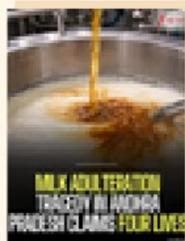


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Four die after consuming 'adulterated milk' in A.P.

THE HINDU : 24/02/2026 - Page 1



Directions in hate crime ruling may be unmanageable: CJI

THE HINDU : 23/02/2026 - Page 12

India's energy shift through the green ammonia route

THE HINDU : 24/02/2026 - Page 7



FM launches NMP 2.0, sets eye on Rs 16.72 lakh cr of asset monetisation by 2030

THE INDIAN EXPRESS : 24/02/2026 - Page 15



Centre unveils policy to tackle terrorism threats

The Union Home Ministry on 23rd February released PRAHAAR, India's inaugural anti-terror policy, addressing cross-border sponsored terrorism, cyber-attacks by criminal hackers and nation states, and threats across land, sea, and air fronts. Accordingly, the policy document assures that capacities have been developed to protect critical sectors like power, railways, aviation, ports, defence, space, and atomic energy from state/non-state actors.

The policy underlines that "India does not link terrorism to any specific religion, ethnicity, nationality or civilisation". At the same time, it also highlighted Jihadi outfits, al-Qaeda, IS sleeper cells, and foreign extremists using drones, encryption, dark web, and crypto for attacks in Punjab/J&K are grave threats to national security. Announced by Home Minister Amit Shah in November 2024 and finalized post-Pahalgam incident, PRAHAAR flags challenges like Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive, Digital (CBRNE) material access, drone misuse, and terror-criminal networks. Furthermore, the policy states that Terror groups leverage social media and local outfits for logistics and recruitment purpose, therefore prevention methods require intelligent monitoring at all points. Forward measures as prescribed by the document include legal experts in investigations, uniform State anti-terror structures, community de-radicalisation via preachers and NGOs, and denying terrorists funds, weapons, and safe havens. It stresses national actions with international cooperation against transnational threats. MHA also stressed that Intelligence and Law enforcement are crucial in preventing youth radicalisation.

PRAHAAR stands for

- Prevention of terror attacks to protect Indian citizens and interests;
- Responses, which are swift and proportionate to the threat posed;
- Aggregating internal capacities for achieving synergy in a whole-of-government approach;
- Human rights and 'Rule of Law' based processes for mitigation of threats;
- Attenuating the conditions enabling terrorism, including radicalization;
- Aligning and shaping the international efforts to counter terrorism;
- Recovery and resilience through a whole-of-society approach.

President unveils bust of Rajaji, hails move to shed 'colonial mindset'

President Droupadi Murmu unveiled the bust of C. Rajagopalachari, India's only Indian Governor-General, at Rashtrapati Bhavan's Grand Open Staircase. It replaces the bust of British architect Edwin Lutyens, who designed New Delhi. This installation symbolizes shedding colonial mindset and embracing India's cultural heritage.

Murmu highlighted Rajagopalachari's mental decolonization efforts. Upon arriving at Government House (now Rashtrapati Bhavan), he displayed portraits of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Mahatma Gandhi, signaling Swaraj's establishment in Indian hearts despite formal dominion status. The President connected Rajagopalachari's ideals to national campaigns promoting Indian heritage and consciousness, especially for weaker sections. She noted his inspiration for Viksit Bharat through enterprise and social connection. The event coincided with Rajaji Utsav, open to public from February 24 to March 1. Rashtrapati Bhavan described the initiative as honoring extraordinary contributors to Bharat Mata while rejecting colonial vestiges.



Four die after consuming 'adulterated milk' in A.P.



Four elderly residents died from acute renal failure after consuming adulterated milk supplied by one vendor to 106 families in Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh. Twelve people fell ill, including eight with anuria (complete urine absence) and three critical children under four. The vendor who had sourced milk from 46 dairy farmers, has been detained to gain clarity over the issue.

Urgent Food Safety Lessons: This incident has flagged several crucial gaps in India's food safety mechanism.

- **Single Vendor Risk:** One adulterated supply chain has affected more than 73 families, showing weak vendor licensing and loose oversight.
- **Vulnerable Groups:** Elderly population (50-70 age) and children (<5 years) suffered worst effects, highlighting need for targeted protection.
- **Delayed Detection:** Symptoms emerged only after multiple deaths, indicating absent routine milk testing.

