

# **NEWS ALERT**

**OCTOBER 16-23, 2018**



**LIBRARY**

**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

**NEW DELHI**

*News Alert is a weekly service offered by the Library, Indian Institute of Public Administration. It contains news items on topical aspects pertaining to Public Administration and allied areas of governance. The service is meant for the IIPA faculty and members only.*

**COMPILED BY**  
**HEMANT KHARE**



**Indian Institute of Public Administration**  
**I.P. Estate, Ring Road, New Delhi-110002**

## **LIST OF NEWSPAPERS COVERED**

**BUSINESS LINE**

**DECCAN HERALD**

**ECONOMIC TIMES**

**HINDU**

**HINDUSTAN TIMES**

**INDIAN EXPRESS**

**PIONEER**

**STATESMAN**

**TELEGRAPH**

**TIMES OF INDIA**

**TRIBUNE**



## **CONTENTS**

<b>BANKING AND FINANCE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>CHILD WELFARE</b>	<b>7-10</b>
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<b>CORRUPTION</b>	<b>13-17</b>
<b>ELECTION</b>	<b>18-19</b>
<b>HEALTH SERVICES</b>	<b>20-25</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>26-27</b>
<b>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>	<b>28-30</b>
<b>POLICE</b>	<b>31-37</b>
<b>POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT- J&amp;K</b>	<b>38-40</b>
<b>POLLUTION</b>	<b>41-44</b>
<b>POPULATION</b>	<b>45-51</b>

<b>PRISON</b>	<b>52-56</b>
<b>PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>57-59</b>
<b>RAILROADS – ACCIDENTS</b>	<b>60-61</b>
<b>RELIGION</b>	<b>62-63</b>
<b>ROADS</b>	<b>64-66</b>
<b>SEX CRIMES</b>	<b>67-68</b>
<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>69-71</b>

## **BANKING AND FINANCE**

HINDU, OCT 16, 2018

### **Bank fraud accused Vinay Mittal extradited from Indonesia**

Industrialist Vinay Mittal, who was wanted by the Central Bureau of Investigation for allegedly cheating banks of 40 crore, has been extradited from Indonesia to face trial in the cases pending against him.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs' website, his [extradition](#) was cleared on September 20.

The CBI had registered FIRs against Mr. Mittal and others in 2014 and 2016 for allegedly cheating Corporation Bank and Punjab National Bank. Following investigations, seven chargesheets were also submitted to the special courts in Delhi and Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh.

As he fled the country, the CBI got an Interpol Red Notice issued against him after he was declared an absconder by the court. He and his family members were finally tracked down to Bali in Indonesia. On India's request, through the Red Notice, the Indonesian authorities detained him in January last year.

After the Indonesian President cleared his extradition, he was brought back and sent to judicial custody. One Mohammad Yahya, wanted in a case of bank [fraud](#) involving 46 lakh, was also deported from Bahrain recently.

# CHILD WELFARE

HINDU, OCT 16, 2018

## No time bar for crimes under POCSO Act



Survivors can complain once they become adults, clarifies govt.

Survivors of child sexual abuse can file a police complaint after they become adults. The government clarified on Tuesday that there is no time bar on reporting such crimes.

The Law Ministry concurred with the opinion of the Ministry of Women and Child Development that unlike the Code of Criminal Proceedings (CrPC), the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012, does not lay down a time limit for reporting crimes covered under it. "The Ministry of Law, after examining the provisions of POCSO Act vis-à-vis provisions of CrPC, has advised that there appears no period of



limitation mentioned in Section 19 in regard to reporting of the offences under the POCSO Act, 2012,” according to a statement.

Section 19 of the POCSO Act, which deals with sexual crimes against children, lays down the procedure for reporting a crime but doesn't specify a time limit or statute of limitation for reporting it.

Whereas the CrPC lays down different time-limits for crimes which carry a punishment of up to three years, there is no time bar for crimes that would attract a jail term of more than three years.

This is an important step for survivors of child abuse, who may try to file a complaint as adults but are turned away at police stations.

“I am optimistic that this will help reduce the levels of child sexual abuse,” said 53-year-old Canadian scientist of Indian origin who was abused as a pre-teen.

**HINDU, OCT 21, 2018**

## **India to host global meet on maternal, child health in December: UNICEF**

The UNICEF said on Saturday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Chile President Michelle Bachelet and chair of PMNCH will deliver the keynote addresses.

India would be the global host for a meet of stakeholders from nearly 100 countries on issues related to maternal and child health, the UNICEF has said.

The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health forum will emphasise the importance of people-centred accountability bringing forward the voices and lived realities of women, children and adolescents through innovative programming and creative projects. The forum will be hosted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH) this December.

The UNICEF said on Saturday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Chile President Michelle Bachelet and chair of PMNCH will deliver the keynote addresses.

Gagan Gupta, the Chief of Health at the UNICEF, told PTI that India has made significant progress in improving maternal health and reducing child mortality.

“India has performed better than rest of world in this field and the number of under-five children dying has fallen by 30 per cent since 2012, from 1.4 million to 9,89,000,” he said.

According to a new report by the United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, under-five mortality rate in India was recorded below one million in 2017 for the first time in five years.

Mr. Gupta said the forum to be held on December 12 and 13 at Vigyan Bhawan will see participation from heads of State, ministers, popular champions, and 1,200 partners from nearly 100 countries.

“India will get an opportunity to present its success story in improving its maternal and child health at a world stage,” he said. Moreover, the forum would also bring various stakeholders on a common stage to share their ideas, he said.

This is the second time India is hosting the forum the first was in 2010.

Previous chapters of the forum have been held in Johannesburg in South Africa in 2014 and Dar es Salam in Tanzania in 2007.

# CLIMATE CHANGE

HINDU, OCT 16, 2018

## **Ahead of climate talks, India in touch with 40 nations**

To forge ties and make the developed nations keep the promises

Ahead of the December climate talks in Katowice, Poland, India is having discussions with 40 countries, including China, to forge alliances and compel the developed countries to make good on promises, made over the years, to provide enough finance and technology to stem runaway global warming.

Over the years, the developed countries have promised to provide \$100 billion annually to the developing countries to check such warming.

“We are having talks with nearly 40 countries in various capacities,” C.K. Mishra, Secretary, Environment, Forests and Climate Change Ministry, told The Hindu on the sidelines of a conference. “Mainly, it is about firming up about how the Paris agreement is to be implemented, as well as outstanding commitments on providing finance and technology.” Over the years, India has been part of several such alliances.

The ‘Like Minded Developing Countries’ (India, China, Venezuela and Iran) and BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) are networks that are formed to lend weight to the concerns of the developing countries.

“There are constant fora where we interact...video calls, meetings. However not all COPs [Conference of Parties] would result in big bang announcements...some are about compelling countries to make good on outstanding commitments,” said a government official familiar with climate changenegotiations.

The COP is a group of 200 countries which meet annually on addressing global warming.

In 2015, the COP made a historic decision in Paris to take steps to ensure that the Earth didn't warm 2C over the pre-industrial era. The agreement is set to come into force from 2020. While the United States has since pulled out from the accord, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change this month released a report that compiled scientific evidence to show that the planet — as of today — was on course to reaching the 1.5C mark by 2030-2052 and to halt it would require global, carbon dioxide emissions to be half of 2017 levels by 2030. Experts are unanimous that this is a Herculean task.

# **CORRUPTION**

HINDU, OCT 21, 2018

## **PMO told to disclose corruption complaints**

CIC asks for report on action taken

The Central Information Commission has directed the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to disclose complaints of corruption received against Union Ministers between 2014 and 2017 and the action taken on them.

