

DAILY PT POINTERS

8th July, 2024



The Hindu : _GS 2/Governance –Page-8

On expunction powers in Parliament

Why did the Opposition engage in a war of words with the government over expunging certain remarks? What is the process to expunge remarks in Parliament? Can a member of the Lok Sabha direct a remark against a Minister? What do the various rules state?

EXPLAINER

Sunday

The story so far:

The first special session of the 18th Lok Sabha witnessed heated discussions, with the Opposition clashing with the government over a range of issues, ultimately concluding with a war of words over the expunction of the remarks of the leaders of Opposition in both Houses. Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar removed portions of Leader of Opposition (LoP) Mallikarjun Kharge's speech, which was critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Meanwhile, in the Lower House, parts of Rahul Gandhi's remarks on the PM and the BJP were expunged from the records on the orders of Speaker Om Birla, sparking allegations of different yardsticks being applied for different MPs.

When are remarks expunged?

Parliament maintains a verbatim record of everything that is spoken and takes place during proceedings. While Article 105 of the Constitution confers certain privileges and freedom of speech in Parliament on MPs, it is subject to other provisions of the Constitution and the rules of the House. On the orders of the presiding officer, that is, the Chairman in the Upper House and the Speaker in the Lower House, words, phrases and expressions which are deemed "defamatory, indecent, unparliamentary or undignified" are deleted or expunged from records. For this purpose, the Lok Sabha Secretariat maintains a comprehensive list of 'unparliamentary' words and expressions.

The rules of parliamentary etiquette, which are laid out to ensure discipline and decorum in the Rajya Sabha, say, "When the Chair holds that a particular word or expression is unparliamentary, it should be immediately withdrawn without any attempt to raise any debate



War of words: Leader Of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge speaks in the House. ANI

over it. Words or expressions held to be unparliamentary and omitted to be expunged by the Chair are credited to the printed debates."

There have been recorded instances where the scope of expunction has been broadened. Speakers, at their discretion, have ordered the expunction of words deemed prejudicial to national interest or detrimental to maintaining friendly relations with a foreign State, derogatory to dignitaries, likely to offend national sentiments or affect the religious susceptibilities of a section of community, likely to discredit the Army, not in good taste or otherwise objectionable or likely to bring the House into ridicule or lower the dignity of the Chair, the House or the members, authors M. N. Kaul and S. L. Shakher note in their book *Practice and Procedure of Parliament*. For instance, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru once

objected when a member referred to the President of Pakistan while asking a supplementary question about the international situation. Mr. Nehru said it would "not be proper" for the Head of a foreign state to be mentioned in the language the member had used. The objectionable words were then expunged.

Members must withdraw objectionable remarks deemed irrelevant to the debate upon the Chair's request and failure to comply may lead to expunction. Similarly, quoting from an un referenced document or speaking after being asked to desist can result in an expunction.

What about remarks against an MP?

If an MP makes an allegation against their colleague or an outsider, Rule 353 of the Lok Sabha outlines the procedural framework to be followed. "The Rule does not prohibit the making of any allegation.

The only requirement is advance notice, on receipt of which the Minister concerned will conduct an inquiry into the allegation and come up with the facts when the MP makes the allegation in the House," former Lok Sabha Secretary General P.D.T. Achary says. If the allegation is neither defamatory nor incriminatory, the above rule would not apply, he adds.

"The rule does not obviously apply to an allegation against a Minister in the government. Since the Council of Ministers is accountable to Parliament, the Members of the House have the right to question Ministers and make imputations against their conduct as Ministers," Mr. Achary adds.

How do officers expunge remarks?

The Chairman and Speaker are vested with the power to order the expunction of remarks under Rule 261, and Rule 380 and 381 of the Rules of Procedure of the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, respectively. Rule 261 states, "If the Chairman is of opinion that a word or words have or have been used in debate which is or are defamatory or indecent or unparliamentary or undignified, he may in his discretion, order that such word or words be expunged from the proceedings of the Council." The Lower House has a similar provision.

However, the relevance of the practice of expunging remarks has lately come into question, in a digital age where expunged content remains accessible due to the live telecast of proceedings and wider circulation of screenshots and videos on social media.

