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CSB IAS ACADEMY
The Road Map to Mussoorie...

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NATIONAL JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (NJAC)

Context; Discussions regarding the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act and NJAC has been resurfacing in the recent days.



About NJAC

- The **99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014** established the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) as an independent constitutional body designed to replace the existing collegium system.
- Its purpose was to **introduce a more transparent, broad-based, and accountable mechanism for appointing judges** to the Supreme Court and High Courts in India.

- Through this Act, Articles 124A, 124B, and 124C were inserted into the Constitution, formally establishing the NJAC as a **constitutional body responsible for recommending appointments and transfers of judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts.**
- Created a **six-member constitutional body** called the NJAC to oversee appointments of judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts.
- Replaced the collegium system, which was previously responsible for judicial appointments.
- Inserted Articles 124A to 124C, defining the NJAC's composition, powers, and procedures.
- Provided for the inclusion of two eminent persons, the Law Minister, and senior judges to ensure broader participation.

Article 124A states that

There shall be a Commission to be known as the **National Judicial Appointments Commission** consisting of the following, namely

- The **Chief Justice of India** as the **ex officio chairperson.**
- Two other senior Judges of the Supreme Court next to the Chief Justice of India as the **ex officio members.**
- The Union Minister in charge of **Law and Justice** as the ex officio member.
- Two eminent persons to be **nominated by the committee** consisting of the Prime

Minister, the Chief Justice of India and the Leader of Opposition in the House of the People or where there is no such Leader of Opposition, then, the Leader of single largest Opposition Party in the House of the People as members.

Article 124B of the COI

- This Article deals with the **functions of NJAC**.
- It states that it shall be the duty of the National Judicial Appointments Commission to—
 - **Recommend persons** for appointment as Chief Justice of India, Judges of the Supreme Court, Chief Justices of High Courts and other Judges of High Courts.
 - **Recommend transfer** of Chief Justices and other Judges of High Courts from one High Court to any other High Court.
 - To ensure that the person recommended is of **ability and integrity**.

Constitutionality of NJAC

- In 2015, the Supreme Court in the case of **Supreme Court Advocates o-Record Association and Anr. v. Union of India** declared **both the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act 2014 and the NJAC Act, 2014 as unconstitutional and null and void**.
- It argued that the 99th Amendment Act which provided for the creation of the NJAC **took away the primacy of the collective opinion of the Chief Justice of India and the two senior-most Judges of the Supreme Court of India**” as their collective recommendation

could be vetoed or suspended by majority of three non-Judge members.

- It stated that the Amendment severely **damaged the basic structure** of the Constitution of which the independence of the judiciary in appointing judges of the higher judiciary was an integral part.
- It also contended that the NJAC Act was itself void **and ultra vires** of the Constitution
- The verdict **brought back** the primacy of the collegium system of judges appointing judges.

Source; CJI says will 'consider' plea to revive NJAC, end Collegium system—The Hindu

PLACES IN NEWS

Hong Kong



- Hong Kong is a city and a **special administrative region** in China.
- With 7.4 million residents of various nationalities in a 1,104-square-kilometre territory, Hong Kong is **one of the most densely populated territories in the world**.

- It is located on China's southern coast, 60 km (37 mi) east of Macau, on the east side of the mouth of the Pearl River estuary.
- It is **surrounded by the South China Sea on all sides except the north**, which neighbours the Guangdong city of Shenzhen along the Sham Chun River.
- The territory consists of Hong Kong Island, the Kowloon Peninsula, the New Territories, Lantau Island, and over 200 other islands.
- Hong Kong has a **humid subtropical climate**, characteristic of southern China, despite being **located south of the Tropic of Cancer**.
- The city was a **colony of the United Kingdom, until the British handed it back over to China in 1997**.
 - Qing dynasty leaders ceded Hong Kong Island to the British Crown in 1842 after China's defeat in the **First Opium War**
- At the time of handover, the Chinese Communist leadership had agreed to a unique arrangement – **"One Country, Two Systems"**.
- In 2014, over 1 lakh city residents took part in the **'Umbrella Revolution'** to protest against China's denial of democratic reforms.
- Hong Kong **has the world's largest number of skyscrapers**, with 482 towers taller than 150 metres (490 ft) and the third-largest number of high-rise buildings in the world.
- Despite being a small island, It is the world's **35th-largest economy, with a nominal GDP of approximately US\$400 billion**.

TERMS IN NEWS

Rare Earth Magnets



- Rare earth magnets are a type of permanent magnet **made from alloys of rare earth elements**.
- They are known for their **exceptional magnetic strength, high energy density, and superior performance compared to other types of magnets**.
- These magnets are widely used in various industries due to their ability to generate strong magnetic fields in compact sizes.
- Their global **supply chain is currently dominated by China**, which accounts for about 90% of processing capacity.

