

## SC Verdict in Cauvery River Water Dispute

### Why in news?

The Supreme Court has pronounced its verdict on the sharing of Cauvery water among Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karnataka and Kerala.

### How did the Cauvery dispute emerge?

- **Historically**, Tamil Nadu used about 602 TMC of the total yield of the river i.e. the available water in a particular year.
- As a result, only about 138 TMC was available for Karnataka until the turn of the 20th century.
- In **1924**, Tamil Nadu built the Mettur dam across the Cauvery river.
- Subsequently, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu signed an agreement effective for 50 years.
- Accordingly, Tamil Nadu was allowed to expand its agricultural area by 11 lakh acres from the existing 16 lakh acres.
- Karnataka was authorised to increase its irrigation area from 3 lakh acres to 10 lakh acres.



- The Cauvery River thus primarily served the needs of farmers in Tamil Nadu.
- On completing 50 years, the **accord lapsed in 1974**.
- Subsequently, Karnataka claimed that the agreement restricted its ability to develop farming activities along the Cauvery basin.
- To make up the lost ground, **Karnataka** attempted to **expand farming activities** in the Cauvery basin.
- It started building reservoirs.
- With this, the Cauvery river water sharing issue emerged.
- It is now a major water sharing dispute among Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Puducherry and Kerala.
- **Tribunal** - By Tamil Nadu's demand, the Union government formed the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) in 1990.
- The dispute was adjudicated by the CWDT in 2007.

### What was the Tribunal's order?

According to the tribunal's order, of the 740 thousand million cubic feet (TMC) of water available for utilisation –

1. 419 TMC was awarded to Tamil Nadu
2. 270 TMC to Karnataka
3. 30 TMC to Kerala

4. 7 TMC to Puducherry

- The remaining 14 TMC was reserved for environmental protection.
- The order also stated that **Karnataka must release 192 TMC** of water in normal monsoon years (June to May).
- Karnataka was thus releasing water to the Biligundlu water station in Tamil Nadu.
- This should be at the rates specified by the tribunal for each month.
- The tribunal also noted that in case the yield was less in a distress year, the allocated shares shall be proportionately reduced.

**What was the response?**

- Both Tamil Nadu and Karnataka challenged the tribunal's order.
- Karnataka claimed 312 TMC of water as against the 270 TMC ordered by the tribunal.
- The court reserved its order in September 2017.

**What is the present SC verdict?**

- The Court declared Cauvery a "national asset".
- It upheld the principle of equitable apportionment of inter-State river water among riparian States.
- The judgment concluded that the CWDT did not take into account Tamil Nadu's stock of an "empirical" 20 TMC of ground water.
- Accordingly, Karnataka is "entitled to marginal relief".
- In its present verdict, the Supreme Court has thus reduced the allocation of Cauvery water from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu.
- Karnataka will now release only 177.25 TMC Cauvery water from its Billigundlu site to Mettur dam in Tamil Nadu.
- This means a reduction of 14.75 TMC quota of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu from the earlier 192 TMC as stipulated by the tribunal.

**Prasar Bharati**

**Topic: Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies.**

Public broadcaster Prasar Bharati (PB) has turned down a resolution moved by the Union ministry of information and broadcasting (I&B) to appoint a serving IAS officer to its board, and deferred its proposal to bring in professionals to head the news service units of Doordarshan and All India Radio.

**Why?**

The board refused to appoint a serving IAS officer as member (personnel) on grounds that the appointment would go against the norms laid down in The Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990.

The broadcaster concluded that accepting the resolutions moved by the ministry would "amount to infringing Prasar Bharati's autonomy".

### What the law says?

As per the PB Act of 1990 the **Prasar Bharati** Board consists of a chairman, a CEO, two whole-time members for finance and personnel, six part-time members, heads of Doordarshan and All India Radio and one representative of the I&B ministry.

There is no provision to have a serving bureaucrat on the board.

Appointment of board members: The PB Act states that the President of India will appoint the Board members decided by a selection committee which is headed by the Vice President of India and includes the Chairman of the Press Council of India and a nominee of the President.

The ministry does not have a direct role in appointment of the chairman and whole-time members of the Board.