The expunged portions are marked by asterisks with an explanatory footnote stating 'expunged as ordered by the Chair'. If the Chair directs that nothing will go on record during a member's speech or interruption, footnote 'not recorded' is inserted. A comprehensive list of words and phrases is circulated to media outlets at the end of the day's proceedings. Once expunged, these words or phrases cease to exist on the official record. However, the relevance of the practice of expunging remarks has lately come into question, in a digital age where expunged content remains accessible due to the live telecast of proceedings and wider circulation of screenshots and videos on social media.

THE GIST

THE GIST

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar removed portions of Mallikarjun Kharge's speech, which was critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the RSS. Meanwhile, in the Lower House, parts of Rahul Gandhi's remarks on the PM and the BJP were expunged from the records on the orders of Speaker Om Birla.

The Chairman and Speaker are vested with the power to order the expunction of remarks under Rule 261, and Rule 380 and 381 of the Rules of Procedure of the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, respectively.

However, the relevance of the practice of expunging remarks has lately come into question, in a digital age where expunged content remains accessible due to the live telecast of proceedings and wider circulation of screenshots and videos on social media.

- Parliament maintains a verbatim record of everything that is spoken and takes place during proceedings.
- While Article 105 of the Constitution confers certain privileges and freedom of speech in Parliament on MPs, it is subject to other provisions of the Constitution and the rules of the House.
- On the orders of the presiding officer, that is, the Chairman in the Upper House and the Speaker in the Lower House, words, phrases and expressions which are deemed "defamatory, indecent, unparliamentary or undignified" are deleted or expunged from records.
 - For this purpose, the Lok Sabha Secretariat maintains a comprehensive list of 'unparliamentary' words and expressions.

The Hindu :GS2-Governance(Page -12)

Bail cannot be withheld as a form of punishment, says SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has held that the right to bail of an accused cannot be withheld as a punishment irrespective of the nature of the crime.

Refusal to grant bail is an unjust punishment leading to “prisonisation” of an accused, who is innocent until proven guilty, the apex court reminded.

“If the state or any prosecuting agency, including the court concerned, has no wherewithal to provide or protect the fundamental right of an accused to have a speedy trial as enshrined under Article 21 of the Constitution then the state or any other prosecuting agency should not oppose the plea for bail on the ground that the crime committed is serious. Article 21 of the Constitution applies irrespective of the



nature of the crime,” a Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Ujjal Bhuyan observed in a recent order.

The order was based on an appeal filed by Javed Gulam Nabi Shaikh against a Bombay High Court decision refusing him bail in a case under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA).

Rejects NIA request

The top court refused a request made by the National Investigation Agency (NIA)

to adjourn the matter and decided to give Shaikh his liberty back. The Bench noted that he has been languishing in prison as an undertrial for the past four years. It added that the trial court had so far not even been able to proceed to frame charges and the State of Maharashtra and the NIA have a total of 80 witnesses to examine in the case.

“Over a period of time, the trial courts and the High Courts have forgotten a very well settled principle of law that bail is not to be withheld as a punishment,” the apex court underscored.

The prosecution case is that Shaikh was apprehended on February 9, 2020 with a bag of counterfeit notes of the denomination of ₹2,000. It was alleged that the consignment was smuggled from Pakistan to Mumbai

- The Supreme Court has held that the right to bail of an accused cannot be withheld as a punishment irrespective of the nature of the crime.
- Article 21 of the Constitution applies irrespective of the nature of the crime.

The Hindu: GS 3/Science and Tech/Environment

Kerala varsity to launch genome editing mission to boost pearl spot production

K.A. Martin
KOCHI

Pearl spot farmers in Kerala have for ages endured the drudgery of finding brood stocks in the wild, breeding them in vastly uncontrolled environments and releasing fingerlings into aquaculture ponds only to see the fish barely achieving body weight of 300 to 400 grams in a year.

That may soon be a thing of the past as the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (Kufos) prepares to launch a genome editing mission to see if the State fish can revolutionise aquaculture as



Genome editing will help enhance breeding and seed production of pearl spots, says Kerala University of Fisheries. H. VIBHU

genetically improved farmed tilapia (GIFT) did decades ago.

Genome editing will target the genetic make-up of the fish that inhibits a faster rate of growth. It will al-

so help enhance breeding and seed production of pearl spots, said Kufos Vice-Chancellor Pradeep Kumar T.

Achieving higher body weight at an enhanced rate

will be a great blessing for aqua farmers in the State because pearl spots fetch a premium in the market whereas tilapia does not. Pearl spots are sold in the retail market for about ₹650 to ₹700 a kg, while tilapia fetches between ₹250 and ₹300 a kg.

