

Sec 8 (4) RP Act

- The Supreme Court of India's judgment in Lily Thomas vs Union of India (2013).
- Through this judgment, the Court invalidated Section 8(4) of the Representation of People Act 1951, which had allowed a three-month period within which to appeal.
- The disqualification was not to take effect during this period; when the appeal is admitted, disqualification would depend on the final outcome of the appeal.
- Thus, under the legal provision cited, there was no instant disqualification of sitting members of the legislature.
- But after the Court struck down this provision of the Representation of People Act 1951, according to the opinion of some experts, a sitting legislator is disqualified the moment the court orders conviction and sentence under Section 8(3) of the Representation of People Act.
- The top court said that Article 102(1) does not create any difference between the sitting member and a candidate so far as disqualification is concerned.
- It held that Parliament has no power to grant exemption to sitting members for three months and thus

struck down Section 8(4) as ultra vires the Constitution.

THE HINDU

Luna 25

- On August 11, Roscosmos, the Russian space agency, launched its Luna 25 spacecraft onboard a Soyuz 2 rocket. Luna 25 consisted of a lander and its mission was to soft-land near the moon's South Pole and study the properties of lunar soil and the atmosphere.
- But on August 20, Roscosmos stated that Luna 25 had suffered a glitch and crashed on the moon's surface the previous day, ending the mission in failure.

Why did Russia launch Luna 25?

- The Luna 25 mission has been in the works for more than two decades.
- It was initially called Luna Glob and the name was later changed to make the mission a part of the Luna series, the last edition of which was launched in 1976.
- In its statement, Roscosmos said one of the mission's purposes was to "ensure Russia's guaranteed access to the moon's surface"

What happened to Luna 25?

- In its statement, Roscosmos said that it would put together a committee to

investigate the precise mode of failure of Luna 25.

- Beyond that, it has only been said that the spacecraft suffered a technical problem that took its operation beyond the parameters within which the mission was designed to operate.
- Speculation on social media platforms by spaceflight experts has centered on one event: as Luna 25 attempted to modify its circular orbit around the moon to a lower pre-landing orbit, it applied more thrust than required, sending it careening to the surface
- But after Russia invaded Ukraine, it lost the goodwill of many countries worldwide, provoking economic sanctions.
- One less known consequence was that Russia lost its privilege to use satellite tracking systems operated by countries in different parts of the world are leading the International Lunar Research Station (ILRS), versus the U.S.-led Artemis Accords, Russia has not executed a successful interplanetary mission in 34 years now.



THE HINDU

Biodiversity north east

- Fostering tourism, undertaking construction projects and developing infrastructure are ways through which a State generates revenue and creates employment opportunities.
- However, some of them come at a steep environmental cost. In the recent case of Re: Cleanliness of Umiam Lake versus State of Meghalaya (2023), the division Bench of Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice W. Diengdoh, in its order, stated that “In the absence of any other employment opportunities and in the name of promoting tourism, the natural beauty of the State should not be destroyed”.
- Offenses related to or against the environment have also taken the shape of “public nuisance” under

Sections 268 to 290 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860, dealing with pollution of land, air, and water.

- However, as the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution grants autonomy to District Councils, it limits the authority of the State over matters pertaining to the jurisdiction of the District Councils, including the use of land.
- In many instances, like in the case of the Umiam Lake, the District Councils do not place any regulations for the preservation and protection of land, especially those around waterbodies.
- The 'Negative List' in the North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS), 2017 is a step in the right direction.
- If an entity is not complying with environmental standards; not having applicable environmental clearances; or does not have consent from the concerned pollution boards, it will not be eligible for any incentive under the NEIDS and will be put on the 'negative list'

THE HINDU

Recombinant virus

- An influenza virus can also infect birds, pigs, horses, and other domestic animals.

- It can assort the types of the two genes it contains hemagglutinin (H) and neuraminidase (N) in these animals to generate a new virus altogether, some of which may infect humans.
- All these complications ensure that designing an effective vaccine for influenza remains challenging.
- The viruses that are generated by introducing a special genetic modification at a specific gene or locus of the viral genome are known as recombinant viruses.
- A virus that is produced by recombining pieces of DNA
- Recombination the exchange of genetic material between genomes is common in coronaviruses because of the way they copy their RNA genomes.

THE HINDU

African Union

- The African Union (AU) is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent. It was officially launched in 2002 as a successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, 1963-1999).
- The AU is guided by its vision of "An Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and

representing a dynamic force in the global arena.”

- The Constitutive Act of the African Union and the Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act of the African Union lay out the aims of the AU which are:
- Achieve greater unity and solidarity between African countries and their people
- Defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of its Member States;
- Accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
- Promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
- Encourage international cooperation
- Promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;
- Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation, and good governance;
- Promote and protect human and peoples’ rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;
- Establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global

economy and in international negotiations.

THE HINDU

Causing flood is a terrorist act

- The proposed Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill (BNS) says that causing “floods” is a terrorist offense.
- The Bill that seeks to replace the British- era Indian Penal Code defines terrorism as a separate offense for the first time as part of a general law.
- The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, of 1967 is a special law focused on terrorist activities. Section 111 (6) (a) of the Bill says that a “terrorist” refers to any person who “develops, manufactures, possesses, acquires, transports, supplies or uses weapons, explosives, or releases nuclear, radiological or other dangerous substance, or cause fire, floods or explosions.”

THE HINDU