### Prasar Bharati:

- ❖ Prasar Bharati is a statutory autonomous body established under the Prasar Bharati Act and came into **existence in November 1997**. It is the Public Service Broadcaster of the country. The objectives of public service broadcasting are achieved in terms of Prasar Bharati Act through All India Radio and Doordarshan.
- ❖ Way forward:
- ❖ India is in dire need of broadcast autonomy, especially in the form of a truly autonomous, even if state-assisted, public service broadcaster.
- ❖ This was a promise made by Nehru to Parliament in 1948. But, it is yet to be redeemed. The post-Emergency 1977-78 broadcast autonomy committee, in its report “Akash Bharati”, presented a blueprint for autonomy.
- ❖ Despite brave efforts to make something of it, Prasar Bharati (PB) has not lived up to its charter.
- ❖ PB “needs to be adequately empowered and enabled” with independent professionals and financial self-reliance to “unleash its creative forces” beyond the market as a true voice of India, its ethos, culture and aspirations in order to become a genuine public broadcaster rather than remain a “government broadcaster”.

### Anti-Narcotics Scheme

**Topic: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes.**

The ‘Assistance to States and UTs for Narcotics Control’ scheme has been extended by the Centre for a further period of 3 years -from 2017-18 to 2019-20 -with an estimated budget of Rs 21 crore.

### About the scheme:

- The scheme aims to combat illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substance.
- The purpose of the scheme is to assist state governments and Union Territories which are contributing in controlling the inter-state and cross border drug trafficking.

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- Financial assistance will be provided to all the anti- narcotics agencies for strengthening their enforcement capabilities to combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Financial assistance is also proposed to be provided for all capacity building activities, including training of personnel.
- The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) being the national nodal agency for drug administration will process the requests from state governments and UTs for financial assistance for improving their enforcement capabilities in dealing with the supply side of the drug menace.
- Estimates suggest that there are 40 lakh drug addicts in the country.
- The most common drugs of abuse are 'ganja', 'hashish', 'opium' and 'heroin'. The abuse of pharmaceutical preparations like 'buprenorphine', codeine based cough syrups and painkillers like 'proxivon' has also assumed serious proportions. In certain regions of the country, drug abuse has already become a severe social-economic problem affecting the vulnerable age groups.
- It is, therefore, essential that the state governments and UTs are aware of the drug-related problems in their states and UTs and address them in an effective manner before they assume epidemic proportions.
- The strategies would include both supply reduction and demand reduction. Supply reduction would include enforcement activities while demand reduction would involve rehabilitation and de-addiction measures.

### **Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship Programme:**

Department of Biotechnology had recently organized a conclave meeting to celebrate the achievements and revisit the journey of the Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship Programme over the years. The 8th Conclave was organized by National Institute of Plant Genome Research (NIPGR).

#### **About the Programme:**

The Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship was conceived in the year 2006-07 with the idea of encouraging scientists (Indian Nationals) working outside the country and would like to return to the home country to pursue their research interests in Modern Biology, Biotechnology, Life Sciences and other related areas. The principal aim of the scheme is to improve the country's human resource capacity in life sciences, modern biology and biotechnology research – both in terms of development, translation and diffusion by means of attracting young scientists settled abroad.

### **India Pharma 2018 and India Medical Device 2018:**

India's biggest Annual Conference on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices – India Pharma 2018 and India Medical Device 2018 – has begun at Bengaluru. The event is being organized by Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, in collaboration with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

**Theme of the event:** Themed around 'Affordable, Quality Healthcare'.

### **Paschim Lehar:**

Paschim Lehar', a tri-service maritime exercise, is being held off India's western coast.

**About the exercise:** The objective of the exercise is to build interoperability. This exercise includes participation of a large number of ships, submarines and aircraft from the Western Naval Command of the

Indian Navy. Units from Eastern Naval Command, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and the Coast Guard are also participating to build interoperability.

### **India's Umang App, Aadhaar win awards at World Government Summit:**

India's **Aadhaar programme** was recognised as the world's largest biometric enabled identification programme at the recently concluded World Government Summit 2018 in Dubai.