But, tilapia achieves a body weight of 600 to 700 grams in six months compared with 12 months needed for pearl spots to achieve 300 to 400 grams. According to data available for 2020, Kerala produces 2,000 tonnes of pearl spots annually against the market demand of 10,000 tonnes.

- The Pearl spot, *Etroplus suratensis* commonly known as “Karimeen” in Kerala is an indigenous fish extensively found along the east and south-west coasts of Peninsular India. It is an important candidate species for aquaculture in ponds in both brackishwater and freshwater environments.
- It is cultured in traditional ponds in Kerala where it is considered a delicacy fetching a high price up to Rs. 150/kg.
- Least Concern

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express-Art and Culture (GSI)-Page 7



A sea of devotees during the Rath Yatra in Puri on Sunday. ANI

- Ratha Jatra, the Festival of Chariots of Lord Jagannatha is celebrated every year at Puri, the temple town in Odisha, on the east coast of India. The presiding deities of the main temple, Sri Mandira, Lord Jagannatha, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra, with the celestial wheel Sudarshana are taken out from the temple precincts in an elaborate ritual procession to their respective chariots.

Indian Express –Economy (GSIII)-Page 11

Crop insurance coverage drops in FY24 as 4 top insurers cut exposure

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, JULY 7

GENERAL INSURANCE companies reduced their exposure to crop insurance under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) during FY24 despite the government's push to expand the insurance coverage in the farm sector. Gross direct premium underwritten by insurers declined by 4.17 per cent to Rs 30,677 crore during the fiscal as against Rs 32,011 crore in the previous year even as farmers faced crop losses due to floods, unseasonal rains and heatwaves.

Crop insurance premium underwritten had risen by 8.66 per cent to Rs 29,465 crore in the previous fiscal (FY23).

The decline is mainly due to the 32 per cent fall in premium income underwritten by state-owned Agriculture Insurance Company (AIC) to Rs 9,890 crore during FY24 from Rs 14,619 crore a year ago, according to data released by the General Insurance Council. AIC is the leading crop insurer in the country. Four government-controlled insurers – AIC, New India Assurance, Oriental



Farmers transplant paddy saplings in a field at Jagdalpur in Bastar district, Chhattisgarh. *PTI File*

deduced its exposure to just Rs 8.94 crore in FY24 from Rs 1,752 crore a year ago. SBI General Insurance also reduced its exposure. New India Assurance Company, the largest insurer in the country, reported a negative premium underwritten at Rs 34.41 crore as against Rs 11.38 crore last year.

"Four insurers controlled by the government directly or indirectly reported a decline in crop insurance coverage. The farm sector is a vital sector of the economy. Public sector entities should have been in the forefront of providing cover to

flation levels.

However, general insurers overall reported a 19.5 per cent rise in premium income underwritten from Rs 17,391 crore a year ago to Rs 20,786 crore. As many as eight general insurers kept away from crop insurance during the year.

The PMFBY scheme, which is currently integrated with multiple stakeholders on a single platform, has covered nearly 4 crore farmers with more than 50 different crops in FY24 under the insurance coverage. More than 55 per cent of the insured farmers in the year are under non-loanee farmer

FALL IN PREMIUM INCOME UNDERWRITTEN BY AIC

■ The decline is mainly due to the 32% fall in premium income underwritten by state-owned Agriculture Insurance Company (AIC) to Rs 9,890 crore during FY24 from Rs 14,619 crore a year ago, according to data released by the General Insurance Council

PMFBY provides a comprehensive insurance cover against failure of the crop, thus helping in stabilising the income of the farmers and encourage them for adoption of innovative practices.

The scheme is compulsory for loanee farmer obtaining crop loan or kisan credit card (KCC) account for notified crops. However, it's voluntary for other/ non loanee farmers who have insurable interest in the insured crop. The maximum premium payable by the farmers will be 2 per cent for all Kharif food and oilseeds crops, 1.5 per cent for rabi food and

enrol non-loanee farmers from Kharif 2023 onwards. This initiative successfully engaged insurance brokers and resulted in 71 per cent of farmer enrolments through Point of Salespersons (PoSPs), totalling 6.88 lakh farmer applications with more than 4.15 lakh hectares of area under insurance across 11 States and 12 insurers, the Ministry said in a note to the CEOs of insurance companies and broking firms it said.