Systemic Failures Exposed : Delving deep into the problem at hand exposes several layers of systematic failures such as -

1. **No Preemptive Testing:** Fodder and cattle feed remains unmonitored despite the products serving 106 households.
2. **Reactive Response:** State expert teams activated post-death damage handling, not preventive audits.
3. **Scale of Impact:** Blood samples from 73 families needed reveals inadequate daily surveillance.

Regular vendor audits, real-time milk quality checks, fodder testing protocols, and rapid-response medical camps are essential. Chief Minister announced ₹10 lakh ex-gratia, but prevention demands constant Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) enforcement. Local procurement chains must face mandatory quality certification to protect vulnerable consumers from such tragedies.

M.P. govt. to extend Bhavantar scheme to mustard farmers for pricing power

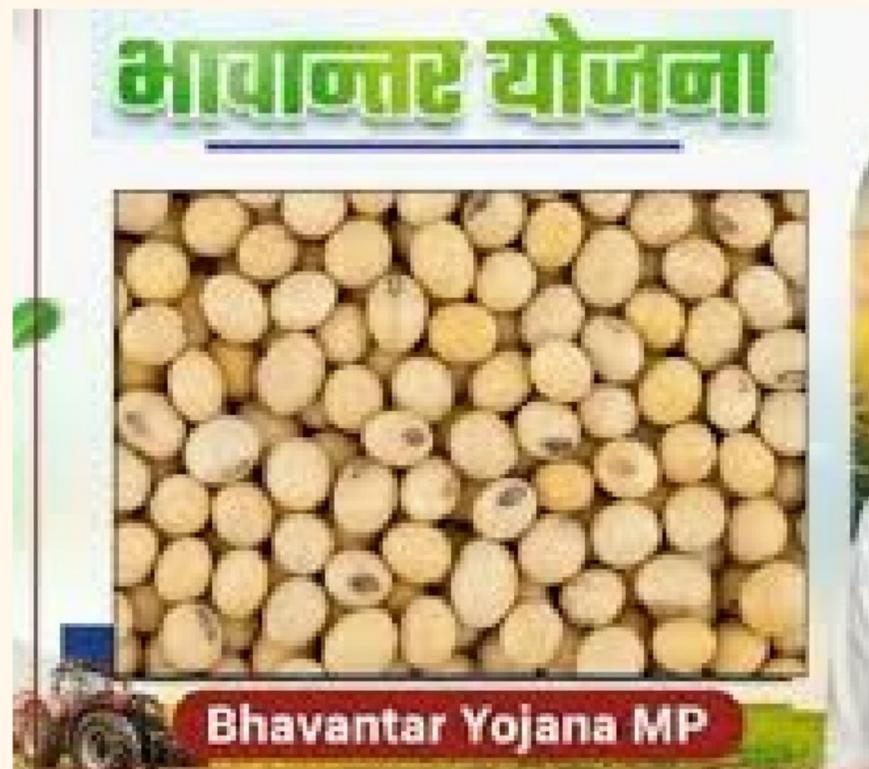
Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced plans to extend Bhavantar Yojana to mustard farmers. The state government sent a proposal to the Centre. This move will benefit about 80 lakh farmers by compensating the difference between government procurement price and market price.

What is Bhavantar Yojana?

Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana (BBY) is a price difference payment scheme. It currently benefits soybean farmers in Madhya Pradesh. The government transfers the difference between Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Modal Rate directly to farmers' bank accounts when crops sell below MSP. Unlike traditional MSP procurement, BBY avoids physical purchase of food grains.

Scheme Coverage & History: Initially launched for 8 Kharif crops (soybean, moong, urad, pigeon pea, groundnut, maize, oilseeds), it expanded to 4 Rabi crops (chickpea, mustard, lentils, onions). BBY emerged after 2017 Mandsaur farmers' protests.

Significance: BBY protects farmers from agricultural price volatility, especially oilseeds and pulses. Direct bank transfers ensure quick compensation without government procurement logistics. The mustard extension addresses current market price shortfalls for 80 lakh Rabi farmers.



