



**Date - 28 April 2022**

## 91st constitutional amendment

- The BJP government has honored senior Congress leader Pratapsinh Rane by conferring the status of “Cabinet Minister” for life on completing 50 years as an MLA in the Goa Legislative Assembly.
- ‘Pratapsinh Rane’ has been a six-time Chief Minister of Goa and an MLA for 50 years.
- The Bombay High Court has said that in a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed against six-time Chief Minister of Goa and MLA for 50 years, Pratap Singh Rane, his “lifetime status of the office of Cabinet Minister” A debatable issue has been raised regarding the challenge.
- The PIL has argued that Goa has a 12-member cabinet and the granting of cabinet minister status to Rane increases the number of cabinet members to 13, which is more than the mandated limit prescribed by the Constitution.
- This limit was set by the 91st Amendment Act, 2003 in the Constitution of India.

### **91st Constitutional Amendment:**

- Clause 1A was inserted in Article 164 of the Constitution (91st Amendment) Act, 2003, according to which “the total number of ministers including the Chief Minister in the Council of Ministers of a State shall not exceed 15% of the total number of members of the State Legislative Assembly.”
- There was also a provision in this that the number of ministers including the Chief Minister in a state would not be less than 12.
- Similar amendments were made under Article 75 also.
- According to this, the Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President and other Ministers shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister.
- The total number of ministers, including the Prime Minister, in the Council of Ministers should not exceed 15% of the total strength of the Lok Sabha.

- The objective of the 91st amendment was to curb the large cabinet and the consequent economic burden on the exchequer.

### **Council of Ministers:**

- Article 74 of the Constitution deals with the status of the Council of Ministers, while Article 75 deals with the appointment, tenure, responsibilities, qualifications, oath and salaries and allowances of ministers.
- There are three categories of ministers in the Council of Ministers, namely Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers. The post of Prime Minister is the highest among all these ministers.
- **Cabinet Ministers:** These are the heads of important ministries of the central government like Home, Defence, Finance, Foreign Affairs etc.
- The cabinet is the main policy making body of the central government.
- **Ministers of State:** They can either be given independent charge of Ministries/Departments or can be placed with Cabinet Ministers.
- **Deputy Ministers:** These are related to cabinet ministers or ministers of state and assist in their administrative, political and parliamentary work.

### **Public interest litigation:**

- Public Interest Litigation (PIL) means lawsuits filed in court to protect the “public interest”, such as pollution, terrorism, road safety, construction related hazards etc.
- Any matter which affects the interest of the public at large can be redressed by filing a Public Interest Litigation in the Court.
- PIL has not been defined in any statute or any Act. This has been interpreted by the judges as being in the interest of the public at large.
- Public interest litigation is the power given to the public by the courts through judicial activism.
- However, the person filing the petition has to prove to the satisfaction of the Court that the petition is being filed in the public interest and not as a mere litigation by a body.
- The Court may take suo motu cognizance of the matter or the case may be initiated on the petition of any publicly aware person.

### **Some of the matters considered under PIL are:**

- Issues related to bonded labor
- Neglected children
- Non-payment of minimum wages to workers and exploitation of informal workers
- Atrocities on women
- Environmental pollution and disturbance of ecological balance
- Food adulteration

- Maintenance of heritage and culture
- The beginning of the era of Public Interest Litigation Movement Justice P.N. Bhagwati in the case SP Gupta vs Union of India 1981.
- In this case it was held that any member of the public or social action group who actually acts can invoke the writ jurisdiction of the High Courts (under Article 226) or the Supreme Court (under Article 32).
- Through public interest litigation, any person can seek redressal against the violation of legal or constitutional rights of persons who cannot approach the court due to social or economic or any other disqualification.

## World Immunization Week 2022

- World Immunization Week 2022 is being organized from 24-30 April.
- The theme of World Immunization Week 2022 is 'Longer Life for All' and aims to unite people to the idea that vaccines make it possible to fulfill our dreams, protect our loved ones and live a long, healthy life.

### World Immunization Week:

- World Immunization Week is a health campaign coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO) which is celebrated annually in the last week of April.
- It aims to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages from disease.
- Vaccination represents a global health and development success, saving millions of lives every year.
- There are still about 20 million unvaccinated and under-vaccinated children in the world.