"Utilising such extensive network of over 12 lakh PoSPs via insurance brokers offers a substantial opportunity to increase non-loanee farmer enrolments. This strategy significantly enhances the enrolment of non-loanee farmers while simultaneously expanding their access to a diverse range of retail insurance products," the Ministry said.

As per the service level agreement (SLA), insurance intermediaries should provide enrolment services to non-loanee farmer through the AIDE (mobile and web platform) developed by Ministry of Agriculture. Following the successful submission of the application on AIDE and the is-

- General insurance companies reduced their exposure to crop insurance under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) during FY24 despite the government's push to expand the insurance coverage in the farm sector.
- The PMFBY scheme, which is currently integrated with multiple stakeholders on a single platform, has covered nearly 4 crore farmers with more than 50 different crops in FY24 under the insurance coverage.
- PMFBY provides a comprehensive insurance cover against failure of the crop, thus helping in stabilising the income of the farmers and encourage them for adoption of innovative practices.
- The scheme is compulsory for loanee farmer obtaining crop loan or kisan credit card (KCC) account for notified crops. However, it's voluntary for other/ non loanee farmers who have insurable interest in the insured crop.
- The premium under the scheme is determined through bidding however, farmers have to pay maximum 2% for Kharif, 1.5% for Rabi food and oilseed crops and 5% for commercial/horticultural crops

Indian Express –Economy (GSIII)-Page 11

ANNUAL SURVEY OF UNINCORPORATED ENTERPRISES FOR 2022-23

UP, West Bengal, Maharashtra had highest share of informal sector enterprises in 2022-23

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

UTTAR PRADESH, West Bengal and Maharashtra had the highest share of informal sector enterprises in both rural and urban areas in 2022-23, the latest Annual Survey of Unincorporated Enterprises for 2022-23 released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) showed. While the share of informal sector enterprises decreased in the post-pandemic year 2022-23 for some states such as Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the state of Uttar Pradesh topped among major states with an increase in the number of unincorporated non-agricultural enterprises.

Among the major states, Uttar Pradesh recorded a 13.83 per cent share of informal sector enterprises in 2022-23, that is, October

STATES WITH HIGHEST SHARE OF INFORMAL SECTOR ENTERPRISES

	2022-23	2021-22
Uttar Pradesh	13.83%	12.99%
West Bengal	12.04%	12.31%
Maharashtra	9.37%	8.81%
Tamil Nadu	6.50%	6.80%
Bihar	5.69%	5.25%
Gujarat	5.37%	6.17%
Karnataka	5.34%	5.72%
MP	5.03%	5.35%
AP	4.93%	4.87%
Odisha	4.53%	4.08%



*Total includes data for 13 other regions; Source: Annual Survey of Unincorporated Enterprises 2022-23 & 2021-22

aftermath of the pandemic compared with 2021-22.

In 2022-23, informal sector workers declined to 1.57 crore in Uttar Pradesh from 1.65 crore in 2015-16 but rose from 1.30 crore in 2021-22. West Bengal also saw a decline in informal sector work-

cent in 2021-22.

The surveys for the unincorporated sector enterprises have been released after a long gap after the data collection. The data for these non-agricultural sector enterprises is seen as a crucial indicator as the informal sector is closely

- Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Maharashtra had the highest share of informal sector enterprises in both rural and urban areas in 2022-23, the latest Annual Survey of Unincorporated Enterprises for 2022-23 released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) showed. While the share of informal sector enterprises decreased in the post-pandemic year 2022-23 for some states such as Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the state of Uttar Pradesh topped among major states

Indian Express –Economy (GSIII)-Page 11

Digital Bharat Nidhi: Govt's fresh attempt to improve rural telecom connectivity

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

THE DEPARTMENT of Telecommunications (DoT) has released draft rules to operationalise the Digital Bharat Nidhi, which would replace the erstwhile Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) and be a fresh attempt by the Central government at increasing telecom connectivity in rural areas.

The USOF is a pool of funds generated by 5 per cent Universal Service Levy that is charged upon all the telecom fund operators on their Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR). The idea is that this money would be used to fund the expansion of telecom networks in remote and rural areas, where private companies may otherwise resist from offering their services due to it not being a revenue generating market.

With the Centre notifying parts of the Telecom Act, it has also proposed additional rules for the final closure of the USOF as the



will select "DBN implementers" through "bidding" or invitation of applications from eligible persons.

This so-called administrator will determine the modalities of providing funding to DBN implementers on a case-by-case basis, including but not limited to full funding, partial funding, co-funding, market risk mitigation, and risk capital.

