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सत्यमेव जयते



MK Yadav Sir

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THE HINDU Page 7

NEW GI PRODUCTS
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

GI tags given to crafts from Rajasthan, mangoes grown in Goa

Sangeetha Kandavel
CHENNAI

Seven products from across India including four from Rajasthan were given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.

The Jalesar Dhatu Shilp (metal craft), Goa Mankurad mango, Goan Bebinca, Udaipur Koftgari metal craft, Bikaner Kashidakari craft, Jodhpur Bandhej craft and Bikaner Usta Kala craft were the ones which got the tag.

The application for the Goa Mankurad mango was filed by All Goa Mango Growers Association, Panaji, Goa. The Portuguese named the mango as Malcorada meaning poor coloured and with time this word transformed to 'Mankurad' *aamo*. *Aamo* means mango in Konkani language.

For the Goan Bebinca, the application was filed by All Goa Bakers and Confectioners Association. Bebinca is a type of pudding and a traditional Indo-Portuguese dessert. It is also known as the Queen of Goan desserts.

At Jalesar in Etah district in Uttar Pradesh, which was the capital of Magadha King Jarasandha, over 1,200 small units are engaged in making Jalesar Dhatu Shilp. This place is known for making decorative metal craft as well as brassware.

Four different crafts from Rajasthan were given the GI tags. The Udaipur Koftgari metal craft was one among them. According to details provided in the documents submitted to the GI office, the Udaipur Koftgari metal craftsmen practices the ancient art of Koftgari used in making ornamental weaponry. The weapons are exquisitely ornamented by a complicated process of etching of design, heating and then cooling intertwined with the process of embedding gold and silver wire into the metal, pressing and flattening it to a smooth surface using moonstone and finally polishing.

The second product from Rajasthan was the Bikaner Kashidakari craft. Kashidakari work is done majorly on objects associated with marriage, especially gift items, and makes use of mirror work.

The Jodhpur bandhej craft is the Rajasthani art of tying and dyeing. It is the art of printing varied patterns on fabrics using the tie and dye method.

The Bikaner Usta Kala craft is also known as gold nakashi work or gold manauti work, due to the prominence of golden colour in an actual manner developed by gold in the previous period. Due to this, the craft has longevity.

Context: : Seven products from across India, including four from Rajasthan, were given the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** by the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.

- The GI tags were secured by 'Jalesar Dhatu Shilp' (a metal craft), 'Goa Mankurad Mango', 'Goan Bebinca', 'Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft', 'Bikaner Kashidakari Craft', 'Jodhpur Bandhej Craft', and 'Bikaner Usta Kala Craft'.

About the Products

- **Goa Mankurad Mango:** This variety of mango is also known as malcorada, **cardozo mankurad, corado, and Goa mankur**. The Portuguese named the fruit malcorada, which means 'poor coloured', and with time, it became mankurad aamo (mango) in Konkani.
- **Goan Bebinca:** Bebinca, also known as the **'queen of Goan desserts',** is a traditional Indo-Portuguese pudding.
- **Jalesar Dhatu Shilp (a metal craft):** At Jalesar in **Uttar Pradesh's Etah district,** once the capital of Magadha king Jarasandha, over 1,200 small units are engaged in making 'Jalesar Dhatu Shilp', including ghungrus (anklets), ghantis (bells) and other decorative metal craft and brassware. The Thatheras community, which resides in a mohalla (locality) named Hathuras, makes these products.
- **Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft:** weapons are exquisitely ornamented by a complicated process of etching designs, heating, and then cooling, intertwined with embedding gold and silver wire into the metal, pressing and flattening it to a smooth surface with moonstone, and finally polishing it.
- **Bikaner Kashidakari Craft**: traditionally **created on cotton, silk or velvet** with a variety of fine stitches and mirror-work, mainly for objects associated with marriage, especially gift items.
- **Jodhpur Bandhej Craft**: It is the **Rajasthani art of tying and dyeing**. Bandhej is one of the most famous textile art forms of Rajasthan.
- **Bikaner Usta Kala Craft**: It is also known as **gold nakashi or gold manauti** work due to the prominence of its long-lasting golden colour. Untreated raw camel hide is processed and moulded by the **Dapgar community** of leather craftspeople for the requirements of the Usta.

BUSINESS STANDARD

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CORPORATE TAX

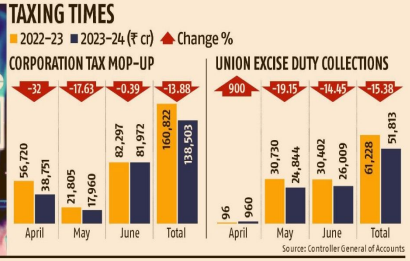
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy

Corporation tax mop-up slips 14%

Total tax collection in Q1 rises 3.38%; excise duty mop-up falls 15%

INDIVJAL DHASMANA
New Delhi, 1 August





Collections from the corporation tax declined nearly 14 per cent year-on-year (YoY) to ₹1.38 trillion in the first quarter of this financial year (Q1FY24), from ₹1.61 trillion, despite signs of economic recovery. The revenue under this head had risen almost 30 per cent YoY in the first three months of 2022-23.

The decline in the corporation tax mop-up was in line with that in excise duty receipts. This, however, contrasted the revenue trend concerning personal income tax (PIT), goods and services tax (GST), and Customs duty.

Overall, there was a 3.38 per cent rise in total tax collection at ₹6.72 trillion in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, against ₹6.50 trillion in the corresponding period of FY23. This was much lower than the 22.18 per cent rise in total tax collection in the first quarter of 2022-23.

Experts attributed the decline in corporation tax receipts to low profit reported by higher tax-paying oil and information technology companies because of falling commodity prices and subdued external demand.

The rate of year-on-year decline has been coming down after April. For instance, there was a decline of 32 per cent in the corporation tax collection to ₹38,751 crore in April this year, from ₹56,720 crore in the same month last year. The YoY decline was less in May at 17.63 per cent; the mop-up was ₹17,960 crore versus ₹21,805 crore a year ago. This further came down to just a 0.39 per cent fall in June this year when the collection was ₹81,972 crore as against ₹82,297 crore in the third month of FY 23, showed figures released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) on Monday.

The decline in June was less due to the advance tax collection. Advance corporation tax mop-up rose 17.68 per cent to ₹92,784 crore until June 17 of FY24, as against ₹78,842 crore until June 16 of FY23, according to the figures released by the finance ministry earlier. Most advance taxes were paid in June.

Bank of Baroda Chief Economist Madan Sabnavis said profit growth in some higher tax-paying industries, such as oil and IT, was low in the first quarter of FY24. "This could be the reason," he said. For instance, Reliance Industries reported around 11 per cent fall in its net profit during Q1FY24, while Infosys recorded only an 11 per cent rise in profit during the period, against analyst expectations of 14-18 per cent growth.

The sectors that gained last year due to high commodity prices will see a moderation this year, Sabnavis said.

Besides corporation tax, Union excise duty yielded lower collection — down 15.38 per cent at ₹51,813 crore — in the first quarter of FY24, against a ₹61,228 crore mop-up in the corresponding period of the previous year. This may be due to a reduction in windfall tax on crude and other fuels.

However, the government raised windfall tax on crude oil in July and August. It first raised the tax on petroleum crude to ₹1,600 per tonne from zero. Now, it has been hiked to ₹4,250 per tonne (from August 1, 2023). The government also hiked the tax on diesel to ₹1 per litre from nil earlier.

The Union excise duty mop-up declined almost 10 per cent during the first three months of 2022-23, as well. On the other hand, personal income tax yielded almost 11 per cent higher revenue to the government at ₹1.92 trillion in Q1, against ₹1.73 trillion Q1FY23.

The collection of central goods and services tax was up 15 per cent YoY to ₹2.06 trillion, from ₹1.79 trillion. Customs duty receipts rose almost 35 per cent to ₹49,201 crore in Q1FY24, from ₹36,467 crore a year ago.

Context: Collections from the **corporation tax** declined nearly 14 percent yearonyear (YoY) to ₹ 1.38 trillion in the first quarter of this financial year (Q1FY24), from ₹ 1.61 trillion, **despite signs of economic recovery.**

Corporate tax

- A corporate tax, also called corporation tax or company tax, is a **direct tax** imposed by a jurisdiction on the income or capital of corporations or analogous legal entities.
- It is **levied on both the public and private companies** registered under the Companies Act of 2013.
- The rate at which the tax is imposed is as per the provisions of the **Income Tax Act, 1961.**
- The **Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT)** does not apply to such companies.
- It is **imposed on the net income or profit** that corporate enterprises make from their businesses.

Type of Company	New Corporation Tax Rate	Additional Benefit/Requirements
Corporations not seeking any incentives/exemptions	22% (earlier 30%) + applicable cess and surcharge. Effective corporate tax rate of 25.17%	No MAT (minimum alternative tax) payable by these companies
Corporations seeking incentives/exemptions	Unchanged at 30%	MAT rate reduced to 15% from earlier level of 18.5%
New Manufacturing Companies	15% (earlier 25%)	New manufacturing co. must be incorporated on or before October 2019. Must start production before March 2023

LIVEMINT Page 8

WTO'S MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy & Trade)

India to flag carbon tax rule in WTO

Developing countries like India will flag serious concerns over the impact of European Union's (EU) regulations on climate change and trade such as carbon tax, on their domestic industry, during WTO ministerial meeting next year, an official said.

The four-day 13th ministerial conference (MC) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) is scheduled for 26 February next year in Abu Dhabi. The ministerial conference is the highest decision making body of WTO.

"These issues will come up in the WTO in a big way. Countries like India will oppose these measures in the WTO," the official said.

In the first seven months of this year, the EU has introduced four regulations on climate change and trade. These are carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM); deforestation regulation; including shipping in the EU's emissions trade system; and foreign subsidies regulation. EU member Germany too has announced a supply chain due diligence act (SCDDA).

Geneva-based 164 member multi-lateral body WTO deals with global exports and import-related norms. PTI

Context: Developing countries like India will flag serious concerns over the impact of European Union's (EU) regulations on climate change and trade such as carbon tax, on their domestic industry, during **WTO ministerial meeting** next year.

- The **four-day 13th ministerial conference (MC)** of the World Trade Organization (WTO) is scheduled for 26 February 2024 in Abu Dhabi.

WTO's Ministerial Conference

- The Ministerial Conference is the WTO's **top decision-making body**
- It usually meets **every two years.**
- All members of the WTO are **involved in the Ministerial Conference** and they can take decisions on all matters covered under any multilateral trade agreements.
- The **WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference** was held in Geneva from 12-17 June. Key Outcomes:
  - **Curtailing harmful fishing subsidies:** The WTO passed a multilateral agreement that would curb 'harmful' subsidies on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing for the next four years, to better protect global fish stocks.
  - **Global Food Security**: Members agreed to a binding decision to exempt food purchased by the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) for humanitarian purposes, from any export restrictions.
  - **E-commerce transactions**: All members agreed to continue the long standing moratorium on custom duties on e-commerce transmissions until the subsequent Ministerial Conference or until March 31, 2024, depending on whichever comes first.
  - **Covid-19 vaccine production**: WTO members agreed to temporarily waive intellectual property patents on Covid-19 vaccines without the consent of the patent holder for 5 years, so that they can more easily manufacture them domestically.

PIB August 2

PM-KUSUM
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Energy)

Nearly 2.46 lakh farmers have benefitted from PM-KUSUM Scheme: Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy

Context: The Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy and Power has informed that the main objectives of the **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM)** include de-dieselisation of the farm sector, providing water and energy security to farmers, increasing the income of farmers and curbing environmental pollution.

- **PM-KUSUM is a demand driven scheme** and therefore quantities/ capacities are allocated under the three components of the scheme based on demand received from the States/ UTs.
- However, **funds are allocated based on type / capacity of systems** and progress of installation reported by the State Implementing Agencies.

PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Uttham Mahabhiyan)

- **About**: It envisages **income generation for farmers from their infertile land** with the establishment of solar power plants.
  - While the farmers can **sell the power generated from the solar plants** to the power distribution companies, the solar pumps can also be installed for irrigation of agricultural land.
- **Origin**: It was launched in 2019 by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).**
- **Aim**: To help farmers **access reliable daytime solar power for irrigation**, reduce power subsidies, and decarbonise agriculture.
- **Three components:**
  - **Component A**: 10,000 MW of Decentralized Ground Mounted Grid Connected Renewable Power Plants of individual plant size up to 2 MW.
  - **Component B**: Installation of 17.50 lakh standalone Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps of individual pump capacity up to 7.5 HP.
  - **Component C**: Solarisation of 10 Lakh Grid-connected Agriculture Pumps of individual pump capacity up to 7.5 HP.
- **Deployment Models:**
  - They can use one of **three deployment models:**
    - off-grid solar pumps,
    - solarised agricultural feeders, or
    - grid connected pumps.
  - **Off-grid pumps** have been the most popular, but the nearly 2,80,000 systems deployed fall far short of the scheme's target of two million by 2022.
- **Implementation**: **State Nodal Agencies (SNAs)** of MNRE will coordinate with States/UTs, Discoms and farmers for implementation of the scheme.

INDIAN EXPRESS

Page 8

PM SVANIDHI

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Govt. Schemes)

Govt sets fresh target of 63 lakh loans for street vendors by year-end

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 1

THE UNION Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry has set a new target for its loan scheme for street vendors — 63 lakh new loans in less than six months till December this year — after having disbursed 50 lakh loans to 39 lakh beneficiaries in the three years since the scheme's launch in 2020.

The Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) was launched during the Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdown to provide street vendors with small working capital loans of Rs 10,000 each. During its launch, the target was set at 50 lakh beneficiaries.

On July 14, in a letter to chief secretaries of all states and Union Territories, Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Manoj Joshi set the new targets: 60,99,000 first-term loans (up to Rs 10,000 each) to beneficiaries in big states, 34,990 such loans in small states and UTs, and 1,66,200 loans in hill states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand and the Northeast.

Joshi also set the target of 22.63 lakh beneficiaries for second-term loans, which are up to Rs 20,000 each and will be given to those who have paid off the first loans, and 2.93 lakh for third-term loans — up to Rs 50,000 given to those who have paid the second.

While the Cabinet extended the scheme's lending period until December 2024 in April last year, these targets are "till December 2023" — months before the scheduled 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

As of Tuesday, the PM SVANidhi website showed that 51.45 lakh loans, amounting to Rs 6,623.36 crore, had been disbursed to 39.07 lakh beneficiaries. This included first-, second- and third-term loans.

In his letter, Joshi wrote: "The scheme not only provides micro-credit to street vendors but is facilitating their inclusion into the formal economy.... Considering the extension of lending period of the scheme and to benefit more street vendors across the country, the ministry has decided to revise the disbursement target for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd tranche loans."

He said the ministry had taken into account the population of urban areas, the loan applications received, and the pending applications to firm up the new targets.

He asked the chief secretaries to assign the new targets to urban local bodies in their states and devise a monitoring mechanism to achieve targets by December 31.

National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI) national coordinator Arbind Singh said the number of street vendors in the country is not known, even though municipality-level surveys of street vendors do take place. He estimates the figure to be around 2 crore.

SETTING FRESH MARKS

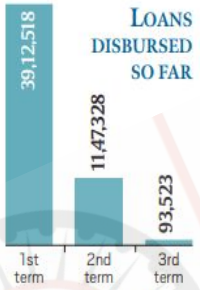
49,76,900
Target of all loans until March 2023

63,00,190
New target of 1st term loans until Dec 2023

22,63,390
New target of 2nd term loans until Dec 2023

2,93,070
New target of 3rd term loans until Dec 2023

LOANS DISBURSED SO FAR



Source: PM SVANidhi website, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Context: The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry has set a new target for its **loan scheme for street vendors** - 63 lakh new loans in less than six months till December this year - after having disbursed 50 lakh loans to 39 lakh beneficiaries in the three years since the scheme's launch in 2020.

