



## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – AUGUST 3, 2019**

### **NATIONAL**

- **The University Grants Commission (UGC) - recommended five government institutions and seven private institutions for Institution of Eminence (IoE) status and letter of intent (LoI) respectively.**
- ✓ The recommendations now wait for the government's approval before being notified
- ✓ The move follows the reports of the empowered expert committee (EEC) appointed by government under the chairmanship of former Chief Election Commissioner N Gopalaswami recommending 15 public institutions and 15 private institutions for granting status of IoE
- ✓ IIT-Madras, IITKharagpur, Delhi University, Banaras Hindu University and University of Hyderabad will soon the IoE status
- ✓ Among the private institutions recommended for issue of LoI include Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Vellore Institute of Technology, Jamia Hamdard, Kalinga Institute of Technology, O P Jindal University and Shiv Nadar University
- ✓ The commission also recommended Bharti (Satya Bharti Foundation) for issuance of LoI in the vacant slot under the greenfield category for yet to be established institutions.
- ✓ Thus, the Satya Bharti Foundation — telecom major Airtel's philanthropic arm — became the second greenfield institution to be given IoE status, after Jio Institute which is backed by the Reliance Foundation.
- ✓ Anna University has also been recommended for the Institute of Eminence status by the University Grants Commission
- ✓ But, Jadavpur University and Anna University can be considered for issue of the IoE status only after the respective state governments have issued an official communication allocating their share of the funds (up to 50%).
- ✓ However, the UGC denied the tag to five private universities — Azim Premji University, Ashoka University, KREA University, Indian Institute for Human

Settlements and the Indian Institute of Public Health — on the grounds that they have not been placed in any global or national rankings

- ✓ Under the scheme, the selected institutions would receive ₹1,000 crore funding for five years.
- ✓ The institutions on their part must raise 20% from within.
- ✓ In the case of State universities, 50% of the funding will have to come from the State

➤ **Rajya Sabha – approved the Code on Wages Bill on August 2**

- ✓ The bill intends to bring all workers, in both formal and informal sectors, under minimum wages regime besides addressing issues like timely payments
- ✓ The Bill was passed through vote with 85 members supporting it and only eight opposing it.
- ✓ The Code on Wages Bill was passed by Lok Sabha on July 30
- ✓ It subsumes four labour laws - Minimum Wages Act, Payment of Wages Act, Payment of Bonus Act and Equal Remuneration Act.
- ✓ The floor wage will be decided by the Tripartite Minimum Wage Advisory Board, comprising representatives of panel, which will be set up
- ✓ The floor wage will be computed based on minimum living conditions
- ✓ Once the law is in place, the employers will have to pay the wage by seventh of every month and they can also pay on weekly or daily basis
- ✓ The advisory committee will have one-third women members to ensure the rights of women workers are protected
- ✓ Under the proposed law, minimum wages will be reviewed after every five years.

➤ **Lok Sabha - passed the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial (Amendment) Bill, 2019 on August 2**



- ✓ The politically contentious bill seeks to delete the name of Congress president as a trustee of the Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial

- ✓ As per the Government, no political party can claim hold over a trust like the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial, because it belonged to every Indian.
  - ✓ Till now, the trust which manages the memorial has the Prime Minister as the chairperson and president of Indian National Congress, culture minister, leader of the opposition in Lok Sabha, Punjab governor and Punjab CM as its members.
  - ✓ But now, the Congress chief is being removed while the leader of the single largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha is being added as a member of the trust.
- **Lok Sabha – passed the Dam Safety Bill on August 2**
    - ✓ The bill intends to set up a national authority and a committee to inspect and maintain dams across the country
    - ✓ The legislation focuses on creating standard criteria for safety of dams across the country
    - ✓ The bill sought to set up a National Dam Safety Authority for proper surveillance, inspection and maintenance of specified dams as well as to address unresolved issues between states
    - ✓ The government has proposed to set up a national committee on dam safety in order to prevent dam failure-related disasters.
  - **Rajya Sabha – passes the amended UAPA bill on August 2**
    - ✓ The bill gives power to the government to declare individuals involved in terror crimes as ‘terrorists’

### Hard line

The UAPA Bill, 2019, amends the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. Some highlights:

