

Current affairs 4th July 2025 by Right IAS

New Species Discovery

A new tree species, *Garcinia kusumae*, has been discovered in Assam. It belongs to the genus *Garcinia*, locally known as thoikora in Assamese. Naming & Dedication: The species has been named in honour of Kusum Devi, the late mother of botanist Jatindra Sarma, who co-authored the study and is the Chairman of Assam's State Expert Appraisal Committee. Unique Family Dedications: Mr. Sarma has now named four plant species after his immediate family members, including: *Amomum pratisthana* (daughter), *Syzygium nivae* (wife), *Garcinia sibeswarii* (father), and now *Garcinia kusumae* (mother). Largest genus in the family Clusiaceae with 414 species. Found mainly in Africa, Australasia, and Southeast Asia. Known for diversity and pharmacological value.

TOPIC → The Growing Plastic Health Crisis

Plastics, once considered inert, are now infiltrating human bodies through microplastics and endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). endocrine → The glands and organs that make hormones and release them directly into the blood so they can travel to tissues and organs all over the body. India, the largest plastic waste generator, faces a rising public health emergency.

Health Impacts Microplastics: Found in blood, lungs, heart, placenta, breast milk, semen, ovarian fluids. 2024 study: 89% of Indian blood samples contained microplastics (avg. 4.2 particles/ml). Indian

men's testicular tissue showed 3x more microplastics than dogs. EDCs: Plastics, once considered inert, are now infiltrating human bodies through microplastics and endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). endocrine → The glands and organs that make hormones and release them directly into the blood so they can travel to tissues and organs all over the body. India, the largest plastic waste generator, faces a rising public health emergency. Found in plastics: BPA, BPS, Phthalates (DEHP, DBP), PFAS. Disrupt hormones like estrogen, testosterone, thyroid hormones. Cause: oxidative stress, inflammation, reproductive cell death.

Plastic Waste in India India generates 9.3 million tonnes/year. 5.8M tonnes incinerated (toxic emissions), 3.5M tonnes pollute land and water. CPCB reports phthalates above EU safety limits in major Indian cities. Children show rising cases of early puberty, respiratory issues, learning disabilities. Policy & Action Gaps Plastic Waste Management Rules (2016–2024) exist but enforcement is weak. Laws ignore low-dose EDC effects and vulnerable populations like children. Way Forward Launch biomonitoring programmes to track EDCs in blood, milk, urine. Fund long-term health studies on fertility and chronic disease risks. Promote: Public awareness on plastic hazards Use of glass/steel/EDC-free materials Healthy diets rich in antioxidants Improve: Plastic segregation, recycling, safe disposal Microplastic filters in water treatment Non-toxic biodegradable materials

About PFAS PFAS are widely used, long lasting chemicals, components of which break down very slowly over time. Because of their widespread use and their persistence in the environment, many PFAS are found in the blood of people and animals all over the world and are present at low levels in a variety of food products and in the environment. PFAS are found in water, air, fish, and soil at locations across the nation and the globe. They are found in many consumer products and industrial applications, including non-stick cookware, firefighting foam, and food packaging

Topic ---> Socialism and Secularism in Indian Constitution

Socialism in the Constitution: Core Principle: Socialism in the Constitution is aimed at promoting social and economic justice and establishing a welfare state. Preamble: Promises “Justice – social, economic, and political” and “Equality of status and opportunity”. Fundamental Rights: Article 14: Equality before law. Article 15: Prohibition of discrimination. Article 16: Equal opportunity in public employment. Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs): Article 38 & 39: Mandate reduction of inequalities, equitable distribution of resources. Articles 41–43: Support right to work, education, and just working conditions. Practical Impact: Inspired legislation and judicial interpretation aimed at achieving economic and social equality.

Secularism in the Constitution: Definition: Indian secularism promotes equal respect and treatment of all religions, not just religious neutrality. Preamble: Even before 1976, it ensured liberty of belief, faith, and worship. Fundamental Rights: Articles 25–

28: Freedom of religion. Articles 29–30: Cultural and educational rights for minorities. Judicial View: Supreme Court has declared secularism as part of the basic structure of the Constitution. Basic Structure Doctrine: Kesavananda Bharati Case (1973): Parliament can amend the Constitution, but cannot alter its basic structure. 42nd Amendment (1976): Added the words “Socialist” and “Secular” in the Preamble without violating the basic structure. Misconception Clarified: Not Mere Additions: Socialism and secularism were part of the original constitutional philosophy, even before their explicit mention in the Preamble. Founders’ Resolution, Vision: Constituent Assembly debates, and freedom movement ideals all emphasized equality and justice.

