

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 11, 2022

TAMIL NADU

- **The Greater Chennai Corporation - has added eight zones to the existing 15 for better civic administration**
- ✓ The number of wards will remain 200 and the boundaries will be the same.
- ✓ The move follows the April 7 announcement of the minister for municipal administration, K.N. Nehru that the corporation's zones will be on a par with the assembly constituencies.
- ✓ Till now, there were 15 zones in Chennai with 22 assembly constituencies, leading to administrative inconvenience.

STATES

- **A new viral infection called tomato flu - infected 82 children, all below five years, in Kollam district of Kerala**



- ✓ This is a case of children experiencing undiagnosed and unidentified fever
- ✓ The symptoms of this flu, also called Tomato fever, include rashes, skin irritation and dehydration.
- ✓ Other symptoms include high fever, body ache, joint swelling and fatigue - much like chikungunya.
- ✓ The flu that gets its name because of the red blister it causes, resembling tomatoes

- ✓ The infected child must avoid scratching the blisters and maintain cleanliness and hygiene.
- ✓ There is no specific drug for treating this contagious fever and the symptoms will resolve over time on their own if supportive care is given.
- ✓ Utensils, clothes and other items used by the infected persons must be sanitised to prevent the flu from spreading

NATIONAL

- **Indian vaccine manufacturer Bharat Biotech along with an international consortium - has partnered with the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) for the development of a variant-proof SARS-CoV-2 vaccine.**
 - ✓ The other members of the consortium are University of Sydney and ExcellGene SA of Switzerland.
 - ✓ The CEPI will extend \$19.3 million funding to the consortium as part of its \$200 million programme for the development of vaccines that provide broad protection against SARS-Cov-2 variants and other beta coronaviruses.
 - ✓ The CEPI will fund the researchers to conduct activities including immunogen design, preclinical studies, manufacturing process development, and a Phase 1 clinical trial.
 - ✓ This is the ninth programme to be funded by CEPI as part of its efforts to develop the vaccines against Covid-19
 - ✓ The partners are also hoping the vaccine will provide protection from future variants of the virus that have not yet emerged.
 - ✓ CEPI is an innovative partnership between public, private, philanthropic, and civil organisations, launched at Davos in 2017, to develop vaccines against future epidemics.
- **Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur - announced a grant of Rs 363 crore for the world's largest film restoration project under the National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM).**
 - ✓ The restoration project is set to come up at the National Film Archive of India (NFAI) in Pune.
 - ✓ The NFHM, in addition to restoration, would also involve assessment and preservation processes of film's condition, preventive conservation, and digitisation with a total allocated budget of Rs. 597 crore.
 - ✓ As part of NFHM, approximately 2,200 films will undergo restoration
 - ✓ The titles have been shortlisted by forming language-wise committees consisting of filmmakers, documentary filmmakers, film historians, producers, etc.
 - ✓ Eminent film personalities such as Aparna Sen, Shriram Raghavan, Anjali Menon, and Vetrимаaran were part of the committees.

- ✓ The restoration project will involve digital and semi-automated manual picture and sound restoration from the best surviving source material.



- ✓ The damages, including scratches, dirt, and abrasions, will be cleaned during the restoration process, while the sound restoration will also be done
- ✓ Besides Satyajit Ray films, Neelakuyil (Malayalam) and Do Aakhein Barah Haath (Hindi) will also be part of the restoration.
- ✓ Short films and documentaries from the collection of NFAI, Films Division and other rare materials, including pre-independence, will also be restored.
- ✓ The National Film Heritage Mission launched in 2016 is aimed at preserving, restoring and digitising our cinematic heritage

INTERNATIONAL

- **On May 10, Ferdinand Marcos Jr, son of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos - claimed victory in the Philippine presidential elections.**



- ✓ He has secured over 31 million votes in an unofficial vote count, more than double the tally of his nearest rival, liberal candidate Leni Robredo.
- ✓ In 1986, Marcos Senior and first lady Imelda Marcos were sent into exile by the 'People Power' revolution for corruption and mass human rights abuses.