**TERRORISM:** Under the Act, the central government may **designate an organisation as a terrorist** organisation if it: (i) commits or participates in acts of terrorism, (ii) prepares for terrorism, (iii) promotes terrorism, or (iv) is involved in terrorism. The Bill additionally **empowers the government to designate individuals as terrorists** on the same grounds

**SEIZURE OF PROPERTY:** Under the Act, an **investigating officer must obtain prior approval of the DGP** to seize properties that may be connected with terrorism. If the investigation is conducted by an officer of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the approval of the Director General, NIA is mandatory

**INVESTIGATION:** Under the Act, **investigation of cases may be conducted by officers of the rank of DSP or ACP or above. Officers of the NIA, of the rank of Inspector or above, can also investigate cases**



SOURCE: PRS LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH

- ✓ In the 240-member House, 147 members voted in favour of the Bill and 42 against.
  - ✓ The bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on July 24.
  - ✓ With the Rajya Sabha giving its assent, the Bill will soon be notified as a law.
  - ✓ The bill blacklists individual terror suspects and allows the “anti-federal” provision seeking to empower the National Investigation Agency DG to seize properties linked to terrorism without prior consent of the state police chief
  - ✓ Of the 278 cases registered by the NIA under UAPA, chargesheets were filed in 204.
  - ✓ Of the 54 cases where courts passed judgment, 48 resulted in convictions — a conviction rate of 91%
- **The Census 2021 – will seek, for the first time ever, information from households on smartphones, DTH/Cable TV connection, internet access, number of members of households having bank accounts, ownership of house, bottled water availability and mobile number as part of the houselisting procedure**

## Mapping the **populace**

The census enumeration exercise will be done in three phases

**HOUSE LISTING:**  
Comprising 34 categories, it will be done from April to September, 2020

**ENUMERATION:**  
Comprising 28 categories, it will be held between February 9 and 28, 2021

**REVISION:** It will be done from March 1 to 5, 2021



**OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:**

- There will be a “third gender” category this time
- Government teachers will conduct the enumeration exercise
- Data will be collected on a web-based application developed under the Registrar General

**THE OUTLIERS:** There are around 45,000 villages in the country with no internet connectivity. For them, data can be gathered on paper

**MANDATORY CLAUSE:** Every citizen is compelled by law to participate in the Census exercise, and denial could lead to criminal action

### THE SCHEDULE

Feb 9-28, 2021   Population enumeration exercise
March 1-5   Revision round
Sept 11-30, 2020   Population enumeration for J&K and snow-bound areas of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand
Oct 1-5   Revision round

- ✓ Importantly, the latest census will not collect caste data
- ✓ While the socio-economic caste census (SECC) was conducted alongside Census 2011, the outcome of the caste census is yet to be made public due to various anomalies in 40 lakh caste names that include different spellings of same caste and respondents citing gotra as caste
- ✓ The Census would restrict itself to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes data.
- ✓ The Census 2021 houselisting questionnaire will seek information from households on 34 parameters between April 2020 and September 2020
- ✓ It will no longer seek a breakup of male and female persons in a household, marking a departure from earlier census exercises
- ✓ The personal details to be sought during the population enumeration exercise of Census 2021, scheduled between February 9 and 28, 2021, are more or less similar to those sought in 2011

- ✓ It will include 29 parameters instead of 28 earlier.
- ✓ The fresh inclusions pertain to new categories of disabilities as per the latest definition
- ✓ The population enumeration would be followed by a revisional round from March 1 to 5, 2021, before finalising the population of the country as on March 1, 2021
- ✓ The reference date for census in Jammu & Kashmir and snow-bound areas of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand is October 1, 2020
- ✓ Over 31 lakh enumerators shall be conducting the latest census, against 27 lakh engaged in Census 2011
- ✓ While the 2011 census had a paper schedule, with data collected being descriptive and hand-written by the enumerators that later had to be keyed in by data entry operators, the data to be collected this time is being codified to make reading and collation easier.
- ✓ Also, the data can be collected by enumerator on his phone, registered with the census authorities, via an application, though he/she will also have option to collect the same on paper and then make data entries.
- ✓ The Census data would be available by the year 2024-25 as the entire process would be conducted digitally

## INTERNATIONAL

- **Saudi Arabia – allows women to apply for a passport and travel freely without the consent of males**



- ✓ The changes are a potential game-changer for Saudi women's rights in the kingdom
- ✓ The current rule stipulates a man's consent to obtain a passport or travel abroad.
- ✓ Most often a woman's male guardian is her father or husband, and in some cases a woman's own son.

