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MK Yadav Sir

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THE HINDU

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PALESTINE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

Ireland, Norway and Spain set to formally recognise Palestine

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

Ireland, Norway and Spain announced on Wednesday that they will formally recognise the state of Palestine, even as reports emerged of Israel pushing its way further into Rafah in southern Gaza.

Israel reacted furiously to the announcements by recalling its Ambassadors to the three countries. The recognition of Palestine is expected to take place on May 28.

Speaking at a press conference in Dublin, Ireland's Prime Minister Simon Harris linked the recognition to Ireland's own freedom struggle from Britain.

"Today, we use the same language to support the recognition of Palestine as a state," he said.

In a separate message released online, Mr. Harris said Ireland believed that recognising a Palestinian state would lead to peace and reconciliation in West Asia. Ireland also recognised Israel's right to "exist securely and at peace" with its neighbours. There should be no further military incursion into Rafah (i.e., by Israel), and no further rockets fired at Israel by Hamas and Hezbollah, Mr. Harris said.



A boy waving a Palestinian flag during a march in Spain. AP

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10
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Context: Ireland, Norway, and Spain have announced they will formally recognise a Palestinian state from 28 May.

Palestine

- **About**: It is an area of the eastern Mediterranean region.
- The region comprises parts of modern Israel and the Palestinian territories of the Gaza Strip (along the Mediterranean coast) and the West Bank (west of the Jordan River).
- **Capital:** Jerusalem
- **Membership**: UNESCO granted the Palestinians full membership in the UN cultural agency, leading the US to defund the body.
- **Status Change**: In 2012, the General Assembly voted in favour of changing Palestine's status to "non-member observer state".
- **ICC Recognition**: In 2015, the International Criminal Court recognised Palestine as a party.

India-Palestine

- In 1974, India became the first Non-Arab State to recognize Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.
- In 1988, India became one of the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine.
- In 1996, India opened its Representative Office to Palestine in Gaza City, which was later shifted to Ramallah in 2003.

INDIAN EXPRESS Page 14

INTERIM BAIL
(Syllabus GS Paper 2 – Polity)



Kejriwal and Soren: Two bail pleas in SC, two different outcomes

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, MAY 22

THE SUPREME Court on Wednesday refused to grant interim bail to former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren to campaign in the Lok Sabha elections.

Soren, who has challenged his arrest in a money laundering case, had sought parity with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who was given 21 days' interim bail on May 10 to campaign.

Voting will take place for seven seats of Jharkhand in the last two phases on May 25 and June 1.

After a Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma refused to hear the case, Soren's lawyers withdrew the petition. Why was Soren's plea denied, while Kejriwal's was accepted?

EXPLAINED LAW

Kejriwal's case

The Delhi Chief Minister was arrested on March 21 in a money laundering case relating to the Delhi excise policy. Within two days, Kejriwal moved the Delhi High Court, challenging the legality of the arrest. This was a crucial move.

In the normal process, a regular bail application is moved before the trial court, and can then go to the High Court and Supreme Court. However, the bar for granting bail under the stringent Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) is high, making the grant of bail extremely unlikely.

Section 45 of the PMLA, which deals with the power to grant bail, requires the accused to satisfy the court that the case passes a "twin test" – that there is no *prima facie* case against the accused, and that the accused is not likely to commit any offence while on bail.

Challenging the legality of the arrest itself yields the same relief – but the bar is set differently here. The accused has to prove that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had no "necessity to arrest", and did not validly exercise its power to arrest under Section 19 of the PMLA.

A plea against an illegal arrest is filed before a constitutional court. This means that the accused can directly approach the High Court and then the Supreme Court, saving the time that might have been spent before the trial court in seeking bail.

Hemant Soren was arrested on Jan 31. *X/@HemantSorenJMM*

On April 9, the HC upheld Kejriwal's arrest, after which he moved the SC. Since the case was pending before the top court and final arguments would take more time, the SC considered releasing Kejriwal on interim bail, keeping in mind the Lok Sabha polls.

Although the SC said that by granting bail it was not creating special circumstances for politicians, Kejriwal's political status was not lost on the court. It did note that "Arvind Kejriwal is the chief minister of Delhi and a leader of one of the national parties."

In the trial, the ED filed a chargesheet against Kejriwal on May 17.

Soren's case

The former Jharkhand Chief Minister was arrested on January 31 on money laundering charges in a land scam-related case. The same day, Soren's lawyers had moved a writ petition in the High Court, challenging the legality of the arrest.

The Jharkhand HC reserved its verdict on February 28 and, two months later, dismissed Soren's case.

In the meantime, the ED had filed a chargesheet – and the trial court took cognizance of it on April 4. This is a routine step in the pre-trial stage – and essentially means that the court is made aware that the prosecution has a *prima facie* case against the accused. Later, the court has to examine the chargesheet and frame charges, after which trial commences.

While the HC reserved its order for weeks, Soren had moved a bail application before the trial court. This has now been dismissed by the trial court.

The SC felt that Soren was pursuing parallel remedies by filing this bail application while also moving an appeal against the HC order on the legality of arrest. The top court observed that Soren should have instead pursued his bail remedy before the HC.

This led to his lawyers withdrawing the plea challenging the arrest. However, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, who appeared for Soren, argued that these are distinct remedies leading to the same effect – the release of the accused.

Unlike Kejriwal's AAP, Soren's JMM is not a national party. Soren had resigned as Chief Minister before his arrest. Unlike Kejriwal, he is not the president of his party – that post is held by his father, Shibu Soren.

Context: The Supreme Court recently refused to grant interim bail to former Jharkhand Chief Minister, preventing him from campaigning in the Lok Sabha elections.

Case laws on interim bail:

- **Sukhwant Singh & Ors v. State of Punjab (2009):** In this case Hon'ble Supreme Court held that the interim bail is a measure especially to safeguard the reputation of an accused. Also, the court has the inherent power to grant bail to a person whose bail application is still pending for disposal.
- **Nikesh Tarachand Shah v. Union of India (UOI) and Ors:** In this case, it was held that grant of bail is a general rule and refusal is an exception exercised carefully as he can defend himself better when he is free. Granting of interim bail is also a general rule and it is given till a final adjudication on the regular bail or anticipatory bail application is disposed off.
- **Kamlendra Pratap Singh v. State of U.P. and Ors (2009):** It was held that interim bail should be given to the person until the main bail application is adjudicated as when the person is arrested, reputation of person is severely affected by that arrest.

Interim Bail

- **About:** "Interim" bail entailing temporary release can be granted under compelling circumstances and grounds, even when regular bail would not be justified. Intolerable grief and suffering in the given facts, may justify temporary release, even when regular bail is not warranted.
- **Respite:** It provides a brief respite to the accused, temporarily releasing them from custody.
- **Time period:** The Interim bail can be extended for more time if the period expires and court thinks fit to extend the time due to special circumstances.
- **Conditional:** It is conditional and can be extended based on the circumstances.
- **Right to freedom is revoke**: If the interim bail expires and the accused fails to meet the requirements for its continuation or pay the necessary amount, their right to freedom is revoked, and they may be retaken into custody.
- **Final decision:** Granting of interim bail is the discretion of the Court but decisions should be sound and guided by law.
- **Interim measure:** Interim bail serves as an interim measure until a final decision is made on the bail application, preventing unnecessary detention of the accused during this period.

DTE May 22

CYCLONE
(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Geography)

Cyclone Remal in making? Low-pressure area forms over Bay of Bengal

Context: The Bay of Bengal is bracing for some intense weather as Cyclone 'Remal' is expected to develop around May 24.

Cyclone

- **About:** It is a large, rotating storm system with low pressure at its center. Cyclones can form in any ocean basin, but they are most common in the tropics.
- **Cause**: A variety of hazards, including strong winds, storm surges, and heavy rainfall.
- **Types of cyclones**
  - **Tropical cyclones**: These are the most common type of cyclone. They form over warm, tropical oceans and are characterized by strong winds, heavy rainfall, and storm surges.
  - **Extratropical cyclones**: These cyclones form over cooler waters and are not as strong as tropical cyclones. They are characterized by strong winds, heavy rainfall, and snow.
  - **Midlatitude cyclones:** These cyclones form in the midlatitudes and are characterized by strong winds, heavy rainfall, and snow.
- **Formation of Cyclones**
  - **Warm ocean temperatures**: Cyclones thrive on warm waters with temperatures above 26.5°C (80°F) as they serve as a primary source of energy for their formation and intensification.
  - **Favorable atmospheric conditions**: The presence of a pre-existing weather disturbance, such as a tropical wave or low-pressure system, can provide the initial trigger for cyclone development. Additionally, low vertical wind shear is crucial for cyclone formation and **maintenance.**
  - **Moisture and instability**: Sufficient moisture in the lower atmosphere and unstable atmospheric conditions contribute to the development of thunderstorms, which are the building blocks of a cyclone.

Recent Cyclones: Cyclonic Storm Michaung, Cyclone Madhili, Cyclone Hidaya, Cyclone Hamoon, Cyclone Tej

RANGELANDS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)



'SILENT DEMISE' OF WORLD'S RANGELANDS: WHY THIS MATTERS

A shepherd, and his flock grazing in a grassland, near Pune. *Pavan Khengre*

NIKHIL GHANEKAR
NEW DELHI, MAY 22

ABOUT HALF of the world's rangelands are degraded, with communities depending on them needing focussed support, a report of the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) found.

Half of Earth's land area

Rangelands are natural or semi-natural ecosystems that are grazed by livestock or wild animals. Depending on climatic conditions, they contain diverse vegetation including grasses, shrubs, bushes, and open forests. Currently, rangelands cover over half of Earth's terrestrial surface area (around 80 sq km), and about 1.21 million sq km in India, from the Thar Desert to Himalayan meadows.

They act as carbon sinks which absorb more carbon than they emit, storehouses of freshwater, and prevent desertification of land. Millions of people worldwide depend on rangelands for food security, and livelihoods. "Rangelands generate 16% of global food production and 70% of feed for domesticated herbivores," the report stated.

A 'silent demise'

The report found that nearly 50% of the world's rangelands are "degraded" and facing a "silent demise". "When we see a 100-year-old tree fall, it rightly evokes an emotional response... The conversion of ancient rangelands, on the other hand, happens in 'silence' and generates little public reaction," UNCCD Executive Secretary Ibrahim Thiaw said.

Climate change, unsustainable land and livestock management practices, conversion of rangelands to farmlands, and uncertainty over land rights of pastoral communities, lead to rangelands' degradation. This negatively impacts soil fertility and biodiversity, resulting in a dip in incomes of pastoralist communities.

Pastoral communities suffer

Pastoralism is a livelihood system based on livestock production. Pastoral communities rear sheeps, goats, cattle, horses, donkeys, camels, yaks, llamas, alpacas, and pigs, for dairy, meat, wool, and leather production. Their livelihoods are dependent on the quality of pasture (rangelands) they have access to, and their rights over them.

There are an estimated 500 million pastoralists globally, around 13 million of whom live in India, across 46 groups, such as Gujjars, Bakarwals, Rebaris, Raikas, Kurubas, and Maldharis. These communities play a major role in India's livestock industry – India is home to 20% of the world's livestock population, around 77% of which is reared by pastoralists on common lands, according to the 'Accounting for Pastoralists in India' report (2020).

India is the largest producer of milk in the world – accounting for 23% of global dairy production – as well as the largest producer of buffalo meat, and the largest exporter of sheep and goat meat.

Context: About half of the world's rangelands are degraded and need policy interventions, and communities depending on them need focused support, according to a new report of the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD).

Rangelands

- **About:** These are natural or semi-natural ecosystems grazed by livestock or wild animals.
- **Types of Vegetation**: Rangelands contain vegetation such as grasses, shrubs, bushes, open forests, and agroforestry systems (land which contains trees and crops or pastures).
- **Climate Impact on Vegetation**: The exact nature of rangelands' vegetation is influenced by rainfall, temperature, and other climate phenomena, as noted by the Rangeland Atlas.
- **Global Coverage**: Rangelands currently cover 80 million sq km of Earth's terrestrial surface area, making them the largest land cover or land use type in the world.
- **Environmental Benefits**
- **Carbon Sinks**: They act as carbon sinks, absorbing more carbon from the atmosphere than they release.
    - Rangelands serve as storehouses of freshwater.
    - They prevent the desertification of land.
- **Global Food Contribution**: Rangelands generate 16% of global food production.
    - They provide 70% of feed for domesticated herbivores, especially in Africa and South America.
- **Indian Rangelands**: In India, rangelands occupy about 1.21 million sq km, stretching from the Thar Desert to Himalayan meadows, according to the UNCCD report.
- **UNCCD Report:** The UNCCD report found that nearly 50% of the world's rangelands can be considered "degraded" and are facing a "silent demise".
- **Pastoralists:** Pastoralism is a livelihood system based on livestock production, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This includes livestock rearing, dairy production, meat production, wool production, and leather production.
    - India is home to 20% of the world's livestock population. Around 77% of these animals are reared in pastoralist systems, meaning they are either herded or left to range on common lands.

TIMES OF INDIA

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STAR CAMPAIGNERS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Ask star campaigners to play by the book, EC tells BJP, Cong

Rejects Stand Of Both Parties Defending Speeches In Violation Of MCC

Bharti.Jain@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Rejecting the defence of both BJP and Congress for utterances of their star campaigners in violation of the model code of conduct, Election Commission on Wednesday asked the presidents of both parties to direct their star campaigners to refrain from making any statements that may aggravate communal or caste differences.

Stating that India's socio-cultural milieu was an enduring preserve and could not be made a casualty of elections, EC in separate letters to BJP chief J P Nadda and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the two parties were not allowed to weaken the heritage of quality electoral experience of Indian voters.

While pointing to extra responsibility shouldered by the party in office to keep up the level of discourse during poll time, EC added that even the opposition could not be allowed unlimited extra space.



'It is expected of you to use the strength of your office and intra-party consultations to advise/counsel/oblige listed star campaigners of your party to be careful in their campaign utterances and correct their discourses,' EC said in its letters to BJP's Nadda and Congress's Kharge

TIMES VIEW: It is good that the EC has asked major parties, especially their star campaigners, to refrain from using language with religious and communal overtones. Such conduct lowers the quality of electoral discourse and raises negative sentiments among the public. However, it would have been better if this direction had come earlier, considering that the notices were sent almost a month ago and only two phases of polling remain. The rhetoric meanwhile has continued, as the EC order notes.

"The utterances of the concerned star campaigners follow patterns and create narratives which can be damaging beyond the model code period," it noted.

In its letter to Nadda, EC asked him to direct his party's star campaigners to avoid religious or communal overtones in their campaign speeches. It asked him to ensure that star campaigners did not make speeches that divided society.

EC's communication follows a notice issued to BJP earlier in the wake of opposition's complaint that PM Modi had made a divisive speech in Banswara, Rajasthan. In his reply, Nadda had maintained that the statements of BJP's star campaigners relied on facts to expose the "mal-intent" of Congress to the nation.

A notice was sent simultaneously to Kharge against utterances of Congress's star campaigners in violation of the model code. EC asked him to direct star campaigners to avoid utterances that may create mutual hatred or tension along communal, religious or caste lines. It asked him to tell the party's star campaigners not to give a false impression that the Constitution may be abolished or changed. Some Congress leaders had made such references while questioning the Agnipath scheme.

Context: The Election Commission rebuffs defenses from ruling and opposition parties regarding violations of the model code of conduct, urging their presidents to instruct star campaigners to abstain from remarks exacerbating communal or caste divides.

Star Campaigners

- **Definition:** Star campaigners are usually the top leaders of a political party but can include other celebrities as well.
  - The only requirement is that these persons have to be members of the political party that appoints them.

Legal Provisions

- **Membership Requirement:** Star campaigners, according to the RP Act, must be members of the political party that appoints them.
  - Section 77 of the RP Act defines 'leaders of a political party' as star campaigners.
- **Maximum Number**: A recognized national or State political party can appoint a maximum of 40 star campaigners.
  - A registered unrecognised political party can appoint up to 20 star campaigners.
- **Notification Requirement:** The names of the star campaigners must be communicated to the Election Commission (EC) and Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of the States within seven days from the date of notification of such election.
- **Multi-phase Election Provision**: In the case of a multi-phase election, a political party can submit a separate list of star campaigners for different phases.
- **Single List for the Entire State**: Despite the provision for separate lists for different phases, it is observed that all major parties provide a single list for a State that is applicable for all phases.

