

# Daily Current Affairs

## 16 March 2024

### MOU On Law And Dispute Resolution

- **India and Singapore** have signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the sphere **of law and dispute resolution**.
- The Ministry of Law and Justice in a statement said that this agreement will further **enhance the cooperation between the two countries** in areas of common interest such as **international commercial dispute resolution**.
- The agreement was signed in a virtual meeting of the Minister of State for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal and Singapore Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Mr. Edwin Tong.



- Addressing the event, Mr Meghwal said that this initiative signifies the **Government's collective commitment** to deepening collaboration in the field of law and dispute resolution, with a focus on sharing best practices, exchanging expertise, and facilitating capacity-building initiatives for the stakeholders.
- He highlighted that with this partnership, the Government is aiming to harness **synergies between the legal regimes** and explore innovative approaches to address the evolving needs of citizens and businesses.

## Election Commissioners

- The newly appointed Election Commissioners **Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh** Sandhu assumed charge of the office today.
- The Election Commission of India in a statement said that Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar welcomed the two newly appointed Election Commissioners at Nirvachan Sadan to the action-packed and intense twelve weeks ahead.



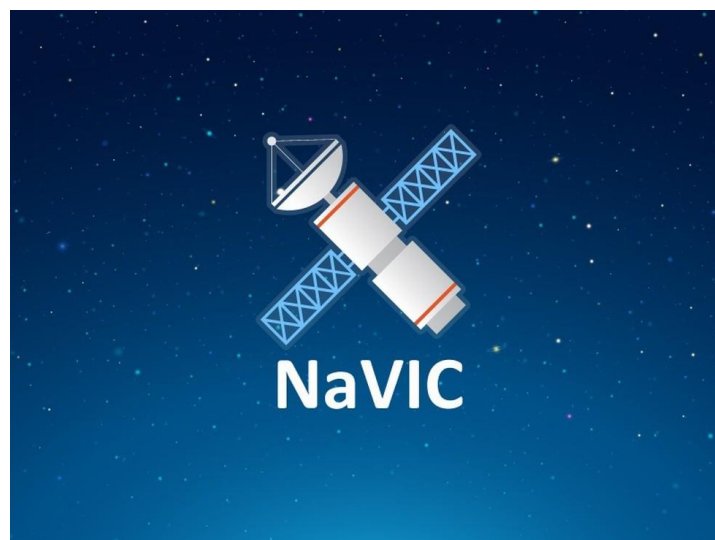
- It said that CEC emphasized the significance of their joining at this historic point when the team ECI is all set to conduct the Lok Sabha election, 2024 in the world's largest democracy.
- Mr. Kumar and Mr. Sandhu were **appointed election commissioners by the selection panel chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.**

## NTP For Dissemination Of Indian Standard Time

- Union Minister of Consumer Affairs Piyush Goyal inaugurated **National Time Protocol (NTP) for dissemination of Indian Standard Time in Mumbai.**
- This will provide Uniform and precise time information with **milliseconds accuracy** and will also increase the cyber security.
- Public can access it via [time.nplindia.org](http://time.nplindia.org) or [time.nplindia.in](http://time.nplindia.in). Mr. Goyal also virtually inaugurated **timing infrastructure** at Regional Reference Standard Laboratory (RRSL) at Faridabad and Ahmedabad.



- CSIR National Physical Laboratory's Head of Indian Standard Time division Dr. Ashish Agarwal said, **India is the first country to implement time distribution system.**
- By the end of year, **atomic clock will be installed** in the RRSL at Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati and Delhi. Mr. Agarwal said, earlier time was sourced from the Global Positioning System (GPS) but now onwards we will have our own system with the help of **Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC).**
- All the mobile operators across the country will have to sync the time using this system, he added.



## Ethanol100

- Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri launched **Ethanol100, an alternate auto fuel** in New Delhi. Mr Puri said that the **green fuels like ethanol100**, which the Modi government has laid special focus on, will play a key role in sustaining the economic growth of the country.



