

DAILY PT POINTERS

29th May, 2024



HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu-Environment (GSIII)Page 5

Crowd pullers



In a safe place: A pair of L'Hoest's monkeys at the Indira Gandhi Zoological Park in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday. The zoo has reported more visitors coming in to see the monkeys from Uganda that were recently rescued from animal traffickers in Srikakulam. K.R DEEPAK

- L'Hoest's Monkey (*Allochrocebus lhoesti*)
 - It is semi-terrestrial and restricted to the lowland, submontane and montane forests of the Albertine Rift in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and western Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda.
 - It is listed as Vulnerable and is listed on Appendix II of CITES

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



The Hindu-IR (GSII)-Page 10

India offers \$1-million aid to Papua New Guinea

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Government of India has granted \$1 million as immediate assistance for Papua New Guinea, which has been hit by a devastating flood and landslip that has so far killed 2,000 people.

"As a close friend and partner under the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) and as a gesture of solidarity with the friendly people of Papua New Guinea, Government of India extends an immediate relief assistance of \$1 million to support relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts," said the Ministry of External Affairs in a press statement.

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India has been providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief to PNG from time to time

Do you know ?

Diplomatic relations between India and the Independent State of Papua New Guinea (PNG) were established when the latter got independence from Australia in 1975.

In an important step in taking forward defence cooperation between India and Papua New Guinea (PNG), PNG appointed its first defence adviser to India.

PNG has been cooperative in issues taken up by India at various international fora including UN, Commonwealth, etc

ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL RELATIONS

10. Bilateral trade figures between India & PNG for the last few years are as follows:
Value: US\$ million (Source: Dept of Commerce, GOI)

Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Export from India to PNG	49.72	56.02	56.17	69.95	85.84
Import into India from PNG	88.97	55.70	125.85	357.58	643.36
Total Bilateral Trade	138.69	111.72	182.02	427.53	729.20

The Hindu- Economy (GSIII)-Page 14

RBI unveils Pravaah portal for approvals

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Tuesday unveiled three major initiatives of the Reserve Bank of India, namely the Pravaah portal, Retail Direct Mobile App and a FinTech Repository.

The Pravaah portal will make it convenient for any individual or entity to apply online for various regulatory approvals in a seamless manner, the RBI said.

The Retail Direct Mobile App will provide retail investors ease of transacting in G-Secs, it added. The Fintech Repository will contain information on data of Indian FinTech firms.

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An altered protein and fussy neurons conspire to cause microcephaly

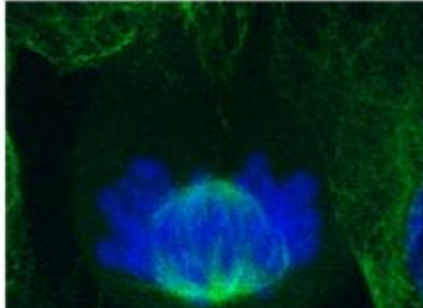
The SASS6 gene and its variants have been implicated in a developmental process that leads to microcephaly. A new study has found that if one copy of this gene is non-functional, the other retains some function. So if both copies are non-functional, a human embryo dies before it becomes a foetus.

D.P. Kishor

Microcephaly is a condition in which a baby's head is much smaller than normal. Most children with microcephaly also have a small brain, poor motor function, poor speech, and abnormal facial features, and are intellectually disabled.

Researchers believe the roots of the condition lie in the peak phase of brain development in the embryo — when the cells that eventually become neurons fail to divide normally. Clinicians can diagnose microcephaly before the baby is born using foetal ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging.

The SASS6 gene, in particular, since 2014, a gene called SASS6 and its variants have been implicated in this developmental process.



protein to exist in all members of the animal kingdom.

When the researchers suppressed the SASS6 gene in *C. elegans* embryos, they found that the cells failed to assemble new neurites, resulting in arrested development.

In 2014, other researchers studied a consanguineous Pakistani family of which four members had microcephaly. All the affected individuals were found to carry a mutated version of the human SASS6 gene on both their copies of chromosome 1 one inherited from the father and the other from the mother.

The SASS6 gene encodes a protein that has 627 amino acids. This protein assembles new neurites during the cell division process. In the study of the Pakistani family, the researchers were able to describe the mutation responsible with microcephaly: the amino acid histidine at position 62 had been replaced by threonine. Thus its name

THE GIST

Most cases of congenital microcephaly come from spontaneous mutations. Consequently, research on the role of a gene from both parents. The risk is greater if the mutated gene is rare in the general population.