Umang app was named winner of the **Best M-Government Service** Award for the Accessible Government category. The application provides users a unified platform that combines government departments and services, facilitating transactions for citizens.

### **Delhi hosts India's first radio festival:**

India's first radio festival was recently held in Delhi. The festival was organised by the International Association of Women in Radio and Television, in collaboration with UNESCO. The event touched on the 2018's theme of World Radio Day – sports and radio – and traced the journey of creativity, music and social changes on the radio.

**About IAWRT:** IAWRT is a global organization formed by professional women working in electronic and allied media with a mission to strengthen initiatives towards ensuring women's views and values are integral part of programming and to **advance the impact of women in media**. IAWRT organizes conferences, implements projects undertakes activities collaborates with and media organizations.

It is in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). IAWRT is managed by international board, which oversees funding initiatives for a number of local chapters and member activities.

### **Venezuela, Libya Lose UN Vote for Third Time in 3 Years:**

Venezuela and Libya have been suspended from voting in the U.N. General Assembly for the third time in three years because of millions of dollars in **unpaid dues to the world body**.

Venezuela must pay a minimum of USD 25,200,296 to restore its voting rights and Libya must pay at least USD 6,594,842. Venezuela is mired in an economic and political crisis and Libya has two rival governments, each backed by an array of militias.

### **Shell Fish Reef**

- Virtually all **of Australia's shellfish** reefs have disappeared, making them the country's most threatened ocean ecosystem.
- Shellfish reefs are made up of oysters & mussels.
- They accrete dead shell material such that the reef grows in size and mass over time.
- Just like coral reefs, they support the growth of important fish species whilst also helping to improve water quality and increase biodiversity.



- The shellfish reef plays a crucial role in water filtration, increased local fish production, bank stabilization and sustaining biodiversity.
- Shellfish reefs have declined by up 99% since British colonization.
- The reason behind the decline are
- Early destruction for lime for mortar used in the construction of roads,
- Overharvesting of shellfish for food and oysters,
- Destructive fishing practices,
- Introduction of non-native shellfish and
- Habitat loss from coastal development.

### **Noro Virus**

- The ongoing 23rd Olympic Winter Games at the South Korean city of Pyeongchang, has been hit by an extraordinary outbreak of disease caused by Norovirus.
- Noro virus is similar to rota virus that induces diahorrea.
- It infects people across all age groups and is highly contagious.

### **World Sustainable Development Summit 2018**

- The Prime Minister will soon inaugurate the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS 2018) in New Delhi.
- WSDS is the flagship forum of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).
- The theme of the 2018 Summit is 'Partnerships for a Resilient Planet'.
- The 'Greenovation Exhibition' at WSDS 2018 will showcase the latest technological advancements to meet Sustainable Development Goals.
- The summit seeks to bring together on a common platform, global leaders and thinkers in the fields of sustainable development, energy and environment sectors.
- The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is a leading think tank dedicated to conducting research for sustainable development of India and the Global South.
- TERI's key focus lies in promoting clean energy, water management, pollution management, sustainable agriculture and climate resilience.

### **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)**

- PFRDA is a statutory regulatory body established by an Act of Parliament in 2013.
- The mandate of the body is to promote, develop and regulate pension sector in India.
- PFRDA appoints the Board of Trustees that takes care of National Pension Scheme (NPS).

- The amount collected under Atal Pension Yojana (APY) is managed by Pension Funds appointed by PFRDA. PFRDA recently identifies 21 Banks as Makers of Excellence under Atal Pension Yojana Outreach Programme.

### 5G

- 5G is the fifth generation wireless network with the advanced features such as higher data bandwidth, greater speed and lower latency.
- It made the worldwide debut in the winter Olympics at Pyeongchang, South Korea.
- The 5G devices are 100 times faster than the 4G devices, sending data at 10 Giga bytes per second (Gbps) and will deliver the Internet of things (IOT).

## Prasar Bharati rejects Ministry's directives

Aggressively defending its autonomy, public broadcaster Prasar Bharati has rejected a range of “directives” coming from the Information and Broadcasting Ministry.

