

UPSC 2017: Comprehensive News Analysis – June 30

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UPSC Current Affairs 2017: News Analysis

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Category: POLITY

1. [Vice-President election to be held on August 5](#)

Context:

- Tenure of Vice-President Mohammad Hamid Ansari coming to an end on August 10.
- Election for the post will be conducted on August 5.

In news:

- The Election Commission said a notification to this effect would be issued on July 4. Contestants can file nominations till July 18, while the last date for the withdrawal of candidatures is July 21. The counting will be done on August 5.

What does the constitution of India say?

- An election to fill the vacancy to be caused by the expiration of the term of office of the outgoing Vice-President needs to be completed before the expiration of the term of the present incumbent.
- The Vice-President is elected by the Electoral College consisting of members of both the Houses of Parliament in accordance with the system of proportional representation, by means of single transferable vote. The nominated members of Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha are also eligible to participate in the election.
- The nomination paper of a candidate has to be subscribed by at least 20 electors as proposers and at least another 20 electors as seconders.
- An elector can subscribe to only one nomination paper as either a proposer or seconder.

Presidential and Vice Presidential Election Act, 1952:

- The law provides that the notification for election may be issued on, or as soon as conveniently may be after, the 60th day before the expiry of term of the office of the outgoing Vice-President.

2. [Privilege of legislators: Breach a grey area, harsh punishment rare](#)

Context:

- On June 21, the Karnataka assembly Speaker ordered the imprisonment of two journalists for a year based on recommendations in two separate reports of its privilege committees
- Though dozens of people are summoned every year before the privileges committees of Parliament and state legislatures on charges of breach of privilege of legislators, it is rare that punitive action like imprisonment has been ordered
- With no codified laws for what constitutes a breach of privilege offence or prescriptions for punishment, this is largely a grey area in legal terms

What provisions of the Constitution protect the privileges of the legislature?

- Article 105 pertains to the powers, privileges, etc, of Parliament, its members and committees
- Article 194, which is identical to 105, protects the privileges and powers of the houses of legislature, their members and committees in the states
- These sections protect the freedom of speech of parliamentarians and legislators
- Insulate them against litigation over matters that occur in these houses, and
- Give powers to define the powers, privileges and immunities of a house, its members and committees

What are the origins of the privileges?

- These are derived from the British House of Commons
- The privileges are reported to have originated when a nascent British parliament was attempting to establish itself in the light of monarchy

What constitutes a breach of privilege?

- These powers and privileges are not codified
- There are no clearly laid out rules on what constitutes breach of privilege and what punishment it entails
- In Karnataka, privileges panels often refer to Practice and Procedure of Parliament by M N Kaul to define breach of privilege
- As per book, "It is a breach of privilege and contempt of the House to make speeches or to print or publish any libel reflecting on the character or proceedings of the house, its committees or any member of the house relating to his character or conduct as a member of Parliament"

What is the criticism of this provision?

- It is sometimes used to counter media criticism of legislators and as a substitute for legal proceedings
- All persons have a right to trial by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal
- Breach of privilege laws allow politicians to become judges in their own cause, raising concerns of conflict of interest and violating basic fair trial guarantees

What is the procedure in privilege cases?

- All state legislatures have special privilege committees comprising 10 to 12 legislators as members and usually headed by a senior politician from the ruling party
- Whenever a legislator has a complaint he can send a letter to the committee
- These matters can pertain to the sidelining of a legislator by government employees when it comes to projects and initiatives, impolite behaviour by government servants, not being invited to public events etc
- The committee will begin proceedings as per the Criminal Procedure Code
- The accused person is summoned and an inquiry is conducted by the committee and based on findings a recommendation is made to the legislature
- When the matter is tabled in the legislature, a debate can be initiated on the report
- Based on the assertions of the House the Speaker can order the punishment as defined by the privileges committee or order otherwise

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu to visit India later this year](#)

In news:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel next week will be reciprocated by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu later this year.
- 2017 year marks the celebration of 25th year of full relations between India and Israel.