Chief Information Commissioner Radha Krishna Mathur, while considering a plea of Indian Forest Service officer Sanjiv Chaturvedi, also directed the PMO to share information on the quantum and value of black money brought back from abroad during the tenure of the BJP-led government at the Centre, along with records of efforts made in this direction. The order asked the PMO to disclose information related to deposits made by the government in bank accounts of Indian citizens from the black money brought from abroad.

## **RTI application**

The Prime Minister's Office had termed the questions asked by Mr. Chaturvedi, in his RTI application related to black money, as not covered in the definition of "information" that can be accessed under the Right to Information Act, but Mr. Mathur rejected the contention.

“The commission further observed that the respondent has not given correct and specific reply/information to the appellant on point numbers 1(b) (corruption complaints against ministers), 4, 5, 12 & 13 (related to corruption in AIIMS) of the RTI application,” Mr. Mathur noted.

Mr. Chaturvedi has earlier served as Chief Vigilance Officer of AIIMS.

HINDU, OCT 21, 2018

## **CBI names its No.2 Rakesh Asthana in bribery case**

*Rakesh Asthana is accused of accepting a bribe of 2 crore in a case that also involves businessman Moin Qureshi*

The Central Bureau of Investigation has named its second-in-command Rakesh Asthana as an accused in a bribery case along with another agency official and two private persons.

Those named as accused in the FIR (13A/2018) are Mr. Asthana, CBI Deputy Superintendent of Police Devender Kumar, Dubai-based investment banker Manoj Prasad and his brother Somesh Prashad. More than 3 crore in bribes were paid by the complainant for getting relief in a case against meat exporter Moin Qureshi and others, the agency said.

### **Searches conducted**

The CBI arrested Manoj in the evening of October 16. Searches were also conducted on the Investigating Officer's premises on Saturday.

Earlier, despite repeated questions from the media, the agency had not confirmed the developments.

The case has been registered on the complaint from Satish Sana Babu, a businessman from Hyderabad, who had first been summoned by Devender Kumar, Moin Qureshi case Investigating Officer, in October 2017. The CBI has got his statements recorded before a magistrate under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code twice, on October 4 and 20.

The agency alleges that bribes were taken in five instalments in December 2017 and October 2018 to give a clean chit to the Hyderabad businessman.

As alleged, 1 crore was paid on December 10 and 1.95 crore on December 13 last; 25 lakh on October 10; and 55, 000 dirhams on October 14. The agency has claimed that the complainant's statement before the magistrate "corroborates" the allegations to the minutest details. "Then, there are WhatsApp conversations and mobile phone location records that confirm the movement of the accused persons. Accused Somesh handled Mr. Asthana's investments in Dubai and London," a CBI official said on Sunday.

The CBI said the amended provision of the Prevention of Corruption Act, which mandates prior approval for initiating a probe against senior government functionaries, would not apply in the case of Mr. Asthana.

According to the FIR, the businessman was summoned in the Moin Qureshi case several times for questioning on a 50 lakh transaction in 2011. During a trip to Dubai, he met Manoj who allegedly got him in touch with his brother for getting relief from CBI summonses.



The FIR alleges that Somesh, after talking to a CBI official on the phone, demanded 3 crore as the initial amount and 2 crore after the filing of the charge sheet in the case. Subsequently, the businessman allegedly paid about 3 crore through middlemen.

However, on September 25 this year — when he along with his family was to board a flight from Hyderabad to Paris — he was stopped at the airport as a look-out circular had been issued against him. On an inquiry with the case investigating officer, he was told to pay up the rest of the amount, as alleged.

## **Turf war**

The latest move by the CBI is yet another indication of the escalating turf war between the top brass in the top agency: CBI Director Alok Verma and Mr. Asthana.

Even as the news of the new complaint emerged, the CBI sent a team of officials to interrogate some businessmen in Vadodara with regard to expenses made by Mr. Asthana in lavish wedding of his daughter. CBI officials have interrogated around a dozen persons about the wedding reception held in sprawling Laxmi Vilas Palace owned by the Baroda's erstwhile royal family Gaekwads. "Two officers came and asked me about bookings in our hotel and catering for the reception," Piyush Shah, a prominent hotelier in Vadodara, told The Hindu.

Before the present complaint was filed, Mr. Asthana filed a complaint against the CBI Director before the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), accusing him of interfering in a corruption case involving family

members of RJD leader Lalu Prasad. Subsequently, in a statement, the agency denied Mr. Asthana's charges against the Director and said the Special Director himself was under probe in half-a-dozen cases and was trying to intimidate officials probing his role. The CBI Director is learnt to have written to the CVC on October 18 and 19 about the FIR registered against Mr. Asthana.

In August this year, Mr. Asthana wrote to the Cabinet Secretary "bringing to his notice certain corrupt practices within the CBI."

This is not for the first time Mr. Asthana is facing bribery allegations. Earlier, his name had surfaced in the Sandesara brothers' case. The Vadodara-based businessmen Sandesara brothers are now abroad, evading probe and arrests by the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate for allegedly defrauding banks of 5,200 crore. The CBI is investigating its two former chiefs A.P. Singh and Ranjit Sinha in other cases.

# ELECTION

HINDU, OCT 23, 2018

**SC refers to 5-judge Constitution Bench plea seeking collegium-like selection process for CEC, ECs**



The Bench was hearing a PIL seeking a transparent selection process for appointment of Election Commissioners in the poll panel.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday referred to a 5-judge Constitution Bench a plea seeking collegium-like selection process for appointing the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs).

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and S.K. Kaul considered submissions raised by lawyer Prashant Bhushan and said the issue of appointment of CEC and ECs has to be taken up by a larger Constitution Bench.

The Bench was hearing a PIL filed by one Anoop Baranwal, seeking a transparent selection process for appointment of Election Commissioners in the poll panel.

The Centre, represented by Attorney General K.K. Venugopal, however, opposed the petition saying so far no case of abuse of official position by the CEC had come forward and referred to names like T.N. Seshan and other persons who have graced the office of the CEC.

## HEALTH SERVICES

STATESMANN, OCT 18, 2018

### **Rajasthan: Zika cases rise to 100 in Jaipur, Centre sends ICMR team**

Of the total affected people, 23 are pregnant women and 20 new Zika cases confirmed on Wednesday were from Jaipur and two neighbouring districts.



The Central government has rushed an Indian Council of Medical Research team to Rajasthan as the number of people infected with Zika virus shot up to 100.

The team has been sent to intensify vector control measures.

Of the total affected people, 23 are pregnant women, said a health ministry official in Delhi, adding that the 20 new Zika cases confirmed on Wednesday were from Jaipur and two neighbouring districts.

“A team of experts from ICMR has reached Jaipur to change the insecticides which are being used in the city to kill mosquitoes that spread Zika, dengue, and chikungunya viruses as a part of the integrated mosquito management programme,” the official said.

Zika virus has been found in some mosquitoes taken as samples from Sindhi Camp and densely populated Shastri Nagar.

On Wednesday, Rajasthan additional chief secretary, medical and health, Veenu Gupta chaired a review meeting in Jaipur.

“Almost all Zika virus infected patients are healthy after treatment. Three-fourth patients do not have symptoms of disease and have recovered,” a state health department official said.

Most of the Zika cases reported were from Shastri Nagar area, where fogging and other anti-larvae activities are being carried out. The official said more than 1 lakh households have been surveyed in Shastri Nagar and neighbouring areas and 330 teams have been engaged to destroy mosquito larvae found during the survey.

On Tuesday, Union Health and Family Welfare Minister JP Nadda had assured Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje that the Centre would extend full support for curbing the spread of Zika virus in the state.

He said that there was no shortage of medicines and testing kits, and those will be provided to the state as and when required.

Nadda called for measures, including intensive fumigation, to ensure vector control in the state.

The minister also urged the people not to panic, but cooperate with the health officials for controlling the breeding of larvae.

