Prelim Bits 30-04-2024 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Declaration of the poll at a polling station to be void

The Election Commission of India (ECI) declared void the poll in certain polling stations of Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh and conducted the repolls.

- **Reasons for declaring the poll void** - India's election laws provide a framework for handling situations where the normal polling process is disrupted for any reason, including
    - Damage to EVMs,
    - Booth-capturing,
    - Natural disasters,
    - A candidate's death.

Intentional destruction or taking away of EVMs
• It is declared by the Election Commision under ***Section 58 of the Representation of People Act, 1951 (RPA)*** if - An unauthorised person has unlawfully taken away any EVM; - Any EVM has been accidentally or intentionally destroyed, or lost, or damaged, or tampered with; - A mechanical failure develops in any EVM during the recording of votes. • During the repoll, the voters' *left middle fingers* are inked to distinguish between the mark made during the original poll (on their left forefinger).
Booth capturing
• It is defined in ***Section 135A of the RPA*** and the ECI may declare the poll to be void in case of - Seizure of a polling station, affecting the conduct of elections; - Taking possession of a polling station, allowing only his or their supporters to vote; - Intimidating or threatening any elector and preventing him from going to the polling station; - Seizure of a counting place affecting the counting of votes; - Involvement of any person in government service in any of the above activities. • Booth capturing is punishable for - **Lay people** - 1 year to 3 years - **Government servants** - 3 years to 5 years
Natural disasters and other disruptions
• The ***Presiding Officer*** of a polling station can *adjourn the poll* at a polling station under ***Section 57(1) of the RPA***, 1951 in case of - A natural calamity like a flood, a severe storm; - Non-receipt or loss or damage to essential polling materials like EVM, electoral roll etc; - Interruption or obstruction due to any riot or, open violence; - Non-arrival of the polling party due to obstruction or any other serious difficulty; - Non-commencement of the poll ***within 2 hours*** from the scheduled time due to malfunctioning of EVM, or any other reason. • After seeking the EC's approval on the date and hours, the adjourned poll will *recommence from the stage at which it was left immediately before* the adjournment. • ***Only*** *electors who have not already voted before* the poll was adjourned are permitted to vote.
Death of a candidate

• As per ***Section 52 of RPA***, amended in 1996, the poll shall be ***adjourned only*** in case of the ***death of a recognised political party's candidate***.
- A recognised political party refers to either a recognised national party, or party recognised as a state party in the state concerned, for which the EC reserves a symbol under the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order.
• The above provision applies if the candidate with a valid nomination dies at any time *after 11.00 a.m. on the last date for making nominations, until the commencement of the poll.*
• The EC calls upon the concerned political party to *nominate another candidate* in place of the deceased candidate ***within 7 days.***

Reference

The Indian Express | What EC can do if normal polling process is disrupted

Hangor Class Submarines

China has launched the 1st of the eight Hangor-class submarines for its all-weather ally Pakistan to provide it with state-of-the-art warships.

- **Origin of the agreement** - The contract for building the submarines between Pakistan government and China Shipbuilding & Offshore International Company Ltd. was signed in 2015.
- **Built by** - 4 of the 8 submarines will be built by Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Group's (WSIG) while others are being built at KS&EW (Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works) under Transfer of Technology agreement.
- **Hangor-class Submarine** – It is an export variant of the *Chinese Type 039A Yuan class* and is named after *PNS Hangor*, which famously sank Indian frigate *INS Khukri* during the 1971 war.
- **Features** - The submarines come with *diesel engines* and an *air independent propulsion (AIP) system* thus its durability underwater.
- It can launch anti-ship missiles and *Babur-3 subsonic cruise missile* which has a 450 km range thus giving Pakistan the deep strike capabilities.
- Pakistan's Hangor class is the direct counterpart of ***India's Kalavari class of submarines,*** based on the French Scorpene-class.