- ✓ Other changes issued in the decrees allow women to register a marriage, divorce or child's birth and to be issued official family documents
- ✓ It also stipulates that a father or mother can be legal guardians of children.

## AWARDS

- **Senior Journalist Ravish Kumar - has been selected for the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award, 2019**
- ✓ Ravish Kumar is among the five recipients of the 2019 Magsaysay award, the Asian equivalent of the Nobel, which recognises the "greatness of spirit and transformative leadership in Asia".
- ✓ Mr. Kumar, 44, is NDTV senior executive editor and one of India's most influential TV journalists



- ✓ The four other winners are Ko Swe Win from Myanmar, Angkhana Neelapaijit from Thailand, Raymundo Pujante Cayabyab from Philippines and Kim Jong-Ki from South Korea
- ✓ Ravish Kumar's anchors the news programme "Prime Time", in NDTV's own 24-hour Hindi-language news channel - NDTV India, which deals with real-life, under-reported problems of ordinary people
- ✓ Ravish kumar has been with NDTV since 1996 and worked his way up from being a field reporter.
- ✓ Other notable winners of the Magsaysay award in the past are RK Laxman, P Sainath, Arun Shourie, Kiran Bedi and Arvind Kejriwal
- **India - emerged world champions at the World Schools Debating Championships 2019 (WSDC).**
- ✓ India finished as the best nation defeating Canada 9-0, which means all nine judges unanimously voted in the country's favour, a feat which has never been achieved by any country in the last decade



Winning team - Saranya Ravindran, Bhavya Shah, Tejas Subramaniam, Prithvi Arun and Manya Gupta won the World Schools Debating Championships 2019 held in Thailand

- ✓ This is also the first time that India has won this championship in 31 years of the contest
  - ✓ Three of the five members of the team are from Chennai
  - ✓ Tejas Subramaniam, a Class XII student at the Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Senior Secondary School (PSBB) was adjudged the 'best speaker of the world'
  - ✓ Other students from the city includes Prithvi Arun, a Class XII student at Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School and Saranya Ravindran, from PSBB, who had participated in the championship for the first time
  - ✓ Bhavya Shah, a visually challenged student from the Rao Junior College of Science, Mumbai was adjudged the sixth 'best speaker in the world'
  - ✓ This was also the first time a visually challenged student has ever spoken at the event
  - ✓ Bhavya used a specialised software in his laptop, that reads the display aloud, to prepare for his speeches
  - ✓ Manya Gupta, another Class XII student from Neerja Modi School, Jaipur was declared the 14th 'best speaker in the world'
  - ✓ The team's head coach Dhruva Bhat, a Rhodes scholar from Oxford University, had represented the country thrice at the WSDC
  - ✓ More than 600 participants from 64 nations participated in the event, which was hosted in Bangkok, between July 24 and August 1
- **Bhasha Mukherjee, a 23 year old British-Indian junior doctor - has been crowned Miss England 2019**
- ✓ Bhasha will represent England in the 69th Miss World contest to be held in December in London
  - ✓ Mukherjee speaks five languages — English, Bengali, Hindi, German and French — and has a Bachelor's degree in medicine and surgery from University of Nottingham.



- ✓ Having moved to UK with her family when she was nine years old, Mukherjee lives in Derby in East Midlands region and works at Pilgrim Hospital in Boston, Lincolnshire

## SPORTS

- **Viswanathan Anand – finishes second at the Grand Chess Tour in Paris**



- ✓ He played in the rapid and blitz categories for a total of 20.5 points to finish second behind Maxime Vachier Lagrave
- ✓ Anand finished joint first in the blitz category and joint second in the rapid category
- ✓ Anand has recently finished joint-seventh in a field of 10 at the Altibox chess tournament at Norway in June, and subsequently finishing joint-ninth at the Grand Chess Tour (GCT) in Croatia.

