

DAILY PT POINTERS

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The Hindu-Economy(GSIII)-Page 5

Spotted locusts invade farms in Idukki, destroy crops

The Hindu Bureau
IDUKKI

The changing climate pattern in the hill district of Kerala poses a threat to its farming sector. Amid the crop loss suffered from incursions by wild animals – and creatures like Malabar parakeets and snails – farmers in Idukki are now reeling under the menace of spotted locust infestation. At Konnathady and Vathikudy grama panchayats, farmers have reported that grasshoppers in large numbers are engulfing their farms, leading to significant crop loss.

“Thousands of grasshoppers arrived from the forests and caused damage. Farms vanished within hours from the grasshopper infestation,” said Ashokan K.K., a farmer in Konnathady.



New concern: Spotted locusts on a farm at Konnathady panchayat in Idukki district. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Konnathady agriculture officer Biju K.D. said plantations of over 70 farmers were severely affected by the spotted locust infestation. “The infestation is being reported in Konnathady and Vathikudy panchayats in Idukki. These insects are attacking coconut trees, bananas, cardamom, pepper, and even large trees,” he said.

Mr. Biju said the Agricul-

ture Department had conducted awareness camps for farmers to prevent the infestation and protect their plants.

Crops destroyed

Confirming the infestation, Gavas Ragesh, assistant professor (entomology), Banana Research Station, Kerala Agricultural University, Kannara, said the pests were identified as

spotted grasshopper/spot-
ted locust (*Aularches militaris*), belonging to the insect family Pyrgomorphidae.

“Large numbers of winged adults were found denuding various crops such as banana, coconut, cardamom, vegetables, areca nut, wild plants and Glyricidia and teak trees. Simultaneously paired adults were seen having pre-oviposition feeding on crops, too. The affected crops were severely destroyed, leaving only midribs or partial leaf lamina hanging from the plants, especially in banana, coconut, etc.” said Mr. Ragesh.

“For management, the farmers can plough the field to expose the egg pods laid by the grasshoppers into the soil to harsh sun rays. Farmers may spray neem oil (5 to 10 ml per litre of water) on grass-

hopper bands or the plants to act as a repellent or feeding deterrent. In emergency conditions as a last resort, farmers may spray insecticides like Lambda-cyhalothrin onto the attacked plants,” he said.

Hit by climate change

According to the expert, the changing climate pattern is the major reason for the infestation.

Climatologist Gopakumar Cholayil said, “The variation of temperature and excess and decline of rainfall also causes various pest attacks. The snail attacks in cardamom plantations and grasshopper attacks in parts of Idukki district are also indications of changing climate pattern. Such climate variations should negatively impact the livelihood of the farming community.”

- The changing climate pattern in the hill district of Kerala poses a threat to its farming sector. Amid the crop loss suffered from incursions by wild animals — and creatures like Malabar parakeets and snails — farmers in Idukki are now reeling under the menace of spotted locust infestation.
- Locusts are the short-horned grasshoppers with highly migratory habit, marked polymorphism and voracious feeding behavior. They are capable of forming swarms (adult’s congregation) and hopper bands (nymphal congregation).
- They cause great devastation to natural and cultivated vegetation. They are indeed the sleeping giants that can flare up any time to inflict heavy damage to the crops leading to national emergency of food and fodder.

The Hindu-Defense(GSIII)-Page 8

House panel to deliberate on India's readiness to deal with 'non-kinetic warfare'

Dinakar Peri
Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Indian armed forces' preparedness to deal with "hybrid warfare" is one of the 17 subjects that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence has narrowed down for deliberations for the year.

According to informed sources, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, a member of the committee, spoke extensively on the growing danger of "non-kinetic warfare" citing the examples of ongoing Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Palestine conflicts, where these methods have been deployed. He contended that the future wars will be fought using these tools and urged chairman and BJP MP Radha Mohan Singh, at the committee's first meeting on October 15, to ensure that the parliamentary panel closely investigates the Army's preparedness to face these threats.

Several other members concurred with the view, citing the recent spate of pager blasts in Lebanon,



Non-kinetic warfare goes beyond the usual military tactics and can involve electronic and information warfare. REUTERS

which is an example of a "non-kinetic warfare".