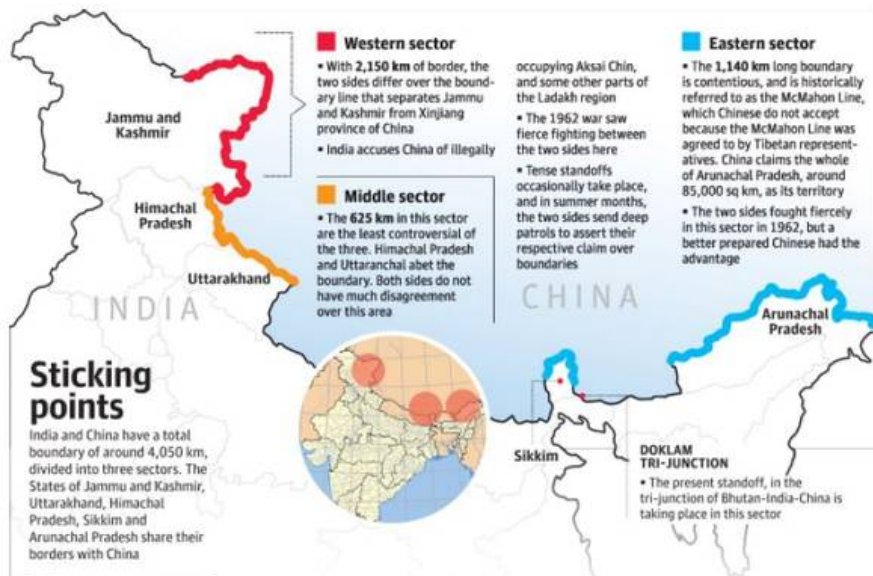
July 4- 6: P.M Modi's visit to Israel-

- The visit will see the partnership being upgraded to a "Strategic Partnership" on issues like water, agriculture, science and technology, and space.
- The leaders are expected to sign MoUs to upgrade ties in more than 30 areas, including cybersecurity, agriculture, tourism, health, connectivity, education, Ganga rejuvenation and "attracting Bollywood".
- Both sides will also commit \$40 million to an Industrial Research & Development fund to encourage applied scientific research, using Israeli innovation and Indian expertise.
- Issues regarding air connectivity between India and Israel would be taken up during the visit. Despite close ties, there are no direct flights between the capitals of the countries.

Key fact: Israel is one of India's largest arms suppliers. In April, India signed a \$2 billion deal with an Israeli firm for advanced medium **range surface-to-air missiles (MRSAMs)**, the biggest such deal for the Israeli industry.

2. Army, PLA in a tug of war over Doklam Plateau

Doklam Plateau:



- The Doklam Plateau, north of the tri-junction between Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet by Indian claim, is not just a disputed area, but has huge **strategic significance** for both India and China.
- Wedged between Bhutan, India and China are few areas of dispute – together accounting for just over 750 square kilometres.
- Among the disputed areas is Doklam (also called Donglang in China), which is just about 90 square kilometres where the present dispute is taking place.

Strategic significance:



- Chinese to reach the China-Bhutan border posts, Doklam provides an easy way to construct their road, and they have been trying to do so and India has consistently objected to it.
- Not very far from Doklam is the strategically important **Chumbi Valley** in the Tibetan region, to which Chinese are now planning to expand their rail connectivity.

Bigger buffer: according to India perspective, Doklam acts as a bigger buffer to its sensitive Chicken™s Neck, or **the Siliguri Corridor**, which is an extremely narrow stretch of land that connects the north-eastern region to the rest of India. From the Chumbi Valley it is just a little over 100 kilometres away.

Skirmish between India and China

- **Bunkers destroyed:** Chinese are believed to have destroyed temporary bunkers of the Indian Army.
- Indian Army is accused of objecting to a road construction by the Chinese side on the disputed area. There was also an incident of jostling among the soldiers of the two sides.

C. GS3 Related

Category: **ECONOMICS**

1. [Reforms, CEZs to aid growth](#)

In news:

- NITI Aayog vice chairman Arvind Panagariya pitched in for labour, land and agriculture reforms along with development of coastal economic zones (CEZs) and new cities to help India achieve rapid economic growth.
- Speaking at a discussion on “NITI Action Agenda and the Indian Economy” organised by the Reserve Bank of India, Mr . Panagariya suggested that **India should undertake projects with a lower gestation period, similar to China** .
- The **three-year action plan** “ prepared after extensive consultation with state governments ” that was recently released by NITI Aayog enlists 300 specific action points.

The Aayog has also proposed reduction of **fiscal deficit to 3%** of the GDP by 2018-19 and the **revenue deficit to 0.9%** of the GDP by 2019-20.

2. [GST transition to pose hurdles: ADB](#)

In news:

- Asian Development Bank president Takehiko Nakao termed the roll-out of the Goods and Services Tax as an important reform achievement of the NDA government, but suggested that it could pose challenges on account of several factors “ **especially the multiplicity of tax rates** .

Focus areas: India must put more energy into reforms of its labour and land acquisition laws as well as regulations governing foreign direct investment so that the economy can grow faster than countries like China on a sustained basis.

- Nakao said the impact of GST on the economy is difficult to gauge at this stage but its biggest benefit would be the integration of the Indian economy into a single market.
- The **dual tax enforcement structure India has adopted** “ whereby both States and the Centre would be in charge of enforcement ” could be problematic too.
- Nakao said it is time for India to take advantage of its young working age population by inviting more investment from within and outside the country.