Quick facts

Project-75 (Kalvari class)	Meaning	Commissioned Year
INS Kalvari	Tiger Shark	2017
INS Khanderi	Island Fort built by Chhatrapati Shivaji	2019
INS Karanj	Island located South of Mumbai	2021
INS Vela		2021
INS Vagir	Sand Fish	2023
INS Vagsheer	Sand Fish	Launched in 2022 (under trails)

References

The Indian Express | Pakistan's new Hangor class submarines,

FirstPost | China launches first Hangor-class submarine for Pakistan

Supreme Court stand on Streedhan Property

The Supreme Courtreiterated that stridhan is an "absolute property" of a woman, and while the husband has no control over the same.

- **Streedhan properties** - Properties gifted to a woman *before marriage, at the time of marriage or at the time of bidding farewell or thereafter* are her streedhan properties.
- It is her absolute property with all rights to dispose at her own pleasure.



- **Supreme Court verdict** – Streedhan property ***does not become a joint property*** of the wife and the husband, and the husband has no title or independent dominion over the property as its owner.
- The husband may use it during the time of his distress but nonetheless he has a ***moral obligation to restore the same*** or its value to his wife.

Reference

Economic Times | Husband's control over wife's stridhan

Salmonella infection (Salmonellosis)

In the last six months, a third of MDH Pvt Ltd's shipments of spice products were rejected by the US because of salmonella contamination.

- **Cause** - Also known as ***salmonellosis,*** it is a common ***bacterial disease*** that affects the intestinal tract.
- Salmonella bacteria typically live in animal and human intestines and are shed through stool (feces).
- **Transmission** - The infection is highly contagious and can be transmitted person-to-food-to-person, animal-to-person directly, animal-food-person, and even person-to-person.
- Humans may contract salmonella infections, usually by eating food with live bacteria on it (undercooked or contaminated food or drinking contaminated water).
- **Symptoms** - Diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, a fever, nausea, and vomiting in some cases.
- **Treatment** - It is a self-limited illness that will go away in a few days, but in some cases it requires medical intervention.
- Cooking foods to a safe internal temperature, usually 165 degrees, and proper food

safety are important for prevention of salmonellosis.

India is the world's largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices.

Related links – Ethylene dioxide

Reference

Firstpost | US rejects MDH over salmonella contamination

Kalesar Wildlife Sanctuary

The Supreme Court has stayed the construction of 4 dams in the Kalesar Wildlife Sanctuary following the Wildlife Institute of India' report.

- **Location** – Haryana
- **Notified in** - 1996
- Kalesar National Park (KNP) and Kalesar Wildlife Sanctuary (KWLS) is the westernmost tip of the ***Terai Arc Landscape*** with the Shivalik mountain range.

Kalesar National Park is named after the Kaleshwar (shiva) temple located in protected area. The Yamuna River flows on the one side of the park.

- **Coverage** - An area of 11,000 acres
- The sanctuary derives its name from the *Kalesar forest*, which is a part of the reserve.
- **Important flora** – Red junglefowl, grey partridge, Indian peafowl, and white-throated kingfisher.
- The Kalesar forest boasts a dense cover of ***Khair and Sal trees.***
- **Important fauna** - Leopards, sambar deer, barking deer, hyenas, jackals, Indian porcupines, Indian pangolins, and langurs.
- **Key features** - The topography varies from plains to hills up to an elevation of 700 m, interspersed with narrow valleys locally called '***khols'*** between the hills.
- These valleys house seasonal rivulets locally called ***'soats'*** which remain dry for most of the year.
- This site qualifies as a ***key biodiversity area of international significance*** (including Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites, and Key Biodiversity Areas).
- **Dams within Kalesar Wildlife Sanctuary** - Chikan, Kansli, Khillanwala and Ambawali.

References

1. Tribune India | SC stays 4 dams inside Kalesar Wildlife Sanctuary

2. [WWI | Kalesar Wildlife Sanctuary]

