Prelim Bits 02-09-2018

Section 124a of IPC

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- Law Commission of India has recently recommended to the Government of India to re-think or even repeal the provision of sedition (Section 124A) from the Indian Penal Code.
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- Section 124a, commonly known as Sedition law made words or any visible representation that attempts to bring hatred or contempt or excite disaffection towards the government punishable by law.
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- They shall be charged with cognizable and non-bailable offence with punishment up to imprisonment for life & fine or imprisonment for 3 years & fine or with fine alone.
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- The expression disaffection includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity.
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- It was introduced in the 1870s, originally to deal with increasing Wahabi activities that posed a challenge to the colonial government.
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- The section has been misused in recent times to suppress even minor dissent.
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- **Non-bailable offence** – The police cannot release anyone on bail and so the arrested person must make an application for bail before a magistrate or court.
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Leptospirosis

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- Health Department has recently given the warning about leptospirosis disease in the post-flood period.
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- Leptospirosis is a bacterial infection in rodents and other wild and domesticated species.
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- It is a zoonotic disease (i.e) spread from animals to humans caused by bacteria of the genus Leptospira.
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- It is transmitted to humans by exposure through water contaminated by urine from infected animals.
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- The infection in man is contracted through skin abrasions and the mucosa of the nose, mouth and eyes.
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- Human-to-human transmission is rare.
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- In most of the cases, leptospirosis only causes mild flu-like symptoms, such as headache, chills and muscle pain.
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- However, in some cases the infection is more severe and can cause life-threatening problems, including organ failure and internal bleeding.
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- Severe form of leptospirosis is known as Weil's disease
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- It is an emerging tropical infectious disease.
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- Without treatment, Leptospirosis can lead to kidney damage, meningitis, liver failure, respiratory distress, and even death.
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Monster Galaxy

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- Astronomers have captured the clearest image of Monster galaxy using Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA).
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- The monster galaxy called as COSMOS-AzTEC-1 is located 12.4 billion light-years away.
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- Monster galaxies, or starburst galaxies, form stars at a startling pace, 1000 times higher than the star formation rate in Milky Way Galaxy.
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- It has molecular clouds that are highly unstable and leads to runaway star formation.

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- They are thought to be the ancestors of the huge elliptical galaxies in Universe.
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- Therefore, these findings pave the way to understand the formation and evolution of such galaxies.
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SAARC

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- South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Council of Ministers' meeting is going to be held in New York.
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- It is expected to be chaired by Nepal Foreign Minister.
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- SAARC is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of nations in South Asia.
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- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are its members.
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- Its secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.
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- The organization promotes development of economic and regional integration.
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- It launched the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) in 2006.
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- States with observer status include Australia, China, European Union, Iran, Japan, Mauritius, Myanmar, South Korea and United States.
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RCEP Trade Minsiters' Meeting

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- Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Trade Ministers' Meeting was recently held in Singapore.
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- RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between the ten member

states of the ASEAN and the six states with which ASEAN has existing free trade agreements - Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.
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- Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam are ASEAN members.
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- RCEP is viewed as an alternative to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a proposed trade agreement which includes several Asian and American nations but excludes China and India.
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- RCEP will cover trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic and technical co-operation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement and other issues.
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- Negotiations of RCEP will aim to achieve the high level of tariff liberalisation, through building upon the existing liberalisation levels between participating countries.
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Source: Indian Express, PIB, The Hindu

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