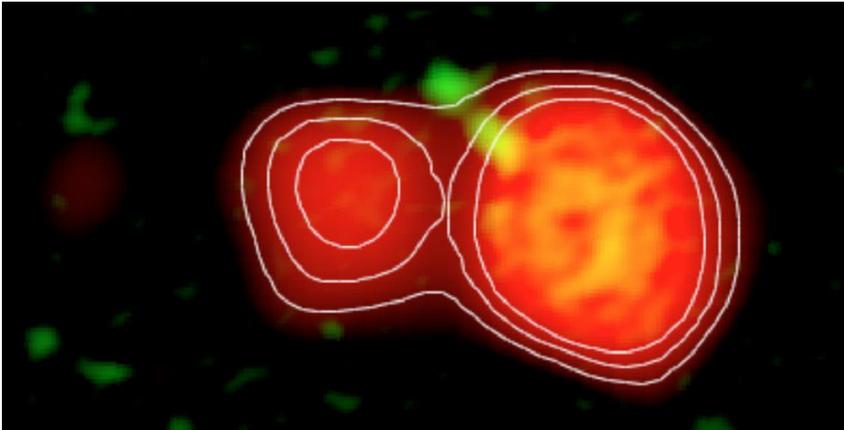
### More on the Topic:

- The Government of India introduced the BH Number Plate or Bharat Series Registration Number for non-transport vehicles in August 2021. The BH Series number plate removes the obligation of transferring vehicle registration after moving from one state to the other.
- Those eligible for the BH number series include:
  - State and Central Government employees
  - Defense sector
  - Bank employees
  - Administrative services
  - Private firm employees who have offices in more than four States or Union Territories.
- The reason to bring the BH series license plate is to save the time and energy of the citizens from the annoyances of transfers of vehicles each time they relocate.

**Source: Business Standard**

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## 6. 'Odd Radio Circles'



**In News:** A new research by an Indian scientists has offered explanations for mysterious hazy circles of radio emission deep in celestial space called Odd Radio Circles (ORCs).

**More on the Topic:**

- Astronomers recently identified these ORCs using the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) in Australia and South Africa, the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) in India, and the Low-Frequency Array (LOFAR) in the Netherlands.
- Such objects are seen only in radio and not in any other form of radiation.
- Some of these objects could be 1 million light-years across, about 10 times larger than our Milky Way.
- The new research has proved that some of **these ORCs could be remnants of thermonuclear supernovas triggered by the explosion of a white dwarf star** in a binary system heavier than 1.4 times the mass of the Sun.

**Source: Hindu**

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## 7. Temples Of Bilaspur



### Topic: Art and Culture

**In News:** The reclamation and restoration of the submerged temples of Bilaspur will begin soon.

#### More on the Topic:

- The temples were built in **Nagara style** and dating back to the **8th and 19th centuries of Kahlur dynasty**.
- In the first phase, three out of the five submerged temple - **Rangnath, Khaneshwar and Nardehswar - will be lifted and placed in Dholara**.
- **The Sandu Maidan will be developed in the second phase**, while in the third a barrage will be constructed to create an artificial lake around the temples.
- The temples had been submerged during the creation of **the Gobind Sagar lake as a reservoir for the Bhakra Dam, which was lauded as the 'Modern Temple of Resurgent India'** by the then PM Jawaharlal Nehru.

**Source: Business Standard**

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