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25 January, 2024

# Expansion of BSF Jurisdiction

***Context:*** *The Supreme Court is scheduled to initiate final hearings on the dispute regarding the extension of the Border Security Force (BSF) jurisdiction in Punjab, with proceedings set to begin in four weeks.*

➢ **Background:**
- The Ministry of Home Affairs issued a notification on October 11, 2021.
- The jurisdiction of the Border Security Force (BSF) was extended in Punjab, West Bengal, and Assam.
- The Punjab government challenged the notification in December 2021.

➢ **Reason for BSF Jurisdiction Extension:**
- The BSF was created in 1968 to secure India's borders.
- It is empowered to arrest, search, and seize under various laws.
- Section 139(1) of the BSF Act allows the central government to designate areas for BSF powers.
- Before October 2021, the BSF had powers within 15 km of the border; this was extended to 50 km.

➢ **Scope of BSF Powers within 50 km:**
- The notification specifies powers under the Criminal Procedure Code, Passport (Entry into India) Act, and Passports Act.
- For other central legislations, the 15-km limit remains.

➢ **Reasons Cited for Expansion:**
- The increased use of drones and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.
- Their long-range capabilities enable surveillance, smuggling of arms, and fake currency.
- Mention of the 'menace of cattle smuggling'; smugglers often seek refuge outside BSF jurisdiction.

➢ **Punjab's Challenge:**
- Punjab filed an 'original suit' in the Supreme Court.
- The Supreme Court has 'original jurisdiction' under Article 131 for disputes between the central government and states.
- The state claims compromise of its exclusive powers to legislate on police and public order matters.
- There is an allegation of issuing the notification without consulting concerned states.

➢ **Argument Before Supreme Court:**
- The Additional Advocate General for Punjab argued that densely populated areas in Punjab fall within the 50-km jurisdiction.
- Contrast with sparsely populated areas in Gujarat and Rajasthan along the international border.

➢ **Other States' Response:**
- West Bengal showed resistance after the October 2021 notification.
- The West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution demanding withdrawal.

➢ **Issues for Supreme Court Consideration:**
- Evaluate if the notification was arbitrary or had legitimate reasons.
- Determine if the notification interferes with local police powers and encroaches upon state powers under the Constitution.
- Decide on factors to consider when designating areas "within the local limits adjoining the borders."
- Address whether all states must be treated alike in determining these local limits.
- Determine if the notification can be challenged through an original suit under Article 131 of the Constitution.

# 14th National Voters' Day (NVD)

***Context:*** *The 14th National Voters' Day (NVD) is slated to be commemorated on January 25, 2024.*

➢ The theme for NVD 2024, 'Nothing Like Voting, I Vote For Sure,' continues from the previous year.

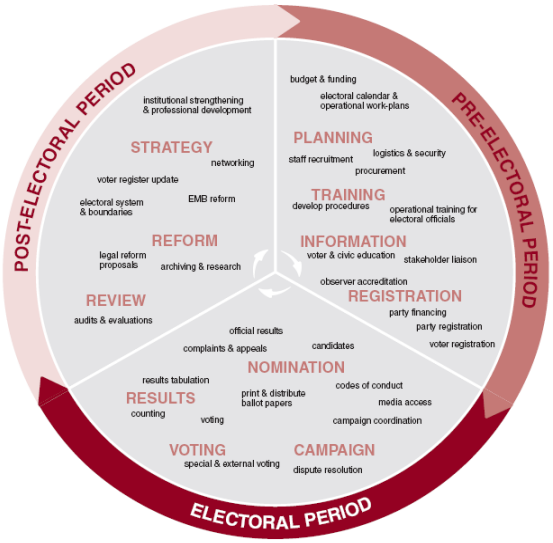
➢ The event will witness the presentation of Best Electoral Practices Awards for 2023 by the Hon'ble President, recognizing outstanding performance in various aspects of election conduct.

➢ Awards will be conferred to State and District level officers for their contributions to IT initiatives, Security Management, Election Management, Accessible Election, Electoral Roll, and voter awareness during 2023.