# DISTRICT COURTS INFRASTRUCTURE – A REPORT

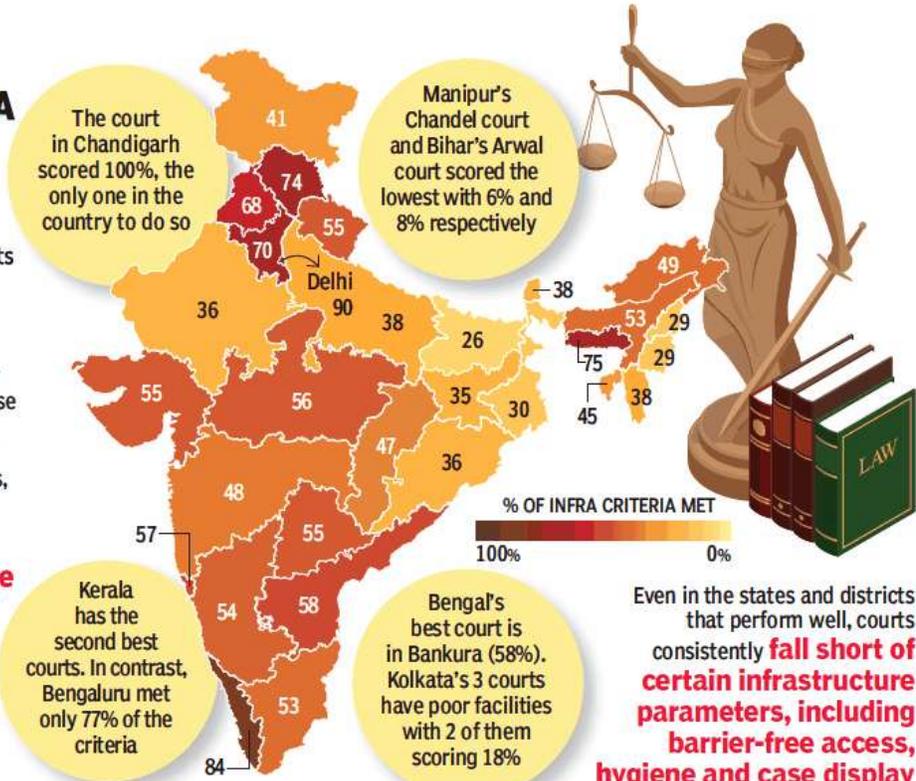
It's not news that India's judiciary is struggling. High rates of case pendency and judge vacancies plague the legal system. At the district level alone, 2.8 crore cases are waiting to be heard and nearly 6,000 positions for judges lie vacant. But the problems don't end there – infrastructure at courts around the country is woefully lacking. A survey of 665 district courts found which courts have the best infrastructure

## 15 STATES MEET LESS THAN HALF THE INFRA CRITERIA

The National Court Management System Committee, set up in 2012 by the CJI and law ministry, identified infrastructure deficiencies in courts and the impact on the judiciary's ability to function

The survey measures courts against the benchmarks set by the committee on nine factors: ease of getting to the court, navigation within the court complex, waiting areas, hygiene, barrier-free access, case display, amenities, security and website

**There's a severe shortage of courtrooms and residence for judges**  
For example, in Mumbai, there are only 1,763 halls for 2,248 judges. UP has a shortfall of 885 courtrooms, of which 371 are under construction



## MORE THAN HALF OF DISTRICT COURTS DON'T HAVE BATHROOMS, ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES



### GETTING THERE

19% of courts aren't accessible via public transport

20% of courts do not have parking



### NAVIGATION

80% of courts lack guide maps

55% of courts don't have help desks on premises



### HYGIENE

60% of courts do not have fully functioning washrooms

47% of courts lack washrooms on every floor



### BARRIER-FREE ACCESS

73% of courts do not have access ramps and/or lifts

89% of courts do not have designated washrooms for persons with disabilities

98% of courts lack visual aid features



### SECURITY

89% of courts do not have working baggage scan facilities at the complex entrance

29% of courts without fire extinguishers

52% of courts have no emergency exit signs within the complex

### CASE DISPLAY



74% of courts do not have electronic case display boards at the entrance and in waiting areas



### WAITING AREAS

46% of courts lack waiting areas



### WEBSITE

89% of the websites uploaded causelists, case orders and status

### AMENITIES

39% of the states have full service court complexes



The least-provided facilities were bank branch (65%), post office (63%), and first-aid (59%), while photocopy (100%), typists (98%) and stamp vendors (97%) were mostly available

Source: Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy