

1. **Convicted Personalities & Right to Election:** The Supreme Court is hearing petitions seeking a lifetime ban on convicted individuals from contesting elections.
 - **About Legal Provisions under the Representation of the People Act, 1951:**
 - **Section 8(3) of the RP Act, 1951:** Disqualifies a person convicted of a criminal offense with a sentence of at least two years. Such a person remains disqualified for six years after release.
 - **Section 8(1) of the RP Act, 1951:** Disqualifies a person convicted under laws for heinous crimes like rape, untouchability (PCR Act), unlawful association (UAPA), and corruption (Prevention of Corruption Act), irrespective of sentence duration, plus six years after release.
 - **Past Supreme Court Judgments:** ADR Case (2002), CEC vs Jan Chaukidar (2013) & Lily Thomas Case (2013)
 - **Election Commission's Role:** Under Section 11 of the RP Act, 1951, allows the EC to remove or reduce the disqualification period of a convicted person.
 - **EC's Decision (2019):** Reduced disqualification period of Prem Singh Tamang (convicted under Prevention of Corruption Act) from six years to 13 months, allowing him to contest and win a by-election.
 - **Key facts & Data:**
 - **ADR Report (2024):** 46% of 543 elected MPs have criminal cases → 31% face serious charges (rape, murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping).
 - **Winning chances:** 15.4% for candidates with criminal records, compared to 4.4% for clean candidates.
 - **Law Commission (1999, 2014) & EC:** Recommended banning candidates facing charges in offenses punishable by 5+ years.
 - **Judicial Review:** SC should review EC's power to reduce or remove disqualification for constitutional validity.
2. **Public Accounts Committee (PAC):** The Parliament's Public Accounts Committee recently directed the government to review the existing rules that decide the toll tax on National Highways (NH).

- Toll rates are based on **NH Fee Rules, 2008**, but **increased vehicular traffic** since then has raised concerns.
- About PAC:** Constituted **annually by Parliament** to examine government expenditure.
 - It reviews Appropriation Accounts, Finance Accounts, and other government accounts (except Public Undertakings and Government Companies).
- Composition:** Total Members - 22 (15 from Lok Sabha, 7 from Rajya Sabha).
 - Members are elected through proportional representation via single transferable vote.
 - Chairperson: Appointed by the Speaker from Lok Sabha members.
 - Since 1967-68, the Chairperson is from the Opposition.
 - Ministers cannot be members; if a member is appointed as a minister, they lose membership.
- Evolution of PAC:** Established in 1921; initially, the Finance Member was the Chairperson.
 - Till 1950, the Finance Department handled secretarial functions.
 - From January 26, 1950, it became a Parliamentary Committee under the Speaker.
 - Secretarial functions shifted to Lok Sabha Secretariat.

3. Smart Grid Index (SGI): Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL) has secured a place among the **top 10 power utilities globally** in the **Smart Grid Index (SGI) 2024**.

- About Smart Grid Index (SGI):** Developed by **Singapore Power Group (SP Group)**, is a global framework that evaluates how efficiently power grids use smart technologies, supplies electricity to North and Northwest Delhi.

7 DIMENSIONS OF A SMART GRID

SMART GRID INDEX

Measures the smartness of electricity grids globally, in seven key dimensions. The benchmarking also identifies best practices to build smarter grids that deliver better value to customers.