➢ The first copy of the ECI Publication 'ECI initiatives for General Elections 2024' will be presented to the Hon'ble President by Chief Election Commissioner Shri Rajiv Kumar, providing an overview of initiatives for inclusive, accessible, and participatory elections.

➢ A short voter awareness film titled 'My Vote My Duty,' produced by ECI in collaboration with filmmaker Shri Raj Kumar Hirani, will be screened, featuring messages from celebrities emphasizing the spirit of democracy and the power of one vote.

## Electoral Cycle



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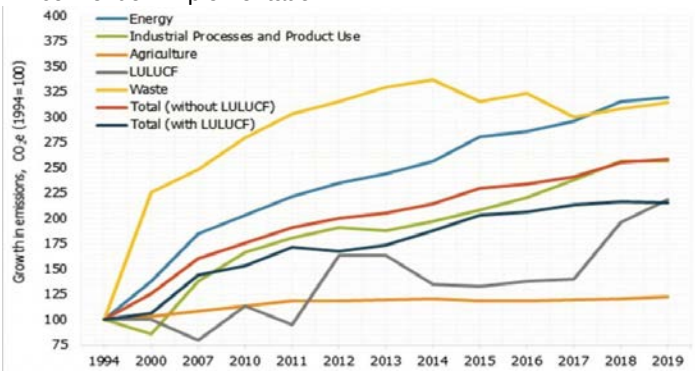
- On January 25, 2024, the Election Commission of India marks its 75th year of service to the Nation, and to commemorate this occasion, a postage stamp themed "Inclusive Elections" will be released.
- National Voters' Day (NVD) has been celebrated annually on January 25 since 2011, marking the foundation day of the Election Commission of India in 1950.
- **Election Commission of India**
  - ECI is an autonomous constitutional authority, overseeing Union and State election processes.
  - Established on January 25, 1950, in line with the Constitution.
  - Administers elections for various positions, excluding panchayats and municipalities handled by separate State Election Commissions.
  - Governed by Part XV (Article 324-329) of the Indian Constitution.
  - Article 324 assigns superintendence, direction, and control of elections to the Election Commission.
  - Article 325 prevents exclusion from electoral rolls based on religion, race, caste, or sex.
  - Article 326 establishes elections based on adult suffrage.
  - Originally a single Election Commissioner, later expanded to include the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two Election Commissioners.
  - Chief Electoral Officer at the state level, an IAS rank Officer, supports the election commission.
  - The President appoints CEC and Election Commissioners.
  - Fixed tenure of six years or until the age of 65.
  - Present composition includes the CEC and two Election Commissioners.
  - Commissioners enjoy the same status and perks as Judges of the Supreme Court.
  - Commissioners can resign or be removed before term completion.
  - CEC removal follows a process similar to that of a Supreme Court judge by Parliament.

# Third National Communication (TNC) and Initial Adaptation Communication

***Context:*** *In December 2023, India presented its Third National Communication (TNC) and Initial Adaptation Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).*

- **Emission Levels:**
  - In 2019, India's net national emissions reached 2.6 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e).
  - This marked a 4.56% increase from 2016 levels and a 115% increase since 1994.
- **Major Emission Contributors:**
  - Carbon dioxide remained the primary greenhouse gas (GHG), constituting 79% of total emissions in 2019.
  - Increased fossil fuel burning, methane emissions from livestock, and rising aluminium and cement production were key contributors.
- **National Communication Report:**
  - The report, prepared in line with convention articles 4 and 12, includes an inventory of GHG emissions by sources and removals by sinks.
  - It provides materials relevant for global emissions trend calculations and information on a country's steps for convention implementation.




