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1. Centre sets up panel to recommend reforms in arbitration law (June 19, 2023)

expert panel
The Government of India has constituted an **expert panel** headed by former Law Secretary **TK Vishwanathan** to propose reforms in the **Arbitration and Conciliation Act** and reduce the burden on the courts.

An overview of the news

- The expert committee comprises Attorney General **N Venkataramani** and members from various government departments, private law firms and legal entities.
- The mandate of the Committee includes evaluating the **current arbitration ecosystem** in India, analyzing the **strengths, weaknesses** and challenges in comparison to foreign jurisdictions.
- The panel is expected to submit its report within **30 days** and recommend a framework for a **cost-effective arbitration system.**
- The Committee will focus on developing a competitive environment both domestically and internationally in the arbitration services market, and will aim at establishing a cost-effective arbitration regime.
- The **Department of Legal Affairs** is taking steps to strengthen the dispute resolution environment in India and promote ease of doing business through legal reforms.
- The reform of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act aims **to reduce court interference, make arbitration a party-driven process and ensure time-bound finalization of arbitration awards.**

2. Government of India constituted peace committee in Manipur (June 10, 2023)

constituted-peace-committee-in-Manipur
Government of India has constituted a **Peace Committee in Manipur** under the **Chairpersonship of Governor, Manipur Anusuiya Uikey** on 10 June.

An overview of the news

- The constitution of the Peace Committee in Manipur was announced by **Amit Shah**, the Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, during his visit to the state from **May 29th, 2023 to June 1st, 2023.**

Members of Peace Committee

- The committee consists of the **chief minister, state government ministers, members of parliament (MPs), members of the legislative assembly (MLAs) and leaders of various political parties.**

- The Committee also includes former civil servants, educationists, litterateurs, artists, social workers and representatives of different ethnic groups.

Mandate of the Committee

- The primary mandate of the **Peace Committee is to facilitate the peace-making process** among different ethnic groups in Manipur.
- This involves promoting peaceful dialogues and negotiations between conflicting parties or groups.
- The Committee aims to **foster social cohesiveness, mutual understanding, and cordial communication** between the various ethnic groups in the state.
- The objective of the committee is **to resolve conflicts, redress grievances and promote reconciliation** among the various communities in Manipur.

3. Three-member panel constituted to probe Manipur violence (June 5, 2023)

Three-member-panel-constituted-to-probe-Manipur-violence
The Centre has established a **Commission of Inquiry** to investigate the recent series of **violence in Manipur**, led by former Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court, **Ajai Lamba.**

About Commission of Inquiry

- In addition to Ajai Lamba, the commission includes retired **IAS officer Himanshu Shekhar Das and retired IPS officer Aloka Prabhakar as members.**
- The headquarters of the commission will be located in **Imphal, Manipur.**
- The central government has appointed the Commission of Inquiry under the provisions of the **Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952.**

What will examine the commission?

- The commission's mandate, according to a notification from the **Union Home Ministry**, is to inquire into the causes and spread of the violence and riots targeting different communities in Manipur that occurred on May 3 and thereafter.
- The commission will examine the **sequence of events leading to the violence, gather all relevant facts**, and determine if there were any lapses or dereliction of duty on the part of responsible authorities or individuals.
- It will also assess the adequacy of administrative measures taken to prevent and address the violence and riots.
- The commission is required to submit its report to the central government as soon as possible.
- But no later than **six months** from the date of its first sitting.

Violence in Manipur

- The violence in Manipur, which began on **May 3**, resulted in numerous **fatalities, injuries, and property damage.**
- The government of Manipur recommended the establishment of a judicial inquiry commission to investigate the causes and factors associated with the crisis.
- Manipur has experienced sporadic violence since the outbreak of **ethnic clashes** on May 3.
- The clashes were triggered by a '**Tribal Solidarity March**' organized in the hill districts to protest the **Meitei community's demand** for **Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.**
- Prior tensions had arisen over the eviction of **Kuki villagers** from reserve forest land, leading to smaller agitations.