DTE May 22

WIND SHEAR & EL NINO

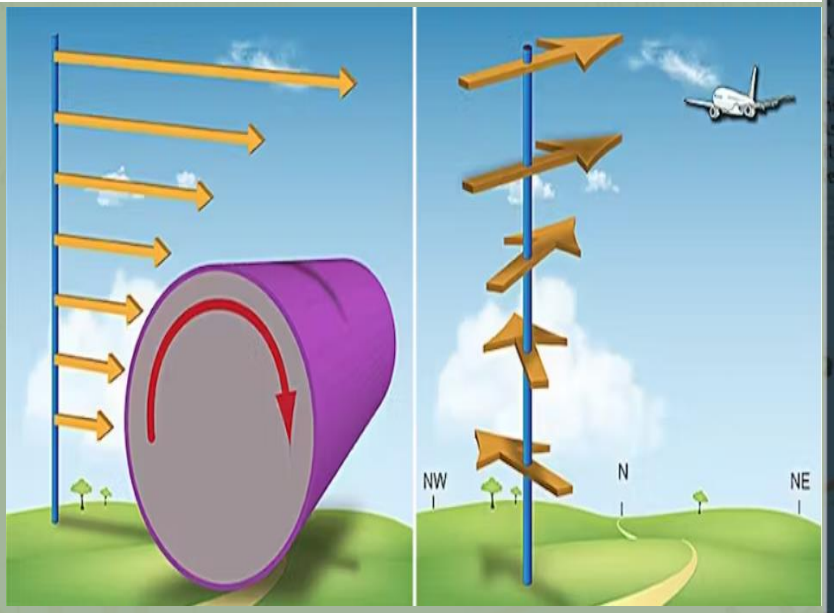
(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Geography)

What is wind shear? An atmospheric scientist explains how it can tear down hurricanes

Context: During hurricane season, weather forecasters frequently discuss wind shear, emphasizing its critical role in predicting storm behavior and intensity.

Wind Shear

- **About:** It refers to changes in wind speed, direction, or both over a distance.
- **Types and Impacts of Wind Shear**
  - **In Aviation**: Pilots encounter wind shear as sudden changes in wind speed or direction, causing turbulence.
  - **Vertical Wind Shear**: Focuses on changes in wind speed and direction with height, crucial in hurricane formation and dynamics.
  - **Illustrations**: Visual representations of wind shear effects, showcasing height and direction variations.
- **Significance in Hurricane Formation**
  - **Tropical Storm Formation**: Wind shear plays a role in the development of tropical storms from low-pressure systems over warm water.
  - **Symmetry in Hurricanes**: Symmetrical structure aids hurricane intensification, while excessive wind shear can disrupt it.



Influence of Climate Patterns

- **El Nino Impact**: During El Nino years, increased wind shear over the Atlantic affects hurricane development by disrupting tropical storm formation.
- **La Nina Contrast:** La Nina, the opposite of El Nino, fosters conditions conducive to more active hurricane seasons due to reduced wind shear.

TIMES OF INDIA

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OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

WB govt 'acted in undue haste' on OBC categorisation, says HC

▶Continued from P 1



The order points out that within six months of Bengal announcing 10% quota for backward Muslims in 2010, the state backward classes panel recommended 42 groups as OBC, of which 41 communities were Muslim

The verdict points out that the state government's unilateral OBC categorisation breached the protocol of consulting the backward classes commission. It says any report recommending categorisation should have been placed in the legislature, with recommendations for new inclusions and exclusions.

At the hearing, the judges questioned provisions of the West Bengal Backward Classes Act, 2012, that allowed the state govt to include new categories under the OBC A and B lists through a gazette notification.

Their ruling mentions that the legislation provided the state govt with "carte blanche authority in respect of specifying or declaring classes as backward, (and) who may be entitled to reservation". It also notes "a complete lack of legislative policy" within the ambit of the Act. "The legislature has to lay down the legislative policy and principle to afford guidance for carrying out the said policy before it delegates its subsidiary powers on its behalf."

The order points out that within six months of Bengal announcing 10% reservation for backward Muslims in 2010, the state backward classes commission recommended 42 groups as OBC, of which 41 communities were Muslim.

"Following such a recommendation, the state immediately included the same in the list. Thereafter, vide memo number 1673 dated May 11, 2012, the state further included 35 classes (9 in the OBC-A category and 26 in OBC-B)," the order states.

The court observed that the commission and the state govt "acted in undue haste, and with lightning speed, in making recommendations for the classification of 77 classes to make the public announcement of the chief minister a reality".

CM Mamata Banerjee had made the announcement at a political rally. "No proper inquiry was conducted by the commission inviting application for inclusion in the lists, and even after purported preparation of the list, no notification was issued inviting objections in general from the people at large," the petitioners said.