- ✓ A former provincial governor, congressman and senator, the 64-year-old son of former dictator has managed to return to the presidency after securing more than 95% of the votes
- ✓ His mother, Imelda Marcos, twice unsuccessfully attempted to retake the seat of power after returning with her children to the Philippines from exile in the United States, where her husband died in 1989.
- ✓ Marcos Junior will begin a six-year term as president at the end of June

AWARDS

- **Slain photojournalist Danish Siddiqui - is among four Indians honoured with the prestigious Pulitzer Prize 2022 in the feature photography category.**
- ✓ Siddiqui and his colleagues Adnan Abidi, Sanna Irshad Mattoo and Amit Dave from the Reuters news agency won the award, which was announced on May 9



- ✓ Siddiqui, who died while covering the war in Afghanistan, has been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the Covid situation in India, along with his colleagues
- ✓ Danish Siddiqui was the Chief Photographer for Reuters, based in India
- ✓ He received the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography, as part of a team of photographers, for documenting the Rohingya refugee crisis
- ✓ In July 2021, Siddiqui was killed while covering a clash between Afghan security forces and Taliban forces in Spin Boldak district of Kandahar city, near the Pakistan border
- ✓ Some of his major works include covering the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Rohingya refugee crisis, Hong Kong protests and Nepal earthquakes.
- ✓ His work on capturing images of funeral pyres of Covid-19 victims at mass cremation sites in Delhi last year had received widespread applause
- ✓ Adnan Abidi, has also received the Pulitzer Prize before -- first in 2018 for his reportage on the Rohingya exodus and again in 2020 for his coverage of the Hong Kong protests.



- ✓ Spanning a career of over 20 years, Abidi has worked with leading news agencies such as Pan-Asia News Agency, Indo Photo News and the Press Trust of India before joining Reuters.
- ✓ Sanna Irshad Mattoo, the first Kashmiri woman to win the Pulitzer Prize, is pursuing her fellowship from the renowned photo company, Magnum Foundation.
- ✓ She won the Prize for her photograph of a health care worker administering a Covid-19 vaccine dose to a shepherd during the vaccination drive in Kashmir's Anantnag district.
- ✓ Amit Dave, with over three decades of experience as a photojournalist, was conferred the prize for his photograph of a veiled woman who was getting her body temperature checked by a health worker during a vaccination drive for workers at a brick kiln in Kavitha village on the outskirts of Ahmedabad.
- ✓ Dave has covered riots, the aftermath of the Bhuj earthquake in Gujarat, droughts and the Indian Ocean tsunami in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Apart from the above four journalists, the Washington Post and The New York Times won the prize for Public Service Journalism and International Reporting, respectively.
- ✓ Further, journalists from Ukraine were recognised with a 2022 Pulitzer Prize special citation.
- ✓ The Pulitzer Prize is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine, online journalism, literature and musical composition within the United States.
- ✓ It was established in 1917 by provisions in the will of Joseph Pulitzer, who had made his fortune as a newspaper publisher, and is administered by Columbia University.
- ✓ The 19-member Pulitzer Board is composed of leading journalists and news executives from media outlets across the US, as well as five academics or persons in the arts

OBITUARY

- **Indian music composer and santoor maestro Pandit Shivkumar Sharma (84 years) - passed away following a heart attack in Mumbai on May 10**