PM SVANidhi

- The **PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)** was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020 for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown.
- It is a special micro-credit facility plan to **provide affordable loan of up to ₹10,000 to more than 50 lakh street vendors,** who had their businesses operational on or before 24 March.
- **Small Industries Development Bank of India** is the technical partner for implementation of this scheme.
- It will manage the credit guarantee to the lending institutions through **Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises.**

DTE

August 2

GLOBAL TOBACCO EPIDEMIC

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Health)



Only four countries making full efforts to end smoking: WHO

Netherlands, Mauritius join Brazil and Turkey in implementing all recommended measures to reduce tobacco smoking globally

NEXT NEWS >

By Nandita Banerji

Published: Tuesday 01 August 2023

Context: Netherlands and Mauritius have now joined Brazil and Turkey in implementing all the recommended measures to **reduce tobacco smoking globally**, United Nations' health agency the World Health Organization said.

- In a fresh report, **WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic, 2023: protect people from tobacco smoke**, the UN health agency urged countries to scale up their use of recognised measures to reduce tobacco use.

Key Points

- The **MPOWER tobacco control measures** by the health agency provide tips on quitting and preventing passive smoking, as well as information on tobacco risks, information on restrictions on advertising, promotion and sponsorship and information about raising taxes on tobacco.
  - The **Parties of the WHO Framework Convention** have committed themselves to protecting the health of their populations in a battle against the global tobacco epidemic.
  - In order to assist the countries **fulfill their commitments** under the Framework Convention, en 2008, the WHO established MPOWER, a plan consisting of the six most important and effective tobacco control methods.
  - **The six MPOWER strategies include:**
    - M: Monitor tobacco use and prevention policies
    - P: Protect people from tobacco smoke
    - O: Offer help to quit smoking
    - W: Warn about the dangers of tobacco
    - E: Enforce bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship
    - R: Raise taxes on tobacco
- The **global rate of the prevalence of smoking** had dropped from 22.8 percent in 2007 to 17 per cent in 2021.
- Smoking remains the **leading cause of preventable death,** killing 8.7 million people each year, including 1.3 million who die from inhaling second-hand smoke.
- **74 countries have no regulations** in place addressing such products, meaning no bans on use in public places, no labelling requirements and no bans on advertising.

Steps Taken by India to control Tobacco Consumption

- India adopted the tobacco control provisions under **WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC).**
- The Promulgation of the **Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Ordinance, 2019** prohibits Production, Manufacture, Import, Export, Transport, Sale, Distribution, Storage and Advertisement of e-Cigarettes.
- The Government of India launched the **National Tobacco Quitline Services (NTQLS)** which have the sole objective to provide telephone-based information, advice, support, and referrals for tobacco cessation.
- **mCessation Programme** is a similar initiative which uses mobile technology for tobacco cessation. It was launched in 2016 as part of the government's Digital India initiative.

DTE

August 1

IBERIAN WOLF

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

The Iberian wolf is extinct in Spain's Andalusia: Report

Wolves from the northern and central part of Iberia can still potentially recolonise Andalusia, says government report

Iberian wolf



Conservation status

Extinct — Threatened — Least Concern

EX | EW | CR | EN | VU | NT | LC

Vulnerable (IUCN 3.1)[1]

Scientific classification

Domain:	Eukaryota
Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Mammalia
Order:	Carnivora
Family:	Canidae
Genus:	*Canis*
Species:	*C. lupus*
Subspecies:	***C. l. signatus***

Context: The **Iberian wolf (Canis lupus signatus)**, the species of gray wolf native to the Iberian Peninsula comprising Spain and Portugal, has been extinct in the historic region of Andalusia in the extreme south of Iberia since 2020, according to the regional government.