Directions in hate crime ruling may be unmanageable: CJI



Chief Justice Surya Kant described the Supreme Court's 2018 Tehseen Poonawalla judgment—issuing broad "general directions" to Centre and States—as "unmanageable" for preventing cow vigilantism and mob lynching. He advocated an individualistic approach for handling each crime based on its specific facts and merits, with immediate action against law abuses.

2018 Judgment Context

A Bench led by CJI Dipak Misra directed preventive, remedial, and punitive measures for lynching/mob violence. Centre/States were ordered to implement and file compliance reports.

2025 Refusal

On February 2025, the Court rejected contempt petitions alleging State non-compliance to the 2018 judgement. CJI Kant clarified that SC only sets general legal principles for authorities and citizens. This should not be considered as equal to daily monitoring. Delhi cannot micromanage diverse State cases; victims must seek immediate remedies via local High Courts and trial courts. "If rights are infringed, immediate action must be taken" ruled the CJI.

Mob Violence - It refers to a lawless mob attempt by few people to take justice in their own hands to deliver Instant justice through violence.

GS III PYQ 2017 - Mob violence & emerging as a serious law and order problem in India. By giving suitable examples, analyze the causes and consequences of such violence ?

Crowd control SOP to be in force till law is enacted: High Court

The Karnataka High Court directed enforcement of the State government's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for crowd control and mass gathering management. This follows a Public Interest Litigation petition triggered by the June 4, 2025, stampede outside M. Chinnaswamy cricket stadium, which killed 11 people.

A Division Bench approved the revised Standard Operating Procedure submitted in January 2026, incorporating suggestions from amicus curiae and stakeholders like the Karnataka State Cricket Association and event organizers. The court ordered its operation until the government enacts the Karnataka Crowd Control (Managing Crowd at Events and Place of Gathering) Bill, 2025.

At present, the state's Home Department has forwarded the Standard Operating Procedure to the Legislative Assembly's scrutiny committee alongside the proposed Bill. Previously, The amicus curiae had noted the Standard Operating Procedure's measures exceed the Bill's provisions, urging legislators to consider them during finalization.

The government initially submitted the Standard Operating Procedure last year. Later it was opened for more discussions leading to acceptance of various stakeholder inputs in December 2025, and filed the revised version on January 13, 2026. The court closed proceedings on the concerned PIL for the time being. However it has allowed the amicus curiae liberty to renew the petition if needed in future.



25 troops killed as violence erupts in Mexico after Army kills cartel leader

Mexican troops killed the country's most wanted drug lord, "El Mencho" Oseguera, Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) leader, in Tapalpa, Jalisco. 25 National Guard troops, 1 prison guard, 1 prosecutor, and 30 cartel gunmen died in subsequent nationwide clashes. El Mencho, who has a \$15M US bounty for his head, succumbed en route to Mexico City.

As a way of retaliation, Cartels torched vehicles and businesses and blocked roads across Jalisco-Michoacán. This level of intense violence in streets signals CJNG's state-like control via parallel governance, extortion.

Broader concerns

- This operation has been conducted with US intel aid as White House confirmed. It mirrors India-US cooperation against narco-terror.
- Power Vacuum: "El Mencho" Oseguera's Son "El Menchito" was jailed in US in last september. This breaks the succession line which could lead to splinter wars and possible recruitment surge (similar to India's Naxal vacuums).
- Hybrid Warfare: Cartel drones/blockades mirror terrorist tactics. 25 troops dead shows military firepower.
- Global Impact: Indian Embassy, UK, Canada and US advisories issued. Tests Sheinbaum's "hugs not bullets" amid Trump border pressure.