4. Supreme Court appointed Sapre Committee submits report on Adani-Hindenburg issue (May 22, 2023)

Sapre Committee

The **Supreme Court** on May 19 made public the report of the court-appointed expert panel in the **Hindenburg-Adani row case.**

An overview of the news

- American short-selling firm **Hindenburg issued** a report on January 24, 2023, calling Adani Group companies overvalued and alleging **manipulation of accounts.**
- However, Hindenburg's allegations were rejected by the Adani Group.
- But the opposition created a ruckus about this issue and when the matter reached the Supreme Court, the **Supreme Court had constituted a special committee to investigate.**

Highlights of the report

- The report states that the **Adani group has disclosed all beneficial owners.**
- There is no allegation that SEBI is rejecting the declaration of beneficial owners of Adani.
- Adani's retail stake has increased after the Hindenburg report.
- The report clearly states that prima facie **no violation of existing rules or laws has been found.**

About Sapre Committee

- **Constituted -** By Supreme court on 2nd March 2023
- **Chairman** - Former Supreme Court judge Justice Abhay Manohar Sapre (Retd).

- **Members of the Committee** - O P Bhatt, Justice J P Devadhar (Retd), Nandan Nilekani, K V Kamath and Somasekhar Sundaresan
- **Purpose of the Committee -** To investigate any violations of securties law by the Adani Group in the wake of the Hindenburg report.
- **Supreme Court made public the report** - On 19 May

5. IRDAI constitutes Expert committee for matters related to mental health (May 16, 2023)

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)
The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** has recently constituted a **five-member expert committee** comprising **medical experts and insurers to advise on matters related to mental health and insurance.**

An overview of the news

- The **panel has been constituted for two years** to **advise on matters related to mental health and insurance.**
- The committee will provide advice and input on **existing insurance coverage** and what is offered for mental illnesses.
- It will also provide guidance on terminology and concepts from a **medical perspective and aspects related to mental illness** from an insurance perspective.
- **Pratima Murthy**, director of the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), has been made the **chairperson of the committee.**

About the committee

- **Dr. Pratima Murthy,** Director, NIMHANS, Bangalore, **(Chairman)**
- **Dr. Nimesh Desai**, Former Director, Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences, New Delhi, **(Member)**
- **Bhargav Dasgupta**, CEO, ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd, **(Member)**
- **Dr. S. Kalyanasundaram**, Psychiatrist, Bangalore, **(Member)**
- **Mayank Bathwal**, CEO, Aditya Birla Health Insurance Company Ltd, **(Member)**

About Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI)

- IRDAI is the **regulatory body** responsible for overseeing and regulating the insurance industry in India.
- It was set up to **promote and regulate the insurance sector in India.**
- It was **established on April 1, 2000**, under the provisions of the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999.**

- The primary role of the IRDAI is to regulate and promote the insurance industry in India.

6. IOA constituted two-member ad-hoc committee (April 29, 2023)

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) constituted a two-member ad-hoc committee on 27 April 2023, consisting of **Bhupendra Singh Bajwa,** Member of the Executive Council of the IOA and **Ms. Suma Shirur,** a Sportsperson of Outstanding Merit from the IOA.

An Overview of the News

- Ahead of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) elections, the IOA will also appoint a retired high court judge to the ad-hoc committee for fair and transparent elections.
- The WFI Ad-hoc Committee will be responsible for managing the affairs of the federation including the selection and participation of players in international events.
- The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the IOA Executive Council chaired by **PT Usha,** President, Indian Olympic Association.
- As per the directive given by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, the earlier proposed May 7 election of WFI has now become invalid.

Background of the constitution of the Ad-hoc Committee:

- It will manage executive issues like player selection and their participation in international games.
- The WFI president's election was originally scheduled for May 7 but the Ministry of Youth Affairs declared it illegal following which an ad-hoc committee was formed.
- Meanwhile, demonstrations are being held against former Indian wrestler WFI President **Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh** for alleged sexual harassment of female wrestlers.

Constitution of Committee by IOA:

- In January this year, the IOA had constituted a committee headed by veteran boxer **MC Mary Kom** to resolve a complaint.
- The primary objective of the IOA is to support sports development in our country by ensuring the well being and care of the sportspersons.
- Her top priority is to safeguard the interest of Indian wrestlers and facilitate their participation in upcoming international competitions including the Asian Games.

