

INTERNAL SECURITY

Context: effects on the nation's internal security as well as the federal structure of expanding the jurisdiction of the Border Security Force.

In News, why?

- The Supreme Court has clarified that the Centre's notification of 2021, which increases the Border Security Force's (BSF) jurisdiction in Punjab from 15 to 50 km, does not lessen the state police's investigative authority; rather, it merely gives the BSF the ability to act concurrently in preventing specific offenses within these limits.
- The Punjabi government filed a case in the Supreme Court in 2021 against the Centre's ruling to increase the BSF's authority.

What Notification Did the Centre Issue Regarding the Extension of BSF's Jurisdiction?

About:

- Under the BSF Act, 1968, the notification superseded an earlier order from 2014 that also applied to the States of Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland, and Meghalaya.
- Along with West Bengal, Punjab, Assam, and the two recently established Union Territories, J&K and Ladakh, were also listed explicitly.
- The BSF has the authority to conduct search and seizure in response to a number of offenses, including the smuggling of drugs and other forbidden goods, illegal foreign entry, and offenses covered by any other Central Act.
- The BSF can only undertake "preliminary questioning" when a suspect has been apprehended or a consignment seized within the designated area, and they have to turn the suspect over to the local police within a day.
- The BSF is devoid of the powers to prosecute crime suspects.

Special Powers of BSF:

- The BSF Act, 1968 gives the BSF the authority to expand its jurisdiction as far as offenses are taken into consideration in all border states. Gujarat has had 80 kilometers since 1969. It was lower in some states.
- It is 50 km in a uniform now. And it would simply mean that BSF will also have jurisdiction over certain offenses under the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973, Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, and Passport Act, 1967, among other laws.
- The local police will still be in charge. Additionally, BSF is granted concurrently with jurisdiction.

What Kind of Problems Does the Extension of Jurisdiction Present?

Bigger Concerns:

State Security vs. Public Order:

- The State Government is largely responsible for maintaining public order and police, which are synonymous with public peace, safety, and calm (Entry 1 and Entry 2 of State list, respectively).
- However, the Union Government also becomes concerned when there is a significant public disturbance that jeopardizes the defence or security of the nation as a whole (entry 1 of the Union list).

Weakening Spirit of Federalism:

- The notification is an infringement on state authority if it is sent out without state government approval.
- According to the Punjab Government, this notification is an intrusion by the Centre acting as security.

Affecting BSF's Ability to Function:

- Border patrol policing does not fit the description of a border guard force; rather, it would make the BSF less capable of carrying out its main responsibility of securing the international border.

Problems Particular to Punjab:

- They have the simultaneous authority to execute all powers over all cognizable offenses under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for a distance of 50 kilometers alongside the state police.
- In a relatively small state like Punjab, all the major cities fall within that when the number is increased from 15 to 50.
- When it comes to the other states, Gujarat and Rajasthan, a significant percentage of Gujarat is covered in marsh area. It is appropriate to extend it there as it does not include any significant urban centres. Similar to this, Rajasthan has deserts.

Constitutional Perspective on Armed Forces Deployment in States

- Even in cases where a state does not request the Centre's assistance and is unwilling to accept central forces, the Centre may use its forces under Article 355 to defend a state against "external aggression and internal disturbance."
- The appropriate course of action for the Centre to take in the event that a state objects to the deployment of Union armed forces is to first issue directions to that state under Article 355.
- The Centre may take additional measures in accordance with Article 356 (President's Rule) if the state disregards an order from the Central government.

BSF: What is it?

- The India-Pakistan war ended in 1965, and the BSF was established.
- Under the administrative direction of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), it is one of the seven Central Armed Police Forces of the Union of India.

- Assam Rifles (AR), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), National Security Guards (NSG), and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) are other Central Armed Police Forces.
- The 2.65-lakh force is stationed near the borders of Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- It is used in anti-naxal operations, on the Line of Control (LoC) alongside the Indian Army, and on the international borders between Bangladesh and Pakistan and Pakistan.
- With its cutting-edge fleet of watercraft, the BSF has been protecting Sir Creek in the Arabian Sea and the Sundarbans delta in the Bay of Bengal.
- It sends a sizable proportion of its skilled labour force annually to the UN peacekeeping mission, providing committed services.

The Way Ahead

Desired Consent of State:

- The current arrangement between the Union armed forces and the State civil authority does not need to be altered, especially considering the security situation in India's neighbourhood.
- Whenever possible, nevertheless, the State Government should be consulted before the Union Government sends out its military troops.

State Becoming Self-Reliant:

- Each State Government may devise both short- and long-term plans for bolstering its Armed Police while consulting with the Union Government.
- The goal is to become mostly self-sufficient in terms of armed police so that the Union's military forces will only be called upon in extreme circumstances involving riots.