Evolving concept

Kinetic warfare typically means military employing a range of weapons. Non-kinetic warfare is an evolving concept, it goes beyond the usual military tactics and can involve electronic warfare, cyber, information, psychological and economic among others. Importantly, it can involve non-military stakeholders too. With technological progress, many believe that the non-kinetic warfare can turn out to be deadlier than the traditional methods.

In the domain of counter-drone technologies, the armed forces have been

looking to induct a range of kinetic and non-kinetic solutions to neutralise drones and drone swarms.

The House panel will also assess the "strategic operational preparedness of the defence forces in view of the current international security scenario, including border security," which will involve reviewing the prolonged stand-off on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China.

Among other topics, the panel will be reviewing "indigenous defence production", "resettlement policies, healthcare facilities and avenues for ex-servicemen" and "assessment of next of kin policy in the armed forces."

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Indian Express –GS 2(Governance)-Page 7

SC recalls verdict declaring benami law provisions unconstitutional

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

Allowing a petition filed by the Center, the Supreme Court Friday recalled its August 23, 2022, order declaring certain provisions of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988, as unconstitutional.

The August 2022 order was delivered by a bench presided by the then CJI N V Ramana and comprising Justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli.

On Friday, a bench headed by CJI D Y Chandrachud and comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra agreed with Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta's submission that the constitutional validity of the unamended Act was never a question before the court when it decided the matter first.

"It is undisputed that there was no challenge to the constitutional validity of the provisions of the unamended Act. This is

petition and recall the judgment," the bench said.

The SC also restored the civil appeal for fresh adjudication before a bench to be nominated by the CJI on the administrative side. It also allowed all those aggrieved by the application of the 2022 judgment in their cases to seek review of the respective orders.

The verdict in 2022 held as unconstitutional Section 3(2) of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988, that prescribed a jail term for entering into benami transactions.

The order also held that the Act, which was amended in 2016, can only be applied prospectively and quashed all prosecutions or confiscation proceedings before the amended Act came into force.

The bench also expressed concern on certain findings in the top court's judgment upholding the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 allowing authorities to take possession of property before trial in excep-

- The Supreme Court of India has recalled its August 23, 2022, ruling that deemed certain provisions of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988, unconstitutional. The earlier decision, made by a bench led by former Chief Justice N.V. Ramana, had invalidated Section 3(2) of the Act, which imposed jail terms for entering into benami transactions, and stated that the Act could only be applied prospectively. On Friday, a new bench led by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud agreed with Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the constitutional validity of the unamended Act was never contested in the initial ruling.
- Additionally, the bench expressed concerns about certain findings in a previous judgment upholding the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, which allowed property possession before trial in exceptional cases, stating it could lead to arbitrary application.

Indian Express –GS 2(Governance)-Page 12

Lady Justice: Roots in ancient Greece, not always blindfolded

BY AJOY SINHA KARPURAM
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

THE SUPREME COURT has unveiled a new statue of “Lady Justice”, reimagining the image — typically a blindfolded woman holding a set of scales in one hand and a sword in the other — that is synonymous with legal practice around the world.

The new, six-foot-tall statue in the judges’ library is of a saree-clad woman with no blindfold, holding scales and, instead of the sword, a copy of the Constitution of India.

The blindfold in the classic rendition has been popularly understood to represent the impartiality of justice, whereas the new statue with unimpeded vision is meant to signify that “Law is not blind; it sees everyone equally.” Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, who commissioned the

statue, said.

The new take on the statue, which has been designed by Vinod Goswami, a muralist who teaches at the College of Art in Delhi, comes in the wake of legal reforms such as the new criminal codes, and the stated aim of “decolonising” the legal framework in India.

Changing meaning

The imagery of Lady Justice can be traced back to Greek and Roman mythology.

Themis, one of the 12 Titans born to Gaia and Uranus according to works of the Greek poet Hesiod who lived circa 700 BCE, is known as the goddess of justice, wisdom, and good counsel — and is often depicted as a woman holding scales in one hand and a sword in the other.

The first Roman emperor Augustus (27 BCE-14 CE) introduced the worship of justice in the form of a goddess known as

Justitia (or Iustitia). Justitia, like Themis, did not wear a blindfold.

