

Amendment in forest conservation act

- The Forest Conservation Amendment Act of 2023 has received limited attention and little discussion about its impact on forests and its inhabitants.

What is the new amendment?

- At first glance, the amendment primarily aims to tackle the critical issues of climate change and deforestation adverse effects, focusing on effective management and afforestation.
- The law further aims to determine how forests can be utilised for economic gain, and the manner in which it seeks to achieve this goal is outlined in the legislation.
- The primary method used to achieve this objective involves removing forests from the law's jurisdiction,

thereby facilitating various forms of economic exploitation.

- As per the amendment, the forest law will now apply exclusively to areas categorised under the 1927 Forest Act and those designated as such on or after October 25, 1980.
- The Act will not be applicable to forests that were converted for non-forest use on or after December 12, 1996 and land which falls under 100 kilometres from the China and Pakistan border where the central government can build linear projects.
- To establish security infrastructure and facilities for surveillance, the central government is authorized to construct security measures in areas up to ten hectares. This provision also applies to areas (up to five hectares) which are designated as vulnerable.

- Within these regions, the government, with the necessary approvals, can implement security protocols as described above.
- Initiatives like ecotourism, safari, environmental entertainment, and more may be implemented in these areas.

Hard line

The UAPA Bill, 2019, amends the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. Some highlights:

TERRORISM: Under the Act, the central government may designate an organisation as a terrorist organisation if it: (i) commits or participates in acts of terrorism, (ii) prepares for terrorism, (iii) promotes terrorism, or (iv) is involved in terrorism. The Bill additionally empowers the government to designate individuals as terrorists on the same grounds

SEIZURE OF PROPERTY: Under the Act, an investigating officer must obtain prior approval of the DGP to seize properties that may be connected with terrorism. If the investigation is conducted by an officer of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the approval of the Director General, NIA is mandatory

INVESTIGATION: Under the Act, investigation of cases may be conducted by officers of the rank of DSP or ACP or above. Officers of the NIA, of the rank of Inspector or above, can also investigate cases



SOURCE: PRS LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH

- The Hindu

The Hindu

Combined maritime forces (CMF)

- China and Pakistan are conducting the third edition of the Sea Guardian-3 bilateral naval exercise in the northern Arabian Sea with Chinese media reporting that the two sides will also hold their maiden joint maritime patrol
- The exercise comes just a day after the 2+2 Ministerial dialogue between India and the U.S. where maritime security in the Indo Pacific was in focus and New Delhi announced its decision to become a full member of

UAPA

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What is UAPA?
The Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967 is a Parliamentary law that gives powers to the central government to deal with activities directed against the integrity and sovereignty of India.

New Amendments (2019)

- NIA officers of the rank of Inspector or above can investigate a case in addition to DSP or ACP ranked officer in a state.
- The law empowers the government to designate individuals as terrorists.
- The approval of Director General of Police is required to attach properties connected with terrorism.

Provisions

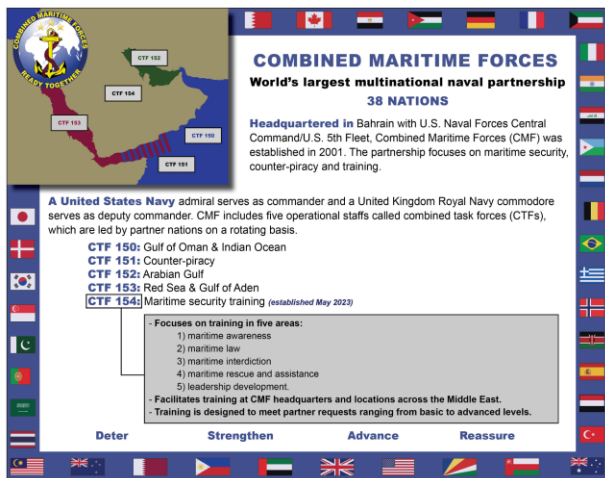
- UAPA is applicable to both Indians and well as foreigners. It can be applied to offences committed either in India or outside.
- The law provides for death penalty and life imprisonment as the highest form of sentences.
- A maximum time of 180 days is given to the investigating agency to file report, which can also be extended.

Concerns

- It gives absolute and sweeping powers to the central government to arrest individuals indulging in an activity it considers as unlawful.
- The courts are bound to give stringent punishment under the UAPA even if offence is not serious.

the Bahrain based U.S. led multilateral grouping Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), of which Pakistan is also a member.

