



3 February, 2024

Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984

Context: The 22nd Law Commission of India has submitted its Report No. 284 titled "Revisiting the Law on Prevention of Damage to Public Property" to the Government of India.

- The 22nd Law Commission, recognizing the ongoing destruction of public property causing substantial losses and inconvenience, prepared a report.
- The report suggests amendments to the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984, to address challenges effectively.
- The Commission also proposes considering a separate law or amendments to existing legislations like Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita or the Indian Penal Code for prolonged obstruction of public property.
- The recommendations aim to strengthen legal frameworks, ensuring swift consequences for those involved in destructive acts.

➤ Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984:

- Legislation that imposes penalties, including a maximum jail term of five years, fines, or both, for acts of mischief against public property.
- Allows for the integration of its provisions with those of the Indian Penal Code.
- Definition of Public Property: Public property encompasses structures and installations associated with water, light, power, energy production, oil installations, sewage works, mines, factories, public transportation, telecommunications, and related properties.
- **Review Necessity and Supreme Court Intervention:**
 - The Supreme Court has identified the inadequacies of the law and intervened through guidelines.
 - Committees, led by Justice K T Thomas and senior advocate Fali Nariman, were appointed to recommend changes to the legislation.

Proposed Amendment	Details
Fine Amount to be equivalent to the market value of the property damaged	In the original act, the guilty could be punished with a jail term and a fine. The fine amount was not defined.
Imprisonment of Less than six months only in special cases	It was enough for the court to just record reasons in case the imprisonment awarded was less than six months. Now the court can do it only for special reasons
Introduction of Section 4A (Presumption against accused)	If the prosecution proves that public property has been damaged as a direct consequence of an offence and if the accused participated in that offence, he will be presumed guilty unless he can prove on the contrary.
Introduction of Section 4B (Abetment of mischief)	If public property is damaged in consequence of a bandh/agitation/demonstration etc called by any organization, the office bearers of that organization will be prosecuted for abetment of offence.
Introduction of Section 4C (Punishment for abetment of mischief)	Abetment of mischief as defined above will henceforth be punishable under this act.
Introduction of Section 4D (Videography in Incidents of demonstration)	The incharge of the police station under whose limits a demonstration is happening can make arrangements for videography of the demonstration if he believes that the damage to the public property is likely to be caused. He has to deposit the soft copies of videography with the SDM.
More Stringent Bail Norms	Bail shall now be granted only when there are reasonable grounds to believe that the accused is not guilty of the offence.

- **Guidelines Issued by the Supreme Court:**
 - The burden of proof against protesters can be reversed, placing an initial onus on the prosecution.
 - A presumption of guilt may be drawn, and the accused can then attempt to rebut this presumption.
 - Rioters can be held strictly liable for damages, with compensation collected to rectify the harm caused.

- High Courts have the authority to initiate suo motu action and establish mechanisms for investigating and awarding compensation for protest-related property damage.

• Impact of Guidelines:

- Despite guidelines, challenges persist, particularly in identifying protesters, especially in leaderless protests.
- Guidelines, like the law, face limitations without effective enforcement mechanisms.

• Call for Law Update and Case Reference - Koshy Jacob vs Union Of India:

- Courts have reiterated the necessity to update the law for enhanced effectiveness.
- The shortcomings of the law were underscored in the case of Koshy Jacob vs Union Of India, where the petitioner was denied compensation due to the absence of protest organizers before the court.

GHAR (GO Home and Re-Unite) Portal

Context: NCPCR has developed and launched a portal named GHAR - GO Home and Re-Unite, which focuses on the restoration and repatriation of children.

➤ Track Child Portal:

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development developed the "Track Child Portal" for tracking missing and found children nationwide.
- Implemented with support from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Railways, State Governments, UT Administrations, and various stakeholders.
- Standard operating procedures and advisories issued for effective implementation.
- Integrated with the CCTNS (Crime and Criminal Tracking & Network Systems) for interoperability and matching of missing children with FIR databases.

➤ GHAR - GO Home and Re-Unite Portal:

- Developed and launched by NCPCR (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights).
- Designed to digitally monitor and track the restoration and repatriation of children under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.
- Facilitates digital transfer of cases to Juvenile Justice Boards and Child Welfare Committees for swift repatriation.
- Includes features for requesting translators, monitoring progress, and ensuring proper restoration and rehabilitation.
- Incorporates a checklist format to identify challenges in repatriation and link children with government schemes.
- A total of 5175 children registered on the GHAR Portal for repatriation.

➤ Awareness and Training Programs by NCPCR:

- NCPCR organized an awareness-cum-launch program for the GHAR Portal on November 20, 2022.
- All concerned stakeholders participated in the program.
- NCPCR issued letters to all States/UTs, urging them to update child data on the portal.
- Conducted various training programs for stakeholders in North Eastern States, enhancing understanding and usage of the GHAR Portal.