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After studying a family of which four members had microcephaly, researchers

discovered that the mutation



point, all the neurites made without using the gene's recipe disappeared, and the cells couldn't differentiate into

During cell division, the old and new cells need to take a series of careful steps. The spindle is like the handrail along this

The gist of the situation: In 2014, researchers discovered the SASS6 gene in the roundworm

tolerance for imperfect neurites. This is why, while an individual with a slightly defective SASS6 gene can survive

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- Researchers believe the roots of the condition lie in the peak phase of brain development in the embryo — when the cells that eventually become neurons fail to divide normally.
- Clinicians can diagnose microcephaly before the baby is born using foetal ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging.
- In particular, since 2014, a gene called SASS6 and its variants have been implicated in this developmental process. The team's findings reinforced the SASS6 gene's role in causing microcephaly

Indian Express-GS1(Geography)Page 8

IMD: La Nina to emerge by July, more rainfall during Aug-Sept

ANJALI MARAR
BENGALURU, MAY 28

THE OCEAN temperatures along the central and equatorial Pacific Ocean were cooling off and neutral El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions are set to emerge anytime soon, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

ENSO is a naturally occurring climate phenomena resulting from ocean-atmosphere interactions. They impact sea surface temperatures along the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

ENSO has three phases : warm conditions referring to El Nino, neutral and cool conditions referring to La Nina. ENSO affects the global weather and triggers extreme weather in the form of rainfall, heat and coldwaves.

On Monday, the IMD said that ENSO neutral conditions would emerge in June and during July-September, ENSO would transition into La Nina.

With the southwest monsoon onset over Kerala expected anytime now, marking the commencement of the four-month long chief rainy season, the development of La Nina in the coming

EXPLAINED La Nina's impact on India

EXCEPT IN east and northeast India, all remaining regions are expected to receive normal or above seasonal rainfall, the IMD said in April. Heavy rains could result in some regions witnessing riverine and urban flooding, mudslides, landslides and cloudbursts.

ple other factors, like the monsoon low pressure systems and depression, which affect the monsoon rainfall, La Nina is one of the major factors. In a La Nina year, one could expect above normal rainfall. This year, due to La Nina conditions, there could be more rainfall during August and September," said Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, director general, IMD. According to the IMD, south peninsular and central India is expected to receive 'above' normal rainfall, northwest India would receive normal rainfall whereas east and northeast India is expected to

known to favour the Indian monsoons. Except the east and north-east India regions, rainfall over remaining parts of the country, during a La Nina year, ends up either being normal or above.

"La Nina generally supports a stronger monsoon wind flow. A stronger monsoon flow can supply the moisture for the monsoon depressions and bring more rain. However, there is no clear indication on whether the number of monsoon depressions are different during a La Nina year," said Roxy Mathew Koll, scientist at the Pune-based Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology.

At the same time, the cyclone potential during La Nina years is higher than normal, hence could act conducive for cyclogenesis. La Nina conditions enhance the ocean heat content in the North Indian Ocean comprising the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea.

"Along with the favorable conditions during a La Nina, the North Indian Ocean temperatures have been increasing at a rapid pace. Many of the extremely severe cyclones (in the past) intensified rapidly in response to warm ocean conditions providing a consistent supply of heat and moisture." Koll added.

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- ENSO has three phases : warm conditions referring to El Nino, neutral and cool conditions referring to La Nina. ENSO affects the global weather and triggers extreme weather in the form of rainfall, heat and coldwaves.

Indian Express-Polity and Governance(GSII)-Page 12

Why an accused in jail can contest, but cannot vote in an election

AJOY SINHA KARPURAM
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

AMONG THE candidates for the Khadoor Sahib Lok Sabha seat that goes to polls with the rest of Punjab on Saturday is Amritpal Singh, head of the pro-Khalistan outfit Waris Punjab De. Amritpal Singh is currently in jail in Dibrugarh, Assam, and his campaign is being led by members of his family.

Amritpal does not have a right to vote. How then can he have the right to be elected to Parliament? What laws apply to voters and candidates who are imprisoned?



DECISION
2024

Statutory rights

In *Indira Gandhi v Raj Narain* (1975), the Supreme Court said that free and fair elections are part of the basic structure of the Constitution, placing it on the highest con-

stitutional pedestal. However, the SC has held that neither the right to elect nor the right to be elected enjoys the same status.

In *Kuldip Nayar v Union of India* (2006), a five-judge Constitution Bench held that the right to vote (or elect) is “pure and simple, a statutory right”. This means that voting is not a fundamental right, and can be denied. The same applied to the right to be elected, the Bench said.