(With agency inputs)

**HINDU, OCT 21, 2018**

## **The value of a health scheme**



The challenges for the success of Ayushman Bharat are more than just at the financial and infrastructural level

On September 24, the government launched the grand government-funded healthcare scheme, the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY). While some see its ambitious goals as its

main strength, others are sceptical given the inadequate funding for the scheme, the weak infrastructure of primary health care centres, and the time required for the goals to be accomplished. However, nobody disputes the imperative of an insurance scheme as vast as the PMJAY, since every year about 36 million families, or 14% of households, face a medical bill that is equal to the entire annual living expenses of one member of the family. This frequently pushes many families into penury.

### **Two schemes, one focus**

The euphoria over this scheme is reminiscent of the excitement over the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), launched in 2008. Although the PMJAY is much wider in its reach than the RSBY (it covers 50 crore beneficiaries with 3,500 crore of government spending and provides benefits up to 5 lakh per eligible family), the central framework is the same: universal health care and health rights. The emerging discourse surrounding the PMJAY scheme resonates with those of RSBY. The focus continues to be on the top-down, deductive reasoning of the scheme, including issues such as allocation of funds for each illness, the types of care provided, financial considerations for empanelment of hospitals, types of illnesses covered, and transaction costs. These considerations matter. However, there are important missing links.

My recent study of RSBY in Karnataka yielded important insights that are pertinent here. Given that RSBY was embedded within the framework of universal health care and health rights, it is appropriate to pay attention to the existence of health rights in a local set-up. I discovered that the way beneficiaries of RSBY (Below Poverty Line



households) perceived the scheme was not as a health right but in terms of the value it imparted, which was measured along multiple dimensions.

Households initially measured the value of the RSBY in terms of its material benefit and measurable impact. This included the financial ease it provided in taking care of illnesses, the expense and types of illnesses that the card covered, and the transaction costs it entailed — how easy it would be to use the card in terms of bureaucratic paperwork and formal procedures.

### **Beyond the visible impact**

However, households also valued the RSBY beyond its visible impact. They had little value for the RSBY because of many reasons. One, officials who distributed the RSBY smart card did not provide information on how to use the card. Two, hospitals did not respect patients with the card, believing that they were availing medical care free of cost. Sometimes they did not honour the card either due to inaccuracy of fingerprints or lack of money on the card. Three, neighbours and family members did not discuss the utilisation of the card, making households perceive the card as just a showpiece: important to possess but not useful. Four, the lack of involvement and endorsement by local leaders further diminished the value of the card for the households.

The value of the RSBY was also derived in relation to the value of health itself. The difficulty in understanding the basic facts of the card and using it led households to opt for seeking medical care without the card. The value for one's health undermined the value for the RSBY. As

one household subsequent to repeated failed attempts to use the card lamented: “We lost time and money, and our illness got worse all because we wanted to use the card. I tell you, if you want to get well, if you really value your health, you cannot rely on this health card.” Next, the value of the RSBY card was derived in relation to the cultural ethos of health insurance. For a significant number of households, health insurance was perceived as a “bad omen” indicating the arrival of sickness and disease.

As the delivery of universal health care and health rights find yet another expression in India through the PMJAY scheme, it is more important than ever before to explore how citizens exercise their right to health and understand how it could be better practised. The biggest challenges for the success of the PMJAY scheme are not just financial and infrastructural at the local level, but how its value is perceived by the community.

**Vani S. Kulkarni teaches sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, U.S. Views are personal**

# INCOME

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 17, 2018

## **Central govt employees, defence personnel to get GPF at hiked rate of 8% for Oct-Dec quarter**

*The interest rate on general provident fund (GPF) was 7.6 % for the July-September quarter of 2018-19.*



The government has increased the rate of interest for general provident fund (GPF) and other related schemes by 0.4 percentage points to 8 % for the October-December quarter.

The rate is in line with that for public provident fund.

The interest rate on GPF was 7.6 % for the July-September quarter of 2018-19.

“... during the year 2018-2019, accumulations at the credit of subscribers to the general provident fund and other similar funds shall carry interest at the rate of 8 % with effect from October 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018,” a department of economic affairs’ notification said. The interest rate would apply on provident funds of central government employees, railways and defence forces.

Last month, the government announced that the interest on small savings, including NSC and PPF, will be hiked by up to 0.4 percentage point for the October-December quarter, to align it with rising deposit rates in the banks.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

HINDU, OCT 16, 2018

### **India, China to sign internal security cooperation agreement on Oct 22**

This will be the first such agreement between the authorities that look after internal security of the two countries

For the first time, India and China will sign an internal security cooperation agreement next week, marking a new beginning in bilateral relations, officials said on Tuesday.

Zhao Kezhi, China's Minister of Public Security, who is set to visit India on October 22, will hold meetings with Home Minister Rajnath Singh. The duo is slated to discuss various aspects of security cooperation between the two countries.

During the visit, an agreement on internal security cooperation between the two countries will be signed, a home ministry official told PTI.

The proposed pact is expected to cover areas of intelligence sharing, exchange programme, sharing of best practices, cooperation in disaster mitigation besides others, an official said.

The move comes just a year after a two-month-long border stand-off between the India Army and the China's People's Liberation Army at Doklam on the India-Bhutan-China tri-junction.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held an informal summit in Wuhan, China, in April this year, which helped repair bilateral ties.

A Chinese delegation met an Indian team on August 28 to hold discussions on the forthcoming visit of the Chinese Minister of Public Security and the proposed pact on security cooperation between the two countries, the official said.

This will be the first such agreement between the authorities that look after internal security of the two countries, the official said.

While Mr. Singh is the head of eight central armed police forces with a combined strength of about 10 lakh personnel, Mr. Zhao is responsible for day-to-day law enforcement in China and commands about 19 lakh personnel.

The scheduled meeting may lead to a future India-China agreement on exchange of sentenced prisoners, another official said.

Currently, India does not have an extradition treaty with China, nor a pact to exchange each other's sentenced prisoners.

There are at least 10 Indians in Chinese prisons and an equal number of Chinese citizens in Indian prisons.

**STATESMAN, OCT18, 2018**

**India rules out talks with Pakistan**

*The spokesperson said Pakistan's continued support to terrorism was one of the reasons India cancelled the meeting between Sushma Swaraj and Shah Mahmud Qureshi on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly last month.*

India on Thursday ruled out talks with Pakistan until the neighbouring country takes credible action against terrorism emanating from its soil.

“Talks and terrorism cannot go together...the onus is on Pakistan to take credible steps and to create conducive conditions by stopping its support to terrorism and dismantling the terrorist infrastructure on its soil,” External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said at a media briefing. He was asked if any ‘Track II’ diplomatic initiative was on for engaging Pakistan.

The spokesperson said Pakistan's continued support to terrorism was one of the reasons India cancelled the meeting between External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmud Qureshi on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly last month.

He said the Indian Army would be in a better position to respond to the Pakistan Army's statement that it would conduct 10 ‘surgical strikes’ in response to a single such operation by India.

# **POLICE**

HINDU, OCT 17, 2018

## **MHA order on merging police forces in 6 UTs kept in abeyance**

Both the ruling Congress and opposition SAD opposed the move to include Chandigarh in the unified force.

The Union Home Ministry has put in abeyance a notification issued last month to amalgamate senior ranks of police from Chandigarh and five other Union Territories including Delhi.

MHA had last month notified the National Capital Territory of Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Chandigarh (Police Service) Rules, 2018.

The decision to include Chandigarh in the unified force was opposed by both the Congress party government in Punjab and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), a member of the BJP-led ruling National Democratic Alliance at the Centre.

Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal of the SAD has written to Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh urging the preservation of the status quo as regards the police force in Chandigarh. She also met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to seek his intervention on the issue.