- The exercise also comes days after Russia and Myanmar held their first naval exercise in the Andaman Sea



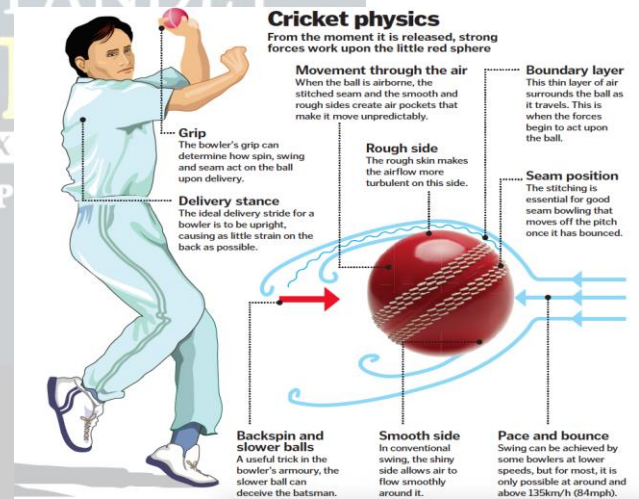
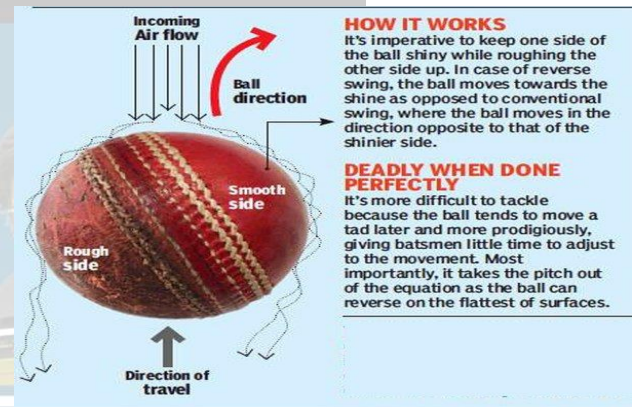
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Science of swing

Exploring the science behind the swing bowling. Swing bowling consists of the ability to change the direction of the ball while in flight towards the batsman. In other words, swing bowlers can alter the direction of the ball mid-

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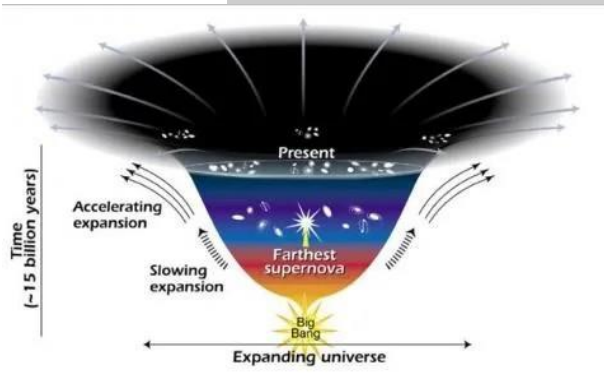
air even before the ball touches the ground. If the ball changes direction after the fall, it's called a seam, but let's leave the science of seam for another day and focus on the swing for now.



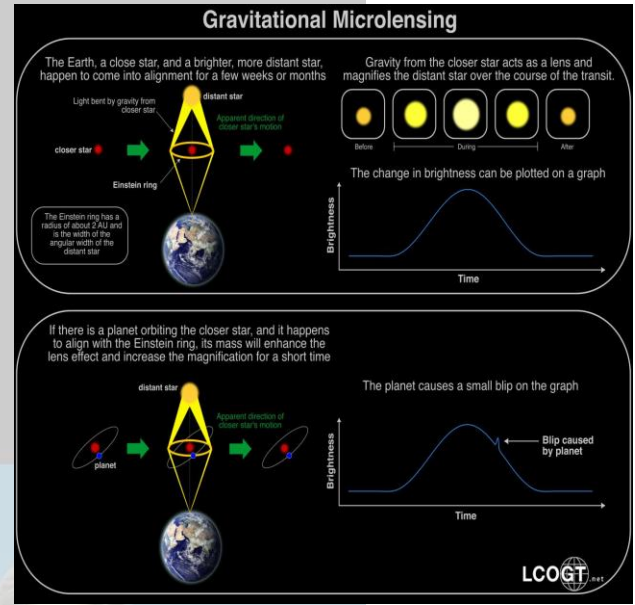
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Dark energy and microlensing

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ENERGY DISTRIBUTION OF THE UNIVERSE



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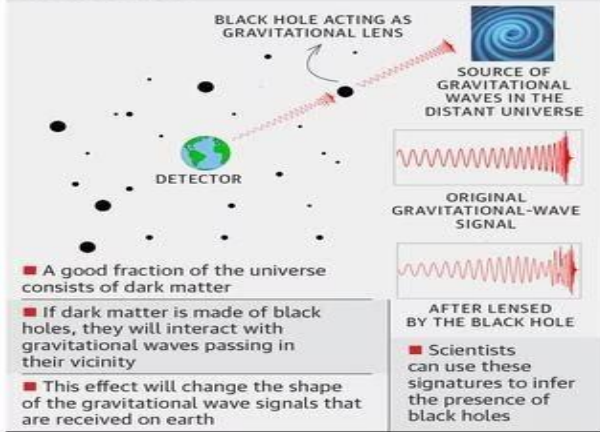
Representation in parliament

SAURABH PANDEY

- An Indian Member of Parliament (MP) is said to represent 2.5 million citizens, on average.