The HC ruling states that "as a model employer, the state govt must conduct itself with high probity and candour, and ensure that the populace does not succumb to any discriminatory practice in the procedural rigmarole".

The court rejected the state govt's plea for a stay on the order till it drew up a response.

Context: Recently, the Calcutta High Court invalidated all new OBC categorizations in Bengal post-2010, citing authorities' implementation of "protective discrimination" in deviation from constitutional norms.

Other Backward Classes (OBCs)

- **About:** It is **is a collective term employed to categorize castes** that experience educational or social disadvantages.
- This classification is one of the **official categorizations of the Indian population**, along with General Class, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes (SCs and STs).

Constitutional provisions for OBCs

- **Article 15(4):** The **State has the authority to create** specialised measures to advance the development of **socially and educationally disadvantaged groups**, which also encompass the OBC.
- **Art. 16(4):** This clause allows the state to reserve vacancies in public service for any backward classes of the state that are not adequately represented in the public services.
- **Article 340**: It gave the President the power to appoint a Commission to investigate the conditions of the backward classes.

National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)

- **About:** The 102nd Constitution Amendment Act, 2018 grants constitutional status to the NCBC.
- This constitutional status empowers the NCBC to review and address complaints and welfare measures pertaining to socially and educationally backward classes.
- **Article 342-A**: Empowers the President to specify the Central List of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) for each State or Union Territory.
    - The Parliament holds the authority to make modifications to the Central List of OBCs, as specified in Article 342-A of the Constitution of India.
- **Rohini Commission**: It was set up by the President under Article 340 of the Indian Constitution on October 2, 2017.
    - **Objective**: To study the extent of inequitable distribution of benefits of reservation among the castes listed in the broad category of OBC with reference to such classes included in the Central list.

TIMES OF INDIA

May 22

FURLOUGH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

SC: Double-murder convict not entitled to furlough extension

Context: The Supreme Court recently ruled that double-murder convicts are not eligible for an extension of furlough.

Furlough

- **Definition**: Furlough refers to a temporary release of inmates from prison.
- **Purpose**: It's a short-term leave granted to prisoners, allowing them to go outside prison for specific reasons, such as maintaining family ties and facilitating reintegration into society.
- **Guidelines**: The Model Prison Manual 2016, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, offers detailed guidelines on inmates' contact with the outside world, including provisions for remission, premature release, parole, and furlough.
- **Eligibility Criteria**: Release on parole and furlough is granted selectively based on criteria such as the nature of the offense, prisoner behavior, and potential impact on public peace and order.
- **Rehabilitation Focus**: Furlough aims to strike a balance between inmates' rights and society's safety, serving as a tool for prisoner rehabilitation and eventual societal reintegration.
- **Legal Framework**: While there are no specific provisions on parole and furlough in the Prisons Act, 1894, and the Prisoners Act, 1900, Section 59 of the Prisons Act empowers states to establish rules for sentence shortening as rewards for good conduct.

Parole

- **About:** It refers to the system of releasing a prisoner with the suspension of their sentence.
- **Conditional Release**: The release through parole is conditional, often contingent on the behavior of the prisoner.
- **Periodic Reporting**: Those on parole are typically required to report to authorities at regular intervals for a specified duration.

THE HINDU May 21

BIMSTEC
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – IR)

BIMSTEC gets 'legal personality' after charter comes into force

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) will now be open to new members and observers after a historic first charter of the grouping came into force on May 20, the Ministry of External Affairs has announced.

With the charter having been adopted in the 5th summit of the BIMSTEC leaders, the grouping has acquired a 'legal personality' and will be able to enter into structured diplomatic dialogue with other groupings and countries.

"The entry into force of the BIMSTEC Charter reaffirms India's commitment to a prosperous, peaceful and sustainable neighbourhood.BIMSTEC reflects the synthesis of our Neighbourhood First and Act East policies," said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. Official Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the charter will provide "legal and institutional framework for meaningful cooperation and deeper integration of the Bay of Bengal region." BIMSTEC was formed in 1997 but for a long time, the organisation could not form consensus among its seven member states – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Myanmar and India – about a common charter that could sum up the vision of the grouping.

Context: The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) has opened its doors to new members and observers with the enforcement of its inaugural charter on May 20, as declared by the Ministry of External Affairs.

