



THE HINDU



GS Paper 2-Governance

X Corp. challenges content blocking orders, opposes Centre's 'censorship portal'

The Hindu Bureau

BENGALURU/NEW DELHI

X Corp, formerly known as Twitter Inc, has moved the Karnataka High Court, challenging the way the Union and State governments are issuing orders to

X's legal challenge

Here are the contentions of Elon Musk's company in the Karnataka High Court:

- Why issue blocking orders under Section 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000, and not under Section 69A

- Section 79(3)(b) outlines the

- Section 69A empowers the government to block access to online content, under specific circumstances

- Union Home

KEY POINTS

- X Corp has petitioned the Karnataka High Court, arguing that content blocking should only be done under Section 69A of the IT Act, not Section 79(3) (b).
- The government contends Section 79 only notifies platforms of liability for illegal content, not blocking orders.





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GS Paper 3-Defence

Defence procurement set to become faster; proposals worth ₹54,000 cr. get nod

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) on Thursday approved guidelines to shorten the timelines for the defence procurement process along with preliminary approvals for procurement proposals worth ₹54,000 crore, a day after



Singh, also accorded Acceptance of Necessity, the first step of the procurement process, to eight proposals worth over ₹54,000 crore. These include procurement of 1,350 hp engines to upgrade the present 1,000 hp engines on the Army's T-90 tanks; Airborne Early Warning & Control Aircraft systems

KEY POINTS

- The Defence Acquisition Council approved guidelines to reduce procurement timelines by 10%–15% and gave preliminary approval for proposals worth ₹54,000 crore. The Cabinet Committee on Security also approved the procurement of 307 indigenously developed 155mm artillery guns at ₹7,000 crore.





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GS Paper 3-Internal Security

Army seeks inclusion of additional areas in Manipur under AFSPA

Vijaita Singh

NEW DELHI

At a review meeting chaired by the Union Home Ministry on Wednesday, the Army sought the inclusion of additional police station limits in Manipur valley districts within the ambit of the Armed Forces (Special) Powers Act (AFSPA), a senior go-



vernment officials. The Army has been periodically extending the scope of the AFSPA in Manipur hill districts, with the last one issued on September 26, 2024.

The Ministry reviewed the scope of the AFSPA in Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Manipur at a multi-agency meeting on Wednesday.

"It is likely that one of the four districts in Assam

KEY POINTS

- The Army proposed including 12 more police stations in Manipur under AFSPA for operational efficiency.
- The Ministry reviewed AFSPA's scope in Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Manipur.
- AFSPA grants the Army and Police powers to kill, arrest, and search without a warrant in disturbed areas, with immunity from prosecution.





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GS Paper 3-Economy

Panel flags 'shoddy implementation' of Centre's flagship tourism scheme

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Members of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), headed by senior Congress leader K.C. Venugopal, slammed the Union Tourism Ministry for shoddy implementation of its flagship scheme *Swadesh Darshan*, launched in 2014-15.

Under the scheme, during the period of 2014-15 to



K.C. Venugopal

port also criticised the government for its failure to complete projects within the stipulated time frame.

At the meeting, according to sources, the Tourism Ministry claimed that 75 of the 76 sanctioned projects were completed. The meeting was attended by V. Vidyavathi, Secretary, Tourism Ministry; Suman Billa, Additional Secretary; and Yadubir Singh Rawat, Di-

sources, expressed serious dissatisfaction with the Ministry's responses. "The Ministry was making desperate attempts to mislead the committee to cover up the deficiencies rather than addressing them. We have taken a serious note of this," one of the members said.

Field inspection

The committee directed



KEY POINTS

- The PAC, led by K.C. Venugopal, criticized the Union Tourism Ministry for poor execution of the Swadesh Darshan scheme, highlighting issues like lack of feasibility studies and incomplete projects. The scheme, launched in 2014–15, has now been revamped as SD2.0, focusing on sustainable and responsible tourism.





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GS Paper 2-Governance

How do habitual offender laws discriminate?

How are habitual offenders deemed so? What is the history behind denotified and nomadic tribes being seen as 'criminal tribes'? Why are States such as Gujarat not keen to repeal the habitual offender laws?

EXPLAINER

Abhinav Lakshman

The story so far:

Months after the Supreme Court of India questioned the need for decade-old laws that have classified a section of criminals as "habitual offenders" across India, the Government of India has revealed in Parliament that such laws continue to operate in as many as 14 States and Union Territories.

What has the SC said about the matter in the past?

In October last year, while deciding a matter on caste discrimination within



THE GIST

In October last year, while deciding a matter on caste discrimination within Indian jails, the Supreme Court of India had called into question the very basis of the "habitual offender" classification, noting it was "constitutionally suspect" and used to "target members of denotified tribes"

Habitual offender laws have a schedule of crimes for which the classification could be invoked. Across States, this



KEY POINTS

- The Supreme Court of India raised concerns over "habitual offender" laws, questioning their constitutionality and misuse against denotified tribes. These laws, rooted in colonial-era legislation, continue in some states, though others like Punjab and Odisha have moved away from them. The laws cover crimes like being a thug or a dacoit.



GS 2/3-IR/Economy

11TH ROUND OF INDIA-EU TALKS ON MAY 5

India-EU FTA talks: Progress on dispute settlement, stalemate on rules of origin

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 20

IN THE first round of trade deal negotiations between India and the European Union after the EU College of Commissioners' visit to India last month, both countries made considerable progress in agreeing on the norms that will guide dispute settlement under the pact but failed to make a significant breakthrough on rules of origin, which help determine the national source of a product.

Amid rising protectionism globally, Prime Minister Narendra

AIM TO CONCLUDE FTA BY END OF 2025



PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen had announced that both sides would aim to conclude the free trade agreement by the end of 2025

vices from a holistic perspective, addressing all obstacles impeding market access, including tariffs, rules of origin, and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)," the re-

The report also stated that limited progress was made on technical regulations, market surveillance, and technical discussions, adding that important diver-

KEY POINTS

- India and the EU made progress on dispute settlement in their trade talks but struggled with rules of origin.
- They aim to conclude the deal by 2025, with talks ongoing since 2022. The EU emphasized market access for cars and resolved some sectoral issues but faced challenges on technical regulations and India's Quality Control Orders.





Miscellaneous

International Happiness Day Being Observed Globally With Theme 'Caring & Sharing'

International Day of Happiness
CARING & SHARING

KEY POINTS

- India ranks 118th in the World Happiness Report 2025, with Finland, Denmark, and Iceland topping the list. Pakistan ranks 109th, and Afghanistan is the lowest. The report evaluates countries based on GDP, social support, life expectancy, freedom, generosity, and corruption perceptions. Despite rapid economic growth, India's happiness score remains low.

