



### G.K snippets...

- Advantage India is a book written by Aniindya Dutta on Indian Tennis. The book is a collection of stories about the achievements in Indian tennis.

### Law, Policy and Governance

#### [Daily snippets](#)



#### 1. [Farmers' stir: Twitter blocks several accounts](#)

- Microblogging site Twitter, citing "legal demands", blocked several accounts that were posting messages in **support of the ongoing farmers' agitation**. However, most accounts were restored in the evening.
- The accounts were taken down after the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeITY), based on a request by the MHA, asked Twitter to act against 250 Twitter handles. The MEITY directed Twitter to block around **250 tweets/ Twitter accounts**, which were using #ModiPlanning-FarmerGenocide hashtag and making fake, intimidatory and provocative Tweets on January 30.

#### 2. [Physical hearings in SC may start by March](#)

- Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, office bearers of the Bar Council of India (BCI) and various lawyers' bodies that physical hearings in the Supreme Court might start by the first week of March. During a meeting, the CJI said the judges themselves were willing to resume physical hearing of cases

#### 3. [SC urges Centre to give UPSC aspirants one-time relaxation](#)

- The Supreme Court urged the Centre to give a one time concession to aspirants seeking another opportunity to take the UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) exam. The preparations of the aspirants for the October 4 prelims last year were hampered by the pandemic restrictions.

#### 4. [HC seeks Centre's reply on pleas over 'misreporting' of RDay rally](#)

- The Delhi High Court asked the Centre to respond to two petitions which have alleged that the Aaj Tak news channel has "*unleashed an offensive and potentially fatal communal attack*" on the Sikh community by circulating unverified videos of the farmers' tractor rally on Republic Day.

#### 5. [High Court rejects plea on action against agencies](#)

- The Delhi High Court dismissed a petition which sought action against the police and intelligence officials, claiming that their alleged failure in “*anticipating and controlling*” the farmers’ protest on Republic Day led to their forced entry into the Red Fort.
- A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh rejected the petition saying it was **too early for the court to interfere** as the police had already registered FIRs in relation to the January 26 incident. The petition stated that the “*violent turn of a peaceful protest/rally, especially on Republic Day casts a huge doubt on the security agencies*”.

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## National News/ Interventions



### Daily snippets

#### 1. Nirmala Sitharaman presents first ever paperless Budget

- **Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** presented the first ever paperless Budget amidst a walkout by members of the former National Democratic Alliance (NDA) constituents, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP) chief Hanuman Beniwal.
- Ms. Sitharaman, who had started a new tradition by carrying her Budget speech in a bahi-khata (ledger book) instead of a briefcase, once again has the distinction of presenting **the first digital Budget** as she read out her speech from a tablet.

#### 2. ‘Sero survey shows 56% have antibodies’

- About 56% of the over 28,000 people whose blood samples were collected in January during a serological survey have developed antibodies against COVID-19.
- The Delhi government conducted the fifth serological survey - the largest till now - to get an idea about the percentage of the population with antibodies against COVID-19, before the vaccination drive. As a part of the survey, blood samples of people of different age groups were collected.
- **What is Herd Immunity?** When a larger part of the population develops antibodies and becomes immune to the virus, the chain of transmission is broken, and this reduces the spread of the disease and this is called herd immunity. So, a higher value of seroprevalence is favourable. As per experts, the result of the serological survey has to be about 50-60%, to indicate herd immunity.
- The current result shows that Delhi might be close to herd immunity, depending on quality of sample selection. But according to experts, different parts of even the same city can attain herd immunity at different times.
- The **first such survey done in the city in June-July** had shown that 23.4% of people surveyed had developed antibodies against the virus. Similar surveys in August showed that 29.1% of people have antibodies, 25.1% in September, and 25.5% in October. A positive result implies that the person has developed antibodies against the virus. This means that the person was infected at some point and developed immunity against it.

#### 3. Rashtrapati Bhavan to reopen from Saturday

- The Rashtrapati Bhavan on Monday said it would reopen for visitors from February 6. Public viewing has been closed due to COVID-19 since March 13, 2020. Visitors can book their time slots online. A maximum of 25 visitors will be allowed per slot. During the tour, visitors will have to follow COVID-19 protocols.