Other focus areas:

- Labour rules still need rationalization
- Regulations for FDI should be further reformed.
- Land acquisition is a very politically difficult issue, the States and authorities should address it.

Category: INTERNAL SECURITY “ DEFENSE

1. [India worst hit in APAC by Petya: Symantec](#)

In news:

- India has been the **worst hit** country in the **Asia Pacific region** and the seventh most impacted nation worldwide by the **Petya ransomware** , according to cybersecurity service provider **Symantec** .
- As per findings by Symantec, Ukraine was worst hit by the ransomware, followed by the U.S., Russia, France, the U.K., Germany, India China and Japan.

How Petya is inserted into networks?

- MEDoc, a tax and accounting software package, is used for the initial insertion of Petya into corporate networks. MEDoc is widely used in Ukraine, indicating that organizations in that country were the primary target
- After gaining an initial foothold, Petya uses a variety of methods to spread across corporate networks.

Petya ransomware:

- The Petya ransomware was the second big scale cyberattack after WannaCry in May.
- The Petya ransomware not only encrypts files, it locks the entire disk, making it basically unusable until the infection is removed.
- It shuts down the system after the infection and asks for ransom of \$300 in bitcoins on rebooting.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. [Communication satellite GSAT-17 launched from French Guiana](#)

In news:

- GSAT-17, the country’s newly launched communication satellite, will soon join the fleet of 17 working Indian communication satellites in space and augment their overall capacity to some extent.
- **Launching station:** space port of Kourou in French Guiana.
- GSAT-17 was sent up as the second passenger on the European booster, Ariane-5 ECA VA-238.
- Operational areas: for broadcasting, telecommunication and VSAT services, carries over 40 transponders. It also has equipment to aid meteorology forecasts and search and rescue operations across the sub-continent.

2. [India gets a sharper eye in the sky](#)

In news:

- Cartosat-2E, is the third Indian remote sensing (IRS) or earth observation satellite that can send 60-cm resolution pictures from an orbit 500 km above the earth.
- It will provide useful space-based data for town planners, creators of urban infrastructure, for agriculture and project monitoring, and for decision makers in Smart City and AMRUTH projects.
- Cartosat-2E is the sixth and last of the second generation cartography themed series, which started in 2007 with Cartosat-2 and includes Cartosat-2A, 2B, 2C and 2D.

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E. Concepts-in-News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn

PRELIMS WORTHY FACTUAL INFORMATION

United Nations Public Service Award:

- The West Bengal government has received the highest award for Public Service, the United Nations Public Service Award, at a ceremony held at the World Forum, The Hague, on 23rd June, 2017.
- Bengal's Kanyashree Prakalpa was chosen from amongst 552 competitive schemes from 62 countries while securing the first position.
- The UN in its praise for the Kanyashree states that this scheme works towards creating a supportive environment in which girls are encouraged to express their full potential and are free to become the architects of their own lives.
- In the category of reaching the poorest and most vulnerable through inclusive services and participation, the Hon'ble CM received a trophy and a certificate. 40 Lakh Kanyashree girls got benefitted from a specially created fund of nearly Rs. 3300 Crores, and the numbers are constantly increasing.

F. Bills/Acts/Schemes/Orgs in News

Articles in news

About the article

(1) The Vice-President shall be elected by the members of an electoral college consisting of the members of both Houses of Parliament in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote and the voting at such election shall be by secret ballot.

(2) The Vice-President shall not be a member of either House of Parliament or of a House of the Legislature of any State, and if a member of either House of Parliament or of a House of the Legislature of any State be elected Vice-President, he shall be deemed to have vacated his seat in that House on the date on which he enters upon his office as Vice-President.

Article 66: Election of Vice-President

(3) No person shall be eligible for election as Vice-President unless he –

- is a citizen of India;
- has completed the age of thirty-five years; and
- is qualified for election as a member of the Council of States.

(4) A person shall not be eligible for election as Vice-President if he holds any office of profit under the Government of India or the Government of any State or under any local or other authority subject to the control of any of the said Governments.

Explanation: For the purposes of this article, a person shall not be deemed to hold any office of profit by reason only that he is the President or Vice-President of the Union or the Governor of any State or is a Minister either for the Union or for any State.

Article 68: Time of holding election to fill vacancy in the office of Vice-President and the term of office of person elected to fill casual vacancy

(1) An election to fill a vacancy caused by the expiration of the term of office of Vice-President shall be completed before the expiration of the term.

(2) An election to fill a vacancy in the office of Vice-President occurring by reason of his death, resignation or removal, or otherwise shall be held as soon as possible after the occurrence of the vacancy, and the person elected to fill the vacancy shall, subject to the provisions of article 67, be entitled to hold office for the full term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office.

