

Freedom of speech

- The freedom of speech is one of the most cherished freedoms.
- The Constitution of India, too, declares that Indians possess this freedom, but makes it subject to the interest of public order, or the sovereignty and integrity of India.
- As Justice Holmes said in the celebrated case of *Abrams vs United States*, in America, “When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe... that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes safely can be carried out.”
- Most recently, the Supreme Court of India in its judgment in *Kaushal Kishore’s case* (rendered on January 3, 2023) declared that the fundamental rights of Indians are exercisable not only vertically but also horizontally.
- The question before the Court in this case was whether the fundamental rights (including the freedom of speech) can be claimed other than against the state or its instrumentalities.

- The Court concluded that such fundamental rights can be enforced even against persons other than the state and its instrumentalities.

THE HINDU

SC on ‘advance medical directives’

- When the Supreme Court granted legal status to the concept of ‘advance medical directives’ in 2018 and allowed passive euthanasia, subject to stringent safeguards, it was seen as a vital recognition of both patient autonomy over end-of-life decisions and the right to a dignified death.
- However, doctors later foudspecificome of the specific directions turned out to be “insurmountable obstacles”.
- In a recent order, modified Bench modified the directions to make them more workable and simple.
- The advance directive no more needs to be countersigned by a judicial magistrate. Instead, it could be attested before a notary or a gazetted officer.
- Instead of the magistrate, it is enough if the notary or officer is satisfied that the document is executed voluntarily, without coercion or inducement, and with full understanding.
- The original guideline that the executor should name a guardian or

a close relative who would be authorized to give consent to refuse or withdraw medical treatment, in the event of the executor becoming incapable of a decision, has been modified to name more than one guardian or relative.

- Instead of the magistrate being tasked with informing family members about the document, in case they are not present at the time of its being executed, the onus is now on the persons themselves to hand over a copy of the advance directive to the guardians or close relatives named in it, as well as to the family physician. It may also be included in digital health records.
- The new guidelines require the hospital itself to constitute a primary medical board to certify whether the instructions on refusal or withdrawal of treatment should be carried out.
- The hospital should also form a secondary board, including a doctor nominated by the district's chief medical officer, which will have to endorse the primary board's certificate.
- The change here is that the district Collector need not constitute the second medical board, as required in the 2018 judgment.
- The scrutiny by the boards holds good even in cases in which there is no advance directive, but the patient

is not in a position to make any decision.

- The new guidelines also spell out the experience and specializations of those to be included in the medical boards.
- While such guidelines are useful and necessary to implement the concept of a 'living will' and advance medical directives, it is time Parliament came out with a comprehensive law.

THE HINDU

Voice deep fake

What are voice deepfakes?

- A voice deep fake is one that closely mimics a real person's voice.
- The voice can accurately replicate tonality, accents, cadence, and other unique characteristics of the target person.
- People use AI and robust computing power to generate such voice clones or synthetic voices.

What are the threats arising from the use of voice deepfakes?

- Attackers are using such technology to defraud users, steal their identity, and engage in various other illegal activities like phone scams and posting fake videos on social media platforms.
- Fraudsters used AI to mimic a business owner's voice directing the CEO of a UK -based energy firm to

immediately transfer around \$243,000 to the bank account of a Hungarian supplier of the company.

- Gathering clear recordings of people's voices is getting easier and can be obtained through recorders, online interviews, and press conferences.
- Voice capture technology is also improving, making the data fed to AI models more accurate and leading to more believable deep fakes voices.

What are the ways to detect voice deepfakes?

- Detecting voice deep fakes need highly advanced technologies, software, and hardware to break down speech patterns, background noise, and other elements.
- Cybersecurity tools have yet to create fool proof ways to detect audio deep fakes.