It said that the directives constituted “contempt” of the Prasar Bharati Act.

A directive from the ministry ordered Prasara Bharati to terminate the services of all contractual employees of Prasar Bharati.

A sizeable number of employees, both in Doordarshan and All India Radio, work on contract and sacking them without arranging for an alternative would lead to the collapse of both organisations, Prasar Bharati said.

The Ministry's proposal to hire two senior journalists, Siddharth Zarabi and Abhijit Majumdar, was withdrawn as the board was not in favour of hiring media persons on exorbitant compensation packages.

### ‘Violation of provisions’

Another agenda item withdrawn during the board meeting was the appointment of a serving IAS officer as Member (Personnel) on the Prasar Bharati Board.

Under the rules, a committee led by the Vice-President has to recommend the person to be appointed as Member (Personnel) and Member (Finance), who have to be whole-time members and employees of Prasar Bharati.

### DD Free Dish

The board also objected to the Information and Broadcasting Ministry's direction to stop all e-auction of channels on DD Free Dish.

The directive will "wreck the finances of Prasar Bharati" and the Corporation stands to lose ₹300 crore.

The Ministry also wants general entertainment channels to be replaced by channels run by Union Ministries.

## **Arvind Jamkhedkar to head ICHR**

Archaeologist and historian Arvind P. Jamkhedkar will be the next Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR).

He will replace Prof. K. Sudershan Rao, who is set retire soon.

Prof. Jamkhedkar is at present Chancellor of Deccan College, Pune, known in academic circles for its archaeology department.

## **WHO issues new guidelines to curb surge in C-sections**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has revised a benchmark used by health professionals worldwide in caring for women during childbirth.

This is because it has caused a surge in interventions like Caesarean sections that could be unnecessary.

Since the 1950s, a woman progressing through labour at a rate slower than one centimetre of cervical dilation per hour has been considered "abnormal".

When doctors confront with this, "the tendency is to act", either with a Caesarean section or with the use of drugs like oxytocin that speed up labour, leading to the "increased medicalisation" of childbirth.

In its new guidelines, the WHO called for the elimination of the one centimetre per hour benchmark.

Recent research has show that that line does not apply to all women and every birth is unique.



## **Worldwide trend**

The recommendation is that that line should not be used to identify women at risk of adverse outcome.

While rates of interventions like C-sections vary among regions, WHO has seen what it considers a worrying rise in such practices worldwide.

The new WHO guidelines say that for a woman delivering her first child, any labour that does not extend beyond 12 hours should be considered normal. For a subsequent pregnancy, the figure drops to less than 10 hours.

## **Zuma quits, Ramaphosa is elected President**

Cyril Ramaphosa was elected South Africa's President by the ruling party legislators after the resignation of Jacob Zuma.

Zuma's scandals brought the storied African National Congress (ANC) to its weakest point since taking power at the end of apartheid.

Mr. Ramaphosa was the only candidate nominated for election after two Opposition parties said they would not participate.

The ANC had instructed Mr. Zuma this week to step down or face a parliamentary motion of no-confidence that he would almost certainly lose.

Mr. Zuma denies any wrongdoing.

## **Oli sworn in as Nepal PM for second time**

K.P. Sharma Oli was sworn in as Nepal's Prime Minister for the second time, weeks after his Left alliance with the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-Maoist) swept the parliamentary polls.

The CPN-UML secured 121 seats in the 275-member Parliament and became the largest party.

The Nepali Congress won 63 seats while the CPN-Maoist secured 53 seats.

## **STATE – AP**

### **States to file affidavits on dispute**

The Supreme Court directed the Centre and six interested States to make statements in the form of affidavits, swearing under the oath that they are bound by the 1980 award of Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal.

The award adjudicated the river water utilisation disputes among the basin States of Godavari and Krishna.

Odisha, A.P., Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Karnataka have to file their affidavits within the next four weeks.

The court passed the order while hearing a matter related to the Indira Sagar Polavaram Project on the Godavari in Andhra Pradesh.

The court did not rule out a proposal for an out-of-court meetings among the Chief Ministers of the six States to sort out the differences on the project and related issues.