

## Tragedy in the Puttingal Devi temple in Kerala's Kollam

- Poor safety planning
- Lack of governmental accountability
- Gross negligence, carelessness and a reckless disregard for the safety of others
- Actions of the organisers despite non-permission
- Failure of the police to implement the decision of the district administration and stop the show
- Violation of norm: bursting firecrackers after 10 p.m.

### Safety of mass gatherings

1. Dedicated research-based institute to the study of accidents
2. Standard operating procedure for festival organisers
3. Zero tolerance for violations, and a strong commitment to safety
4. Collaboration between the Centre and States during such emergencies – relief operations, disaster management, medical support etc.
5. Regular field drills of established protocols.

### Simultaneous holding of elections

1. To check **election expenditure**
2. To impart **stability to state governments**
3. To free the central government from a **populism** that is forced on it by a constantly ticking election cycle,
4. To end the repeated pause on decision-making because of the **model code of conduct**

The solution to excessive campaign expenditure and a much too focussed eye on the electoral cycle is better found in persuading political leaderships to develop self-discipline and to explain to the people the need for unpopular, but necessary, decisions.

### Defence preparedness: the way forward

Newly released Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2016:

1. Suggestions of the Dhirendra Singh Committee set up to revamp the DPP have been accepted.
  - introduction of a new category of Buy Indian (or IDDM, Indigenous Design Development and Manufacture),
  - the graded acceptance of better quality through the introduction of an “enhanced” performance parameter clause, and
  - the sudden energisation of private players in defence manufacturing
2. Rules putting the private industry at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the Defence PSUs (DPSU) have been modified or removed. Thus, “nomination” of a DPSU for absorbing transfer of technology has been done away with and the tax exemptions withdrawn, making pricing more competitive.
3. Incentivisation of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in many sphere

### Work left:

1. Creation of an autonomous **Procurement Executive (PE)** outside the government
2. The acceptance of **selecting strategic partners** in six key sectors (aircraft, ship building, et al.) is good but would require diligent implementation
3. Empowering the private sector by letting them lead in large ‘Make in India’ projects
4. Training the acquisition manpower

## Shyam Benegal Committee to revamp the CBFC

1. CBFC should only be a film certification body whose scope should be restricted to categorising the suitability of the film to audience groups on the basis of age and maturity.
2. An increase in the number of film certification categories now to U, UA12, UA15, A, and AC (Adult with Caution)
3. The censor board, including the chairperson, should only play the role of a guiding body and not be involved in the day-to-day affairs of certification of films
4. Recertification of films for television for family viewing
5. Every filmmaker who applies for certification should deposit the original director's cut and not the certified version at the National Film Archives of India in Pune

### Concerns:

While the panel does uphold artistic freedom, the provision of certification comes with one huge rider: certification can be denied when a film contains anything that contravenes the provisions of Section 5B (1) of the Cinematograph Act, 1952.

A film shall not be certified for public exhibition if, in the opinion of the authority competent to grant the certificate, the film or any part of it is against the interests of [the sovereignty and integrity of India] the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or involves defamation or contempt of court or is likely to incite the commission of any offence.

### Updating the Act

The archaic Cinematograph Act needs to be overhauled and updated. The Mukul Mudgal Committee had made major recommendations on its modification wrt:

- certification categories
- process of selection of board members,
- jurisdiction of the appellate tribunal,
- the administrative set-up
- no State could ban a film without taking the Centre into confidence
- Consistency in certification of films due to supplementary rules of censorship by the state govts.

Larger institutional revamp and systemic alteration in the CBFC and its processes are the need of the hour. The govt. must expedite the implementation of such recommendations.

## Amendments to Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA)

1. **Disincentivising reporting:** The proposed amendments make all actual and potential bribe-givers offenders under the PCA. The PCA already criminalises those who abet corruption. Forcing people into this dilemma would only further the culture of impunity by disincentivising reporting of corruption by bribe-givers.
2. **Need to seek prior approval for investigation into certain cases of corruption:** The amendments state that complaints regarding corruption that relate to **decisions taken or recommendations made** by public servants in the discharge of their official duty, shall not be investigated without the prior approval of the Lokpal or Lokayuktas, as the case maybe.
3. The amendments seek to require **government's permission before prosecuting** even retired public officials.

### Measures:

1. Re-introducing the grievance redress bill (2011)
2. Operationalising the Lokpal Act and the Whistle Blowers Protection Act

## Geospatial Information Regulation Bill, 2016

1. It aims at regulating the acquisition and use of geospatial information pertaining to India.
2. It makes it illegal to acquire and even maintain previously acquired Indian geospatial data without applying for and receiving a licence from an authority that is to be created for this purpose.
3. Any company, organisation or individual that disseminates maps contradicting official versions could face up to seven years in prison and a fine of up to Rs.100 crore.
4. The proposed legislation envisages appellate authorities and enforcement agencies — a signal that issues of misrepresentation could be dealt with more strictly than they are currently.
5. Not allowing updates till security clearance is released may affect the business model of businesses premised on providing up-to-date information.

What is the Difference between GIS and Geospatial?

- **GIS** refers to a system where geographic information is stored in layers and integrated with geographic software programs so that spatial information can be created, stored, manipulated, analyzed, and visualized (mapped).
- The **term geospatial** is used to define the collective data and associated technology has a geographic or locational component.
- **Geospatial data** is data that has a geographic component to it. This means that the records in a dataset have locational information tied to them such as geographic data in the form of coordinates, address, city, or ZIP code. GIS data is a form of geospatial data. Other geospatial data can originate from GPS data, satellite imagery, and geo-tagging.