THE HINDU

Consociational political system

- Malaysia held its 15th general election in November 2022 putting an end to the volatile political situation in the region
- The election delivered the first hung Parliament of the country as none of the existing political coalitions secured a simple majority.
- The unity government led by Pakatan Harapan (PH), (The Alliance

of Hope) under the premiership of Mr. Anwar Ibrahim formed the government even though it fell short of a majority with 82 seats.

- It is backed by the former long-ruling coalition Barisan Nasional (BN) (National Front) led by the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO).
- Malaysia is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and multicultural country, comprising of an ethnic Malay majority, a plethora of indigenous communities, and ethnic minorities like the Chinese and the Indians.
- Malaysia adopted a consociational (a political system formed by the cooperation of different social groups on the basis of shared power) democracy, at the time of independence in 1957, as a viable governance model to manage its ethnic heterogeneous population effectively.
- The ethnicity -based political system facilitated the formation of a multi-ethnic coalition, popularly known as the Alliance, to come to power.
- The Alliance was composed of the UMNO representing the Malay majority and minority ethnic political partners the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC).

- The consociational democracy model adopted by Malaysia was successful up until 1969.
- But after the unprecedented racial riot in 1969, the Barisan Nasional (BN) embarked upon a model of politics to promote only Malay rights
- This was unleashed by the UMNO which had a hegemonic political position in the ruling BN coalition.
- The UMNO used the Malaysian state as an apparatus to institutionalize Malay dominance, Malay language, Islam, and Malay culture in the public sphere.

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NCST

The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

- The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution.
- By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was replaced by two separate Commissions namely- (i) the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and (ii) the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) w.e.f. 19 February 2004.
- The term of office of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and

each member is three years from the date of assumption of charge.

- The Chairperson has been given the rank of Union Cabinet Minister, the Vice-Chairperson that of a Minister of State and other Members have the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.
- The first National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was constituted in March 2004.

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TEDBF

- The HAL Twin Engine Deck Based Fighter (TEDBF) is a canard delta wing, twin-engine, carrier-based, multirole combat aircraft currently under development for the Indian Navy.
- The TEDBF is being designed and developed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and will be manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- The TEDBF is intended to perform a multitude of missions, including air supremacy, air interdiction, anti-access/area denial (A2/AD), anti-ship warfare (ASW), and electronic warfare (EW) missions.
- The TEDBF is expected to replace the Mikoyan MiG-29K onboard the INS Vikramaditya and the INS Vikrant.
- The programme was officially announced in 2020, in response to

the Indian Navy's dissatisfaction in operating a single-engine carrier-based fighter based on the HAL Tejas, and its eventual withdrawal from the naval LCA programme in 2016.

THE HINDU

India's growing energy need

- India's energy demand has significantly increased and in the coming years, it will reach 11% of the global demand as against 5% currently,
- "Demand for energy in the country has grown significantly.
- This offers opportunities for energy companies to invest in and collaborate with energy firms in the country,"
- The energy sector played a major role in deciding the future of the world in the 21st century and India was one of the strongest voices today in developing new resources of energy and in the energy transition,
- Also, the country has a chunky class of the aspirational population, and energy would play an important role in fulfilling the aspirations of these people; in fact, energy demand would be highest globally in India in coming years, the government, under the National Green Hydrogen

Mission, had set aside ₹1 lakh crore for green hydrogen.

- The country was taking the lead in the green hydrogen space and would replace grey hydrogen (created from natural gas, or methane, using steam methane reformation but without capturing the greenhouse gases made in the process), to increase its share to 25% in the next five years.
- Addressing a large audience of energy experts and captains of global energy companies, global and domestic investors should increase their presence in fossil fuel exploration in the country.
- Something 10 lakh square kilometers of 'no-go zones' were freed for energy exploration,
- Domestic exploration of fuels and an increase in the production of such fuels was one of the focus areas for the energy sector in the country.
- "Based on investor sentiment, we have reduced no-go areas in the country by 10 lakh square km to facilitate exploration in inaccessible areas.

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