The DBN shall fund schemes and projects for providing targeted access to telecommuni-

cation, or expanding a telecommunication network shall share and make available such telecommunication network, and telecommunication services being delivered using such telecommunication networks on an open and non-discriminatory basis, and in accordance with the instructions issued from time to time by the administrator," the draft rules said.

Underutilisation of USOF

Since its establishment in

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on July 4 released draft rules to operationalise the Digital Bharat Nidhi, in a fresh attempt by the central government at increasing telecom connectivity in rural areas.
- Digital Bharat Nidhi would replace the erstwhile Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), which is a pool of funds generated by a 5 per cent Universal Service Levy charged upon all the telecom fund operators on their Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR).
- The idea is that this money would be used to fund the expansion of telecom networks in remote and rural areas, where private companies may otherwise resist offering their services due to them not being revenue-generating markets.
- As per the Telecom Act, contributions made by telecom companies towards the Digital Bharat Nidhi will first be credited to the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI). All revenues that the government receives, including loans raised and all money received in repayment of loans, are credited to the CFI. The government also incurs its expenditures from this fund.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express –Environment (GSIII)-page 12

WHY ARCTIC WILDFIRES ARE BAD NEWS FOR THE WORLD

ALIND CHAUHAN
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

SMOKE FROM raging wildfires has once again darkened the skies over the Arctic. It is the third time in the past five years that high intensity fires have erupted in the region, Europe's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said earlier in July. A majority of fires are in Sakha, Russia, where more than 160 wildfires charred nearly 460,000 hectares of land up until June 24.

The June monthly total carbon emissions from the wildfires are the third highest of the past two decades, at 6.8 megatonnes of carbon, behind June 2020 and 2019, which recorded 16.3 and 13.8 megatonnes of carbon respectively, C3S added.

Wildfires have been a natural part of the Arctic's boreal forest or snow forest and tundra (treeless regions) ecosystems. However, in recent years, their frequency and scale have increased, primarily due to global warming. And these blazing wildfires are fueling the climate crisis.



A wildfire in Yakutia, Russia, in 2021. Reuters

temperature difference between the Arctic and lower latitudes. As a result, the polar jet stream often gets "stuck" in one place, bringing unseasonably warm weather to the region. This can lead to intense heatwaves, which can cause more wildfires.

All three factors – rising temperatures, more frequent lightning and heatwaves – will most likely worsen in the coming years, thereby causing more wildfires in the Arctic.

- Wildfires have been a natural part of the Arctic's boreal forest or snow forest and tundra (treeless regions) ecosystems. However, in recent years, their frequency and scale in the regions have increased, primarily due to global warming.
- The Arctic has been warming roughly four times as fast as the world. While the global average temperature has increased by at least 1.1 degree Celsius above the pre-industrial levels, the Arctic has become on average around 3 degree warmer than it was in 1980.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



PIB–Health

Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying

Increasing Public Awareness on World Zoonoses Day: Not All Animal Diseases Are Zoonotic

Posted On: 07 JUL 2024 1:29PM by PIB Delhi

World Zoonoses Day is celebrated in honour of Louis Pasteur, who administered the first successful rabies vaccine, a zoonotic disease, on July 6, 1885.

This day is dedicated to raising awareness about zoonoses—diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans—and promoting preventive and control measures.

Do you know ?

Zoonoses are infectious diseases that can transfer between animals and humans, such as rabies, anthrax, influenza (H1N1 and H5N1), Nipah, COVID-19, brucellosis, and tuberculosis. These diseases are caused by various pathogens, including bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



PIB–Art and Culture(GSI)

Ministry of Culture

Ministry of Culture initiates Project PARI for the 46th World Heritage Committee Meeting

Project PARI aims at stimulating dialogue, reflection, and inspiration, contributing to the dynamic cultural fabric of the nation.

Over 150 visual artists from all over the country working on various sites in the national capital for beautification of public spaces for the upcoming event.

Posted On: 06 JUL 2024 6:50PM by PIB Delhi

- **Project PARI** (Public Art of India), an initiative by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, being executed by **Lalit Kala Akademi and National Gallery of Modern Art** seeks to bring forth public art that draws inspiration from millennia of artistic heritage (lok kala/lok sanskriti) while incorporating modern themes and techniques. These expressions underscore the intrinsic value that art holds in Indian society, serving as a testament to the nation's enduring commitment to creativity and artistic expression.