

**DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS
ANALYSIS**

LAKSHYA ACADEMY®

30 NOVEMBER 2023

1 - Bhoot Chaturdashi:

GS I

Indian Culture

- **Context:**

- Chhoti Diwali Bhoot, also known as Naraka Chaturdashi, occurs the day before Diwali.

- **Festivals in various states:**

- Chhoti Diwali, the day before Diwali, is particularly linked to beliefs about the arrival of spirits on Earth and the defeat of the demon Narakasura, who represented darkness.
- These explanations explain why this day is often referred to as Bhoot or Naraka Chaturdashi.

- **Goa:**

- Huge effigies of the Asura King Narakasura are set ablaze throughout the state of Goa.
- The "Narakasura Vadh" represents Lord Krishna's victory over Narakasura.

- **West Bengal:**

- In West Bengal, people celebrate "Bhoot Chaturdashi," also known as "Narak Chaturdashi" or "Kali Chaudash," the day before Diwali, or "Chhoti Diwali."
- It is the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight in the Kartik month.
- It is thought that on this night, departed souls visit their loved ones on Earth.
- The 14 lamps, or "choddo prodip," are meant to ward against evil spirits as well as welcome the ancestors.
- To commemorate the occasion, it is customary to eat 14 varieties of "saag," or leafy vegetables (also known as "choddo shaak").
- On Bhoot Chaturdashi, "Aghoris," Shaivite ascetics of the Tantric "kapalik" tradition, get together in various locations to perform Tantric rituals and "puja."

- **Gujarat:**

- Many Gujaratis observe a rite known as "kaklat kadhvo" on Kali Chaudash (chaturdashi), which literally translates to "letting go of clamour and troubles."
- The "vada," a prepared fried delicacy, is the focal point of the ceremony.

- After completing the rite, the ladies leave the house without turning around because they believe that if they do, the "kaklats" (fights, clamour, resentment, household complaints, etc.) will follow them.
- On the eve of Kali Chaudash, the "bhuvras," or religious leaders of the village, conduct a rite at the village cemetery in an effort to subdue the ghosts.
- Gujarati businesses conclude their fiscal year and file their accounts for the previous year on Diwali day through a custom known as "Chopda Poojan," during which the traditional accounting books are venerated at the auspicious hour.
- After Diwali, until the fifth day of the New Year, known as "Labh Paacham," no commerce is conducted.
- *Source → The Hindu*

2 - Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2023:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- The draught Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2023 was made public by the Information & Broadcasting Ministry.
- **Important information:**
- **Objectives and goal:**
- With the passage of the Bill, the broadcasting industry will have a more cohesive legal framework that covers digital news, OTT (over-the-top media service) content, and current affairs.
- The Bill seeks to increase accessibility and inclusivity for individuals with impairments in broadcasting.
- It encourages the use of sign language, audio descriptions, and subtitles.
- **Important aspects of the Bill:**
- **A framework for regulations:**

- In essence, the Bill unifies many broadcasting services' regulatory requirements into one legislative framework.
- It aims to supersede various policy directives that now regulate India's broadcasting industry, including the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act of 1995.
- **Regulation expansion into new domains:**
 - The Bill expands its regulatory authority to include current affairs, digital news, and broadcasting of over-the-top content, which are currently governed under the IT Act of 2000.
 - Provisions for newly developed broadcasting technology are also included.
- **Definitions:**
 - Together with other significant technical terminology that will be specified in the statute for the first time, the Bill offers thorough definitions for terms used in modern broadcasting.
- **Numerous codes and committees:**
 - It establishes "Broadcast Advisory Council" to counsel the national government on violations of the programme code and advertisement code, as well as "Content Evaluation Committees" for self-regulation.
- **Penalties:**
 - For operators and broadcasters, the Bill offers legislative sanctions such as advice, warning, censure, or monetary fines.
 - There are additional provisions for jail time and/or fines, but they are limited to particularly serious violations, such as using a fake affidavit to get registration.
 - In order to maintain justice and equity, monetary penalties and fines are correlated with the entity's financial capacity, taking into consideration its investment and turnover.
- **Officer for Disability Grievances:**
 - The appointment of a Disability Grievance officer is provided for under the Bill.
- **Infrastructure exchange:**
 - Additionally, it includes opportunities for platform service carriage and infrastructure sharing among broadcasting network operators.
- **Provision of Right of Way:**

- The Bill creates a formal dispute resolution process and streamlines the "Right of Way" provision to deal with relocation and alterations more effectively.
- *Source* → *The Hindu*

3 - Community rights and forest conservation:

GS III

Environmental Conservation:

- **Context:**
- There hasn't been much talk regarding the Forest Conservation Amendment Act of 2023 or its effects on forests and their inhabitants.
- **The recently proposed Act amendment:**
- **Objectives and intent of the amendment:**
- The amendment's main goals are to address the pressing problems of climate change and the negative effects of deforestation, with an emphasis on afforestation and efficient management.
- The Act outlines the process by which it attempts to accomplish this goal of determining how forests might be used for economic gain.
- The main strategy to accomplish this goal is to exempt forests from legal restrictions, which makes it easier for other kinds of economic exploitation to occur.
- **Relevance of the legislation:**
- The 1927 Forest Act and any lands classified as such on or after October 25, 1980 are the only areas to which the forest legislation will now apply, under the modification.
- The Act will not apply to territory that is less than 100 kilometres from the boundary between China and Pakistan, where the central government is permitted to construct linear projects, or to forests that were converted for non-forest use on or after December 12, 1996.
- **Infrastructure for security provisioned:**

- The central government is permitted to build security measures in regions up to 10 hectares in order to set up surveillance facilities and security infrastructure.
- This clause also covers areas that have been classified as vulnerable, up to five hectares.
- The government in these areas is able to put the previously mentioned security measures into place with the required authorization.
- These sectors may see the implementation of programmes like ecotourism, safaris, environmental entertainment, and more.
- Human rights groups and tribal people have expressed disapproval of these efforts' primary goal, which is to enhance the livelihoods of individuals who depend on forest resources.

- **The amendment's need:**

- The Supreme Court's 1996 decision in the well-known Godavarman Thirumulkpad case resulted in the interpretation of forest land according to its "dictionary meaning."
- All private forests were subsequently included in the 1980 law's jurisdiction.
- This has generated discussion because it was claimed that the Act mainly intends to prevent the conversion of forest land for large-scale businesses and other non-forest uses.
- Due to the law's alleged negative effects on the nation's industrial development, there has been a great deal of opposition to it, particularly from private landowners, people, and organisations dedicated to forest protection.
- The demands of the nation's industrial classes were the primary force behind the decision to remove forest land from the legal system.
- The introduction of the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill in Parliament brought these factors back to the fore and led to lengthy discussions and arguments.
- Subsequently, a 31-member Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) was assigned the Bill by Parliament.

- **JPC's recommendation:**

- Just six members of the 31-member JPC discussing the matter represented the opposition.
- As a result, the Bill was effectively approved by both chambers of Parliament without a great deal of discussion or debate.
- There have been no cooperative talks with the southern states about issues pertaining to their particular regions.
- The Odisha government removed the state's designation as a "deemed forest" a few days after the Act was passed, but it was forced to withdraw the order later on because of public outcry, stating that it was awaiting comprehensive regulations and guidance from the relevant Central Ministry.

- Removing the forests from the Forest Conservation Act's jurisdiction would essentially prevent native populations from standing up for their rights.
- **The requirement of "prior consent":**
- In 2016 and 2017, the Forest Conservation Act was significantly modified to require prior approval from the tribal grama sabha before any changes could be made to forests for uses other than forests.
- Nevertheless, the requirement for this kind of permission has been eliminated by the most recent changes to the law.
- However, in this case, State governments can take the initiative to participate in particular activities within this framework by incorporating grama sabhas, especially when it comes to land acquisition for different reasons, by setting up steering committees at the State level.
- However, many State governments may be hesitant to act on this front because they believe Adivasi grama sabhas are "anti-development," and they worry that their actions may impede politically advantageous afforestation projects.
- **Compensatory afforestation: What is it?**
- The term "compensatory afforestation" refers to a range of programmes and initiatives that can be used for afforestation or reforestation by groups (including big businesses) as well as by private citizens.
- In the past, the Compensatory Afforestation Act faced numerous obstacles, mostly because of unclear language in the original statute and a lack of land.
- Simplifying the procedure is the aim of the new amendment.
- According to the law, afforestation activities must reforest an equivalent quantity of land elsewhere for each parcel of land destroyed.
- It leaves leeway for discretion by not specifying the kind of trees that should be planted.
- **What impact does this have on the FRA (Forest Rights Act)?**
- **Absence of execution:**
- It seems that the Central government and the State governments are no longer as excited about putting the FRA into effect in their respective States as they were at first.
- **State authority eroding:**
- The Act is viewed by many as a barrier to the conversion of forest land for uses other than forests.