- **TNC Data and Analysis:**
  - The Third National Communication (TNC) contains emissions data up to 2019, whereas the previous submission (Third Biennial Update Report) covered data until 2016.
  - Periodic analysis of emissions data is crucial for addressing the climate crisis.
- **Sectoral Contributions (1994-2019):**
  - All sectors showed emission growth between 2016 and 2019.
  - Land Use and Land Use Change & Forestry (LULUCF) reported a 14% average rate of emission removals.
- **Energy Sector Dominance:**
  - The energy sector remained the highest contributor, constituting three-fourths of total GHG emissions in 2019.
  - Fossil fuel-based power generation contributed significantly, with a 10% increase in emissions since 2016.
- **Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU):**
  - IPPU emissions increased by 16% in 2019, driven by cement, aluminium, and lime production.
  - Cement production is considered challenging to address in climate change efforts.
- **Agricultural Emissions:**
  - Despite a marginal decline in the sector's share, absolute emissions from agriculture increased by 3.2%.
  - Major contributors were enteric fermentation, rice cultivation, and manure management.
- **Waste Sector Challenges:**
  - GHG emissions from the waste sector accounted for 2.34% in 2019.
  - Challenges in waste management persist due to rapid urbanization.
- **LULUCF Sector Impact:**
  - LULUCF sector acted as a net sink, removing 20% of India's $CO_2$ emissions in 2019.
  - Wildfires contributed to emissions, impacting the net balance.
- **India's Climate Commitments:**
  - India's updated NDCs for 2021-2030 include reducing emissions intensity of GDP by 45% and achieving 50% cumulative electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
  - Emission intensity reduced by 33% between 2005 and 2019, showcasing progress toward climate commitments.

Face to Face Centres

DELHI MUKHERJEE NAGAR: 9205274741, 42 | LAXMI NAGAR : 9205212500, 9205962002 | RAJENDRA NAGAR: 9205274743 | UTTAR PRADESH PRAYAGRAJ: 0532-2260189, 8853467068 | LUCKNOW (ALIGANJ): 0522-4025825, 9506256789 | LUCKNOW (GOMTI NAGAR): 7234000501, 7234000502 | GREATER NOIDA: 9205336037, 38 | KANPUR: 7887003962, 7897003962 | GORAKHPUR : 7080847474, 9161947474 | ODISHA BHUBANESWAR: 9818244644/7656949029

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- **Decoupling Economic Growth and Emissions:**
  - Despite rapid economic growth, India demonstrated a decline in energy intensity, aligning with global trends.
  - Non-fossil fuel-based electricity generation surpassed 41%, achieving the 2030 target in 2021.
- **Carbon Sink Creation:** Between 2005 and 2021, India created an additional carbon sink of 1.97 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent.
- **Forest Fire Impact:** Forest fires contributed to emissions in the LULUCF sector, emphasizing challenges linked to climate change and forest preservation.
- **Overall Emission Trends:** Total national emissions (including LULUCF) increased by 4.56% compared to 2016.
- **Global Significance:** Periodic analysis of emissions data is crucial for global efforts to combat climate change.

# NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

## The South Asian University

Recently the Delhi High Court has ruled that the South Asian University enjoys the status of an international organisation which has 'privileges and immunities" and a writ petition against it is not maintainable.

**About the South Asian University:**

- The South Asian University (SAU) is an **intergovernmental university** that is **funded by the governments of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)** countries.
- It is under the purview of the **Ministry of External Affairs** and located at the Akbar Bhawan Campus in Chanakyapuri, **New Delhi.**
- The eight countries that sponsor the university are **Afghanistan**, **Bangladesh**, **Bhutan**, **India**, **Maldives**, **Nepal**, **Pakistan** and **Sri Lanka.**
- The university's **main objective is to "strengthen regional consciousness**" by providing "liberal and humane education to the brightest and the most dedicated students of South Asia".

**The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation:**

- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is an intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of South Asian nations.
- The organization strives to uplift South Asian communities by **promoting welfare**, **enhancing quality of life** and fostering economic, **social**, and cultural development.
- It was established on **December 8, 1985**, when the heads of state or governments of eight countries signed the SAARC Charter in Dhaka.
- Its headquarter is in **Kathmandu, Nepal.**

## Zombie Viruses

Recently, the Scientists have warned that melting Arctic permafrost could unleash 'zombie viruses' and trigger a global medical emergency.