Chandigarh, a Union Territory is also the common capital of Punjab and Haryana States. As per an earlier reorganisation Act 6, ,60% police officers posted there were from Punjab and 40% were from Haryana.

There are about 533 posts in the six UTs (excluding Puducherry) that will be covered under the new rules that includes the posts of assistant commissioners of police and deputy superintendents of police.

These postings, which were till now decided by the respective UT administrators were put at the disposal of the Centre.

A senior government official said the decision to merge the police forces was based on a 2012 report of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) detailing the “corruption and extortion nexus” of policemen posted in Chandigarh.

**HINDU, OCT 16, 2018**

## **PM inaugurates revamped National Police Memorial**

Says the previous govts. did not make an effort to build it

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the previous government was not serious about building a memorial for policemen killed in line of duty, and he was “chosen by God to do the good work.”

He opened a revamped National Police Memorial and a museum in Chankayapuri here on Sunday.

Conceptualised in 1984, the earlier memorial, a 150-foot structure of steel, was brought down on the order of the Delhi High Court in 2008 because it violated environmental norms.



### **A long wait**

Mr. Modi said the previous governments let the files on the matter gather dust. “I am proud of the new police memorial that is being dedicated to the nation today, but I have few questions to ask. Why could this memorial not come into being despite over 70 years of Independence? Why wait for so many years?”

The National Police Commemoration Day is observed on October 21 every year to pay homage to the 10 men of the Central Reserve Police

Force killed in an ambush by Chinese troops in 1959 in Ladakh's Hot Spring area.

Mr. Modi said the plan to have a National Police Memorial was conceptualised when Atal Behari Vajpayee was the Prime Minister and in 2002, the then Home Minister, L.K. Advani, laid the foundation. "I agree that work was stopped because of legal issues, but had the previous governments made honest and wholehearted efforts, this memorial could have been built much earlier," he said.

He also urged the police to use technology in their day-to-day work so that the public did not have to go to police station for getting his complaint registered.

**HINDU, OCT 23, 2018**

## **Modi steps in as CBI begins to probe its own leadership**

*On Monday, the CBI arrested its Deputy Superintendent of Police Devender Kumar in connection with bribery allegations against Special Director Rakesh Asthana and others.*

As the Central Bureau of Investigation's second-in-command Rakesh Asthana was embroiled in a bribery case, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval swung into damage control,

asking CBI Director Alok Verma to ensure the government's image was not tarnished.

Mr. Verma briefed the Prime Minister on Sunday evening about the bribery FIR filed by the agency against Mr. Asthana.



## **Official arrested**

On Monday, the CBI arrested its Deputy Superintendent of Police Devender Kumar in the same case.

Official sources said Mr. Verma had recommended Mr. Asthana's suspension.

According to top officials, the CBI Director also briefed Mr. Doval about the case. "He briefed the Prime Minister with all the details regarding the case and subsequently, the Prime Minister asked him to meet and brief the NSA also since the name of a senior officer of R&AW is also mentioned in the FIR," a top official told The Hindu.

Asked whether the Prime Minister or the NSA said anything during the meeting, the official said: "Both are concerned about the government's

image getting tarnished in the matter. The NSA asked the Director to lie low and ensure that the government's image is not damaged in the process." The official denied that the Prime Minister and the NSA "gave any instruction regarding the case." Meanwhile, on Monday, Mr. Asthana reportedly sought an appointment with the Prime Minister, but no time was given to him.

However, he reportedly visited the PMO and met some officials, but it could not be confirmed whom he met.

### **'Devender Kumar fabricated statement'**

The CBI arrested Mr. Devender Kumar for allegedly fabricating a statement of Hyderabad-based businessman Sathish Sana, under Section 161 of the Criminal Procedure Code, in the Moin Qureshi case. The agency alleged that the statement was fabricated with the plan to "corroborate the baseless allegations made by Mr. Rakesh Asthana against Director, CBI, Alok Kumar Verma, to CVC."

It is alleged that the statement was shown to have been recorded on September 26 when Mr. Sana was actually in Hyderabad. He had come to Delhi on October 1 and got his statement recorded on October 3 before the then investigating officer.

The CBI said considering the seriousness of the matter, the role of other officers of the SIT, then supervising the Moin Qureshi case, is also being probed.

The accused Deputy SP was the investigating officer in that case, lodged in February 2017, wherein former CBI chief A.P. Singh was also being

probed for alleged links with his childhood friend and meat exporter Moin Qureshi.

Mr. Sana recently lodged a complaint with the CBI alleging that he was made to pay more than ₹ 3 crore in bribes to get relief from summonses in the Qureshi case. He was first summoned in October 2017, following which three more notices were issued asking him to join the probe.

As alleged by the businessman, in December 2017, he met investment banker Manoj Prasad in Dubai who, through his brother Somesh, promised to help him get relief. He was allegedly asked to pay up an initial sum of ₹ 3 crore and ₹ 2 crore at the time of filing of the charge sheet in the case. The advance amount was paid, it is alleged.

However, on the night of September 25 — when Mr. Sana and his family were about to board a flight from Hyderabad to Paris, — he was stopped at the airport as a look-out circular had been issued against him. He then contacted the investigating officer, who asked him to join the probe again. When he enquired with Manoj, he was allegedly told to pay the rest of the amount.

Mr. Sana allegedly paid ₹ 25 lakh and 55,000 dirhams, but then decided to record his statement before a magistrate on October 4 alleging coercion by CBI officials. After getting the FIR registered on October 15, on Mr. Sana's complaint, the CBI again got his statement recorded before the magistrate. Subsequently, it arrested Manoj and also conducted a search at the investigating officer's premises.

## **POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT- J&K**

HINDU, OCT 21, 2018

### **BJP leads the tally in J&K civic polls**

*In an election boycotted by regional players, the party wins 100 wards in Kashmir Valley and 212 in Jammu*

The BJP emerged the frontrunner in the urban local bodies elections in Jammu and Kashmir when votes were counted on Saturday, winning 100 wards in the volatile Kashmir Valley.

Of the 1,144 total wards in the entire State, the BJP won 312 against the Congress's tally of 267.

The results declared by the State Election Commission showed that the BJP dominated the Jammu region by winning 212 of the 520 wards. The Congress won 110.

The BJP managed to win the Jammu Municipal Corporation, winning 43 of the 75 wards.

#### **'Victory of the people'**

"This is the victory of the people as they have reposed their faith in us. We will continue to serve them to the best of our ability," BJP State chief Ravinder Raina said while leading the celebrations at the party headquarters in Jammu.

In Kashmir, the Congress managed to win 157 wards out of 624, while the BJP won 100. Due to the boycott call by separatists and the decision of the two main regional parties, National Conference and People's Democratic Party, to stay away from the polls, the BJP won 76 seats uncontested and Congress 78 in the Valley. The BJP has managed to win four municipal bodies in south Kashmir.

The impact of the raging violence and separatists' boycott was evident from the fact that 185 wards remained vacant in the Kashmir Valley as no nominations were filed. These elections also saw the rise of Independent candidates, who significantly dominate the scene in the two regions. In Kashmir, 178 Independent candidates won, while in Jammu, 185 were victorious.

The Srinagar Municipal Corporation has a fractured mandate, with the Congress winning 16 wards, the BJP four and Independents 53. They now hold the key to the election of a Mayor.

Mattoo for Mayor?

Junaid Azim Mattoo, formerly associated with the National Conference, was declared the winner from the Rawalpura, Solina and Bud Dal wards in Srinagar.

He was congratulated by People's Conference chief Sajjad Lone. Mr. Mattoo is tipped to contest for the Mayor's post. "Change has come to Srinagar, a city that deserves the best for what it has witnessed and endured," Mr. Mattoo said.



