

GS II

SYLLABUS: PROBITY IN GOVERNANCE: CODES OF CONDUCT.

LOKPAL

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 6.

News: "Judges' dilemma."

Context: Lokpal's ruling that High Court judges are amenable to its jurisdiction and the Supreme Court order staying it on its own motion raise more than a mere question of law.

About Lokpal:

- **Central Vigilance Commission:** relies on CBI for investigation under **Prevention of Corruption Act 1988** and only oversees the bureaucracy, **Ministers. MPs are out of its purview.**
- Based on the **recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission**, Lokpal and Lokayukta were established as **independent statutory body** under the **Lokpal and Lokayukta Act 2013**.
 - It deals with complaints against **MPs, Ministers and Secretaries at Central level.**

Composition:

- Composed of a **chairperson and a maximum of eight members**, with **half of them being judicial members**.
 - 50% of members belong to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, minorities, and women.
- **Selection Committee:** which includes the Prime Minister as Chairperson, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Chief Justice of India or a Judge nominated by him/her and one eminent jurist appointed by President.
- **The term of office for the Lokpal** of India is **five years, or until the member turns 70 years old.**

Powers of Lokpal:

- **Jurisdiction** to inquire corruption cases:
 - Against current & former Ministers (including PM).
 - Allegations on PM (not in matters related to International Relations, Atomic energy etc).
 - Current and former MPs.
 - Secretaries at central level, union govt officials under group A, B, C, D; All institutions receiving funds from govt.
- Can **recommend transfer or suspension** of official accused of corruption.
- Power to **Search and Seizure**.
- Powers to **take up preliminary Inquires under PCA 1988**.
- **Supervise and instruct any central investigating agencies** like CBI.
- Currently, Judiciary is out of Lokpal ambit.

Issues in functioning:

- **As of 2025, Lokpal has ordered investigation in just 24 cases in 5 years** and granted prosecution sanction in six cases.
- **No Suo Motu powers** against any public servant.
- **Ineffective Whistle blower protection:** Anonymous complaints not allowed, heavy fines for false complaints.
- **Selection committee and the issue of Leader of Opposition.**
- **Limitations on investigations:** Eg. Investigation on PM need two-third support of lokpal bench.

- **2016 Amendment:** Public officials spouses and children are not needed to disclose assets public. This goes against anti corruption.
- **Rejection of complaints for incorrect format:** Nearly 90% of the complaints were rejected as they were not in correct format in 2024.
- **One cannot file complainants after 7 years of incident.**

Note:

- Under **Lokpal Act, 2013, Lokpal jurisdiction extends to "persons"** who are members of any **body or authority created by an Act of Parliament** cannot be applied to the Supreme Court, an institution established by the Constitution.
- **High Courts are established under Respective State Acts.**

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PYQs: CSE (M).

GS IV 2013: 'A national Lokpal, however strong it may be, cannot resolve the problems of immorality in public affairs'. Discuss.

ECONOMY

PRE-CONTEXT

CURRENCY SWAP

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 11.

News: "RBI to infuse liquidity via \$10 bn USD-INR swap deal."

Currency Swap Agreement:

- **Example:**
 - **Under the mechanism**, RBI enters into an agreement with a swap partner, **exchanging INR for USD**.
 - With the US dollars in hand, the RBI can provide dollar liquidity to banks and financial institutions facing short-term USD shortages.
 - **Repayment:** **after specified period RBI reverses the transaction**. It repays the USD it borrowed, and in return, it gets back the equivalent INR at the pre-agreed exchange rate.

Benefits:

- **Market Stability:** reducing volatility in the INR exchange rate.
- **Crisis Management:** They are an important tool during periods of financial stress or uncertainty, ensuring that banks have access to foreign currency when needed.
- **Cost Efficiency:** By securing liquidity through a swap, the RBI can often provide funding at more favourable terms compared to other short-term financing options.

Note: India's forex reserves as of January 2025 were '625 billion USD'.

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CULTURE

PRE-CONTEXT

CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "Indian languages have always accepted and enriched each other without hostility:PM"

About classical languages:

Classical languages:

- Tamil, Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Odia.
 - **Newly added (2024): Marathi, Bengali, Assamese, Pali, Prakrit.**

Benefits to classical languages:

- Financial assistance.
- Annual international awards for scholars by Ministry of Education.
- Preservation and digitalisation of ancient texts.
- Creation of Centre of Excellence for studies in classical languages.

Criteria: by Linguistics Experts Committee under Ministry of Culture

- Records over a period of 1500-2000 years old etc.
- A body of ancient literature texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers.
- Discontinuity with modern usage or forms.
- *The literary tradition is original and not borrowed from another speech community. (This provision is removed in 2024).*
 - **Removal of this provision led to recognition of 5 languages as classical languages.**

Constitutional Provisions:

- **Art. 347:** protect and preserve languages.
- **Art. 350A:** facilitate instruction in mother tongue.
- **Art. 350B** Special Linguistic officer appointed to safeguard linguistic minorities.

Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL):

- Works under **Ministry of Education**.
- 4 out of 6 classical languages function under the aegis of the CIIL.
- **Tamil and Sanskrit are made autonomous.** They receive funds directly from Ministry of Education, rest receive from CIIL.
- **Due to no timely disbursal of funds,** rest 4 language institutions seek autonomy.

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TECHNOLOGY (DEFENCE)

PRE-CONTEXT

AIR DEFENCE SYSTEMS

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 10.

News: "Amid growing threat from drones, Army to strengthen its air defence."

QRSAM:

- Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile (QRSAM) system.
- **Range of 30km**, the QRSAM, being developed by the DRDO.
- Short range system to **tackle drones etc.**

THAAD:

- Developed by **USA**. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) is a ballistic missile defence system.
- It is designed to **intercept and destroy incoming short, medium, and intermediate-range ballistic missiles** during their **terminal (final) phase** of flight.
- Operational range **upto 200km**.
- It is **not capable of intercepting** Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles (**ICBM**).
- Interceptor missiles can reach speeds over Mach 8 (eight times speed of sound).
- **Uses hit-to-kill technology** i.e destroying incoming through kinetic energy without explosive warheads.
- It **can intercept missiles both inside and outside the Earth's atmosphere**.
- THAAD **uses X-band radar** for detecting and tracking missiles.

Iron Dome:

- Developed by **Israel**, designed to **intercept and destroy short-range missiles (upto 250km)**, artillery shells etc.
- Effective at low altitudes.
- Interceptor missiles use **Proximity-fused warheads**.

S-400 Triumph:

- Developed by **Russia**, a **long range air defence missile system** capable of intercepting variety of air targets like aircraft, UAVs, cruise missiles, ballistic missiles.
- Can engage upto 36 targets at once.
- Can launch missiles of varied ranges like **upto 400km**.
- Altitude for intercepting targets is from 5m to 30 km.
- Uses a combination of semi-active and active radar homing for precision targeting.

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