Legal scholar Desmond Manderson of the College of Law, Australian National University, wrote in a 2020 paper that the “first known image to show a blindfolded justice comes from a woodcut... published in Ship of Fools, a collection of satirical poems by fifteenth century lawyer Sebastian Brant.”

This 1494 image, Manderson pointed out, “is not a celebration of blind justice, but a critique”. The woodcut, often attributed to German Renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer, is titled “The Fool Blindfolding Justice”, and depicts the eponymous ‘fool’ blindfolding a woman resembling Lady Justice — with a sword in one hand and scales in the other.

However, by the early 17th century, Manderson wrote, the image had “lost its

satirical connotations”, and had come to be equated with the very notion of justice.

Lady Justice in India

Along with the common law legal system that continues to serve as the basis for how India’s judiciary functions, the British Raj also introduced the iconography of Lady Justice. This image still survives in courthouses around the country.

At the Calcutta High Court — first constructed in 1872 — images of Lady Justice were carved into the pillars supporting the building. The depictions show Lady Justice blindfolded in some cases, and with her eyes open in others. The Bombay High Court too, features a statue of Lady Justice at the top of one of its buildings, once again without a blindfold.

The new statue at the Supreme Court is

very similar to another piece of art featured on the premises. A mural close to the judges’ entrance shows Mahatma Gandhi and Lady Justice on either side of a chakra; Lady Justice in this depiction is wearing a saree, and holding scales and a book instead of a sword.

Protests in Bangladesh

In December 2016, a large statue of the goddess Themis was erected in the front plaza of Bangladesh’s Supreme Court. The statue wore a sari and a blindfold, and held scales and a sword.

The statue led to protests from the Muslim orthodox who objected to what they claimed was idol worship. In May 2017, the statue was removed to a location on the Supreme Court premises that was away from the public eye. In August 2024, after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, the statue was demolished.



The new statue of Lady Justice in Supreme Court. 77

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HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB –Governance(GSII)

Prime Minister's Office



PM to launch 'Karmayogi Saptah' - National Learning Week on 19th October

Each Karmayogi to achieve at least 4 hours of competency-linked learning

Ministries and Departments to organise workshops and seminars to enhance domain-specific competencies

Posted On: 18 OCT 2024 11:42AM by PIB Delhi

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will launch the 'Karmayogi Saptah' - National Learning Week on 19th October at around 10:30 AM at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi.
- Mission Karmayogi was launched in September 2020 and it has made substantial progress since then. It envisions a future-ready civil service rooted in Indian ethos, with a global perspective.
- The National Learning Week (NLW) will be the largest event of its kind providing fresh impetus towards individual and organisational capacity development for Civil Servants. This initiative will stimulate a renewed commitment to learning and development. NLW aims to create a "One Government" message, align everyone with national goals and promote lifelong learning.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



PIB –Environment(GSIII)



- The Union Government has approved three pilot projects to utilize hydrogen in steel production.
Objective of the Scheme:
Identify advanced technologies for green hydrogen in steelmaking.
- Demonstrate safe operations of hydrogen-based steel processes.
- Validate technical feasibility and economic viability for low-carbon iron and steel production.
- The National Green Hydrogen Mission was launched on January 4, 2023, with an outlay of Rs. 19,744 crores until FY 2029-30.
Goals of the Mission:
Promote self-reliance through clean energy.
- Inspire global clean energy transitions.
- Achieve significant decarbonization of the economy.
- Reduce dependence on fossil fuel imports.
- Establish India as a leader in green hydrogen technology and markets.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air –Governance(GSII)

SC Rules That Law On Prohibition Of Child Marriages Will Prevail Over Personal Laws



- The Supreme Court today held that the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act cannot be stunted by personal laws and marriages involving children violate the free will to have a life partner of choice.
- A Bench comprising Chief Justice, D.Y. Chandrachud and Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra also issued guidelines for effective implementation of the law on prevention of child marriages in the country.
- During the pronouncement of the judgment, Chief Justice Chandrachud emphasized that personal laws must not hinder the enforcement of the national statute aimed at preventing child marriages. The authorities must focus on child marriage prevention and protection of minors while penalising offenders as a last resort.
- The bench also noted that the law on Prohibition of Child Marriage has certain gaps. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 was enacted to prevent child marriages and ensure their eradication from society. The Act replaced the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929.