Laws enacted by Parliament could regulate both these statutory rights, the court ruled.

Must be convicted

Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RPA) provides for disqualification from contesting elections to Parliament or state Assemblies “on conviction for certain offences”. The disqualification applies from the date of conviction, and continues for six years after the end of the sentence.

However, the bar on contesting elections kicks in only after a person has been convicted, and not if they are only charged with criminal offences. This is what applies to Amritpal Singh.

Section 8 of the RPA has faced two major challenges in the SC in recent years.

■ In 2011, the nonprofit Public Interest Foundation filed a petition arguing that persons against whom criminal charges have been framed, or who have filed false affidavits regarding their criminal history, should also be disqualified. However, the SC held that only the legislature could alter the RPA.

■ In 2016, advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay filed a petition seeking permanent disqualification for convicted persons. This case is ongoing and, in November 2023, the SC, taking note of delays in criminal cases against MPs and MLAs, asked the Chief Justices of all High Courts to register a suo

motu case titled “In Re: Designated Courts for MPs/MLAs” for HCs and to issue directions for the “expeditious and effective” disposal of these cases.

A report submitted to the court in April 2024 showed 4,472 such cases were still pending.

Exceptions to provision

The Election Commission of India (ECI) is empowered under Section 11 of the RPA to “remove” or “reduce” the period of disqualification. In 2019, the ECI used this power to reduce the period of disqualification faced by

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang who was released following a one-year prison sentence in 2018 for misappropriating funds in the procurement of cows. The Sikkim Kramtikari Morcha leader went on to win the byelection for the Poldok Kamrang Assembly seat.

Another situation where a disqualified MP or MLA can contest arises if their conviction is stayed on appeal to a higher court. In 2019 the Supreme Court held that once a conviction is stayed, “the disqualification which operates as a consequence of the conviction cannot take or remain in effect”.

Dharanajay Singh, a former BSP MP who had been convicted of kidnapping by a district court in 2020, approached the Allahabad HC for a stay on his seven-year sentence, which would allow him to contest the Lok Sabha election. Last month, the HC granted him bail, but refused to stay the conviction, saying “it is the need of the hour to have purity in politics”.

In 1997, the SC rejected a challenge to Section 62(5) in the case of *Anukul Chandra Pradhan v. Union of India*. The court re-affirmed that the right to vote was a statutory right and could be subject to statutory limitations. It also held that a person in prison because of their conduct “cannot claim equal freedom of movement, speech and expression”, and that restrictions on prisoners’ right to vote are reasonable as they are linked to keeping “persons with criminal background away from the election scene”.

No voting right for jailed

Sub-clause (5) of Section 62 of the RPA states: “No person shall vote at any election if he is confined in a prison, whether under a sentence of imprisonment or transportation or otherwise, or is in the lawful custody of

the police.”

With an exception provided for those in preventive detention, this provision effectively bars every individual who has criminal charges framed against them from casting their vote unless they have been released on bail or have been acquitted.

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This decision has been relied upon by both the SC (in 2023) and the Delhi HC (in 2020) to dismiss pleas seeking voting rights for prisoners.

- In 1975, the Supreme Court in the case of *Indira Gandhi v Raj Narain* recognised that free and fair elections are a part of the ‘basic structure’ of the Constitution of India, and any laws or policies that would violate this principle could be struck down.
- Though free and fair elections have been placed on the highest constitutional pedestal, the Supreme Court has held that the rights to elect and be elected do not enjoy the same status. For instance, a five-judge constitution Bench in 2006, in the case of *Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India* held that the right to vote (or the right to elect as it was called) is “pure and simple, a statutory right”. This means that voting is not a fundamental right and can be repealed. Section 8 of the Representation of People Act, 1951 (RP Act) is titled “Disqualification on conviction for certain offences”. Suppose a person is convicted of any of the offences in the exhaustive list provided in the provision.
- The Election Commission of India (ECI) is empowered under Section 11 of the RP Act to “remove” or “reduce” the period of disqualification

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

News on air :Miscellaneous

Indian Army Major Radhika Sen Selected To Receive 2023 Military Gender Advocate Of Year Award



Major Radhika Sen 

Engagement Platoon Commander, UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
Recipient of the 2023 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award

- Created in 2016, the United Nations “Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award” recognizes the dedication and efforts of an individual military peacekeeper in promoting the principles of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.
- Major Sen is the second Indian peacekeeper to receive this prestigious award following in the footsteps of Major Suman Gawani who was a co-recipient for 2019.

Do you know ?

India is currently the eleventh largest contributor of women military peacekeepers to the United Nations with 124 now deployed.