- ✓ The renowned musician had been suffering from kidney-related issues for the past six months and was on dialysis.
- ✓ Born in the city of Jammu in the region of Kashmir on January 13, 1938, Sharma came from a musical family with his father, Uma Dutt Sharma, was a well-known vocalist of Benaras gharana and tabla drum player.
- ✓ When he was just 17 years old, in 1955, Shivkumar Sharma debuted his santoor playing at a classical music concert in Mumbai.
- ✓ Shivkumar Sharma is believed to be the first musician to have played Indian classical music on the santoor, a folk instrument from Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✓ Using the santoor for the first time in Hindi cinema, Pandit Shivkumar Sharma composed the background music for one of the scenes in Shantaram's film Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baje in 1956 for music director Vasant Desai and later recorded his first solo album in 1960.
- ✓ He was one half of music composer duo Shiv- Hari and composed music with flute legend Pt Hari Prasad Chaurasia for an array of films directed by Yash Chopra
- ✓ For the hugely popular 1967 Hindustani classical music record 'Call of the Valley' with flautist Hariprasad Chaurasia and guitarist Brij Bhushan Kabra, the 1981 romantic drama film 'Silsila,' and the 1989 romantic drama film 'Chandni,' Pandit Sharma received a 'Platinum disc' each
- ✓ Pandit Shivkumar Sharma was the recipient of national and international awards, including an honorary citizenship of the city of Baltimore, USA, in 1985
- ✓ Sharma received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1986, followed by the Padma Shri in 1991, and the Padma Vibhushan in 2001.
- ✓ As a duo, Shiv-Hari were nominated five times for Filmfare magazine's Best Music Director prize.
- ✓ Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has announced a state funeral for Sharma.

SEDITION LAW – A REPORT

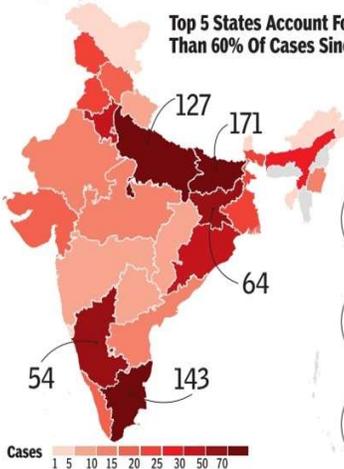
Why Sedition Law Must Change Or Go

India-Pakistan cricket matches, cartoons, social media posts and even the Hanuman Chalisa have been some of the recent triggers for the application of the colonial-era sedition law, Section 124A IPC. Data compiled by independent media and research group **Article14** shows that between 2010 and 2021, police across the country freely slapped Section 124A on activists, journalists, politicians, students and ordinary citizens in a clear departure from guidelines laid down by the top court in 1962. After arguing that abuse of the law should not be grounds for its repeal, the Centre on Monday told the Supreme Court that it is ready to review it

Over 13,000 Booked In 867 Cases Since 2010

Article 14 compiled the sedition law database – A Decade Of Darkness – by analysing legal documents, FIRs, news reports, etc. It says a total of 867 sedition cases were registered during 2010-21 in the country. As many as 13,306 people were named in these cases, though the database could ascertain the identities of only about 3,000 of the accused

Bihar filed the most sedition cases, followed by Tamil Nadu and UP, but Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland has had no sedition cases since 2010



Among Top 5 States For Cases, 3 CMs Have Seen 100+ Cases Filed Under Them

| State | Chief minister | Cases | No. of accused | As share of state's cases |
|------------|-----------------|-------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Bihar | Nitish Kumar | 161 | 1,498 | 94.2% |
| Tamil Nadu | J Jayalithaa | 125 | 3,402 | 87.4% |
| UP | Yogi Adityanath | 100 | 1,049 | 78.7% |
| Jharkhand | Raghubar Das | 46 | 1,581 | 71.9% |
| Karnataka | HD Kumaraswamy | 18 | 77 | 33.3% |

What Is Sedition?

Use of words or actions that are intended to encourage people to oppose a government

Creating hatred, contempt or disaffection against government through words, signs or in other ways

– Oxford Dictionary
– Indian Penal Code Section 124A
A five-judge SC bench had said in the 1962 Kedar Nath Singh case that unless there was a call to violence or an intention to disrupt public order, any criticism of the government cannot be deemed sedition

Singapore Scrapped Sedition Law Last Year

In October 2021, Singapore repealed its sedition law that the British had introduced in 1948. Singapore law minister **K Shanmugam** said, "The excitement of disaffection against the government shouldn't be criminalised. I think if it is, a lot of people, including many in this House, would be considered criminals". Singapore had used the law only 6 times between 1965 and 2016