Stick together

Source : The Hindu Editorial 24-02-2026



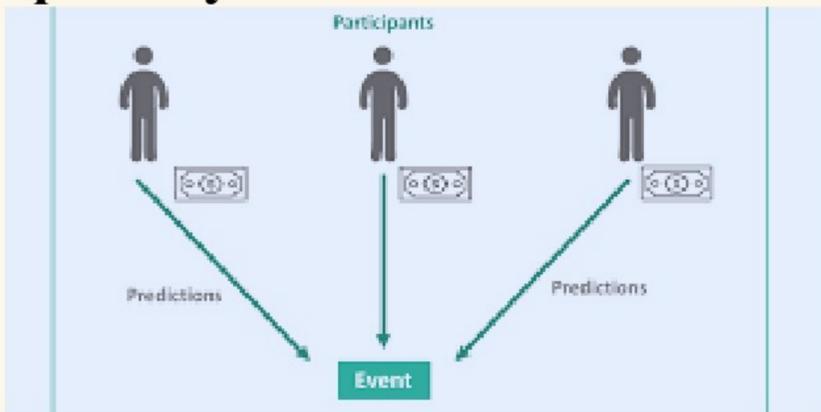
India-Brazil relations gained strategic importance during President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's January 2026 visit amid US tariff threats and global uncertainty. Both nations, facing severe US tariff concerns, agreed to double trade to \$30 billion by 2030 through deals on critical minerals, steel mining, and digital cooperation, thereby diversifying from China-led supply chains.

Shared Multilateral Platforms: As BRICS, IBSA, G-4, and biofuel alliance co-founders, India and Brazil have the potential to counter Trump's challenges to multilateralism, territorial sovereignty, and UN structures. Lula's presence at India's AI Impact Summit signaled Global South solidarity.

US Tariff Backdrop: Post-US Supreme Court ruling against Trump's reciprocal tariffs, both countries (targeted over BRICS, Iran trade, Russian oil) paused negotiations. Lula urged "unionising" against US pressure rather than individual deals disadvantageous to smaller nations.

Strategic Significance: Lula's visit to India as well as his attendance at the AI impact Summit before his Brazil election and Washington trip has reaffirmed multilateral commitment. The "bundled sticks" metaphor emphasizes coordinated Global South resistance. India's postponed US trade talks reflect strategic recalibration, positioning India-Brazil as anchor powers against protectionism and unilateralism.

Prediction Markets: Mechanics, Popularity & Controversies



A prediction market is a platform where users buy units of a probable event to profit when that event occurs or does not. Users fund accounts via crypto, credit/debit cards, or bank transfers, with platforms possibly charging fees. They browse topics like science, sports, culture, and finance to bet on events. Kalshi and Polymarket claim to be the largest platforms. Polymarket uses the USDC stablecoin - a non-official cryptocurrency pegged to the value of the U.S. dollar - via the Polygon network.

Rising Popularity and Criticisms Prediction markets surge due to their design, ease, and social media virality. They let speculators bet on familiar real-world events instead of complex investments. Platforms claim crowdsourced wisdom reduces bias, as people bet on believed outcomes. Yet critics highlight risks like irresponsible gambling, betting on violence in West Asia markets, spreading false news, and insider trading. Both use clickbait on X and Instagram.

Regulatory Status Prediction markets occupy a grey area. They face regulation in some places and bans elsewhere. Kalshi reports CFTC regulation but encounters U.S. state restrictions and challenges. Polymarket bars users from 33 countries, including the U.S., Germany, U.K., and Singapore. Interest grows in India, with Reddit users debating Polymarket's legality.

Prediction Markets in Gambling

Data-driven odds, transparent markets



FM launches NMP 2.0, sets eye on Rs 16.72 lakh cr of asset monetisation by 2030

NMP1.0 and 2.0- achievements and annual targets

(in Rs lakh cr)

YEAR	NMP1.0	NMP 2.0
FY22-24	3.87	
FY25	1.43	
FY26		2.49
FY27		3.26
FY28		3.46
FY29		3.69
FY30		3.81

SOURCE: GOVERNMENT

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 on Monday. This initiative targets Rs 16.72 lakh crore from asset monetisation over five years starting April 2025. NITI Aayog developed it based on the Union Budget 2025-26 mandate. The plan exceeds the earlier Rs 10 lakh crore target.

NMP 1.0, launched in 2021, achieved 89% of its Rs 6 lakh crore goal by FY25. It unlocked value from underutilised public assets through Toll-Operate-Transfer models, Infrastructure Investment Trusts, and strategic auctions. This attracted pension funds and sovereign wealth funds to highways and other projects. Public InvITs now allow citizens to invest directly in infrastructure.

NMP 2.0 covers highways (Rs 4.42 lakh crore from 21,300 km), power (Rs 2.77 lakh crore), ports (Rs 2.64 lakh crore), and railways (Rs 2.62 lakh crore). Other sectors include coal, mines, urban infrastructure, aviation, petroleum, warehousing, telecom, and tourism. Key measures involve listing GAIL Gas stakes, divesting airport holdings, auctioning 94 coal mines, and leasing BSNL land via Public-Private Partnerships.