In Leh, the BJP suffered a setback with all the 13 wards being won by the Congress. The BJP failed to win any ward in Kargil where the Congress won six and Independents seven. The BJP and the Congress also witnessed their share of shocks. Former Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Kavinder Gupta's elder brother as well as senior Congress senior leader Tariq Hameed Karra's wife lost the elections.

# POLLUTION

STATESMANN, OCT 18, 2018

## **Delhi air quality ‘very poor’, to hit ‘severe’ category in coming days**

*Further deterioration of the air quality has been forecast in the coming days with the PM10 level reaching 341 and the PM2.5 level 159.*

Delhi’s air quality for the first time this season deteriorated to the “very poor” category on Wednesday, with several areas in the national capital nearing severe levels of pollution, according to the authorities.

Stating that a number of factors were responsible for the deteriorating air quality, including vehicular pollution, construction activities and meteorological factors, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) predicted further deterioration of the air quality in Delhi-NCR in the coming days.

Meanwhile, Delhi’s Environment Minister Imran Hussain said latest satellite images showed crop residue burning at “dangerous” levels and asserted that it should be stopped immediately or the entire north India, including Delhi, would suffer serious health hazards.

The Supreme Court-empowered Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) has already imposed since Monday the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), which prescribes a set of

measures to curb air pollution, after Delhi's air quality deteriorated to "poor" a few days back.

A senior EPCA official said they were mulling implementing stringent measures like banning generator sets in the National Capital Region (NCR), increasing the parking fees and strengthening the public transport system in the coming days.

"We have already enforced measures for very poor air quality, but further stringent measures will be decided shortly," he said.

The overall Air Quality Index (AQI) of Delhi was recorded at 315 Wednesday, according to the Centre-run System of Air Quality Forecasting and Research.

An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor" and 401 and 500 "severe".

On Wednesday, Anand Vihar recorded an AQI of 358, Dwarka Sector 8 376, ITO 295, Jahangirpuri 333 and Rohini 330, according to the CPCB.

The PM10 level (presence in the air of particles with a diameter of less than 10 micrometres) in Delhi stood at 296 and the PM2.5 level was recorded at 139, according to the CPCB data.

This is the first time this season the air quality has deteriorated to the "very poor" category.

Further deterioration of the air quality has been forecast in the coming days with the PM10 level reaching 341 and the PM2.5 level 159.

A CPCB official said among the meteorological factors behind the falling air quality, the main reason was the drop and change of wind speed, which was now flowing from the stubble-burning areas.

He said on-ground implementation of the GRAP directions was being enforced, but the activities causing pollution were still continuing.

The GRAP is generally implemented if “very poor” or “severe” air pollution levels are recorded for 48 hours, but given the extent of winter pollution witnessed by the national capital, the plan was implemented as the air quality slipped to the “poor” category, the official said.

In addition, the CPCB has deployed 41 teams to monitor the implementation of the measures taken to combat air pollution.

In Delhi, Hussain released the latest NASA image of north India and asked the people in the national capital to minimise local pollution, while noting that there will be “zero tolerance” for garbage and crop residue burning.

He also asked people to keep all construction material covered to stop dust re-suspension.

“It is high time crop residue burning in the fields must immediately be halted, failing which a serious health hazard awaits the entire northern India.

“It is beyond any reasonable understanding as to why this menace is being ignored, despite a well-known fact that the consequences will be disastrous in the coming days,” the minister said in a statement.

Dust from unpaved roads, construction activities and traffic congestion are some of the main local factors causing the air quality of Delhi-NCR to deteriorate, as reported by 41 inspection teams deployed to monitor the implementation of the norms enforced to combat pollution.

According to the reports of the 96 CPCB inspections conducted till October 7, 554 violations were recorded.

The reports also listed the steps taken by the CPCB to deal with the violations, including informing the authorities like the Delhi Pollution Control Committee, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the New Delhi Municipal Council to impose suitable penalties.



# POPULATION

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 17, 2018

## Quality education, health services drive family size in India

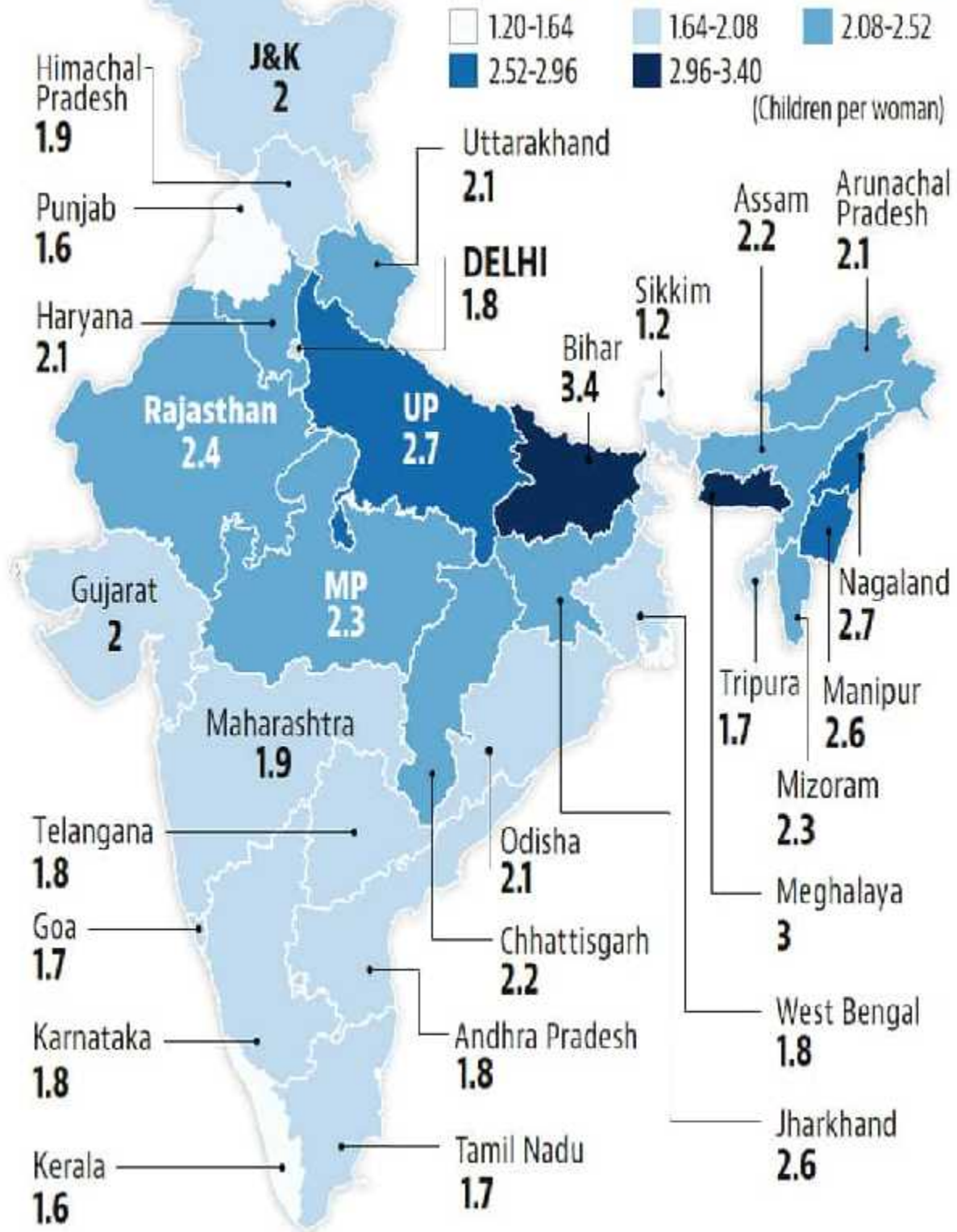
Real progress happens in states with high literacy and when people regard fertility a conscious choice that they can control. Reliable methods of contraception must also be widely available.