01. MONITORING & CONTROL

SCADA
DMS / ADMS

02. DATA ANALYTICS

Smart Meter Coverage
Data Analytics Application

03. SUPPLY RELIABILITY

SAIDI
SAIFI

04. DER INTEGRATION

Management of DER Integration
Grid Scale Energy Storage

05. GREEN ENERGY

Renewable Energy Penetration
EV Facilitation

06. SECURITY

IT Cyber Security
OT Cyber Security

07. CUSTOMER EMPOWERMENT & SATISFACTION

Real-time data to Customers
Customer Satisfaction Feedback

- **Evaluation Process & Recognition:** 92 utilities from 36 countries/markets were assessed.
 - Tata Power-DDL scored 83.9%, reflecting its strong smart grid deployment.
 - Tata Power, through its discoms in Delhi, Odisha, Ajmer, and Mumbai, serves 12.5 million consumers (over 5 crore).
- 4. **Right to Travel Abroad:** Recently, the Jammu and Kashmir High Court ruled that an applicant's **conduct**, not their relatives' background, should determine passport approval.
 - The judgment cited **Article 21 of the Constitution**, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty.
 - **About Right to Travel Abroad:** Not explicitly mentioned in the Indian Constitution but interpreted as part of Article 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty).
 - **Related Provisions:** Article 21 protects life and personal liberty, restricting deprivation only through a legal procedure.
 - Article 19(1) (d) guarantees freedom of movement within India, indirectly linked to international travel.
 - Article 19(1) (a) ensures freedom of speech & expression, which may include travel abroad for education, culture, or profession.
 - **Key Cases related to:**
 - **Satwant Singh Sawhney v. D. Ramarathnam (1967):** Supreme Court recognized the right to travel abroad as part of Article 21. Government cannot deny or impound passports without legal justification. Court directed the government to restore passports to petitioners.
 - **Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978):** Expanded Article 21, affirming the right to travel abroad as part of personal liberty, held that any restriction must follow a fair, just, and reasonable legal procedure.
- 5. **Section 294 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023:** Recently a YouTuber was facing controversy over his comments on 'India's Got Latent'. The government has taken note and summoned him before a Parliamentary IT Committee.
 - **About the Legal Provisions:** Criminalises sale, import, export, advertisement, and display of obscene materials, including online content.
 - **Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000:** Under Section 67 criminalises publication or

transmission of obscene material in electronic form.

- **Court Approach to determining Obscenity:** Content evaluated as a whole, considering its context (artistic expression, satire, entertainment).
 - **“Community Standards Test”:** Determines if content dominantly appeals to prurient interests → Public sentiment & cultural sensitivity are crucial—societal norms evolve over time → Balance between freedom of expression & morality—content that undermines public morals is restricted.
- **Key Court Cases on Obscenity**
 - **College Romance Case (2024):** SC quashed proceedings under Section 292 IPC & Section 67 IT Act, held that “foul, indecent, and profane language” is different from obscenity. Obscenity requires arousing sexual thoughts, which the show did not.
- **Social Media Laws in India:**
 - **IT Act, 2000: Section 79** provides exemption to intermediaries from liability if they follow due diligence.
 - **Section 66A** (punishment for offensive online messages) **struck down in 2015** for being unconstitutional.
 - **IT (Intermediary Guidelines & Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021:** Categorises platforms as **social media intermediaries, significant social media intermediaries, and news publishers.**
 - **Digital Personal Data Protection Bill (DPDPB):** Establishes guidelines for data collection, processing, and storage by social media platforms, focus on user consent & data privacy.
- 6. **Einstein Ring:** The European Space Agency’s (ESA) Euclid space telescope has recently discovered a rare ring of light, known as an Einstein ring, around a galaxy nearly 590 million light-years away from Earth.
 - The ring was discovered around **NGC 6505**, first identified in the **19th century**.
 - **About Einstein Ring:** A ring of light around **dark matter, galaxies, or clusters** caused by **gravitational lensing**.
 - Gravitational lensing occurs when a massive celestial body bends and amplifies light from a distant galaxy behind it.

- The gravitational lens in this case was NGC 6505, bending light from a galaxy 4.42 billion light-years away.
- Named after Albert Einstein, who predicted that light bends around massive objects in his general theory of relativity.
- The first Einstein ring was discovered in 1987, and they remain extremely rare (found in less than 1% of galaxies).
- They are not visible to the naked eye and require space telescopes like Euclid to observe.



• **Why Do Scientists Study Einstein Rings?**

- **Dark Matter Research:** Helps study dark matter, which makes up 85% of the universe but cannot be directly detected.
- **Galaxy Observations:** Enables viewing distant galaxies that would otherwise remain invisible.
- **Understanding the Universe:** Provides insights into the expansion of the universe and changes in space-time between galaxies, as explained by NASA.

7. Biosecurity Zones: The Andhra Pradesh Government has recently declared four areas as Biosecurity Zones, where the restrictions are imposed, in view of the identification of the avian influenza (bird flu) cases in the State.

- The four areas are Badampudi in Eluru district, Velpuru and Kanuru in West Godavari and Gampalagudem in NTR district.
- **About:** Biosecurity zones are areas where restrictions are imposed to prevent the spread of pests, diseases, and other threats.
- **Security Restrictions in Three Layers:**
 - Red Zone (0-1 km radius): Strict restrictions on movement of people and birds, no mobility between farms.
 - Surveillance Zone (1-10 km radius): Government monitors the area but no movement restrictions.
 - Beyond 10 km: No restrictions on sale and consumption of chicken and eggs.