■ Dr. Ambedkar’s View: Equality as Foundation: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar highlighted equality as the basis for liberty and fraternity, deeply rooted in the Constitution.

Topic → Can the Supreme Court halt an Act passed by a State ?

Background: SC Order of July 5, 2011 The Supreme Court ordered Chhattisgarh to stop using Special Police Officers (SPOs) for anti-Maoist operations. Directed the recall of all firearms issued to SPOs. Ordered disbanding of armed vigilante groups like Salwa Judum and Koya Commandos. Found that deployment of poorly paid and ill-trained SPOs violated Article 14 (Equality) and Article 21 (Right to Life). The Union Government was also ordered to stop funding SPO recruitment for counterinsurgency purposes. Reason for Contempt Petition In response to the 2011 order, Chhattisgarh passed the Chhattisgarh

Auxiliary Armed Police Forces Act, 2011. The new Act allowed the formation of an auxiliary force to assist in maintaining public order combating Maoist violence. Petitioners argued that this circumvented the 2011 Supreme Court order, amounting to contempt of court

Why Did the Supreme Court Reject the Contempt Plea? The SC noted that its original directions were complied with by the State. The Court upheld the legislature's power to enact new laws, provided they do not violate the Constitution. It emphasized that: Passing a law does not amount to contempt of court orders. A legislature may validly remove the basis of a judgment or cure a defect found by the court. This upholds the doctrine of separation of powers — between legislature, executive, and judiciary. The Court reiterated the position from *Indian Aluminium Co. vs. State of Kerala* (1996) — courts should not interfere with valid legislative competence unless the law is unconstitutional.

Topic → What is the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)?

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) is a hydroelectric dam constructed on the Blue Nile River in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia, close to the border with Sudan. Started: 2011

Geographical Context The Blue Nile, which originates in Ethiopia, contributes about 85% of the water to the Nile River, which flows through Sudan and Egypt. The Nile is the lifeline for Egypt, providing over 90% of its freshwater.

Controversy and Disputes

1. **Egypt's Concerns** Egypt fears the dam will reduce the flow of Nile waters, especially during the filling phase. It sees GERD as an existential threat due to its

reliance on the Nile for agriculture and drinking water.- 2. **Sudan's Concerns** Initially supported GERD for potential flood control and cheap electricity, but now worries about water flow regulation and dam safety.
- 3. **Filling of the Dam** Ethiopia started filling the reservoir unilaterally in 2020, causing tensions. The lack of a legally binding agreement between Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt remains the main point of contention.



Topic → Removal Process of Supreme Court / High Court Judges in India

The removal process for judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts is governed by: Article 124(4) and (5) of the Constitution (for Supreme Court) Article 217 read with Article 124(4) (for High Court) The Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968 This process is also called “Impeachment”, though the term is not used in the Constitution

Step-by-Step Removal Procedure

1. Initiation of Motion A removal motion is initiated in either House of Parliament. Requires: 100 members of the Lok Sabha, or 50 members of the Rajya Sabha

2. Admissibility Decision The Speaker (Lok Sabha) or Chairman (Rajya Sabha) decides whether to admit the motion.

3. Constitution of Inquiry Committee
1. 2. 3. If admitted, a three-member committee is formed: Chief Justice or a judge of the Supreme Court Chief Justice of a High Court An eminent jurist

4. Investigation and Report The committee investigates and submits a report: If the judge is not guilty, the motion ends. If the judge is guilty, the process continues. Parliamentary Approval The motion is debated in both Houses. It must be passed in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha by: A majority of total membership, and A 2/3rd majority of members present and voting 6. President's Order If passed in both Houses, the motion is sent to the President of India. The President issues an order, officially removing the judge. Key Features Judges cannot be removed by the executive (President or PM) alone. Ensures independence of the judiciary. So far, no judge has been removed successfully, though proceedings have been initiated (e.g., Justice V. Ramaswami in 1993, Justice Soumitra Sen in 2011).