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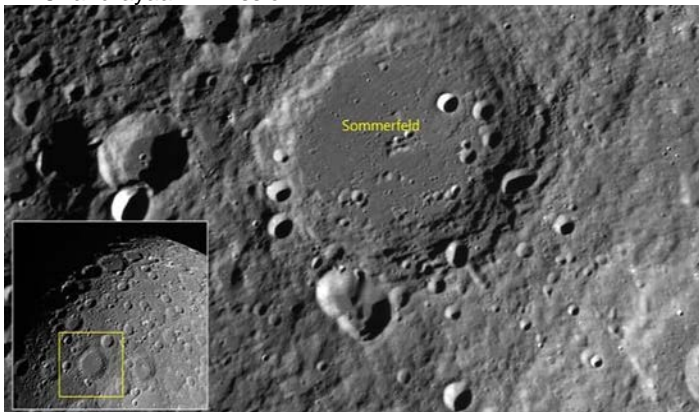
➤ Khoya-Paaya Portal

- The Union Government has launched the Khoya Paya web platform for reporting, tracking, and uploading information on missing children.
- It is a joint initiative of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) and the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY).
- The platform enables citizens to report missing children, share sightings, and search for missing or found children.
- Reporting can be done through text, photographs, videos, and other means of transmitting and uploading information.
- The website provides links to court orders mandating police to register an FIR in cases of missing children, treating them as either abduction or trafficking unless proven otherwise during the investigation.

Moon's shrinking and moonquakes

Context: Evidence from a recent study suggests that the gradual cooling and shrinking of the Moon's interior are leading to moonquakes and faults.

- **Fault Generation and Moonquakes:** Evidence from a recent study suggests that the gradual cooling and shrinking of the Moon's interior are leading to the generation of faults and moonquakes.
- **Location of Faults:** Some of these faults are appearing near the south pole of the Moon, close to the landing site of India's Chandrayaan-2 mission.



- **NASA's Artemis 3 Mission:** NASA is planning to land the Artemis 3 mission in the same region where these faults are being generated.

➤ Impact on Stability:

- Modelling indicates that shallow moonquakes capable of strong ground shaking in the south polar region are possible due to slip events on existing faults or the formation of new thrust faults.
- Young thrust faults can cause sites to be active, resulting in more moonquakes and potentially affecting the stability of regions planned for permanent outposts by NASA and other space agencies.
- **Faults:** In geology, a "fault" refers to broken fractures between two massive blocks of rock, allowing them to move against each other, causing quakes and geological activity.
- **Detection of Faults:** The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera, onboard NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, identified numerous small and young thrust faults distributed in the lunar crust.
- **Formation of Scarps:** These faults create cliff-like landforms resembling star-steps on the lunar surface, forming when contractional forces break the crust and push or thrust it on one side over the other.
- **Causes of Contraction:** The contraction leading to fault formation is caused by the cooling of the Moon's interior and tidal forces exerted by Earth, resulting in the shrinkage of the natural satellite.
- **Accompanying Moonquakes:** Shallow-depth moonquakes accompany these faults, some of which were recorded by the Apollo Passive Seismic Network, installed by Apollo astronauts over half a century ago.
- **Types of Moonquakes:**
 - **Shallow Moonquakes:** Structural weaknesses in the moon's interior cause earthquake-like events at depths up to 125 miles.
 - **Deep Moonquakes:** Tidal stressors from Earth induce quakes originating between 500 and 750 miles below the lunar surface.
 - **Meteoritic Moonquakes:** Collisions with meteorites and space objects trigger quakes, influenced by external impacts.
 - **Thermal Moonquakes:** Lunar surface experiences temperature-driven quakes during its 30-day day-and-night cycles, ranging from 130°C to -173°C.

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Talabira Thermal Power Project



Today, the Prime Minister of India will lay the foundation stone of Talabira Thermal Power Project of Neyveli Lignite Corporation India Limited, under the Coal Ministry in Odisha.




About Talabira Thermal Power Project:

