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1. The 'Architecture Nobel': 2024 Pritzker prize



Figure 1 Japanese architect Riken Yamamoto

Why in News?

Japanese architect Riken Yamamoto was declared winner of the 2024 Pritzker Architecture Prize, the highest international award in the field, which is sometimes referred to as the "Architecture Nobel". The prize has been awarded every year since its founding in 1979, and Yamamoto is the ninth laureate from Japan. Architects from Japan have won the largest number of Pritzkers.

The Nobel of Architecture

The Pritzker Architecture Prize was instituted by Jay A Pritzker, the late founder of the Hyatt Hotels chain, and his wife Cindy, "to honour a living architect whose built work demonstrates talent, vision and commitment, who has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture".

The award comes with a purse of \$100,000, a citation, and a bronze medallion based on designs by Louis Sullivan, the Chicago architect known as the father of the skyscraper, which bears the words firmness, commodity, and delight, recalling the Roman architect and engineer Marcus Vitruvius's prescription for a well-built structure.

The winner is picked from a field of more than 500 on average, nominated by experts including past laureates, academics, and professionals, by a jury who make visits to sites of the projects. The prize is awarded in May, at a ceremony that is modelled on the Nobel Prizes.

Relevance: GS Prelims

Source: The Indian Express

2. 1st ever 'National Creators Awards

Why in news?

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi presented the first-ever National Creators Award today at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The National Creators Award is an effort to recognize excellence and impact across domains, including storytelling, social change advocacy,

environmental sustainability, education, and gaming among others. The award is envisioned as a launchpad for using creativity to drive positive change.



Background

The National Creator Award has witnessed exemplary public engagement. In the first round, more than 1.5 lakh nominations across 20 different categories were received. Subsequently, in the voting round, about 10 lakh votes were cast for digital creators in various award categories. Following this, 23 winners, including three international creators, were decided. This overwhelming public engagement is testimony that the award truly reflects the people's choice.

The award is being provided across twenty categories including the Best Storyteller Award; The Disruptor of the Year; Celebrity Creator of the Year; Green Champion Award; Best Creator For Social Change; Most Impactful Agri Creator; Cultural Ambassador of The Year; International Creator award; Best Travel Creator Award; Swachhta Ambassador Award; The New India Champion Award; Tech Creator Award; Heritage Fashion Icon Award; Most Creative Creator (Male & Female); Best Creator in Food Category; Best Creator in Education Category; Best Creator in Gaming Category; Best Micro Creator; Best Nano Creator; Best Health and Fitness Creator.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