- **Ethanol100, a cleaner and greener** alternative to gasoline, is a blend of **92 to 94 percent ethanol, 4 to 5 percent motor spirit** to provide colour to flame and **1.5 percent Co-solvent higher saturated alcohol**.
- The fuel produces **lower emissions** of greenhouse gases, a reduction by around 63% on well to wheel basis.
- Ethanol100 will help to mitigate the impacts of climate change and improve air quality.
- Prominent two-wheeler manufacturers are already undertaking trials for Ethanol100 compliant vehicles.
- **As part of a pilot initiative, IndianOil** is rolling out Ethanol100 at 183 retail outlets across ethanol-rich states of Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Delhi. It plans to make Ethanol100 available at 400 retail outlets in these states in a phased manner.



## SIPRI Report

- According to a report released by the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**, 2024, **India continues to be the world's largest arms importer**, with Russia being the prime source of its procurement despite a declining share in recent years.
- **India accounted for 9.8 percent** of the total global arms imports during the 2019-2023 period.
- The country's arms imports **increased by 4.7 percent** between 2014-18 and 2019-23, despite the government's ongoing efforts to boost domestic defence manufacturing and procurement.



- Russia's share in Indian arms exports is gradually falling. During the period under review, **Russia accounted for 36 percent of India's total arms imports**, marking the first time since the 1960-64 term that Russia's share fell below the 50 percent mark.
- This trend is expected to continue as **India turns to France and the United States** for military hardware, and Russia focuses on meeting its domestic demands amidst the ongoing war in Ukraine.
- **France accounted for 33 percent of India's total arms imports**, while the United States contributed 13 percent.
- With India's recent acquisition of **31 armed MQ-9B Sky Guardian drones** from the US for \$3.9 billion and 26 Rafale-M fighters from France for \$6 billion, the share of these two countries is likely to increase in the current five-year period.

## Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize

- Executive Board of the **Sahitya Akademi**, chaired by President Sri Madhav Kaushik, convened at **Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi**, and approved the selection of 24 books for the Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize 2023.
- The books were chosen based on recommendations made by three-member Selection Committees in each language, following the established rules and procedures.
- **The prize recognizes translations first** published between January 1, 2017, and December 31, 2021.
- The Selection Committees made recommendations for the Translation Prizes in their respective languages.



## साहित्य अकादेमी अनुवाद पुरस्कार

- The prize, which includes a **cash award of Rs. 50,000** and a **copper plaque**, will be presented to the translators of the selected books at a special function later this year.
- Tamil writer **Kannaiyan Dakshnamurthy** has been awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award for Translation for his **Tamil translation of Mamang Dai's novel "The Black Hill."**

- Originally published in English in 2014, the novel was translated into Tamil under the title “**Karungunram**” in 2016.
- **Kannaiyan Dakshnamurthy** is a well-known translator, having translated works on various subjects, including the 1857 revolt, short stories from Sri Lanka, and biographies of notable figures such as Indira Gandhi and Vivekananda.
- Set during the colonial era, Mamang Dai’s novel “The Black Hill” follows the life of a **couple from rival tribes** who elope to be together.
- The narrative is woven around a real-life incident involving the disappearance of a French Jesuit priest, Father Nicolas Krick, in the 1950s and the subsequent execution of someone in connection with the case.

## Kovind Panel Recommendations

- HLC, popularly known as the **Kovind panel after its chairman**, former President Ram Nath Kovind, was constituted in September 2023, to go into the issue.
- The **panel had as its members** Home Minister Amit Shah, former Rajya Sabha Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Lok Sabha Secretary General Subhash C Kashyap, former chairman of the 15th Finance Commission N K Singh, Senior Advocate Harish Salve, and former Chief Vigilance Commissioner Sanjay Kothari. Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal was a Special Invitee to the Committee.



- The report comprises **18,626 pages**, and is the outcome of extensive consultations with stakeholders, experts and research work of 191 days, since its inception on September 2, 2023.