Key Points

- **Andalusia is an 'autonomous territory' of Spain** and consists of eight provinces: Almería, Cádiz, Córdoba, Granada, Huelva, Jaén, Málaga, and Seville.
- The Iberian wolf is currently distributed over most of the autonomous territories of **Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, Castilla y León** and some areas of La Rioja, Madrid and northern Castilla La Stain.
- More than **90 per cent of the population is located in Castilla** y León, Galicia and Asturias; On the contrary, the southern population is in sharp decline.
- The Iberian wolf, like other types of gray wolf, **lives in packs** that are territorial and hierarchical and led by a dominant breeding pair.
- In **Andalusia, it was mainly found in Sierra Morena** which had good cover, prey base in the form of wild ungulates and a scarce asphalted road network as well as lack of other infrastructure.
- **IUCN Status:** Vulnerable.



TIMES OF INDIA

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CASTE CENSUS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Population & Associated Issues

Bihar caste survey 'perfectly valid, legally competent': HC

Paves Way For Resumption Of Drive After 3 Months

JDU, RJD claim victory; BJP hails verdict

Dev Kumar Pandey | TNN

Patna: The Patna high court dismissed on Tuesday a batch of PILs challenging the validity of the Bihar caste survey, terming the state government's initiative "perfectly valid and legally competent", and paving the way for the stalled exercise to resume after almost three months.

The verdict delivered by the division bench of Chief Justice K Vinod Chandran and Justice Partha Sarthy means the interim stay ordered by the HC on May 4 automatically stands vacated.

The bench upheld the Nitish Kumar government's contention that the Collection of Statistics Act, 2008, empowers it to conduct such an enumeration exercise in the interest of social justice. It also found substance in the state government's submissions citing assembly debates and the Supreme Court's landmark judgment in the Indira Sawhney case pertaining to the rationale for reservation based on caste.

"The aim and purpose of the caste survey is to identify Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes so as to uplift them and ensure equal opportunities — not only by affirmative action, but also providing employment, ensuring admission to educational institutions etc," it said.

"Such endeavours are in the nature of compelling public interest, which overrides the right to privacy...hence, such surveys cannot be brushed aside."

The bench also distinguished a caste survey from a census, observing that the former couldn't in any way be construed as "a coercive exercise" to divulge citizens' personal data since information such as age, sex, parentage, residence, etc, were already in the public domain. It said the "legitimate" objective of the government was to provide "development with justice", as outlined by the governor in his address to both Houses of the state legislature.

A total of 12 writ petitions had challenged the legality of the caste survey announced on June 6, 2022, on the grounds that it was a census in the garb of a survey. The petitions argued that the state government had no legislative competence to conduct a census, which was the exclusive domain of Parliament under the Census Act of 1948. They also contended that such a survey was tantamount to violating the fundamental right to privacy of an individual.

Another point raised by the petitioners was the viability of the projected survey expenditure of Rs 500 crore from the state's contingency fund.

PTI



RJD leaders in Patna celebrate the HC decision on Tuesday

Patna: BJP joined the Nitish Kumar-led Mahagathbandhan in Bihar on Tuesday in welcoming the Patna HC verdict upholding the validity of the caste survey, only for the JD (U)-RJD combine to question if the saffron party was faking it after having allegedly tried to stall the exercise, report **Manoj Chaurasia, Madan Kumar & Abhay Singh**.

After the state BJP welcomed the ruling, deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav accused the party of being a spoke in the wheel "when 80% of the survey had been completed". "There is poverty within every caste, and our initiative is not only aimed at doing a headcount of castes, but also finding out their economic status".

RJD chief Lalu Prasad said the court had "opened door for the all-round progress of the poor (across all castes)".

JD(U) leader Vijay Kumar Choudhary termed the verdict a victory for the "policy and intention of the Nitish government". He said BJP now stood exposed for allegedly conspiring to scupper the initiative.

Context: The Patna high court dismissed a batch of **PILs challenging the validity of the Bihar caste survey**, terming the state government's initiative "perfectly valid and legally competent", and paving the way for the stalled exercise to resume after almost three months.

- The verdict means the interim stay ordered by the HC on May 4 automatically stands vacated.
- The bench upheld the bihar government's contention that the **Collection of Statistics Act, 2008**, empowers it to conduct such an enumeration exercise in the interest of social justice.
- It also found substance in the state government's submissions citing assembly debates and the **Supreme Court's landmark judgment in the Indira Sawhney case** pertaining to the rationale for reservation based on caste.