BIMSTEC

- **About**: It is a regional organization signing the Bangkok Declaration.
- **Establishment**: 1997
- **Full form**: The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
- **Aim**: To promote regional unity and cooperation. Member States include Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand.
  - The Permanent Secretariat is located in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- **Chairmanship of BIMSTEC:** Rotates according to the alphabetical order of the English names of the Member States.
- **Initially known as**: BIST-EC (Bangladesh-India-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation)
- **Principles of BIMSTEC:** Sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference in internal affairs, non-aggression, peaceful co-existence, mutual respect and mutual benefit.

The purposes of BIMSTEC:

- Accelerate economic growth and social progress in the Bay of Bengal region through joint endeavors in equality and partnership.
- Promote collaboration in economic, social, technical, and scientific fields, providing mutual assistance in training and research.
- Cooperate in regional projects to raise living standards, generate employment, and improve transportation and communication infrastructure.
- Maintain peace, combat terrorism and organized crime, address natural disasters and climate change, and eradicate poverty in the region through collaboration with international organizations.

LIVEMINT

ADVERTISING STANDARDS COUNCIL OF INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

ASCI: Mamaearth, Patanjali among big ad violators

Varuni Khosla
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NEW DELHI

Yoga guru Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved Ltd may have been rapped by the Supreme Court for its misleading ads, but the biggest advertising violator of FY24 was Mamaearth parent Honasa Consumer Pvt. Ltd, the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) said on Wednesday.

ASCI found Honasa to be the biggest violator with 187 such ads, followed by sports betting companies WinDaddy and Fun88 India with 98 each.

Honasa also runs brands like Dr. Sheth's Skin and Hair Clinic, Aqualogica, The Derma Co. and Ayuga.

ASCI said in a report that Patanjali was involved in as many as 28 advertising violations in FY24.

These included endorsements of products such as its DantKanti toothpaste, chyawanprash, infection-fighting Ayurvedic medicines, heart medicines, ointments, honey, sprays, and orthopaedic and pain-relief tablets, the report said.

Women's fashion retailing platform Urbanic's parent Maysquare Lifestyle Pvt. Ltd, Rummy24 run by Ability Games as well as makeup brand Renee Cosmetics were also among companies allegedly violating advertising standards.

Other companies in the list included Bright Lifecare Pvt. Ltd which owns MuscleBlaze and HealthKart and firms like Unacademy and FirstCry.

Interestingly, betting and gambling companies have overtaken healthcare firms that are making false claims of magical remedies as the most violative ads this year, said the report.

A majority or 85% of all complaints made against false and misleading advertisements last year were made for those appearing on digital platforms.

Of all the ads listed, over 1,300 ads of illegal betting were reported to the information and broadcasting ministry, along with about 150 ads of liquor promotion and e-cigarettes and vapes, said ASCI. About 1,250 ads were reported for drugs and magical remedies to the ministry of Ayush.

Context: Despite the Supreme Court's criticism of Patanjali Ayurved Ltd's misleading ads, Honasa Consumer Pvt. Ltd, the parent company of Mamaearth, emerged as the top advertising violator of FY24, according to the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI).

Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

- **About:** ASCI was founded in 1985 under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956.
- **Self-regulatory Council**: ASCI is designated as a voluntary, self-regulatory council, operating as a non-profit entity.
- **Governing Bodies**: ASCI comprises a Board of Governors, members of the Consumer Complaints Council, and a Secretariat.
- **Composition of the Board**: The Board includes a governor and 16 members from esteemed firms, encompassing media agencies, advertisers, and advertising industry stakeholders.
- **Functions:**
  - ASCI has embraced a self-regulating code to safeguard consumer interests and ensure ethical advertising practices.
  - The Consumer Complaints Council scrutinizes and investigates grievances regarding violations of advertising ethics and the Code of Conduct of the News Broadcasting Associations.
  - ASCI actively solicits complaints from consumers regarding misleading, deceptive, or false advertisements, which are independently assessed by the Consumer Complaints Council.
  - ASCI monitors advertisements across various sectors, including those promising Covid-related benefits, and has extended its scrutiny to online real money gaming ads.
  - It has released comprehensive guidelines, particularly for sectors such as paints, apparel, detergents, skin care, ACs, fans, water purifiers, etc.

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