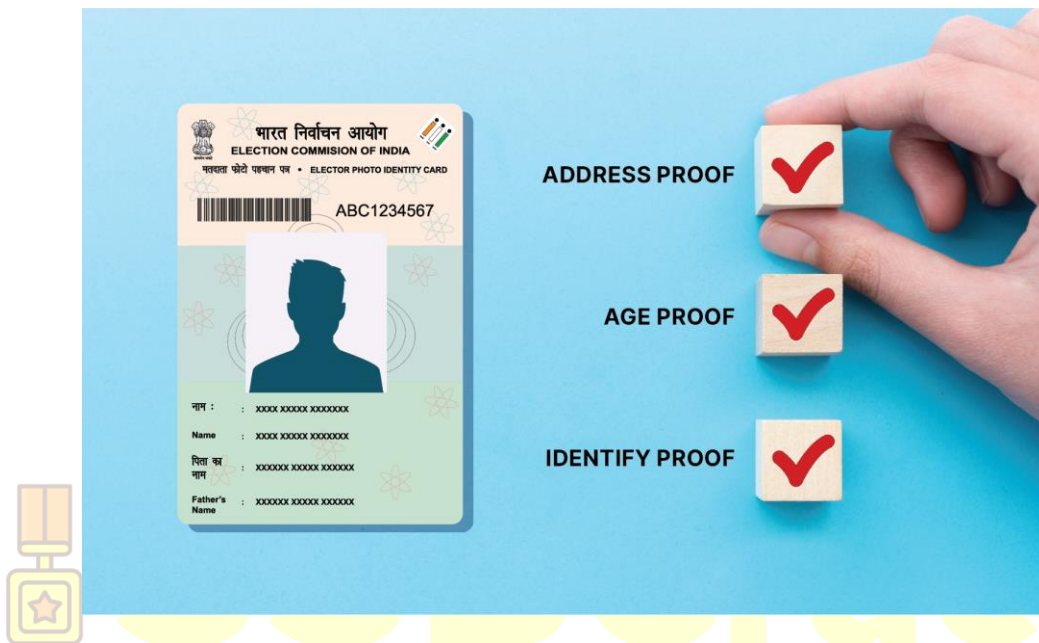
- The high level committee has recommended a **two-step approach for holding** simultaneous elections for Lok Sabha, state assemblies and local bodies.
- It recommended that in the first step, simultaneous elections can be held for Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.
- This can be followed in the second step by holding elections in Municipalities and Panchayats **within 100 days**.
- The **Committee recommends that in the event of a hung House**, a no-confidence motion constitutes the new House, fresh elections may be held for the **remainder of the five-year term**.



- Where fresh elections are held for the State Legislative Assemblies, then such new Legislative Assembly unless it is dissolved sooner, shall continue up to the end of the term of the Lok Sabha, the committee report stated.
- A Constitution Amendment Bill will have to be introduced in the Parliament amending Article 83 (Duration of Houses of Parliament) and Article 172 (Duration of State Legislatures). This Constitutional Amendment will not need ratification by the States, the report said.
- To synchronise Lok Sabha and assembly elections, the president shall notify the date of the first sitting of the Lok Sabha after a general election as the **"appointed date"**.
- The tenure of all state assemblies formed via polls after the "appointed date" and before the expiry of the full term of the Lok Sabha, will be only for the period ending up to the subsequent parliamentary polls.



- After this one-time transitory measure, all Lok Sabha and assembly polls will be held simultaneously.
- A single electoral roll and Elector's Photo Identity Card (EPIC) shall be prepared by the Election Commission of India in consultation with the State Election Commission and the same will substitute any other electoral roll prepared by ECI.