Caste Census

- **About**: Caste Census is the **demand to include the caste-wise tabulation of India's population** in the upcoming exercise.
- **Background**: Caste was last included in the Indian Census in **1931 at the time by the Britishers.**
  - From 1951 to 2011, every census in independent India provided data on **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes** but not on other castes.
  - The Britishers **ended the practice in the 1941 Census**, citing cost restrictions.
- **Importance of Cast Census:**
  - Equitable representation
  - Enumerating the marginalised
  - Removes caste rigidities
  - Data for Policy Making
  - Judicial support
- **Implications**: In the absence of such a census, there is **no reliable estimate of the number of OBCs,** other categories within OBCs, and others.
- **SECC 2011**: Conducted in 2011 **for the first time since 1931.**
  - It is meant to canvass every Indian family, both in rural and urban India, and ask about their **Economic status and specific caste name.**

DST

August 2

DOUBLE-NUCLEI GALAXIES

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Geography)

New technique developed to search for closely merging supermassive black holes

Context: Researchers have developed a **new algorithm** which has led to the discovery of thousands of double-nuclei galaxies.

- Out of these 159 were confirmed to have pairs of **accreting supermassive black holes** or active galactic nuclei (AGN) as they are usually called.

Key Points

- **Supermassive black holes (SMBHs)** have masses of a million to several billion times the mass of the sun.
- **Accreting SMBH or AGN** gives out enormous amounts of radiation over the entire electromagnetic spectrum. Detecting this radiation is one of the only ways of observing SMBHs in distant galaxies.
- So **detecting AGN pairs is one of the best ways** of tracing the mergers of massive black holes. However, it is extremely rare to find galaxies that have double-nuclei and dual AGN.
- In fact, detection of dual AGN is often only by accident, and before this study less than 50 were known.
- With time, such **AGN pairs finally result in two supermassive black holes** spinning around each other and giving out nano-Hz gravitational waves. The final merger of the SMBHs will give out a burst of gravitational waves.
- Many of these double nuclei galaxies are at separations similar to the separation of the **Milky Way and Andromeda galaxies.**
- Their existence shows us how **merging galaxies** appear to change with time and how their SMBHs will appear before finally merging to form more massive black holes.
- Thus, **studying a large sample of double nuclei galaxies** can help predict how the Milky Way and Andromeda will appear as they merge in the future. This study also shows that galactic collisions can signal “the beginning of the end” for the individual AGN as they merge to form a more massive SMBH.
- The investigators also found that the **merging galaxies have a tendency to look red** - indicating the presence of old stars and the decreased formation of new stars.
- Since star formation is the **lifeblood of galaxies**, red galaxies represent the old, evolved population of galaxies. Thus the study reveals how AGN can extinguish the star formation in galaxies leading to the formation of red and “dead” elliptical galaxies.

PIB

August 1

LOKMANYA TILAK NATIONAL AWARD

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Awards)

PM conferred Lokmanya Tilak National Award in Pune, Maharashtra

Context: The Prime Minister was conferred the **Lokmanya Tilak National Award** in Pune, Maharashtra.

- The Prime Minister donated the cash prize to the Namami Gange Project.
- The Prime Minister **became the 41st recipient of the award.**
- It has previously been presented to luminaries such as Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Mrs Indira Gandhi, Dr Manmohan Singh, Shri N. R. Narayana Murthy, Dr E. Sreedharan among others.

Key Points

- The Award was constituted by **Tilak Smarak Mandir Trust in 1983** to honor the legacy of Lokmanya Tilak.
  - **Bal Gangadhar Tilak,** commonly known as Lokmanya Tilak, was a prominent Indian nationalist, freedom fighter, social reformer, and political leader during the Indian independence movement.
  - The British Government termed him the **"Father of Indian Unrest".**
  - He is known for his slogan, **"Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it."**
- It is awarded to people who have worked for the progress and development of the nation and whose contribution can only be seen as remarkable and extraordinary.
- It is presented **every year on the 1st of August** - Lokmanya Tilak's death anniversary.

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