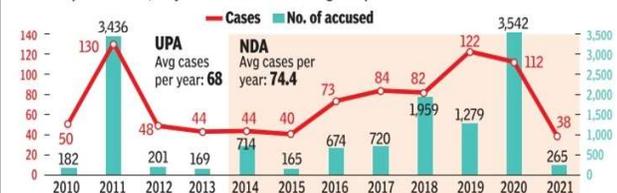


Graphic: Anil Dinod

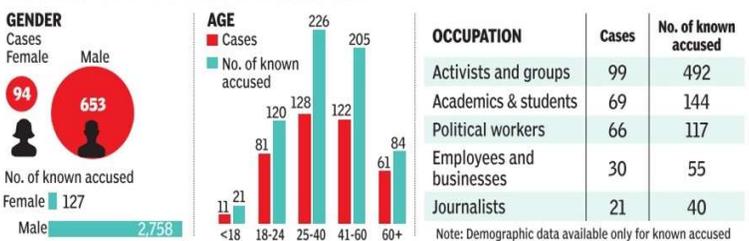
The Jayalithaa-led ADMK government in TN slapped the sedition charge on thousands of persons, mostly from fishing communities, between 2011 and 2012 during protests against the Kudankulam nuclear plant
In Karnataka, roughly the same number of cases were filed under CMs Yediyurappa, Kumaraswamy and Siddaramaiah

In Past 11 Yrs, Nearly 70% Of Sedition Cases Since 2014

595 sedition cases – 69% of the total since 2010 – have been filed since 2014, when the BJP-led NDA formed government at the Centre. Article14 points out that data compiled by National Crime Records Bureau does not capture the full extent of the use of the sedition law because in cases with multiple offences, only the offence with the highest punishment is counted



Profile Of A Sedition Accused...



Most Cases End In Acquittal, But It Can Be Months In Jail

Article14 says only 13 out of the more than 13,000 accused were found guilty in sedition cases, a conviction rate of less than 0.1%. It says trials were concluded only for 128 accused with 100 acquitted of all charges and a further 15 cleared of charges of sedition only

| Long Period In Custody Top Reason For Granting Bail | Top reasons for granting bail | No. of accused | Top reasons for rejecting bail | No. of accused |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Trial court | Long period of custody | 263 | Gravity of offence | 150 |
| Granted 303 | Grounds of parity | 255 | Prima facie case made out | 75 |
| Rejected 410 | No specific role attributed | 137 | Recovery | 55 |
| High court | No criminal history | 110 | Specific role attributed | 50 |
| 584 | Chargesheet filed | 90 | Named in FIR | 43 |
| 83 | | | | |
| Supreme Court | | | | |
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An accused was most likely to spend up to 50 days in prison until a trial court granted bail and up to 200 days until a high court did so

Some Recent 'Seditious' Activities In India

- April 2022:** MP Navneet Rana and MLA husband Ravi Rana charged with sedition after declaring they would recite the Hanuman Chalisa outside Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray's residence. State says they were rousing hatred against the government and the CM
- Feb 2022:** Ahead of UP polls, SP-RLD candidate Dr Neeraj Chaudhary booked for sedition over a video in which his supporters were allegedly shouting 'Pakistan Zindabad'. Chaudhary claimed they were shouting 'Aqib Bhai Zindabad'
- Feb 2022:** Congress candidate Ajay Rai charged with sedition for using 'undignified language' against PM Modi, UP CM Adityanath
- Jun 2021:** Filmmaker Aisha Sultana charged with sedition for allegedly saying the Centre was using Covid as a bioweapon against the people of Lakshadweep
- Aug 2021:** SP MP Shafiqur Rehman Barq charged with sedition for allegedly comparing the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan with the Indian freedom struggle
- Sep 2021:** Former UP governor Aziz Qureshi charged with sedition for likening UP's BJP government to a "blood-sucking demon"
- Nov 2021:** Chhattisgarh Congress MLA Shailesh Pandey seeks sedition case against Bilaspur collector for "insulting the state government" by not inviting him to district-level State Day celebration
- Dec 2021:** Assam Police charge journalist Anirban Roy Choudhury with sedition for an article on the arrest of lawyer Pradip Dutta Roy, who is also charged with sedition
- Dec 2020:** Man charged with sedition for making a hoax call about a bomb to delay a train's departure at a Delhi station