Regional Arrangement:

- By agreement, a collection of neighboring States may maintain a formal agreement for the mutual use of their armed police forces in times of emergency.
- The best forum for reaching an agreement among the states within a zone to create such a plan would be the Zonal Council.

GOVERNANCE

The Role of Governors under the Constitution

Context: The credibility of elected politicians and the legislative process are jeopardized when a governor refuses to approve a bill passed by the state legislature, as the recent Supreme Court ruling made clear.

Introduction

- State of Punjab v Principal Secretary to the Governor of Punjab and Another is a 27-page ruling that held that the governor, who is nominated by the President, cannot act as a symbolic head forever and cannot hold up legislative action.
- The Supreme Court's ruling has made it clear that a governor who decides not to sign a law is required to return it to the legislature with a statement explaining their reasons.
- In light of the current disagreements in various states between elected governments and governors, this decision assumes even greater significance. Punjab, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala have all petitioned the Supreme Court for instructions pertaining to their respective governors.

Clarification of the Constitution's Article 200

- The four measures that the Punjab legislative assembly enacted in June 2023 and that the governor of Punjab had detained was the primary point of disagreement in this case. The decision provides a clear interpretation of Article 200 of the Constitution, which addresses state "Assent to Bills."
- A bill is forwarded to the governor by Article 200 once it has been passed by the legislative assembly, or both houses in a bicameral legislature.
- The governor is presented with three options when it comes to choosing a law. The governor has three options: to sign the bill into law, to withhold his or her consent, or to reserve the bill for the president's review.

Two main conclusions from the verdict

- The decision clearly states that the governor cannot effectively veto the operations of an elected legislature because he is an unelected, constitutional authority. The governor's constitutional authority to ratify legislation passed by the legislature must be exercised in a way that does not interfere with the "normal course of law making." Indefinitely withholding consent, in the opinion of the Supreme Court, would violate the "fundamental principles of a constitutional democracy based on a Parliamentary pattern of governance."
- S R Bommai v. Union of India was also used in the ruling to highlight the fact that the federalist principles that are a fundamental component of the Constitution cannot be disregarded by the governor in the exercise of their constitutional authority. Throughout India's legal and political history, there have been numerous instances where the governor's office has been abused to strengthen the union government's hold over state governments headed by opposition parties. This rivalry between various political parties is also evident in the numerous conflicts that exist between governors and particular state administrations in modern-day India.

Not only a court case

- As a result, it goes beyond only being a legal conflict between the governor, the union government, and some state governments. Additionally, it is a political disagreement between several opposition and ruling parties.
- In essence, the Supreme Court's decision in this case has highlighted the threats that these kinds of political disagreements represent to India's constitutional goal of federalism.
- The bulk of federal conflicts that have been witnessed recently are not signs of institutional misalignment but rather of party domination, despite the fact that the constitutional idea of a federal polity with a power balance favouring the union was an institutional arrangement.

Conclusion

According to this Supreme Court ruling, "the tuning fork of democracy and federalism" affects the governor's position. The Court aimed to uphold the dignity and poise necessary for governors to carry out their constitutionally mandated duties through this ruling. More significantly, it issues a strong caution against partisan abuse of the governorship in modern-day India.

PRELIM FACTS

1. Kra Isthmus

Context:

- Because of a planned transit route that would link the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand, the Kra Isthmus, which is part of Thailand's Malay Peninsula, has grown in significance strategically.
- This isthmus, which is only 44 km wide at its narrowest point, might have an impact on global trade and security that is comparable to the historical importance of the Panama and Suez Canals. The prime minister of Thailand recently formally unveiled a multibillion-dollar land-bridge project.
- An isthmus is a small stretch of land with two water borders that joins two bigger land masses.
- The Kra Isthmus in Thailand is the narrowest part of the Malay Peninsula. The isthmus is bordered to the west by the Andaman Sea and to the east by the Gulf of Thailand



2. Fund ALTERRA

Context:

- At the COP28 climate conference in Dubai, UAE President Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan declared the establishment of the \$30 billion ALTERRA climate fund.
 - By the end of the decade, the fund hopes to raise \$250 billion in capital, of which \$25 billion would go toward climate policies and \$5 billion will be used to encourage investment in the Global South.
 - The fund aims to influence private markets to make climate-related investments, particularly in underdeveloped and rising nations.
 - Generally speaking, the word "Alterra" refers to a Latin word that is frequently used to denote modification, change, or variance in a variety of contexts.
- The following four major pillars will direct the fund's investments:
- 1) First, the Energy Transition
 - 2) Decarbonization of Industry

- 3) Ecological Ways of Living
- 4) Technologies Affecting Climate Best of Class

3. Genome sequencing at the population level

Context:

- A major achievement in population-scale genomics was recently reached when the UK finished sequencing half a million entire genomes.
- This method has profound effects on many scientific domains and provides hitherto unheard-of insights into human diversity.
- Globally, there are several large-scale genome projects in progress, such as the All of US program in the United States, the "1+ Million Genomes" initiative in the European Union, and the "Three Million African Genomes" project that is planned.