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## International NEWS/Events/ Personalities

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### Daily snippets

#### 1. Military seizes power in Myanmar coup

- Myanmar's military seized power on Monday in a coup against the democratically elected government of **Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi**, who was detained along with other leaders of her **National League for Democracy (NLD)** party in early morning raids. The Army said it had carried out the detentions in response to "**election fraud**", handing power to **military chief Min Aung Hlaing** and imposing a state of emergency for one year, according to a statement on a military owned television station.
- The detentions came after days of escalating tension between the civilian government and the military that stirred fears of a coup in the aftermath of the election. **Ms. Suu Kyi's party won 83% of the vote** in only the second election since the junta agreed to share power in 2011. The Army issued a statement, saying power will be transferred to the winning party after "*holding a free and fair election*", but did not specify a timeline.

#### 2. West condemns coup, China's response is muted

- The United Nations led condemnation of Myanmar's military on Monday after it seized power, calling for the release of elected leaders, including Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. **UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres** said the developments were a "*serious blow to democratic reforms*" and urged all leaders to refrain from violence and respect human rights, a U.N. spokesman said.
- The U.S, Britain, Australia and the EU condemned the military's coup and detentions and its declaration of a state of emergency. **China's response, however, was more muted.** "*We hope that all sides in Myanmar can appropriately handle their differences under the Constitution and legal framework and safeguard political and social stability,*" Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said.
- **U.S. President Joe Biden** said Washington may consider reimposing sanctions lifted during the nation's transition to democracy. **British Prime Minister Boris Johnson** also condemned the coup. "*The vote of the people must be respected and civilian leaders released,*" he said on Twitter.
- **Japan** said it opposed any reversal of the democratic process in Myanmar. "*We strongly call on the military government to restore democracy as soon as possible,*" said a Foreign Ministry statement. The **head of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen**, called for the "*immediate and unconditional release*" of all those detained.

#### 3. For New Delhi, the tightrope on Myanmar is back

- For India, the return to **military rule by Myanmar's Tatmadaw (Army)** and the **detention of Aung San Suu Kyi** and the political **leadership of the National League of Democracy (NLD)** are a repeat of events 30 years ago, but the Modi government's reaction is likely to be starkly different to **India's strong public criticism of the junta's actions in 1989-90.**

- One important reason for the change is that India's security relationship with the Myanmar military has become extremely close, and it would be difficult to "burn bridges" with them given their **assistance in securing the North East frontiers** from insurgent groups.
- In a joint visit to Naypyidaw in October 2020, **Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla** and **Army Chief Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane** met with both **State Councillor Suu Kyi** and **Gen. Min Aung Hlaing**, making it clear that New Delhi saw both relationships at par.
- Another reason for the change is Ms. Suu Kyi herself, whose **image as a democracy icon and Nobel peace laureate has been damaged** by her time in office, where she failed to push back the military, and even **defended the Army's pogrom against Rohingya in Rakhine State in 2015**.
- Officials also say a harsh reaction from India, on the lines of that from the U.S., which has threatened action against those responsible for the "coup" unless they revoke the military's takeover, would only benefit China. Apart from strategic concerns, India has **cultivated several infrastructure and development projects** with Myanmar, which it sees as the "gateway to the East" and ASEAN countries. These include the **India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway** and the **Kaladan multimodal transit transport network**, as well as a plan for a **Special Economic Zone at the Sittwe deepwater port**.

#### 4. No Indian role in developing ECT in Colombo

- Reneging on a 2019 agreement with India and Japan, Sri Lanka has decided to develop the strategic **East Container Terminal (ECT) at the Colombo Port** on its own. The Sri Lankan government would instead offer the West Container Terminal to India for possible investments.
- The decision was taken at Monday's Cabinet meeting held by **President Gotabaya Rajapaksa**, when members "unanimously" agreed to proposals submitted by the Minister of Ports and Shipping, the source said.
- It comes amid **mounting pressure from Port union workers against any foreign role** or investment in the ECT project, where nearly 70% of the transshipment business is linked to India. **For New Delhi, the strategic ECT project in Colombo has been high on priority**. It has figured in talks at the highest levels. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa told agitating Port worker unions that the **Adani Group - Government of India's nominee** - would invest in the terminal, and that the Terminal would not be "sold or leased" to any foreign entity, signalling that his government was taking forward the 2019 memorandum of cooperation (MOC).
- The **Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) was to hold a 51% stake** in the operations, while India and Japan together would hold 49%, as per the MOC, which was signed by the former Maithripala Sirisena Ranil Wickremesinghe administration.

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#### Suggested Readings

1. A tribute to Durga Das Basu, [Link to article](#)
2. Violation of Fundamental Rights and UAPA, [Link to article](#)
3. Key highlights from the Union Budget, [Link to article](#)

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Sources referred to : [The Hindu](#), [The Indian Express](#), [Live Law](#), [Bar & Bench](#)

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