

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**Registration of political parties under Section 29A of the RP Act, 1951**

- Registration of Political parties is governed by the provisions of Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- A party seeking registration under the said Section with the Commission has to submit an application to the Commission within a period of 30 days following the date of its formation.
- This is done as per guidelines prescribed by the Election Commission of India in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 324 of the Constitution of India and Section 29A of the RP People Act, 1951.
- The applicant association is inter-alia asked to publish proposed name of the party in two national daily newspapers and two local daily newspapers, on two days in same newspapers.

Eligibility of National Political Party: To be eligible for a 'National Political Party of India,' the Election Commission has set the following criteria

- It secures at least six percent of the valid votes polled in any four or more states, at a general election to the House of the People or, to the State Legislative Assembly; and
- In addition, it wins at least four seats in the House of the People from any State or States. OR
- It wins at least two percent seats in the House of the People (i.e., 11 seats in the existing House having 543 members), and these members are elected from at least three different States.

Eligibility of State Political Party: To be eligible for a 'State Political Party,' the Election Commission has set the following criteria –

- It secures at least six percent of the valid votes polled in the State at a general election, either to the House of the People or to the Legislative Assembly of the State concerned; and
- In addition, it wins at least two seats in the Legislative Assembly of the State concerned. OR
- It wins at least three percent (3%) of the total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the State, or at least three seats in the Assembly, whichever is more.

INDIAN ECONOMY**World Consumers Day**

15 March is World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD), an annual occasion for celebration and solidarity within the international consumer movement. It marks the date in 1962 President John F Kennedy first outlined the definition of Consumer Rights.

Significance of the day: It is an opportunity to promote the basic rights of all consumers, for demanding that those rights are respected and protected, and for protesting the market abuses and social injustices which undermine them.

Key facts:

- Theme: Trusted Smart Products.
- WCRD was first observed on 15 March 1983, and has since become an important occasion for mobilising citizen action.
- Consumers International (CI), which was founded in 1960 organises WCRD. It is the only independent and authoritative global voice for consumers and has over 220 member organisations in 115 countries around the world.
- Consumer Rights Day — India December 24th. On this day the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 had received the assent of the President.

Consumer protection act: India adopted the Consumer Protection Act, later in 1986, thus providing a legal face to the Indian consumers. One of the strongest campaigns for protection of consumer rights in India, is "JagoGrahakJago" which literally translates into, "wake up consumers"! This multimedia campaign from Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India is aimed at creating an aware consumer.

Jobs, labour market politics to dominate electoral discourse in 2019 Polls

A charter by major trade unions reflects discontent on issues of jobs, minimum wage. The promises of the past years have created a situation where labour market issues such as disparities in income and the controversial jobs crisis will figure hugely in the forthcoming elections.

Controversies regarding job market

- The controversies surrounding the jobs crisis largely arise out of two facts

- The administrative failure of the central government to design credible periodic labour force surveys in place of the then-existent quinquennial National Sample Survey data, whose most recent database pertains to 2011-12, as soon as the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) assumed power
- Delaying the release of the results of the periodic labour force survey.

Data And facts as reported by various reports

- The leaked National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) report on jobs surely does not show the government in glory as unemployment, especially unemployment of youth, has arguably peaked and reports of “cleaning” of the jobs data as was done with the gross domestic product (GDP) data have considerably weakened the historically credible statistical architecture in India.
- Various data sources such as the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), MUDRA scheme on the one hand and private data sources like the Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy database and the recently released CII report on jobs in the MSME sector have provided an often conflicting picture on jobs created during NDA rule.

Growth and jobs conundrum

- The arguments that growth cannot be unaccompanied by jobs or that if the job crisis were so acute there should have been major social unrest sound weak for two reasons.
- Jobless growth is not new in India (since the 1980s it has figured in the debate) and growth numbers itself are surrounded by doubts because of revisions.
- The government has effectively snuffed out official data on strikes and lockouts and hence no macro profile of labour unrest could be understood.

Unrest in labour market

- The major central trade unions have come up with a 43-point charter that reflects discontent on issues such as unemployment and minimum wage.
- The CII’s claim of jobs creation is hollow on two grounds, viz. they base the job growth in a small segment of the economy, i.e. MSMEs, and extrapolate the numbers to cover the entire workforce of around 450-500 million workers (including a huge agricultural sector) and make extrapolations of growth of employment of 13-15 millions jobs per annum during the last four years.
- Anecdotal and research evidence on the adverse effects of demonetization and GST seem to challenge the findings of the CII survey—the Tamil Nadu government has admitted in June 2018 that close to 50,000 MSME firms shut shop in 2017-18.

Influencing Electoral politics

- In an economy where labour supply is more than demand, people cannot remain unemployed.
- Election outcomes are difficult to gauge but the narrative based on primordial identities such as caste and religion is most likely to be moderated by economic controversy, perhaps for the first time in the electoral history of India.

Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)

The Sub-Committee of the FSDC has discussed ways to address challenges pertaining to the quality of credit ratings in the wake of the IL&FS defaults crisis.

Against faulty Credit Rating

- Credit rating firms, currently regulated by the SEBI had come under sharp criticism from the RBI recently for failing to identify financial troubles in various companies, especially in the case of IL&FS, which commanded AAA rating just before it started defaulting.
- RBI officials had expressed concerns over the inability of rating agencies’ to assess credit risk and take timely rating actions.