Types of Rare Earth Magnets

- Neodymium (Nd-Fe-B) and Samarium Cobalt (SmCo) are the two most common types of rare earth magnet materials. Both types are extremely strong.
- Neo magnets are composed primarily of neodymium, boron and iron, and samarium cobalt is composed of samarium and cobalt.

- Both materials come in different grades, or strengths, and have different magnetic and physical properties.
- These magnets tend to be brittle and are vulnerable to corrosion.
- Manufacturers typically nickel-plate the material to protect it from oxidation.

Uses of Rare Earth Magnets

- These are used in medical applications such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines, as well as X-Rays and positron emission tomography (PET) imaging.
- They are also utilized in aviation, national defense, electronic devices, smartphones, consumer goods, jewelry, hard drives, and electric vehicles (EVs), to name several applications

Methamphetamine



- Methamphetamine is a **powerful, highly addictive stimulant that affects the central nervous system.**
- It is also known as meth, chalk, ice, and crystal.
- It was developed early in the 20th century from its parent drug, amphetamine, and was **used originally in nasal decongestants and bronchial inhalers.**

Properties of Methamphetamine

- It is a member of the class of amphetamines.
- It takes the form of a **white, odorless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder that easily dissolves in water or alcohol.**
- Methamphetamine is potent and easy to produce.
- It has a role as a **neurotoxin, a psychotropic drug, a central nervous system stimulant, a xenobiotic and an environmental contaminant.**

Effect on Humans

- It causes increased activity and talkativeness, decreased appetite, and a pleasurable sense of well-being or euphoria.
- The use of methamphetamine in higher doses **can induce psychosis, bleeding in the brain, skeletal muscle breakdown, and seizures.**
- It can **cause violent behavior, mood swings, and psychosis such as paranoia, delirium, auditory and visual hallucination, and delusions when used chronically.**
- Chronic long-term methamphetamine use can be highly addictive, **and if it is discontinued abruptly, it might lead to withdrawal symptoms**

Exercise Suryakiran



- It is the **joint military exercise conducted between India and Nepal**.
- The Indian contingent is being represented mainly by troops from the ASSAM Regiment.
- The aim of the exercise is to jointly rehearse conduct of Sub Conventional operations under Chapter VII of the United Nations Mandate.'

About the Exercise

- **Scope:** To strengthen battalion-level synergy in Jungle Warfare, Counter-Terrorism Operations in Mountainous Terrain, Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR), Environmental Conservation, and Integrated Ground-Aviation Operations.
- It will focus on incorporating niche and emerging technologies, including Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), drone-based ISR, AI-enabled decision support tools, unmanned logistic vehicles and armoured protection platforms.
- **Significance:** It will further enhance the level of defence cooperation between Indian Army and Nepal Army

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q1; Consider the following statements regarding National Judicial Appointments Commission

1. It was established by the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014
2. It created a six-member constitutional body called the NJAC with the President as the Ex Officio Chairperson to oversee appointments of judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts.
3. In 2015, the Supreme Court declared both the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act 2014 and the NJAC Act, 2014 as unconstitutional and null and void.

How many of the above statements are correct

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All of the Above
- d) None of the Above

Q2; Consider the following statements regarding Hong Kong

1. Hong Kong is a city and a special administrative region in Japan.
2. Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated territories in the world.
3. The city was a colony of the United Kingdom until 1997.

How many of the above statements are correct

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All of the Above
- d) None of the Above

Q3; Consider the following statements regarding Rare Earth Magnets

1. These are a type of permanent magnet made from alloys of rare earth elements.
2. They are known for their exceptional magnetic strength, high energy density, and superior performance compared to other types of magnets.
3. Their global supply chain is currently dominated by Germany, which accounts for about 90% of processing capacity.

How many of the above statements are correct

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All of the Above
- d) None of the Above

Q4; Consider the following statements regarding Methamphetamine

1. Methamphetamine is a powerful, highly addictive stimulant that affects the central nervous system.
2. It was developed early in the 20th century from its parent drug, amphetamine, and was used originally in nasal decongestants and bronchial inhalers.
3. Addictive use can induce psychosis, bleeding in the brain, skeletal muscle breakdown, and seizures.

How many of the above statements are correct

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All of the Above
- d) None of the Above

Q5; Exercise Surya Kiran is a joint military exercise conducted between India and which of the following countries

- a) Nepal
- b) Bhutan
- c) Bangladesh
- d) Sri Lanka

Answers

1. B
2. B
3. B
4. C
5. A