Anti-Paper Leak Bill

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Why in News?

The Union Cabinet headed by the prime minister approved draft legislation that seeks to significantly tighten punishment for paper leak offences.

- The amendments are intended to deter organised criminal networks and institutions that profit from examination fraud, while ensuring that candidates are not penalised under the law.
- It aims to amend the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, strengthening the legal framework against examination fraud.
- The 2024 Act covers recruitment examinations conducted by agencies such as the UPSC and SSC, as well as major entrance examinations, including NEET, JEE and CUET.
- The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, was the 1st central law specifically enacted to address paper leaks and organised examination malpractice after widespread concern over repeated exam irregularities.
- **Punishment**
  - Individuals found guilty of paper leaks could face a minimum prison term of 5 years along with a financial penalty.
  - Cases involving organised paper leak rackets would attract a maximum punishment of 10 years in jail and fines of up to Rs 10 crore.
- The existing law prescribes imprisonment of 3 to 5 years for individuals involved in paper leaks.
- Organised offences currently carry jail terms ranging from five to 10 years, along with a minimum fine of Rs 1 crore.
- **Time-bound Investigations** - The draft legislation also introduces provisions for time-bound investigations and mandatory fast-track court trials.

- As per the proposal, investigations into paper leak cases must be completed within 3 months.

Reference

[News on Air | Anti-paper leaks draft bill]