Advantages:

- Population-scale genome projects assist a variety of goals, including public health campaigns, pharmaceutical target identification, and the study of disease prevalence and biomarkers.
- Initiatives like the Genome Asia project in Asia and Genome India in India seek to sequence populations at the population level, advancing our knowledge of human evolution, migratory trends, and environmental adaption.
- Concerning population-level sequencing, commonly referred to as population-scale
- It is the procedure of sequencing several individuals' DNA or mRNA from one or more species. To identify genomes, this method makes use of a lot of sequencing information and probabilistic matching methods.

4. The Mahasagar Initiative

- Maritime chiefs from several countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) convened for the inaugural meeting of MAHASAGAR, a project of the Indian Navy. 'Collective Maritime Approach towards Countering Common Challenges' is the theme.
- Maritime Heads for Active Security and Growth for All in the Region is what MAHASAGAR stands for. It seeks to establish a forum for high-level conversations that promote collaboration among IOR countries.
- Heads of the maritime departments and agencies in Tanzania, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, and Sri Lanka.
- The SAGAR vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region) of the Indian government is in line with MAHASAGAR.
- To strengthen ties with its maritime neighbours, India released Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR), its strategic vision for the Indian Ocean, in 2015 on the economic and security fronts.

5. Marapi Volcano

- Lately, there were fatalities and ash eruptions up to 3,000 meters (9,840 feet) in the air from the Marapi volcano in West Sumatra, Indonesia.
- The most active volcano on the island of Sumatra is called Mount Marapi, or "Mountain of Fire." Its most catastrophic eruption occurred in April 1979, killing sixty people.
- Indonesia is home to 127 active volcanoes and is located on the "Ring of Fire" in the Pacific.
- Even though Mount Merapi is among the world's most dangerous volcanoes, it is a well-liked tourist attraction.
- In Indonesia, Mount Merapi and other volcanoes including Mount Semeru and Mount Bromo are still well-liked travel destinations for adventure seekers.



ANSWER WRITING

Q. The public primary and secondary education system in India is confronted with a number of obstacles. What steps may be taken to improve the infrastructure, cost, and quality of government schools relative to private ones?

Parents prefer to enroll their children in private schools, even if it means paying much more for tuition and other fees, as evidenced by a recent survey conducted by the Right to Education Resource Centre at IIM Ahmedabad. Parents blame government schools for the low quality of education received by their children.

The Indian public elementary and secondary education system has a number of challenges, including:

- **Poor Learning Outcomes:** Children in Standard V have maintained their proficiency in reading basic English sentences at the 2016 level, as reported by the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2022 (from 24.7% in 2016 to 24.5% in 2022).
- **Deficit in Infrastructure:** As per (ASER) 2022 In 2022, 68.9% of schools have a playground; the percentage of schools having improved useable restrooms for girls is only 68.4%; and only 76% of schools have access to potable water.
- **Teacher Shortages and Quality:** Approximately 1.1 lakh schools in India are single-teacher institutions, according to UNESCO's 2021 State of the Education Report for India: No Teachers, No Class.
- **Poor Attendance:** In 2022, the average teacher attendance rate is expected to be 87.1%, whereas the average student attendance rate has been essentially constant at 72% for the previous few years.
- **Gender gaps:** In some areas, gender gaps still exist despite advancements. The percentage of girls between the ages of 15 and 16 who are not enrolled has decreased, with a current standing of 7.9% in 2022, according (ASER) 2022.
- **High Drop-out Rates:** According to the UDISE+ 2021–22 data, the overall dropout rate in Indian schools is 1.5% for primary level classes (1–5), 3% for upper primary classes (6–8), and 12% for secondary level classes (9–10). This percentage is still very high.
- **Minimal emphasis on pre-primary education:** 78.3% of 3-year-olds are enrolled in early childhood education in 2022, according to (ASER) 2022.
- **Outdated Curriculum:** Although the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) is updated on a regular basis, questions have been raised concerning the curriculum's applicability and efficacy.
- **Gaps in Vocational Education:** According to the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021–22, fewer students are enrolled in programs for vocational education than in traditional courses.
- **Digital Divide:** With many students unable to access online education, the COVID-19 outbreak brought attention to the digital divide.
- **State-by-State Inequality:** According to NITI Ayog's SEQI 2023, states with higher scores—like Kerala and Tamil Nadu—and lower scores—like Bihar and Jharkhand—indicate differences in the quality of education.
- **Growth in private tuition:** From 26.4% in 2018 to 30.5% in 2022, more children in Standard I–VIII are enrolling in paid private tuition programs.