About FSDC

- FSDC is an apex-level body constituted by the Government of India to create a super regulatory body as mooted by the RaghuramRajan Committee in 2008.
- Finally in 2010, the then Finance Minister of India, Pranab Mukherjee, decided to set up such an autonomous body dealing with macro prudential and financial regularities in the entire financial sector of India.

- An apex-level FSDC is not a statutory body. No funds are separately allocated to the council for undertaking its activities.

Composition

- Chairperson: The Union Finance Minister of India
- Members:
 - Governor Reserve Bank of India (RBI),
 - Finance Secretary and/ or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (DEA),
 - Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS),
 - Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs,
 - Chief Economic Advisor, Ministry of Finance.
 - Other members include chairman of SEBI, IRDA, PFRDA and IBBI

Responsibilities

- Financial Stability
- Financial Sector Development
- Inter-Regulatory Coordination
- Financial Literacy
- Financial Inclusion
- Macro prudential supervision of the economy including the functioning of large financial conglomerates
- Coordinating India's international interface with financial sector bodies like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Financial Stability Board (FSB) and any such body as may be decided by the Finance Minister from time to time.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC

West Nile virus (WNV)

Health Ministry takes stock of the public health measures for controlling West Nile Virus. A section of the media has reported that a seven year old boy from Malappuram District of Kerala is suffering from a West Nile Virus (WNV).

About WNV:

- West Nile Virus (WNV) is a member of the flavivirus genus and belongs to the Japanese encephalitis antigenic complex of the family Flaviviridae.
- West Nile Virus (WNV) can cause neurological disease and death in people. WNV is commonly found in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America and West Asia.
- WNV is maintained in nature in a cycle involving transmission between birds and mosquitoes. Humans, horses and other mammals can be infected.

Transmission:

- Human infection is most often the result of bites from infected mosquitoes. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds, which circulate the virus in their blood for a few days. The virus eventually gets into the mosquito's salivary glands. During later blood meals (when mosquitoes bite), the virus may be injected into humans and animals, where it can multiply and possibly cause illness.
- The virus may also be transmitted through contact with other infected animals, their blood, or other tissues. A very small proportion of human infections have occurred through organ transplant, blood transfusions and breast milk. There is one reported case of transplacental (mother-to-child) WNV transmission.
- Horses, just like humans, are "dead-end" hosts, meaning that while they become infected, they do not spread the infection. Symptomatic infections in horses are also rare and generally mild, but can cause neurologic disease, including fatal encephalomyelitis.

Signs and symptoms:

- Infection with WNV is either asymptomatic (no symptoms) in around 80% of infected people, or can lead to West Nile fever or severe West Nile disease.
- About 20% of people who become infected with WNV will develop West Nile fever. Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, occasionally with a skin rash (on the trunk of the body) and swollen lymph glands.

- The symptoms of severe disease (also called neuroinvasive disease, such as West Nile encephalitis or meningitis or West Nile poliomyelitis) include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, and paralysis.

Treatment and vaccine: Treatment is supportive for patients with neuro-invasive West Nile virus, often involving hospitalization, intravenous fluids, respiratory support, and prevention of secondary infections. No vaccine is available for humans.

India's solar capacity addition has slowed down

- A new report by global analytics firm CRISL, says that India could fall short by about 40 per cent from its stated goal.
- India, which crossed 25 GW of installed capacity at the end of December 2018, may only be able to add another 44 to 46 GW in the next five years.
- India may not be able to meet its 2022 commitments of installing 100 gigawatts (GW) of solar power.

Why?

- One of the reasons is an anti-dumping measure imposed in July 2018 called the safeguard tax on imported solar cells, which are widely used in India.
- This tax was 25 per cent for the first year, 20 per cent for the next six months and 15 per cent for the following six months.
- This was done as a safeguard measure for the domestic solar module industry, which is unable to sell panels due lower priced imports from China and Malaysia.
- Coupled with this there was lack of clarity on GST for the solar sector for over a year.

Declining Tariffs

- The impact of the duty increased the cost of installation by 10-15 per cent, even though module prices fell from \$0.30 per watt-peak in March 2018 to \$0.24 per watt-peak in December 2018.
- In 2017 the lowest bid tariff was Rs 2.44 per unit, which could not be reached in 2018.
- All this meant that capacity addition in 2018 was much below the achievements of 2017. In 2017-18, 9,000 megawatts (MW) of solar capacity was added, which slowed down to less than 7,000 MW in 2018-2019.
- The report says that installation rate will climb up in the coming years as the safeguard duties are brought down incrementally.

DEFENCE

Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM)

In a major boost for Army, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test fired indigenously developed, low weight, fire and forget Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM).

MPATGM:

MPATGM is third-generation anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) indigenously developed by DRDO. It has strike range of 2.5 km. It weighs around 14.5 kg to maintain man portability. It is capable of being fired from shoulder and can be used during day and night. It has minimum lateral centre and gravity offset.

It works on fire and forget principle and is known for its top attack capabilities. It is effective against both stationary and moving targets. It will be deployed in infantry and parachute battalions of Indian Army.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Study HARD, no matter if it seems impossible, no matter if it takes time, no matter if you have to up all night, just remember that the feeling of SUCCES is the best thing in the entire world.