7. Committee constituted to review the National Pension System for government employees (April 7, 2023)

Committee Constituted to review the nps govt employees

The **Finance Ministry** on 6 April constituted a **four-member committee headed by Finance Secretary T V Somanathan** to **review the pension system for government employees under the National Pension System (NPS).**

An overview of the news

- **Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Special Secretary, Department of Expenditure and Chairman, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) will be members of the committee.**
- The committee will suggest whether any changes are necessary in the existing structure of the **National Pension System (NPS)** applicable to government employees.
- The committee will suggest modifications with a view to improve the pensionary benefits of government employees covered under NPS, keeping in view the fiscal implications and the overall budgetary impact.
- The announcement comes in the backdrop of several non-BJP states seeking restoration of the **Old Pension Scheme (OPS)** and employees' unions in some other states demanding the same.
- The state governments of **Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh** have requested to return the accumulated funds under NPS while notifying the Center about their decision to restore the old pension scheme.
- Under the OPS, retired government employees received **50 per cent of their last drawn salary as monthly pensions.**

8. Center sets up committee to monitor tur stock (March 28, 2023)

Center sets up committee to monitor tur stock

The **Department of Consumer Affairs** on 27 March constituted a **committee to monitor the stock of Tur (Arhar)** held by **importers, millers, traders,** and other such entities.

An overview of the news

- This committee has been constituted under the **chairmanship of Nidhi Khare**, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- A committee will monitor the stock of Arhar in coordination with state governments.
- The decision was taken following reports that traders were not selling the pigeon pea stock in the market despite a good quantity of imports.
- The **Government is also closely monitoring the stock position in the domestic market** to take necessary measures in case of an unexpected increase in the prices of pulses in the coming months.
- The Government had **issued an advisory to the States/UTs on August 12, 2022,** to implement stock disclosure in respect of Toor under the **Essential Commodities Act, 1955.**

Hike of Toor prices

- According to the ministry's data, the all-India daily average retail price of Tur was recorded at **Rs 114.44 per kg** on 27 March, 2023, which was **11.47 per cent higher than a year ago.**
- The **all-India daily average wholesale price** of Tur was recorded at **Rs 10,462.03 per quintal**, which was **12.48 per cent higher than a year ago.**

9. Center constitutes a committee of secretaries to expedite infrastructure projects along northern border areas (March 15, 2023)

Defense Minister **Rajnath Singh** chaired a **high-level meeting in New Delhi** on 14 March **to review the progress of infrastructure projects in the northern border areas.**

News Overview

- During the meeting, Singh stressed on the need for early completion of all pending projects on top priority and taking a pan-India approach in matters of national security.
- The government has decided to **set up a committee of secretaries** that will meet frequently to fast-track pending projects in the northern border areas.
- Other ministers and officials who attended the meeting included Road Transport and Highways Minister **Nitin Gadkari,** Railway Minister **Ashwini Vaishnav**, Energy Minister **RK Singh**, Environment Minister **Bhupendra Yadav**, National Security Advisor **Ajit Doval** and the Chief Ministers of Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand and the states of Ladakh. The governor and the lieutenant governor were also involved.

10. Supreme Court sets up expert panel to probe Adani issue (March 4, 2023)

The **Supreme Court** on March 2 constituted an **expert panel to probe the regulatory failure on the Adani issue.**

An overview of the news

- The expert committee's members are - f**ormer SBI chairman O P Bhatt, Justice J P Devadhar (retired), veteran banker K.V. Kamath, Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani and advocate Somasekhar Sundaresan.**
- The committee will be headed by former Supreme Court judge **A M Sapre.**
- The Supreme Court has asked the committee to submit its report to the court in a sealed cover within two months.
- Panel will **investigate any regulatory failure in dealing with the alleged breaking of rules** by the Adani Group of companies.

- The mandate of the committee will be to suggest measures to strengthen the framework, investigate the Adani dispute and suggest measures to strengthen the legal framework.
- The Supreme Court also directed **SEBI** to ensure that all information is made available to the committee.

Adani-Hindenburg issue

- In late January, **Hindenburg published** a report **critical of the finances of the Adani group.**
- It said the major listed companies of the group had "**substantial debt**" which has put the entire group in a "**precarious financial position".**
- Hindenburg accused the Adani-led group of "**stock manipulation and accounting fraud over the course of decades".**
- Seven listed firms of the Adani group lost nearly half their **market value (over USD 100 billion)** following the report.
- The combined market value of the listed Adani firms is now at **US$108 billion, up from US$218 billion** before the Hindenburg report.