The plan supports Viksit Bharat by upgrading transport networks and improving service efficiency. Proceeds will mainly go to the Consolidated Fund of India, with allocations for private investment and State funds. Public-Private Partnerships will recycle capital, reduce public debt, and draw private sector participation.

CONTOURS

India's energy shift through the green ammonia route

Source : THE HINDU Editorial 24/02/2026

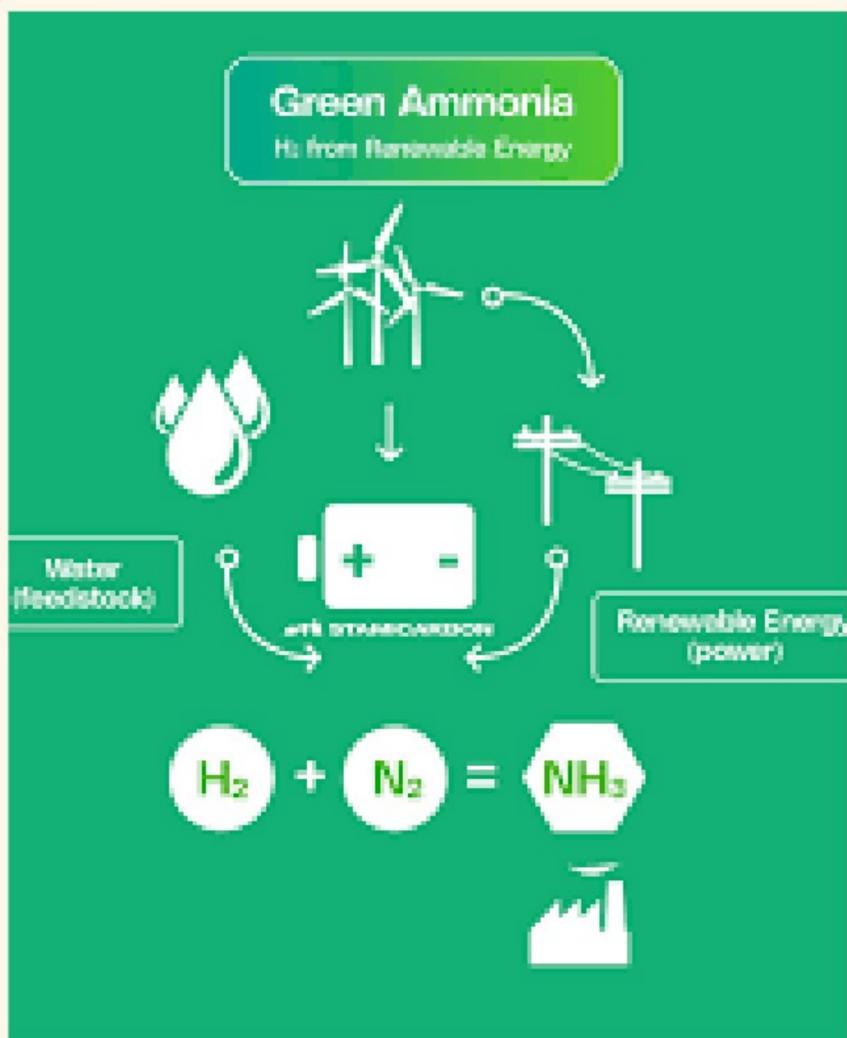
What is Green Ammonia? Green ammonia is produced by combining nitrogen with green hydrogen, offering a zero-emission alternative to grey ammonia for fertilizers, clean energy, and marine fuel.

Global Demand & Promotion Programs

Green ammonia leads green hydrogen adoption globally, driven by decarbonization needs in industry, power, and transport. Some noteworthy examples include H2Global's tender of green ammonia under the EU's hydrogen import strategy, South Korea's Clean Hydrogen Portfolio Standard (CHPS) tender for clean ammonia procurement as a bulk fuel, and the recent tender concluded by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) under the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) programme of India's National Green Hydrogen Mission.