(1) Subject to the provisions of this constitution and the rules and standing orders regulating the procedure of Parliament, there shall be freedom of speech in Parliament

(2) No member of Parliament shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in Parliament or any committee thereof, and no person shall be so liable in respect of the publication by or under the authority of either House of Parliament of any report, paper, votes or proceedings

105. Powers, privileges, etc of the Houses of Parliament and of the members and committees thereof

(3) In other respects, the powers, privileges and immunities of each House of Parliament, and of the members and the committees of each House, shall be such as may from time to time be defined by Parliament by law, and, until so defined shall be those of that House and of its members and committees immediately before the coming into force of Section 15 of the Constitution (Forty fourth Amendment) Act 1978

(4) The provisions of clauses (1), (2) and (3) shall apply in relation to persons who by virtue of this constitution have the right to speak in, and otherwise to take part in the proceedings of, a House of Parliament or any committee thereof as they apply in relation to members of Parliament

(1) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution and to the rules and standing orders regulating the procedure of the Legislature, there shall be freedom of speech in the Legislature of every State

(2) No member of the Legislature of a State shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in the Legislature or any committee thereof, and no person shall be so liable in respect of the publication by or under the authority of a House of such a Legislature of any report, paper, votes or proceedings

194. Powers, privileges, etc., of the House of Legislatures and of the members and committees thereof

(3) In other respects, the powers, privileges and immunities of a House of the Legislature of a State, and of the members and the committees of a House of such Legislature, shall be such as may from time to time be defined by the Legislature by law, and, until so defined, shall be those of that House and of its members and committees immediately before the coming into force of Section 26 of the Constitution forty fourth Amendment Act, 1978

(4) The provisions of clauses (1), (2) and (3) shall apply in relation to persons who by virtue of this Constitution have the right to speak in, and otherwise to take part in the proceedings of a House of the Legislature of a State or any committee thereof as they apply in relation to members of that Legislature

Schemes in News

About the schemes

• Implemented by West Bengal government

- Kanyashree™s core objectives are simple and focussed: it aims to ensure that girls stay in school and delay their marriages till at least age 18. Kanyashree™s approach is also simple: it uses a social safety net mechanism that has shown a high degree of success in transforming the lives of children and adolescents in several countries in the world: Conditional Cash Transfers. The scheme has two cash transfer components:
- The first is an Annual Scholarship of Rs. 750/- to be paid annually to the girls in the age group 13 to 18 years (studying in Class VIII equivalent or above for every year that they remained in education, provided they are unmarried at the time.
- The second is a One-Time Grant of Rs. 25,000/-, to be paid after a girl turns 18, provided that she was engaged in an academic or occupational pursuit and was unmarried.
- The term “education” encompasses secondary and higher secondary education, as well as the various vocational, technical and sports courses available for this age group. Given that children from socio-economically disadvantaged families are more vulnerable to child marriage, the scheme is open only to girls from families whose annual income is Rs. 1,20,000/- or less. For girls with special needs, orphans and girls in J. J. Homes the income criterion is waived. Girls with special needs, but in a class below class VIII, can also apply for the annual scholarship.

Objective:

Kanyashree Prakalpa seeks to improve the status and wellbeing of girls, specifically those from socio-economically disadvantaged families through Conditional Cash Transfers by:

Kanyashree Prakalpa™

- Incentivizing them to continue in education for a longer period of time, and complete secondary or higher secondary education, or equivalent in technical or vocational streams, thereby giving them a better footing in both the economic and social spheres.
- Disincentivising marriage till at least the age of 18, the legal age of marriage, thereby reducing the risks of early pregnancies, associated risks of maternal and child mortality, and other debilitating health conditions, including those of malnutrition.
- It was also decided that the Scheme should confer more than just monetary support; it should be a means of financial inclusion and a tool of empowerment for adolescent girls. The scheme™s benefits are therefore paid directly to bank accounts in the girls™ names, leaving the decision of utilization of the money in their hands.
- To reinforce the positive impact of increased education and delayed marriages, the scheme also works to enhance the social power and self-esteem of girls through a targeted behaviour change communication strategy. The communication strategy not only builds awareness of the scheme, but includes adolescent-friendly approaches like events, competitions and Kanyashree clubs, and the endorsement of strong women figures as role models to promote social and psychological empowerment.

As more and more girls remain in school, it is envisaged that they will use the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge that will help them become economically independent. Even if girls do get married soon after they turn 18, it is expected that their education and enhanced social and emotional development will give them a better foundation for in their adult lives. And over time, as entire generations of women enter marriages only after they have some degree of economic independence, it is expected that the practice of child marriage is completely eradicated, and women will attain their right to health, education and socio-economic equality.