India's population growth story is far more complicated than its bringing down the total fertility rate (TFR) —the average number of births a woman has in her lifetime – to 2.3.

More than half of India's population lives in states where the population has stopped growing, with the TFR in urban India and 18 states having

## Fertility rate in Indian states



fallen below the replacement level of 2.1, which is when the population stops growing.

Yet another one-third of the country's population has TFR between 2.5 and 3, with the rates being the highest 3.4 in Bihar, which is home to 10% of the population. The country's demographic transition varies not just widely across regions and states, but also across districts. The states in southern India and a few other regions, including Delhi, have reduced fertility and deaths at a much faster rate than the rest of the country.

According to demographer Ansley Coale, fertility rates begin to fall in a sustained way when people consider fertility a conscious choice that they can control, when they believe that having smaller families is advantageous, and when reliable methods of contraception are widely available. "Family size, whether small or large, is intertwined with reproductive rights, which are tied to many other rights, such as those to health and education, adequate income, the freedom to make choices, and non-discrimination. Where all rights are realised, people tend to thrive. Where they are not, people are not able to realize their potential, and fertility rates tend to be higher or lower than what most people really want," said the UNFPA State of the World Population Report 2018.

### How India grows

How India's population story plays out depends on India's young population. Every fifth person in India is an adolescent (10-19 years) and every third a young person (10-24 years). Every year, 12-14 million people enter the workforce, largely from the northern states.



“India needs to invest in the health, education and technical skill development of this age group to leverage its competitive advantage for economic growth,” said Poonam Muttreja, executive director of the Population Foundation of India.

Rapid fertility decline raises the share of working age population( ages 15-49 years) and leads to a corresponding fall in the dependency ratio. After a few decades, however, this demographic advantage is lost as the share of the elderly population increases.

Low dependency ratio is the period of demographic dividend, which provides a window of opportunity to countries to boost productivity and economic growth. A dependency ratio of less than 67% boosts growth.

India is set to ride this wave, with its dependency ratio falling from 75% in 2001 to 65% in 2011. It is projected to fall to 55% in 2021, where it will remain for two decades before beginning to close at 2041 and finally closing in 2061, when the ageing population will push up the dependency ratio above the critical 67%.

While Kerala and Tamil Nadu, which led the demographic transition in India, are already gaining from their shrunken population, they will lose the dividend before the 1940s when their population ages. In sharp contrast, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar will reach a dependency ratio below 67% only by 2021.

Mind the gap

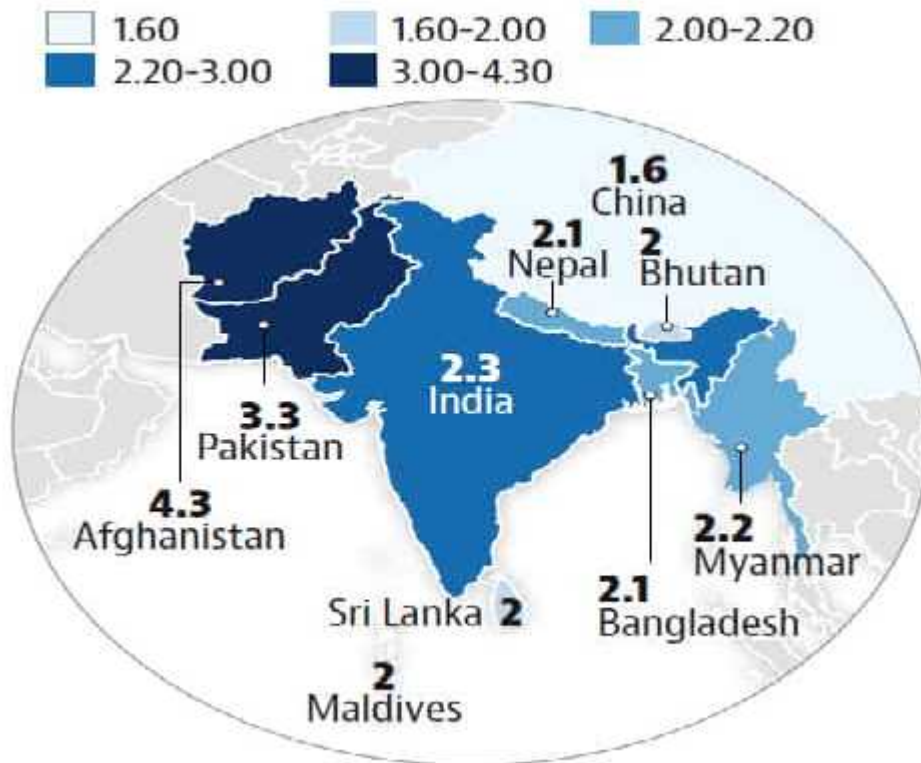
With the demographic dividend varying so widely between states, India's challenge is to implement customised and differential policies that correspond with each state's level of demographic transition.

“Government policies must focus on social and health security and promoting new employment skills for the ageing population in the demographically advanced states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Andhra, Gujarat, Punjab, Himachal and West Bengal,” said ,” said Shailaja Chandra, former executive director, Population Stabilisation Fund.

“With the population ageing, we need to focus on building skills to provide care, including health and social services, and establish old-age homes and housing models where the older population can live independently with supportive facilities on call,” said Chandra.

In the six states where fertility remains high, promoting sexual and reproductive health services, providing quality education and vocational skills to young people must be prioritised.

“Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran and Turkey all saw substantial declines in infant and child mortality, partly because of wider reach of health-care systems, economic development, reduced poverty, and increased female enrolment in primary and secondary education,” said the UNFPA report. Other factors that led to lower fertility is decreasing infant and child mortality and strong national family planning programmes.



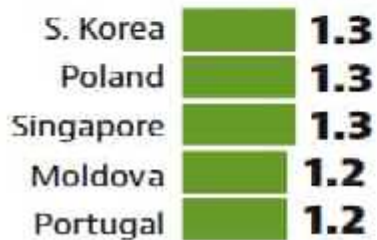
### Highest fertility rate



### India fertility rate



### Lowest fertility rate



Source: NFHS-4, UNFPA

The age of marriage needs to be raised further so young girls are mature enough, physically, mentally and emotionally, to make the right reproductive choices, say experts.

In states with high fertility, contraceptive information and services must reach young people.

“An estimated 70% of the population momentum is fuelled by the young population and young girls don’t want to have kids as soon as they get married. Young couples, especially women, need the information and the tools to choose when and how many children they want,” said Muttreja.

“Young girls have less knowledge and access to contraception and health services and are more likely to succumb to pressure to start a family at a young age, which is not good for the health of both the mother and child,” said Muttreja.

“In the end, our success will not just come in reaching what we imagine is ideal fertility. The real measure of progress is people themselves: especially the well-being of women and girls, their enjoyment of their rights and full equality, and the life choices that they are free to make,” writes Natalia Kanem, executive director, UNFPA.

# PRISON

HINDU, OCT 23, 2018

## Ripe for prison reform



Political will is crucial to reform India's criminal justice system

In an acknowledgment that the more than a century-old system of prisons in India needs repair, the Supreme Court, late last month, formed a committee on prison reforms. Headed by former Supreme Court judge, Justice Amitava Roy, it is to look into the entire gamut of reforms to the prison system. But this is not the first time that such a body is being set up, examples being the Justice A.N. Mulla committee and the Justice Krishna Iyer committee on women prisoners (both in the 1980s).

While marginal reforms have taken place, these have not been enough to ensure that prison conditions are in tune with human rights norms.