### Vaccination more important than ever:

- For more than 200 years, vaccines have protected us from diseases that threaten life and stunt our growth.
- For more than two centuries, vaccines have helped keep people healthy – from the first vaccines developed to protect against smallpox to the latest ones used to prevent severe cases of COVID-19.

- With the help of vaccines, we can progress without the burden of diseases like smallpox and polio, which cost millions of people.

### **Vaccine Methodology:**

- Vaccines train the immune system to make antibodies in the same way that the immune system functions when exposed to an actual disease.
- This is because vaccines contain only dead or weakened forms of microbes, which neither cause disease nor put a person's life at risk.
- Vaccines are administered at different ages from birth to infancy and vaccination card is given to maintain this record.
- It is important to ensure that all these vaccines are up to date.
- Children can be safely vaccinated in combination (eg for diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus), to protect children's lives.
- There may be some minor side effects of the vaccine, such as mild fever, pain or redness at the injection site, which go away on their own within a few days.
- Serious or long-lasting side effects are extremely rare.
- Vaccines can be given safely during mild illness, but children with moderate or severe illness with or without fever may need to wait until recovery to receive a dose.

### **Recent vaccination initiatives in India:**

- Universal Immunization Program
- Intensive Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 3.0 Scheme
- Pulse Polio Program

## **'Kisan Bhagidari Prathmikta Hamari Abhiyan'**

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare of India will organize 'Crop Insurance Pathshala' under 'Kisan Bhagidari Prathmikta Hamari Abhiyan' as a public participation movement.

### **Kisan Bhagidari Prathmikta Hamari Abhiyan:**

- Under this campaign, all insurance companies will organize Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)- 'Crop Insurance Pathshala' at Block/Gram

Panchayat/Village level for all 7 days of the campaign period with the participation of at least 100 farmers.

- In this campaign, detailed information will be shared about crop loss information and post-harvest loss during local calamities and monitoring of farmers' applications, which farmers can contact for grievance redressal etc. and get maximum benefit of the scheme. To get the farmers will be explained in detail.

### **Objective:**

- Its purpose is to make the farmers aware of the major aspects of the PMFBY scheme such as the provision of the scheme, the determination of crops and how to get the benefits of the scheme, etc. This also includes providing benefits of PMFBY scheme to the farmers for the ongoing Kharif season 2022.
- Special attention will be given to the importance of PMFBY/Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) and how farmers can take advantage of the scheme by enrolling under this scheme.

### **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana:**

- It was launched in the year 2016 which is being run by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- It has replaced the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and the Revised National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).

### **Objective:**

- Providing a comprehensive insurance cover in case of crop failure so as to help in stabilizing the income of the farmers.

### **Area / Scope:**

- All food and oilseed crops and annual commercial/horticultural crops for which past yield data is available.

### **Premium:**

- The fixed insurance premium/premium paid by the farmers under this scheme is 2% for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all Rabi crops. Annual premium is 5% in case of commercial and horticultural crops.

- The premium cost of farmers' share is shared equally by the states and the central government in the form of subsidy.
- However, 90% of the insurance premium subsidy under this scheme is borne by the central government in the states of Northeast India.

### Execution:

- It is implemented by empaneled general insurance companies. The Implementing Agency (IA) is selected by the respective State Government through bidding.

### Revised PMFBY:

- Revised PMFBY often referred to as PMFBY 2.0, has **the following features:**
- **Totally Voluntary:** This is optional for all farmers from the Kharif season of the year 2020.
- Earlier this scheme was mandatory for loanee farmers availing crop loan / Kisan Credit Card (KCC) account for notified crops.
- **Limit of Central Subsidy:** The cabinet has decided to limit the premium rates under this scheme to 30% for unirrigated areas/crops and 25% for irrigated areas/crops. It is noteworthy that on the basis of these premium rates, 50% subsidy is borne by the Central Government.
- **More flexibility to the States:** The Government has given flexibility to States/UTs to implement PMFBY and has given them the option to choose any number of additional risk covers/features.
- **Investment in Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities:** Insurance companies will now have to spend 0.5% of the total premium collected on Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities.

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