- According to the State government's bureaucracy, providing community rights under the FRA could make the State less powerful over the forest.
- They expect that any such initiatives may face legal challenges.
- **Endangers the adivasis's rights:**
- Rather than amending the FRA, the government has chosen to minimise or dilute the extent of forest areas in order to manage the aforementioned situation and limit the possibility of more Adivasi claims.
- The growing problem of human-animal conflicts in forest areas, especially in the Adivasi hamlets of the Western Ghats region, is another concern that the amendment ignores.
- The Adivasis' way of existence is under jeopardy, and wildlife is also at risk due to this conflict.
- **Issue domains:**
- **Forest governance versus reforestation:**
- The idea of forest governance is fundamentally at odds with the concept of afforestation, which provides significant financial incentives for afforestation projects to both private individuals and institutions.
- Given that all of the nation's woods are included in the concurrent list, this runs counter to the idea of decentralised forest governance.
- These kinds of governance procedures run against the spirit of federal regulations.
- **Issue with linear strategic projects:**
- Strategic linear project definition gets quite ambiguous and difficult.
- In contrast to external security risks such as border conflicts and cross-border skirmishes, internal environmental security is also a major worry, particularly for states that frequently experience natural disasters.
- Unfortunately, this priority cannot be assured.
- **Source → *The Hindu***

4 - Ransomware attack on Industrial and Commercial Bank of China:

GS II

International Issues

- **Context:**
- A ransomware attack on the US branch of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) caused only minor disruptions to trades in the US Treasury market.
- **ICBC: What is it?**
- With more than \$6 trillion in assets, ICBC, a state-owned commercial bank in China, is the biggest lender in both the country and the entire globe.
- It is among the world's most lucrative businesses.
- With a market value of \$194.57 billion, it ranks third in the world's banking industry, behind JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America.
- **Ransomware attacks: what are they?**
- Malicious software, also known as ransomware, is a sort that either prevents access to or threatens to reveal sensitive data until the victim pays the attacker a ransom.
- This particular kind of cyberattack has grown in popularity among malevolent actors in the last few years.
- **What is 3.0 Lockbit?**
- Lockbit, a company that effectively sells its software to cybercriminals on the dark web, developed LockBit 3.0.
- The most common ransomware strain, Lockbit 3.0, is responsible for over 28% of all recorded assaults between July 2022 and June 2023.
- Over 1,400 attacks against victims in the US and other countries have been carried out by LockBit perpetrators, who have demanded ransom payments totaling over \$100 million.
- Although it has never been verified, it is supposed to have Russian roots.
- **Importance of the latest assault:**
- Since the financial sector invests much in cybersecurity and divides its operations to deter theft, successful cyberattacks on banks are uncommon.

- Because of this, even though this attack is the most recent in a recent series of ransomware attacks, it is rather uncommon.
- Considering how important ICBC is to the global banking system, an attack like this may have had far-reaching effects.
- Some market players did claim that the attack prevented deals through ICBC from being settled, which had an impact on market liquidity.
- *Source → The Hindu*

5 - GPS tracker:

GS III

Science and Technology:

- **Context:**
- Recently, a prisoner in Jammu and Kashmir who had been fitted with a Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking device to follow his whereabouts was freed on bond.
- **What is GPS Tracker:**
- This is the first time a GPS tracker has been used for this purpose in the nation.
- A GPS tracker is a tiny, wearable gadget similar to the GPS collars that have been used for animal tracking for a long time.
- Law enforcement and security organisations can track the wearer's movements in real time and receive the wearer's precise position at all times thanks to this device.
- Since the gadget is impervious to manipulation, every effort to do so triggers an alarm.
- Additionally, the wearer or any unauthorised person cannot remove it without endangering it.
- An individual can wear the tracker on their arm or ankle.
- As a result, GPS bracelets and anklets exist.
- **Utilising these gadgets:**
- **Regarding domesticated and untamed animals:**
- These days, GPS gadgets are widely used, and some individuals even implant them in their pets.

- These gadgets track the activities of wild creatures like cheetahs in Kuno and rogue elephants in Kerala.
- **Regarding automobiles:**
- To guarantee that they can be found if they are stolen, many modern cars come with trackers installed.
- **What is the legal standing for this kind of technology use?**
- GPS tracker proponents contend that their use can ease the application process for bail under the strict UAPA and provide police with the assurance that they won't object to it.
- Human rights advocates claim that tracking someone violates their basic right to privacy.
- The basic rights of those using GPS trackers cannot be violated, even though the state uses this tactic to try to protect public safety.
- In the 1978 case of "Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India," the Supreme Court declared that the right to human dignity is inalienable to the right to life.
- It is vital to have a system of informed consent and processes to deal with unethical and unlawful practises since surveillance raises worries about over-regulation and human rights violations.
- *Source → The Hindu*