## **Punish or reform?**

The terms of reference for the new committee are omnibus and seem ambitious. One must also not forget that its formation comes at a time when controversy surrounds the Tamil Nadu government's recommendation that the seven convicts in the assassination, in 1991, of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi be released. The plea of the petitioners is that however heinous the crime, the penalty imposed — they have served 27 years — was beyond endurance.

This is the crux of the debate: incarceration in any form is uncivilised, especially when it is so long-drawn-out, and when the objective of criminal punishment should be one of reform rather than wreaking vengeance on a perpetrator of crime. The Hammurabi Code, it is argued, is no longer acceptable. In my view, any exercise to improve prison conditions — though not directly related to a plea for mercy, such as convicts in the Rajiv Gandhi case — must not ignore this axiom.

There is a divide here. Significantly, those pleading for clemency in this case are outnumbered, which is reflective of popular sentiment that a gruesome crime needs to be dealt with severely. It is also about the unresolved conflict in attitudes about incarceration — punishment or reform — which also explains the halfway jail reforms agenda seen in many countries.

So how do we render conditions within prisons less harsh and more humane? There are those who believe that if you keep improving prison

conditions, there is likely to be an attendant impact on the incidence of crime. This accounts for the reluctance of many criminal justice administrators to employ or enlarge non-prison alternatives such as community service.

The offshoot of all this is growing numbers of prisoners and the woeful incapacity of governments to build more and larger prisons. The question often asked by governments is, in these days of extreme fiscal stress, why should state resources be diverted to a ‘negative exercise, whose benefits are dubious’? This is why jail officials are often asked to ‘somehow manage’ with existing modest facilities.

### **Packed to the gills**

The data on prison overcrowding are frightening. Except in parts of Europe, where crime is still low or at acceptable levels, overcrowding is rampant.

In the U.S., for example, which has a humongous crime problem, complicated by gun violence and a strident racist overtone in combating crime, the prison system is creaking under the stress of numbers. At any time, it is estimated, there are more than two million prisoners in state and federal prisons. In the U.K., the latest available data (July 2018) show a current prison population of approximately 92,500.

In India, the publication, Prison Statistics India, brought out by the National Crime Records Bureau will provide food for thought for the Justice Roy Committee. In 2015, there were nearly 4.2 lakh inmates in 1,401 facilities, with an average occupancy rate of 114% in most. About

67% of total inmates were undertrials, a commentary on the speed and efficiency of India's criminal justice system.

There is an obvious poverty of ideas in justice administration. While public officials and social workers are agreed upon the need to reduce overcrowding, there is hardly any convergence on how to go about this delicate exercise. There is also an obvious fear of backlash against any move to decriminalise what is now prohibited by statutes.

### **Handling white collar crimes**

There is a popular view that in order to reduce prison populations, proven non-violent offenders could be dealt with differently. But it is frustrating that no consensus has evolved across the world on this relatively uncomplicated issue.

White collar crime has assumed monstrous proportions but there is no reason why we should continue to lock up offenders instead of merely depriving them of their illegal gains. Devising swift processes of attachment of properties and freezing of bank accounts are alternatives to a jail term. There are legal impediments here, but these can be overcome by ensuring a certain fairness in the system, of the state taking over illegally acquired wealth. The argument that not all gains made by an economic offender are open is not convincing enough to opt for incarceration over punitive material penalties. In India, progress has been made in freezing 'benami' holdings of major offenders even though it may not be a 100% effective step of cleaning up. But these are the first steps towards making economic crimes unaffordable and unattractive for the average offender.



## **On prison officials**

Another complaint against prisons is the brutality and venality of prison officials, again common across the world. A solution will be a point to ponder over for the Justice Roy Committee.

Finally, improving prison conditions has no political leverage. Just as humane prisons do not win votes, the bad ones do not lose votes for any political party. As long as there are no stakes here for lawmakers, one can hardly hope for model prisons, where inmates are accommodated with due regard to their basic human needs and are handled with dignity.

**R.K. Raghavan is a former CBI Director**

# PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

PIONEER, OCT 21, 2018

## **Ethics for administrators**

Pramod Pathak



The need for ethics is felt in all walks of life. More so, in the administration which is responsible for good governance. Needless to say that the governance in our country leaves much to be desired. The onus is certainly on the administrative machinery headed by the civil servants, particularly the officers of the coveted Indian Administrative Services, the kingpins of India's Administration. Perhaps for this reason there is a complete paper on Ethics, Integrity and Attitude that has been included in the recent past as General Studies Paper-IV for the Civil Services Main examination. The objective of this paper is to test the candidate's attitude and aptitude towards issues related to integrity and

probity in public life, and his ability to handle ethical dilemmas that arise during the course of the career of the civil servant. Ethics is certainly a major issue in the present days and challenges in the form of allurements and sometimes threats to career and even personal well-being do arise in public life. Ethics, it must be understood, is a multifaceted concept which often involves grey areas where the decision maker does not find simple right or wrong answers. It is these areas that offer the greatest challenge to the career bureaucrat and the ability to discriminate is often put to test. Ethics is too wide and complex an issue to be understood and evaluated as consistency is often found missing. The issue of ethics is an issue of attitude, even aptitude but largely character. To ensure that anybody entering the coveted ranks of Indian Civil Services remains ethical in his dealings all through his career is difficult. Ethics is that uncanny ability to exercise the right choices when distraction in the form of rewards are too alluring to ignore. But this is the real test of character. Though this one paper may be of some use in finding out the orientation of the candidate appearing for the examination to some extent, the larger issue is the predictive validity of such examination. What is more crucial is the continuous training and personality development of the incumbent once he joins the services as that is where situations fashion changes in attitudes. One paper then may serve to be some kind of an indicator and, that too, not a very strong one. But the important issue is maintaining integrity all through. Important because the Indian Civil Services is supposed to be the steel frame of Indian Administration. It is, therefore, imperative to ensure that this steel frame does not rust. Unfortunately the rusting is being evidenced as occasional incidents would point out. The big question is training for

ethics. How an administrator has to be sensitised. For an effective training regimen the key areas that need to be focused are empathy, non-partisanship, tolerance, humility and compassion. The periodicity of such training is also a consideration. How long and how often? With changes in job requirements the role of the civil servant calls for a systematic change but the intriguing aspect is that the basic model has more or less remained the same. Hence it is important to reinvent the services with emphasis on emotional quotient and morality quotient. The loyalty must shift to the people and the nation rather than the powers that be. The loyalty to the crown was the hallmark of the British rule. Post-independence this seems to have shifted to the party in power in many cases.

Pathak is a professor of management, writer, and an acclaimed public speaker. He can be reached at [atppathak.ism@gmail.com](mailto:atppathak.ism@gmail.com)

## RAILROADS- ACCIDENTS

STATESMAN, OCT 19, 2018

### **Amritsar train accident: Over 50 dead; Punjab government orders probe**

*Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved Rs 2 lakh for the families of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured, while Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh has announced Rs 5 lakh compensation for the deceased and free treatment for the injured*



Over 50 people are feared dead and many more seriously injured as a speeding train ran them over in Amritsar on Friday evening. The accident occurred when these people, standing on a railway track, were watching an effigy of Ravan going up in flames as part of the Dussehra celebrations.

According to a Northern Railway spokesperson, the incident occurred at gate number 27 between Amritsar and Manawala, when a DMU (train number 74943) was crossing through the closed gate.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved Rs 2 lakh for the family of the dead and Rs 50,000 for the injured, while Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh announced Rs 5 lakh compensation for the deceased and free treatment for the injured. The CM has also ordered an inquiry into the accident.

The Ravan effigy had been erected very close to the railway line at Joda Phatak in Amritsar, and a large number of people had assembled on and near the tracks to watch the Ravan vadh.