Initiative can be taken to make government schools more appealing than private schools:

Improve the Infrastructure

- **Modernize School Buildings:** Make sure there are enough classrooms, libraries, labs, and leisure spaces.
- **Boost sanitation and hygiene** by having access to potable water, working restrooms, and frequent efforts to raise awareness of good hygiene.
- **Technology Integration:** To support digital learning, make computers, tablets, and internet connectivity available.

Encourage Teachers:

- **To attract and retain qualified teachers,** implement a merit-based hiring policy, pay competitively, and provide chances for professional growth.
- **Ongoing Teacher Training:** To improve subject knowledge and pedagogical abilities, hold frequent workshops, seminars, and training sessions.
- **Performance-Based Incentives:** To encourage educators and acknowledge their work, put in place a system of rewards based on performance.

Update the curriculum:

- **Holistic Education** Integrate a holistic approach to education that emphasizes the physical, mental, social, and emotional growth of students.
- **Skill-Based Learning:** To equip students for future career prospects, incorporate entrepreneurship training and vocational skills.
- **Learning through Activities:** Promote project-based learning, field excursions, and practical training.

Establish a Good School Climate:

- **Inclusive and Supportive Environment:** Encourage an environment that is friendly, inclusive, and supportive of diversity in order to sustain social peace.
- **Parent-Teacher Collaboration:** Encourage frequent communication between parents and teachers so that issues can be discussed and student progress can be addressed.

- **Community Engagement:** To promote a feeling of ownership, include the local communities in school events and decision-making procedures.

Conclusion:

By putting these ideas into practice, we can build an inclusive and equitable educational system that enables every child to realize their full potential and realize the goal of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which is to produce a generation of young people who are morally grounded, capable, and prepared to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

MCQs

- Which of the following statements regarding the Denotified tribes (DNTs) is/are correct?
 - Denotified tribes (DNTs) are the communities that were 'notified' as being 'born criminal' during the British regime under a series of laws starting with the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871.
 - The government therefore set up the DWBDNCs (Development and Welfare Board for De-Notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities) under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Select the correct answer using the codes below.

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) **Both 1 and 2** (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- Arrange the following India-Nepal boundary locations from West to East:
 - Lipulekh
 - Kalapani
 - Limpiyadhura

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

(a) 1-3-2 (b) 2-3-1
(c) **3-2-1** (d) 2-1-3
- Consider the following statements regarding Global Initiative of Academic Networks in Higher Education
 - IIT Kharagpur serves as the nodal agency for the implementation of GIAN.
 - The primary aim of GIAN is to tap into the global talent pool of scientists and entrepreneurs, encouraging their active involvement with higher education institutions in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) **Both 1 and 2** (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- Which of the following is a most likely consequence of implementing the 'Unified Payments Interface (UPI)'?

(a) **Mobile wallets will not be necessary for online payments.**

(b) Digital currency will totally replace the physical currency in about two decades.

(c) FDI inflows will drastically increase.

(d) Direct transfer of subsidies to poor people will become very effective.
- Which of the following is the largest producer of sugar?

(a) India (b) **Cuba**
(c) China (d) Mexico
- Regarding "carbon credits", which one of the following statements is not correct?

(a) The carbon credit system was ratified in conjunction with the Kyoto Protocol

(b) Carbon credits are awarded to countries or groups that have reduced greenhouse gases below their emission quota

(c) The goal of the carbon credit system is to limit the increase of carbon dioxide emission

(d) **Carbon credits are traded at a price fixed from time to time by the United Nations Environment Programme.**
- Recently, which one of the following currencies has been proposed to be added to the basket of IMF's SDR?

(a) Rouble (b) Rand
(c) Indian Rupee (d) **Renminbi**
- Which of the following statements regarding System for Pension Administration (Raksha) (SPARSH) initiative are correct?
 - SPARSH is an initiative of Ministry of Defence which aims at providing a comprehensive solution to the administration of pension to the defence pensioners.
 - It is in line with the Government's vision of 'Digital India', 'Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)' and 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance'.

Select the correct answer using the code below.

(a) 1 Only (b) 2 Only
(c) **Both 1 and 2** (d) None of the above
- Consider the following statements, with reference to LHS 3154 Star:
 - LHS 3154 is an ultra-cool dwarf star that's about 50 light years away from Earth.
 - It is about a thousand times less luminous than our sun and nine times less massive.
 - The planet, LHS 3154b, is 13 times more massive than Earth and about the mass of Neptune.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) **All three** (d) None
- Consider the following statements regarding Cholelithiasis:
 - It is a disorder characterised by gallbladder stones.
 - It is most usually caused by a chemical imbalance inside the gallbladder's contents.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) **Both 1 and 2** (d) Neither 1 nor 2