GREEN AMMONIA

- Green ammonia production is where the process of making ammonia is 100% renewable and carbon-free.
- It is usually done by using hydrogen from water electrolysis and nitrogen separated from the air. These inputs are then fed into the **Haber-Bosch process**, all powered by sustainable electricity.
- In the Haber process, hydrogen and nitrogen are reacted together at high temperatures and pressures to produce ammonia, NH₃.
- In contrast, traditional ammonia production involves forming ammonia from methane, water and air, using **steam methane reforming (SMR)**.
- This process consumes a lot of energy and produces around 1.8% of global carbon dioxide emissions.



Indian focus : Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) has developed the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) programme under India's National Green Hydrogen Mission. SECI recently concluded auctions on long-term green ammonia supply for existing fertilizer manufacturers in India.

The SECI auctions established a significant breakthrough in cost-competitive green ammonia procurement, setting new global benchmarks, almost 40%-50% less than the prices from the H2Global auction. SECI's green ammonia auctions awarded 13 contracts to 7 bidders (one securing 6 for 370,000 tonnes/year), with prices ₹49.75-64.74/kg (\$572-744/tonne)—significantly narrowing the cost gap vs. grey ammonia (\$515/tonne) via subsidies (₹5.3-8.82/kg for 3 years) and 10-year offtake guarantees.

Delivery & Strategic Significance India's SECI tenders has identified coastal delivery points near 13 fertilizer plants, allowing green ammonia to be shipped directly by sea. This replaces about 30% of India's current ammonia imports, cutting reliance on foreign suppliers. Shipping avoids volatile global gas prices, currency fluctuations, and geopolitical disruptions like wars or sanctions. India holds a unique edge with low renewable energy costs (solar/wind power for green hydrogen) combined with reliable 10-year contracts that guarantee buyers and stable revenue for producers. This winning formula positions India as a global leader in clean ammonia markets. To sustain growth, India needs blended finance through government support and private loans with reduced risk and harmonized regulations for grid access, safety standards, and certification. These measures build investor confidence, attract private capital, and accelerate large-scale production—making green ammonia commercially viable while driving India's energy independence.

PRELIMS CORNER :

Q) Consider the following statements :
(2022)

1. Attorney General of India and Solicitor General of India are the only officers of the Government who are allowed to participate in the meetings of the Parliament of India.
2. According to the Constitution of India, the Attorney General of India submits his resignation when the Government which appointed him resigns.

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

Q) At the national level, which ministry is the nodal agency to ensure effective implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006? (2021)

- (a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- (b) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- (c) Ministry of Rural Development
- (d) Ministry of Tribal Affairs

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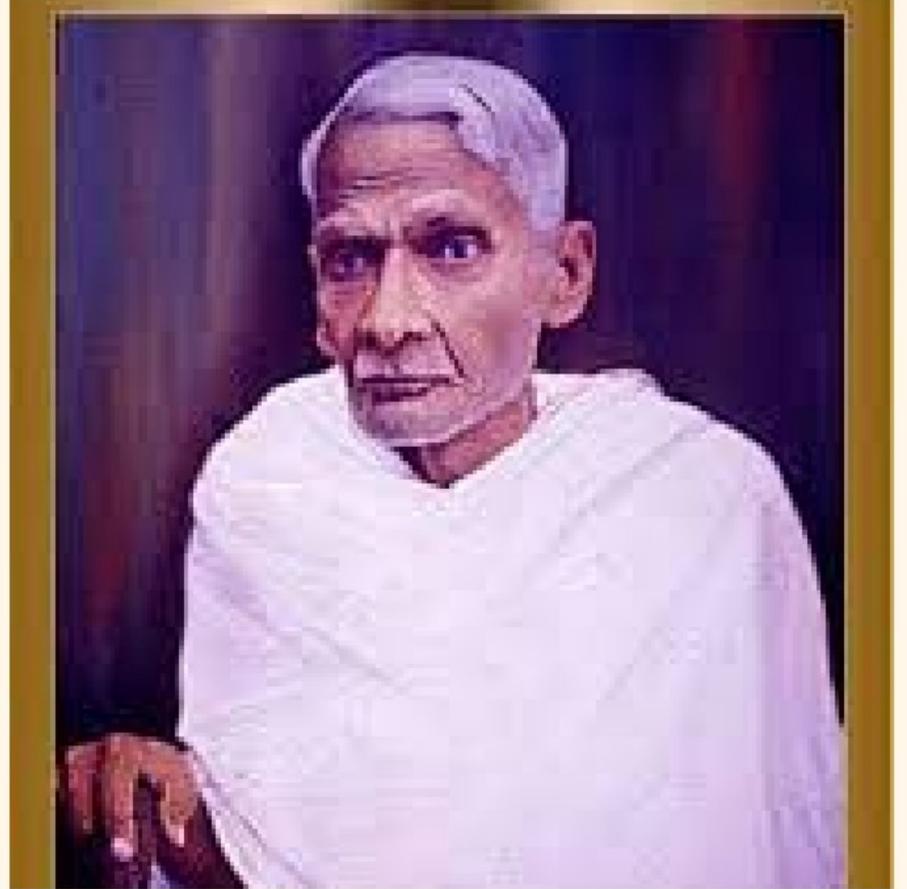
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HERITAGE