## RELIGION

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 17, 2018

### **Sabarimala row: Devotees attack journalists, stop women from approaching temple**

*The doors of the Sabarimala temple are set to open to devotees for first time after the SC verdict at 5 pm today. Thousands of police personnel, including policewomen, are deployed at the base camps.*



At least three women journalists were attacked by an angry mob on Wednesday while on their way to report the protests over the Supreme Court's verdict to allow women of all ages into the temple dedicated to Lord Ayyappa in Kerala's Sabarimala as tension mounted in Pathanamthitta district.

Pooja Prasanna of television news channel Republic TV, Saritha S Balan of The News Minute website and News18's reporter Radhika Ramaswamy were attacked by the mob in the district, where the hilltop temple is situated

Television channels showed hundreds of people surrounding Prasanna's car in Nilakkal town of the district as the protesters chanted Ayyappa slogans. The mob then turned violent as it punched and banged the windshields and windows of the car.

The website of Republic TV reported that the mob surrounded Prasanna's car, "shoving their faces into every window and the windshield, shouting loudly, making intimidatory gestures, and then, slamming the car from all sides".

It also reported that Prasanna and the rest of the camera crew travelling with her were attacked and slapped by the mob after they stepped out of the car. The crew's equipment was also snatched by the protesters.



## ROADS

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 17, 2018

### **Over 5,000 killed in road mishaps in Haryana in 2017, says report**

*Union ministry of roads transport and highways reveals over 4,400 mishaps took place because of over-speeding, 180 were caused by drunken driving, 432 due to driving on wrong side and 147 due to jumping traffic light.*



Of total 5,120 people who lost their lives in road mishaps in 2017 in Haryana, 1,137 were aged between 18 and 25 and another 345 were below the age of 18, the latest report of the research wing of the Union ministry of roads transport and highways reveals.

The statistics in the report further show that the number of persons aged between 25 and 35, who were killed in road accidents, was 1,418. The report further shows that 1,019 persons aged between 35 and 45 lost their lives on road and another 1,105 aged between 45 and 60 got killed in road mishaps. The number of victims above 60 years was 601, the report says.

### **What are the reasons**

The report reveals that over 4,400 accidents took place because of over-speeding in which 1,962 people lost their lives while over 880 were grievously hurt. As many as 180 accidents were caused by drunken driving in which 86 people got killed and 61 sustained grievous injuries.

In 432 accidents caused due to driving on the wrong side, 185 people lost their lives, leaving 195 others grievously hurt. In 147 accidents caused by jumping red traffic light, 53 were killed and 27 others grievously hurt, the report adds.

### **No fault of weather**

Also, contrary to the impression that more accidents occur in bad weather conditions, the reports says that over half of the total casualties in road mishaps occurred in accidents that happened in clear and sunny weather.

The number of people killed in rain was 614 and 900 in foggy conditions. Statistics further reveal that in the hails or sleet weather, 45 people were killed road mishaps while 1,184 lives were lost in road mishaps in other weather conditions across the state.

## **Fatal highways**

The reports shows that of the total deaths, 1,990 persons died in accidents on national highways in the state while the number of casualties on the state highways was 1,369 last year. The number of casualties on national highways in 2014 was 1,704; in 2015 it was 1,759 and in 2016 it was 1,845.

On the state highways, the number of road deaths was 1,339 in 2014; 1,475 in 2015 and 1,243 in 2016.

As many as 1,761 people lost their lives on roads other than state or national highways.

## SEX CRIMES

STATESMAN, OCT 22, 2018

### **Kerala nun rape | Father Kuriakose, key witness against Bishop Franco, found dead in Jalandhar**

*Bishop Franco Mulakkal was arrested in Kochi on September 21 after he was accused of repeatedly sexually abusing a nun between 2014 and 2016.*



Days after Bishop Franco Mulakkal returns to Jalandhar after getting conditional bail, Father Kuriakose Kattuthara, a key witness in the Kerala nun rape case was found dead under mysterious circumstances in his personal room in St. Mary's Church in Dasuya on Monday.

Father Kattuthara, 60, was known for vociferously speaking against Mulakkal. The exact cause of his death is not known yet.

Father Kuriakose had earlier openly said that he had been getting death threats and that the church officials were tormenting him ever since he testified against Bishop Franco.

Bishop Franco Mulakkal has expressed sadness over the sudden demise of Father Kuriakose, a statement by Jalandhar Diocese said.

Father Kuriakose has served in the Diocese of Jalandhar in various capacities as Parish Priest, Professor, Director, Chaplin to convents etc. He was instrumental in preparing the Punjabi Missal for the local Church.

Bishop Franco Mulakkal was arrested in Kochi on September 21 after he was accused of repeatedly sexually abusing a nun between 2014 and 2016.

Mulakkal, who heads the Roman Catholic Diocese in Jalandhar in Punjab, is the first bishop in the country to be jailed for rape.

The action came after a nun complained that she was raped 13 times between 2014-16. The crime had occurred at a convent in Kottayam district.

The police in its remand report to a trial court said that Franco Mulakkal came to the convent with the intention of sexually assaulting the victim.

Earlier last week, the Kerala High Court granted conditional bail to Bishop Franco Mulakkal, stating that Franco should not enter Kerala and that he should surrender his passport before the court.

## WOMEN

HINDU, OCT 22, 2018

### **#MeToo: SC declines urgent hearing of PIL seeking registration of FIRs**



The petition also seeks NCW to provide security and assistance #MeToo victims

The Supreme Court on Monday declined urgent hearing on a PIL seeking the registration of FIRs based on allegations of sexual misconduct and assault levelled by women across various sectors, part of what is being referred to as India's #MeToo movement.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice S.K. Kaul told lawyer M.L. Sharma, who had filed the petition, that it will come up for hearing in the regular course.

Besides FIRs, the petition also seeks a direction to the National Commission for Women (NCW) to give security and assistance to the women who have come out in the open with their allegations.

HINDU, OCT 22, 2018

## **M.J. Akbar resignation: Better late than never, says Opposition**

*It is a vindication of the power of truth even if it began with one brave person speaking up: Congress*

Opposition parties on Wednesday said the resignation of Union Minister of State for External Affairs M.J. Akbar was late in coming, but saw it as a necessity in view of the complaints of sexual harassment made against him by about 20 women.

The BJP, however, called the resignation a positive step, saying a government that was “committed” to women’s empowerment would not want to get embroiled in such a controversy.

Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi told The Hindu, “Better late than never. The BJP itself seems to have reversed its stand of obstinacy even though belatedly.” BJP spokesperson and Lok Sabha MP Meenakshi Lekhi said: “The allegations are personal and the party would not want to get embroiled, specially when the Modi government has done a lot for women’s empowerment... This is a matter of an editor and the media should also have a relook at these equations, as the allegations are by reporters.”

### **A salute for the women**

The Congress’ Priyanka Chaturvedi, however, questioned the Prime Minister’s silence. “The resignation of M.J. Akbar is a vindication of the

power of truth even if it began with one brave person speaking up,” she tweeted. “I salute these women who stood their ground despite the brazen stance of the GoI, silence of the PM who speaks of women empowerment and the misuse of power by deploying a battery of lawyers against one woman.”

Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said: “The CPI (M) has been saying from day one that it is morally untenable for M.J. Akbar to continue as Minister.”

The CPI’s D. Raja, too, said the resignation should have come long back.

Rashtriya Janata Dal spokesperson and RS MP Manoj Jha said, “This is more than anybody else’s a victory of the women who spoke out through the Me Too campaign. Their voices were consistent and they did not get cowed down before intimidation by M.J. Akbar. May be that message finally reached Raisina Hill and the government feared that it could snowball into a bigger crisis.”



---

**For Limited Circulation**

---