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President’s Address

- Article 87 provides for the special address by the President.
- The article provides that at the commencement of the first session after each general election to the House of the People and at the commencement of the first session of each year, the President shall address both Houses of Parliament assembled together and inform Parliament of the causes of its summons.
- Such an Address is called 'special address', and it is also an annual feature.
- No other business is transacted till the President has addressed both Houses of Parliament assembled together.
- This Address has to be to both Houses of Parliament assembled together.
- If at the time of commencement of the first session of the year, Lok Sabha is not in existence and has been dissolved, and Rajya Sabha has to meet.
- And Rajya Sabha can have its session without the President's Address.
- In 1977, during the dissolution of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha had its session on 28 February 1977 without the President's Address.
- In the case of the first session after each general election to Lok Sabha, the President addresses both Houses of Parliament assembled together after the members have made and subscribed the oath or affirmation and the Speaker has been elected.
- The Address contains a review of various activities and achievements of the Government during the previous year and sets out the policies, projects and programmes which Government of the day wishes to pursue with regard to the important national and international issues.

Motion of Thanks

- The address of the president, which corresponds to the ‘speech from the Throne in Britain’, is discussed in both the Houses of Parliament on a motion called the ‘Motion of Thanks’.
- It is available to the members of Parliament to raise discussions and debates to examine and criticise the government and administration for its lapses and failures.
- Generally, three days are allotted for the discussion on the Motion of Thanks.
- If any of the amendments are put forward and accepted then the Motion of

Thanks is adopted in the amended form.

- Amendments may refer to matters contained in the Address as well as to matters which, in the opinion of the member, the Address has failed to mention.
- At the end of the discussion, the motion is put to vote.
- The Motion of Thanks must be passed in the House, Otherwise, it amounts to the defeat of the government.
- It is one of the ways through which the Lok Sabha can also express a lack of confidence in the government.
- The other ways are:

1. Rejection of a money bill.
2. Passing a censure motion or an adjournment motion.
3. The defeat of the government on a vital issue.
4. Passing a cut motion.

Kaka Hathrasi

- Kaka Hathrasi is counted among the foremost poets of 'haasya' (humour) and 'vyanga' (satire) in Hindi literature.
- Born Prabhulal Garg on September 18, 1906, he took the name 'Kaka Hathrasi' based on his hometown, Hathras in Uttar Pradesh, and on the popular character of a 'Kaka' (uncle) he had essayed in a play.
- His poetry looks at politics, social ills, the pomposity of the cultural elite, the everyday struggles of middle-class life with the same razor-sharp, but good-natured gaze.
- Hathrasi was honoured with the Padma Shri in 1985 for his contributions to Hindi literature.
- Apart from humour, he wrote on classical dance and music under the pen name 'Vasant'. Kaka Hathrasi was also an accomplished painter.
- He founded a whole new genre of humour-writing, which authors since then have tried to emulate.

Sharang Artillery Gun

- Sharang is first 130mm M-46 Artillery gun upgraded to 155mm by Ordnance Factory Board.
- It was formally handed over by OFB to Indian Army at the Lucknow Defence Expo.
- The gun's range has now gone from 27km to over 36km with the upgrade.
- It also has more explosive capability and hence and more damage potential.
- After close to three decades, the Army inducted its first modern artillery guns system in November 2018, these gun capabilities of Indian army

includes

1. M-777 Ultra Light Howitzers (ULH) from the U.S.
2. K9 Vajra-T self-propelled artillery guns from South Korea.
3. The 155mm Dhanush towed gun system, developed based on the Bofors guns by OFB, is under induction.
4. Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), a 155mm, 52 calibre gun, being jointly developed by the DRDO in partnership with Bharat Forge of Kalyani Group and Tata Power SED.
5. 155mm Excalibur precision-guided ammunition from the U.S.

Ease of Living Index

- Ease of Living Index (EoLI) and Municipal Performance Index (MPI) 2019 have been launched by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.
- Ease of Living Index is aimed at providing a holistic view of Indian cities based on

1. The services provided by local bodies,
2. The effectiveness of the administration,
3. The outcomes generated through these services in terms of the liveability within cities
4. The citizen perception of these outcomes.

- The key objectives of the Ease of Living Index are four-folds, viz.

    a) Generate information to guide evidence-based policy-making;

    b) Catalyse action to achieve broader developmental outcomes including the SDG;

    c) Assess and compare the outcomes achieved from various urban policies and schemes.

    d) Obtain the perception of citizens about their view of the services provided by the city administration.

- EoLI 2019 will facilitate the assessment of ease of living of citizens across three pillars: Quality of Life, Economic Ability and Sustainability which are further divided into 14 categories across 50 indicators.
- It aims to assess the progress made in cities through various initiatives and empower them to use evidence to plan, implement & monitor their performance.
- These indices are designed to assess the quality of life of citizens in 100 Smart Cities and 14 other Million Plus Cities.

Municipal Performance Index 2019

- Municipal Performance Index 2019, aims to assess the performance of municipalities based on five enablers namely Service, Finance, Planning, Technology and Governance which have been further divided into 20 sectors which will be evaluated across 100 indicators.
- This will help Municipalities in better planning and management, filling the gaps in city administration, and improving the liveability of cities for its citizens.
- All participating cities have appointed nodal officers whose responsibility is to collect and collate the relevant data points from various departments both within and outside of the ULB and upload the same along with supporting documents in the exclusive web portal designed for this purpose.

International Gandhi Awards for Leprosy

- The International Gandhi Awards for Leprosy commemorates the compassion that Mahatma Gandhi possessed and his services towards people with leprosy.
- The awards aim to recognize the outstanding work by individuals and organisations to fight leprosy and eliminate the prejudices associated with it.
- International Gandhi Awards for Leprosy 2020 was awarded to Dr N.S. Dharmashaktu and the Leprosy Mission Trust in New Delhi.

Court of Arbitration for Sport

- The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) is an institution independent of any sports organization.
- It is located in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- It has the task of resolving legal disputes in the field of sport through arbitration.
- The CAS was created in 1984 and is placed under the administrative and financial authority of the International Council of Arbitration for Sport (ICAS).
- It does this pronouncing arbitral awards that have the same enforceability as judgements of ordinary courts.
- It can also help parties solve their disputes on an amicable basis through mediation when this procedure is allowed.
- The CAS sets up non-permanent tribunals, which it does for the Olympic Games, the Commonwealth Games or other similar major events.
- Any disputes directly or indirectly linked to sport may be submitted to the CAS.
- These may be disputes of a commercial nature (e.g. a sponsorship contract),

or of a disciplinary nature following a decision by a sports organisation (e.g. a doping case).

Ban on CFL Lamps

- Kerala state announced it will impose a ban on the sale of compact fluorescent lamps (CFL) and incandescent (filament) bulbs starting November this year as part of sustainable energy policy.
- The state administration in its budget also added that streetlights and bulbs in government offices across the state will be converted to light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs.
- The announcement is in line with the government project of 'Filament-free Kerala' envisaged in 2018 as part of the state's Urja Kerala mission.
- LED bulbs are energy-efficient than filament or CFL bulbs and will, therefore, generate less waste.
- Also, filament bulbs contain the mercury element which, when broken, is polluting in nature.
- The filament-free Kerala project will be implemented by the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) and the Energy Management Centre, Kerala.
- Consumers in the state can place orders for LED bulbs on the KSEB website in exchange for existing filament bulbs.

Source: AIR, PIB, Indian Express

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