- For making **logistical arrangements for the conduct of simultaneous elections**, the ECI may draw up a plan and estimate in advance for the procurement of equipment, such as EVMs and VVPATs, deployment of polling personnel and security forces and make other necessary arrangements.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

**1. NTP For Dissemination Of Indian Standard Time Inaugurated In**

- A. Kolkata
- B. Mumbai
- C. Bhubaneshwar
- D. New Delhi

**ANSWER: B**

**2. SIPRI Report Released By**

- A. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute India
- B. Stockholm International Potential Research Institute India
- C. Stockholm Indian Peace Research Institute
- D. Stockholm Institute Peace Research Institute

**ANSWER: A**

**3. Blue Line Term Serves As Boundary Between**

- A. North Korea and South Korea
- B. Lebanon and Israel
- C. India and China
- D. Sudan and Libya

**ANSWER: B**

**4. Where Was India's First FutureLABS Center Inaugurated**

- A. C-DAC Hyderabad
- B. C-DAC Kolkata
- C. C-DAC Thiruvananthapuram
- D. C-DAC Bengaluru

**ANSWER: C**

**5. Researchers Discovered A New Scorpion Species With 8 Eyes And 8 Legs In Which Country**

- A. Thailand
- B. Indonesia
- C. Vietnam
- D. Maldives

**ANSWER: A**

**6. Which University Conferred President Murmu With The Honorary Degree Of Doctor Of Civil Law**

- A. University of Chicago
- B. University of Mauritius
- C. University of Melbourne
- D. University of Pennsylvania

**ANSWER: B**

**7. Which State Government Launched The 'Project ODISERV'**

- A. Odisha
- B. Maharashtra
- C. Gujarat
- D. Kerala

**ANSWER: A**

**8. Project SOORYA Is Launched By Which Organization**

- A. ISRO
- B. DRDO
- C. WHO
- D. UNEP

**ANSWER: A**

**9. Euscorpiops Krachan Belongs To Which One Of Following Species**

- A. Spider
- B. Scorpion
- C. Fish
- D. Snake

**ANSWER: B**

**10. Kinmen Islands Is Located In Which Country**

- A. Taiwan
- B. Japan
- C. Vietnam
- D. Philippines

**ANSWER: A**

**11. Mangistau Region, For A Man Made Methane Leak, Is Located In Which Country**

- A. Kazakhstan
- B. Vietnam
- C. Uzbekistan
- D. Indonesia

**ANSWER: A**

**12. Second Thomas Shoal Reef Is Located In Which One Of Following Sea**

- A. Mediterranean Sea
- B. Caribbean Sea
- C. South China Sea
- D. Red Sea

**ANSWER: C**

**13. Sabroom Land Port Is Located In**

- A. Tripura
- B. Manipur
- C. Nagaland
- D. Mizoram

**ANSWER: A**

**14. Which Company Has Partnered With SBI For Its Transaction Banking Platform**

- A. Aurionpro
- B. Oracle
- C. TCS
- D. Hexaware Technologies

**ANSWER: A**

**15. Who Elected As The New President Of The Paralympic Committee Of India**

- A. Devendra Jhajharia
- B. Deepa Malik
- C. J. Chandrasekhar
- D. Andrew Parsons

**ANSWER: A**



**16. In Which Indian State Did Union Minister Arjun Munda Inaugurate The National Dairy Mela And Agricultural Exhibition**

- A. Jharkhand
- B. Karnataka
- C. Kerala
- D. Maharashtra

**ANSWER: A**

**17. In Which Country Is Agalega Island Located**

- A. Indonesia
- B. Sri Lanka
- C. Maldives
- D. Mauritius

**ANSWER: D**

**18. Where Is First Indigenously Manufactured Electrolyser Commissioned By L&T**

- A. Junagadh
- B. Ajmer
- C. Chittorgarh
- D. Hazira

**ANSWER: D**

**19. Cabinet Declared Which Day As 'National Space Day' In India**

- A. August 20
- B. August 23
- C. August 25
- D. August 27

**ANSWER: B**

**20. When Is 'International Day For The Elimination Of Racial Discrimination' Observed**

- A. March 18
- B. March 21
- C. March 23
- D. March 24

**ANSWER: B**