- Talabira Thermal Power Project is a **2,400 Megawatts coal-fired power project** in Sambalpur district of Odisha.
- The project **aims to provide reliable, affordable, and continuous power**, contributing to the nation's energy security and economic growth.
- The project focuses on producing electricity at a **cost of ₹3.65 per unit** (₹2.40 fixed cost and ₹1.25 variable cost), making it **one of the cheapest power production projects in the country**.
- **Neyveli Lignite Corporation India Limited** has been allotted Talabira coal mines with total reserves of **553 million tonnes** and a peak rated capacity of 23 million tonnes.
- The project is intricately **linked to NLCIL's captive coal blocks**, ensuring sustainability and reduced transportation costs.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thermal power plant boasts higher efficiency, reduced carbon footprint and a 10% eco-friendly biomass co-firing initiative, emphasizing environmental sustainability. Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry have signed PPAs securing the supply of 800 MW, 1,500 MW, 400 MW, and 100 MW respectively from the project.
<p>Subika Painting</p> 	<p>Recently, the cultural activists and scholars raised concern that the Manipur's age-old Subika Painting is on the brink of extinction due to neglect.</p> <p>About Subika Painting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subika painting is an ancient painting style used in Puyas (Manipur manuscripts) and is intricately linked to the cultural history of the Meitei community in Manipur. The Subika painting style is represented in six surviving manuscripts including, Subika, Subika Achouba, Subika Laishaba, Subika Choudit, Subika Cheithil and Thengrakhel Subika. Subika Laishaba represents a direct continuation of the Meitei cultural tradition through visual images, possibly existing since the introduction of the writing tradition in Manipur. Experts estimate the use of Subika paintings since the 18th or 19th century, indicating Manipur's historical prominence in visual arts alongside other cultural forms like Raas leela and Nat Sangkritan. Subika painting depicts various themes related to Meitei culture, traditions, folklore, mythology and historical events, providing insights into the cultural heritage of Manipur. Dr. Yumnam Sapha, along with other cultural activists and scholars, is leading efforts to preserve and revive the Subika painting style.
<p>Pyramid of Menkaure</p> 	<p>Recently, the Egyptian authorities planned to resurface the Pyramid of Menkaure with granite blocks that once clad part of its exterior.</p> <p>About the Pyramid of Menkaure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Pyramid of Menkaure is a 61-meter-high (200-foot) pyramid located on the Giza Plateau, in the southwestern outskirts of Cairo, Egypt. It is the youngest and smallest of the three main pyramids at the Giza Necropolis and was constructed of limestone and Aswan granite. The pyramid is thought to have been built as the tomb of the Fourth Dynasty Egyptian Pharaoh Menkaure, who ruled over 4,000 years ago. The unfinished nature of the granite blocks indicates that Menkaure died before the structure was finished. The pyramid was once covered in pink granite from Aswan, but now it has a huge hole in its north face. The hole was made in the 12th century by the son of Saladin in the hopes of finding treasure inside the building.
<p>Personality in News</p> <p>Sadhu Mehr</p>	<p>Sadhu Meher (1st January 1940-2nd February 2024)</p> <p>Sadhu Mehr, an Indian actor, director and producer was born in Boudh district of Odisha.</p> <p>Contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meher began his career in 1969 with Hindi films such as 'Bhuvan Shome', 'Ankur' and 'Mrigaya' before transitioning to Odia cinema. His notable works in Odia cinema include 'Bhukha' (1989) and films like 'Abhimaan', 'Aparichita', 'Abhilash' and 'Gopa Re Badhhuchi Kala Kanhei'. He directed the first children's sci-fi (science fiction) Odia movie titled 'Babula' in 1985.  <p>Honours and Awards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sadhu Mehr became the first from Odisha to win a National award for best actor in 1974 for his role in Shyam Benegal's Hindi film 'Ankur'. He was honoured with the Padma Shri in 2017, acknowledging his significant contributions to Indian cinema. He received the Jaydev Samman from the Odisha government in 2011 for his lifetime contribution to cinema. <p>Ethical Values: Integrity, Compassion, Dedication, etc.</p>

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Place in News

Tanzania

Inaugurating the 37th Surajkund International Crafts Fair in Faridabad recently, the President of India expressed appreciation for the cultural exchange between Tanzania and India.



Tanzania (Capital: Dodoma)

Location: Tanzania is an East African country located just south of the Equator.

Boundaries: Tanzania shares its border with **Comoro Islands and the Indian Ocean** (East), **Burundi** and **Rwanda** (West), **Uganda** (North), **Kenya** (Northeast), **Mozambique** and **Malawi** (South) and **Zambia** (Southwest).

Geographical Features:

- **Mount Kilimanjaro** is the highest peak in Tanzania.
- The **Ruvuma**, the **Rufiji**, the **Wami** and the **Pangani** are the major rivers in the country and drain into the Indian Ocean.
- Tanzania borders three of Africa's Great Lakes including the **Lake Victoria** (Africa's largest lake), **Lake Tanganyika** (deepest lake in Africa and known for its unique species of fish) and **Lake Malawi**.

POINTS TO PONDER

- Under which article of the Constitution are the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) framed? - **Article 118**
- When did India ratify the Ramsar Convention? - **1982**
- Which country has decided recently not to join BRICS? - **Argentina**
- Which state bagged the third best tableaux award for Republic Day Parade 2024? - **Tamil Nadu**
- What makes E-Ink displays easier on the eyes for long reading sessions compared to LCD and LED displays? - **They emit less blue light**

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