**About Zombie Viruses:**

- Zombie viruses (**Methuselah microbes)** are pathogens that can remain **viable in frozen soil for tens of thousands of years.**
- They are buried under **20% of the Earth's northern hemisphere**, mainly in the Arctic region.
- They have the potential to spread diseases and modern **humans lack natural immunity** against these prehistoric viral invaders.
- The infection is spread by biting into contaminated tissue through broken skin and transplantation to human beings.
- Scientists fear that **"zombie viruses**" could cause the next pandemic, similar to or worse than COVID-19.
- The longest frozen virus to become infectious is **Pandoravirus yedoma,** which is 48,500 years old.

## Melanistic Tiger Safari

Recently, the Odisha Government has announced to establish a melanistic tiger safari which will be the first of its kind in the world.

**About Melanistic Tigers:**

- Melanistic tigers are **also known as black tigers** and have a dark black or nearly black **coat with faint** or **almost invisible stripes**.
- Their stripes are still visible, **albeit much darker than those of a normal tiger**.
- They have a genetic condition known as **melanism**, where there is an excessive development of **dark pigmentation** (melanin) in the skin and fur.
- The largest population of melanistic tigers is **found in the Simlipal National Park** in India, with a small number also found in other parts of **India** and **Southeast Asia**.
- They are **not a distinct species** but a rare color variant of Bengal Tiger.

## Wandering Albatross

Recently, it has been found that the climate change could put Wandering Albatrosses nesting sites at risk which could lead threatened and their extinction.

**About Wandering Albatross:**

- The wandering albatross (**Diomedea exulans**) is the **world's largest flying bird.**
- It is an oceanic nomad and they **spend most of their 60 years of life at sea** and only come to land to breed approximately every two years once they have reached sexual maturity.
- It is found in **Vast Southern Ocean**, particularly islands like **Marion Island** and **Prince Edward Island.**
- It is the largest member of the **Diomedea genus**, with a **wingspan of up to 3 meters** and a body mass of **8–12 kg.**
- It lays a **single egg** and breeds only every **second year.**
- Marion and Prince Edward Islands support around half of the global wandering albatross breeding population (estimated at 20,000 mature individuals).
- It gets **Vulnerable** status by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

## Place in News

## Yellow Sea

Recently, North Korea has fired several cruise missiles towards the Yellow Sea.

**About the Yellow Sea:**

- The Yellow Sea is a **marginal sea of the Western Pacific Ocean**.
- It is located between the **Korean Peninsula** and **mainland China**.
- Its name comes from the **color of the silt-laden water** from the major Chinese rivers that empty into it.
- Known as **Huang Hai in China** and the West Sea in North and South Korea, it spans 870 kilometers in length and 556 kilometers in width.
- It is **one of the largest shallow** areas of continental shelf in the world
- The Yellow Sea's basin countries include **China**, **North Korea** and **South Korea**.
- It has a climate with **cold, dry winters** and warm, wet summers.
- The warm current in the Yellow Sea is part of the **Tsushima Current**, diverging near **Kyushu in Japan** and flowing northward.
- It is one of the most developed economic areas in **North China,** with coastal farming and maritime trade.

## POINTS TO PONDER

- In Swachh Survekshan 2023, which city ranked high in swachhata? **- This time Surat has also secured the top position along with Indore. Indore had held the top position alone for 6 consecutive years.**
- Which state in India has the 60 Parachute Field Hospital been selected recently for Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar (SCBAPP)-2024? **- Uttar Pradesh**
- Who was on the other end of the line in San Francisco when Alexander Graham Bell placed the first transcontinental telephone call from New York City? **- Thomas Watson**
- Which aromatic hydrocarbon, synthesized by August Kekulé, has a structure linked to a dream about a snake eating its own tail? **- Benzene (C6H6)**
- Who recommends the names for Bharat Ratna to the President of India? **- Prime Minister**