C V KUNHIRAMAN



Early Life & Journalism: Born in 1871 at Mayyanad near Kollam, C.V. Kunhiraman began his journalistic career writing for Sujananadini under Paravoor Kesavan Asan. In 1911, he founded Kerala Kaumudi as a weekly from Mayyanad, single-handedly serving as proprietor, editor, printer, and proofreader. It became a daily in 1940, evolving into Malayalam's leading voice against caste discrimination. Kunhiraman also edited Malayalarajyam, Navajeevan, Kathamalika, Yukthivadi, Navasakthi, and Vivekodayam.

Social Reform Leadership: A devoted follower of Sree Narayana Guru, Kunhiraman served as SNDP Yogam General Secretary (1928-29, 1931-32). He led the Vaikom Satyagraha (1924-25) alongside T.K. Madhavan, facing arrest during the temple road access struggle for lower castes. He founded Vellamanal school for Ezhava children, serving as headmaster to promote education.

Literary Legacy: Authoring 14 books across novels, poetry, stories, and biographies, Kunhiraman democratized classical literature through prose versions of Valmiki Ramayanam (1901) and Vyasabharatam. His writings championed social justice and human dignity.

Impact: Kunhiraman's tireless journalism uplifted Ezhavas while dismantling caste barriers. Kerala Kaumudi remains his enduring platform for equality, embodying his vision of social transformation through fearless advocacy and education.

Prelims Corner: Explanations

1) Answer is option d

Statement 1 (Incorrect): Article 88 grants the Attorney General of India (AGI) right to speak and participate in Parliament proceedings (both Houses and committees) without voting rights. However, the Solicitor General of India (SGI) lacks this constitutional privilege. SGI is a statutory appointment under executive discretion to assist AGI, not a constitutional post with parliamentary access. Other law officers like Additional Solicitor General also attend but cannot participate like AGI.

Statement 2 (Incorrect): Article 76(4) states AGI holds office "during the pleasure of the President." No constitutional mandate requires resignation when the appointing government resigns. This is convention only—AGI typically resigns with Council of Ministers' change (e.g., 2014, 2024 transitions), but legally continues until President accepts resignation or removes them.

Key Constitutional Provisions:

- Art 76: AGI appointment, duties, rights (Art 76(1-2)), tenure (Art 76(4))
- Art 88: AGI parliamentary participation
- SGI: Executive appointment, no constitutional status

Exam Insight: Tests distinction between constitutional mandate vs political convention. Answer: Neither (2022). Distinguish AGI's formal rights from SGI's supportive role and tenure's presidential discretion vs government convention.

2) Answer is option d

Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006: Nodal Ministry Roles

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs serves as the nodal agency for implementing the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (Forest Rights Act or FRA). This landmark legislation recognizes and vests forest rights in Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers who have resided in forest areas for generations but lacked formal documentation of their rights.

Key Features:

- Grants individual forest rights (land cultivation, habitation) and community rights (minor forest produce, sacred sites, biodiversity management).
- Addresses historical injustices by communities displaced or marginalized during forest conservation.

Institutional Framework:

- Primary responsibility: Ministry of Tribal Affairs oversees Gram Sabha-level recognition, State/District Level Monitoring Committees, and appeals.
- Supportive role: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change facilitates implementation through forest departments but cannot override FRA processes.



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