How gravitational microlensing works

When a gravitational wave approaching the earth is interrupted by the presence of a black hole, the signal gets modified as shown.



UPSC BRILLIANCE

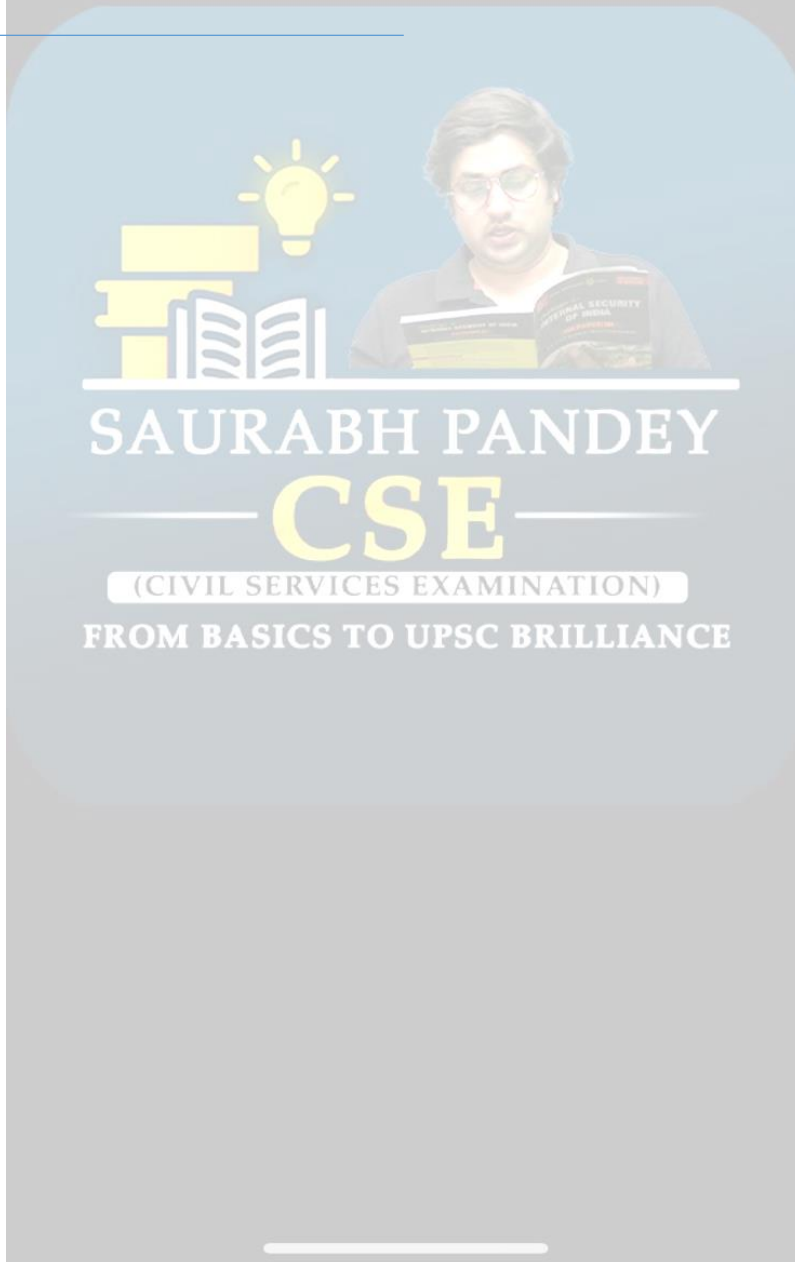
- In comparison, a U.S. House of Representatives member typically represents approximately 7,00,000 citizens.
- Delimitation could be a potential solution to restore proportionality it has been utilized in the past.

Current Affairs 14th November 2023 by Saurabh Pandey

- The Commission was set up four times in the past as an independent body, to enable redistricting
- Promoting federalism
- Beyond this, our electoral system must be reformed. Federalism needs to be promoted (past decades of centralization that have impacted Centre State relations), and we need to give States a better voice and a platform to represent their interests.
- The Rajya Sabha can play this role; however, it is currently elected by State legislatures, giving disproportionately more representation to larger/more populous States. Constitutional reform can be pursued to give each state the same number of Rajya Sabha MPs.
- Proportional representation can also be considered, especially for the Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections.
- In Australia, lower house elections have voters rank candidates on an alternative preference ballot if a candidate does not win a majority of votes in the first round, the weakest candidate is eliminated, with their votes redistributed to the next preferred candidate
- We need more States as well.
- The largest State (highest resident population) in the United States, California, has a population of just 39 million, with the average State having a population of about five to six million.
- Around 22 Indian States/Union Territories have a population higher than that.
- The States Reorganization Commission was set up in 1953, creating nearly 14 linguistic States and six Union Territories.

- There is potential for India to have more States (moving up from 29 to say 50 or even 75 States); for example, a State such as Uttar Pradesh, is simply too big to be governed well as a single unit

The Hindu



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