



CURRENT AFFAIRS DATED ON 10 AUG 2018

General Studies -2

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Bill, 2018

Why in News?

The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Bill, 2018 which was passed by the Lok Sabha on 6th August 2018, has been passed by the Rajya Sabha today.

Details of the Bill:

Section 18A has been inserted to nullify conduct of a preliminary enquiry before registration of an FIR, or to seek approval of any authority prior to arrest of an accused, and to restore the provisions of Section 18 of the Act.

Section 18A, inserted in the Act, states that:-

(1) For the purpose of the PoA Act,-

(a) preliminary enquiry shall not be required for registration of a First Information Report against any person; or

(b) the investigating officer shall not require approval for arrest, if necessary, of any person, against whom an accusation of having committed an offence under the PoA Act has been made and no procedure other than provided under the PoA Act or the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, shall apply.

(2) The provision of section 438 of the Code shall not apply to a case under the Act, notwithstanding any judgment or order or direction of any Court.

Background :

The directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court in their judgment in (Dr. Subhash Kashinath Mahajan Vs the State of Maharashtra and Another) amount to amending the PoA Act and have diluted the provisions of the PoA Act.

Issues Raised:



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- The directions of the Hon'ble Court to conduct a preliminary inquiry within seven days by the Dy. S.P. concerned to find out whether the allegations make out a case under the PoA Act.
- Arrest in appropriate cases may be made only after approval by the S.S.P., would delay registration of First Information Report (FIR) and will impede strict enforcement of the provision of the POA Act.
- It may also be difficult to get the preliminary inquiry conducted within seven days as sufficient number of Dy. S.P level officers are usually not in place.
- Other repercussions of the said directions of the Hon'ble Court are that delay in registration of FIR would result in delay in payment of admissible relief amount to the victims of atrocities admissible only on registration of FIR.
- All this would adversely affect the very objective of the Act to prevent commission of atrocities against members of SC and ST .

Hence, it was considered expedient and meaningful to reaffirm the reliance and trust of members of SCs and STs on the provisions of the PoA Act.

Unnat Bharat Programme 2.0

The Government has recently launched Unnat Bharat Abhiyan 2.0, which is the phase-2 of scheme. It covers 750 Higher Educational Institutes.

About the Scheme:

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan aims to link the Higher Education Institutions with atleast (5) villages, so that these institutions can contribute to the economic and social betterment of these village communities using their knowledge base.

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan is inspired by the vision of transformational change in rural development processes by leveraging knowledge institutions to help build the architecture of an Inclusive India.

It also aims to create a virtuous cycle between the society and an inclusive university system, with the latter providing knowledge base; practices for emerging livelihoods and to upgrade the capabilities of both the public and private sectors

Objective of the scheme are:



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- (i) To engage the faculty and students of Higher Educational Institutions in understanding rural realities;
- (ii) Identify and select existing innovative technologies, enable customization of technologies, or devise implementation methods for innovative solutions, as required by people; and
- (iii) To allow Higher Educational Institutions to contribute to devising systems for smooth implementation of various Government Programs.

Currently 688 Institutions covering 33 States/UT's are participating under the scheme.

General Studies -3

National Disaster Response Force

Context:

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given the approval for raising of four (4) additional battalions of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) to strengthen the India's disaster response set up at an estimated cost of Rs 637 crore.

Details:

- The objective of raising four additional battalions is to reduce the response time keeping in view the vast geographic area of the country.
- These four battalions will initially be raised as two battalions in Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and one battalion each in Border Security Force (BSF) and Assam Rifles (ARs).
- Later these four battalions will be converted into NDRF battalions.
- Based on the vulnerability profile, these four battalions will be placed in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Delhi National Capital Region.

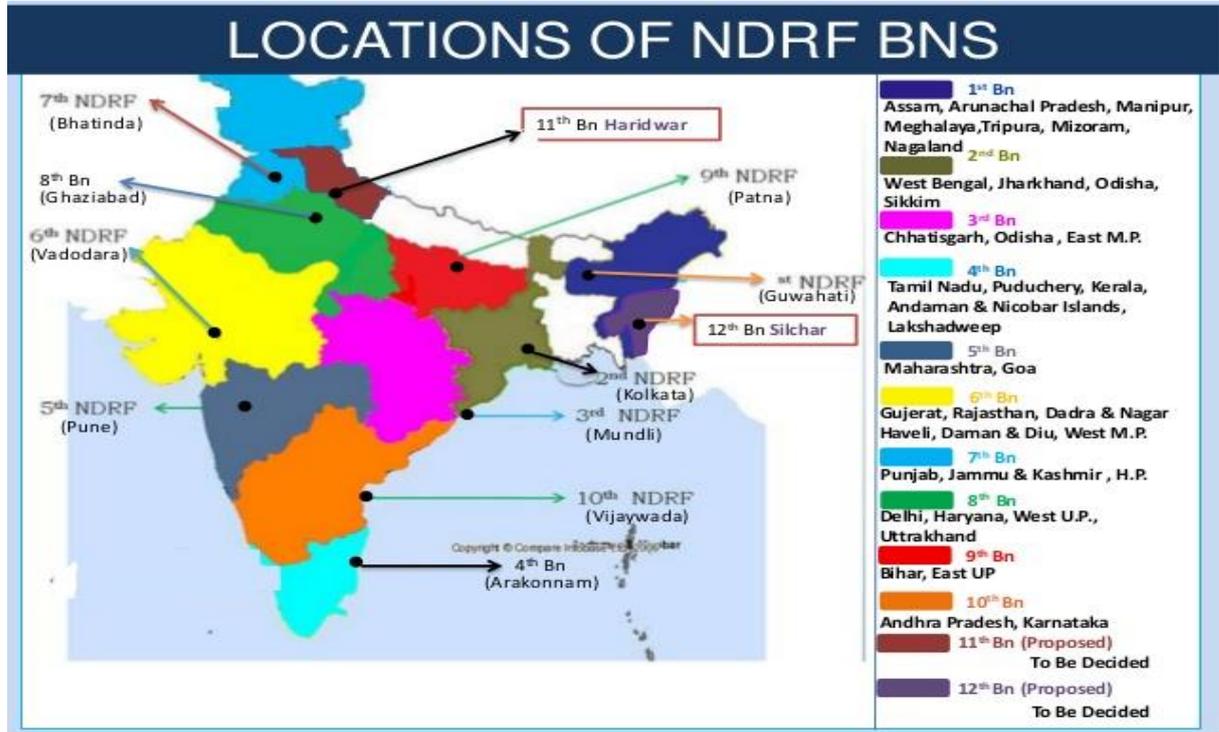
Background:

NDRF is a specialized force, which has been created in the year 2006 for the purpose of specialist response during the natural and man-made disaster or threatening situation.



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At present there are 12 battalions in NDRF which are deployed strategically across the country to provide immediate response.



National Energy Storage Mission

The Expert Committee in MNRE has proposed a draft NESM with objective to strive for leadership in energy storage sector by creating an enabling policy and regulatory framework that encourages manufacturing, deployment, innovation and further cost reduction.

3-Stage Solution

NITI Aayog and Rocky Mountain Institute's joint report on India's Energy Storage Mission has proposed three stage solution approach i.e.

- Creating an environment for battery manufacturing growth;
- Scaling supply chain strategies;
- and Scaling of battery cell manufacturing.



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Energy Storage is one of the most crucial & critical components of India's energy infrastructure strategy and also for supporting India's sustained thrust to renewables.

Key areas for energy storage application include:

- i. integrating renewable energy with distribution and transmission grids;
- ii. setting Rural micro grids with diversified loads or stand-alone systems;
and
- iii. developing Storage component of electric mobility plans.

World Biofuel day

World Biofuel Day is observed every year on 10th August to create awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels and to highlight the various efforts made by the Government in the biofuel sector.

The World Biofuel Day is being observed by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for the last three years.

What are Biofuels?

- A **biofuel** is a [fuel](#) that is produced through contemporary biological processes, such as agriculture and [anaerobic digestion](#), rather than a fuel produced by geological processes such as those involved in the formation of [fossil fuels](#), such as coal and petroleum, from prehistoric biological matter.
- Biofuels can be derived directly from plants (i.e. [energy crops](#)), or indirectly from agricultural, commercial, domestic, and/or industrial wastes.
- Renewable biofuels generally involve contemporary [carbon fixation](#), such as those that occur in [plants](#) or [microalgae](#) through the process of [photosynthesis](#).

Benefits of Biofuels:



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- Biofuels have the benefits of reducing import dependency on crude oil, cleaner environment, additional income to farmers and employment generation in rural areas.
- The biofuels programme is also in synergy with the Government of India initiatives for *Make in India*, *Swachh Bharat* and enhancing farmers' income.

Since 2014, the Government of India has taken a number of initiatives to increase blending of biofuels.

The Government approved the **National Policy on Biofuels-2018** in June 2018.

National Policy on Biofuels 2018

Salient features

 <p>An indicative target of 20% blending of ethanol in petrol and 5% blending of biodiesel in diesel is proposed by 2030.</p>	 <p>With a thrust on Advanced Biofuels, the Policy indicates a viability gap funding scheme for 2G ethanol Bio refineries of Rs.5000 crore in 6 years in addition to additional tax incentives, higher purchase price as compared to 1G biofuels.</p>	 <p>Categorization of Biofuels into Basic Biofuels - First generation(1G) Bioethanol & biodiesel and "Advanced Biofuels"- Second Generation(2G) ethanol, drop-in fuels, algae based Third Generation(3G) Biofuels.</p>	 <p>Increase scope of raw material for ethanol procurement by encouraging Intermediate (B-Molasses), Sugarcane Juice, other Sugar containing materials and damaged as well as surplus food grains.</p>
 <p>Develop National Biomass repository by conducting appraisal of biomass across the Country.</p>	 <p>Bio diesel production to be encouraged from non edible oilseeds, used cooking oil, short gestation crops and development of supply chain mechanisms.</p>	 <p>Thrust on research, development and demonstration in the field of Biofuel feedstock production, advanced conversion technologies from identified feedstock.</p>	 <p>Setting up of National Biofuel coordination committee (NBCC) under Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Working Group on Biofuels.</p>



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The Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas is making all efforts to increase ethanol supply for petrol and has taken several steps in this direction.