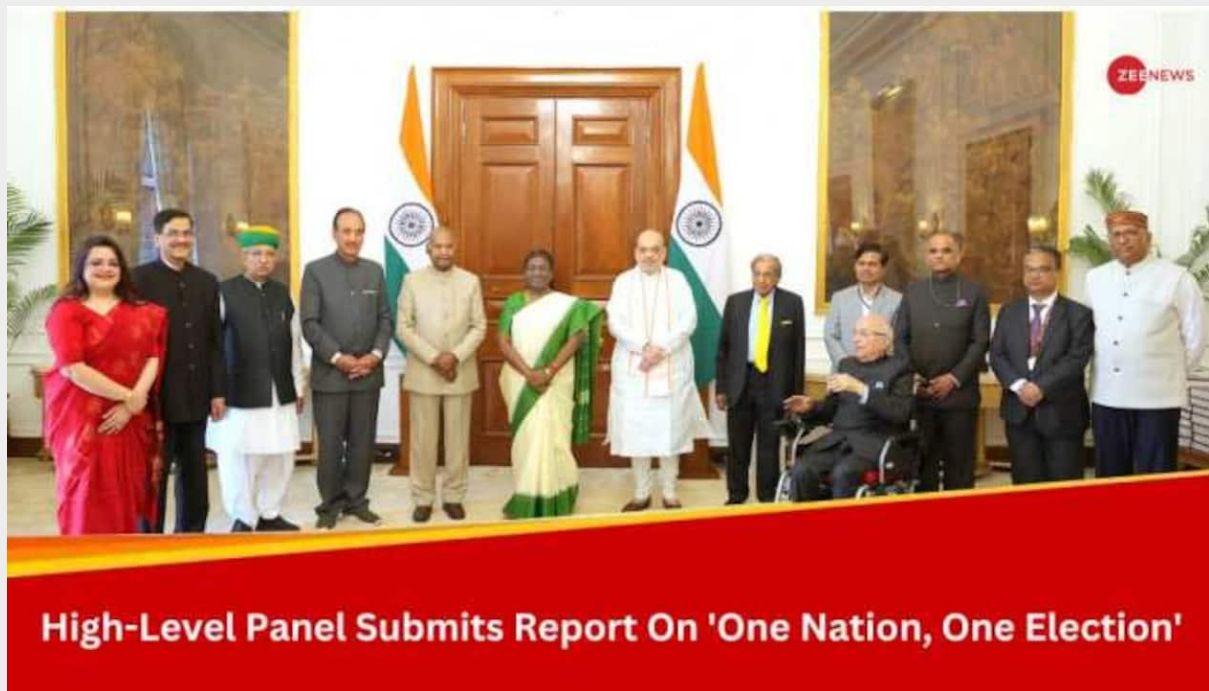
Source: PIB

3. One Nation, One Election: Highlights of the Kovind panel's recommendations

Why in News?

The High-level Committee (HLC) on One Nation, One Election submitted its report to President Droupadi Murmu recently. The comprehensive 21-volume, 18,626-page report contains 11 chapters plus Annexures.

The government has also published a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). These are some key questions and answers on the One Nation, One Election proposal, as per the government documents.



What is meant by simultaneous elections?

Simultaneous elections, popularly referred to as “One Nation, One Election”, means holding elections to Lok Sabha, all state Legislative Assemblies, and urban and rural local bodies (municipalities and panchayats) at the same time.

Currently, all these elections are held independently of one another, following timelines dictated by the terms of every individual elected body.

Is this the first time that simultaneous elections are proposed to be held in India?

No. Following efforts made by the central government, state governments, and political parties along with the Election Commission of India, simultaneous elections were held in the seven states of Bihar, Bombay, Madras, Mysore, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal in 1957.

Simultaneous elections were by and large in vogue until the fourth general elections of 1967. However, as successive central governments used constitutional provisions to dismiss state governments before the end of their term, and as coalition governments in the states and the Centre kept collapsing, a country came to see elections at different times through the year.

According to the HLC report, the country now sees five to six elections in a year — if municipalities and panchayat elections are also included, the number of elections will increase manifold.

So what is the need for holding simultaneous elections?

There has been discussions on this issue in various public forums, especially since 2014, when the current government came to power, and after Prime Minister Narendra Modi threw his weight behind the idea.

The government's FAQs list the following reasons in favour of holding simultaneous elections:

(i) Frequent elections burden the government exchequer with additional expenditure. If the expenditure incurred by political parties is also added, these figures will be even higher.

(ii) Asynchronous elections cause uncertainty and instability, thwarting supply chains, business investments and economic growth.

(iii) Disruption of government machinery due to asynchronous elections causes hardship to citizens.

(iv) Frequent use of government officials and security forces adversely affect discharge of their duties.

(v) Frequent imposition of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) causes policy paralysis and slows down the pace of the developmental programmes.

(vi) Staggered elections induce 'voters' fatigue' and present a significant challenge in ensuring their participation.

Who took up the job of studying this issue?

The HLC, popularly known as the Kovind panel after its chairman, former President Ram Nath Kovind, was constituted in September 2023, to go into the issue. The panel had as its members Home Minister Amit Shah, former Rajya Sabha Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Lok Sabha Secretary General Subhash C Kashyap, former chairman of the 15th Finance Commission N K Singh, Senior Advocate Harish Salve, and former Chief Vigilance Commissioner Sanjay Kothari. Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal was a Special Invitee to the Committee.

What has the committee recommended?

According to the FAQs, the committee has made the following recommendations:

(i) **AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION:** The Constitution should be amended to enable simultaneous elections in two steps.

In the first step, simultaneous elections will be held to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. For this, no ratification by the states will be required for the constitutional amendment.

In the second step, elections to municipalities and the panchayats will be synchronised with elections to Lok Sabha and state Assemblies in such a way that local body elections are held within 100 days of the elections to Lok Sabha and state Assemblies. This will require ratification by not less than one-half of the states.

(ii) **SINGLE ELECTORAL ROLL AND ELECTION ID:** For the purpose of preparation of single electoral roll and electoral photo identity cards for use in elections to all the three tiers of

government, the Constitution should be amended, so that the Election Commission of India can prepare a single electoral roll and election ID in consultation with the State Election Commissions. These amendments will require ratification by not less than one-half of the states.

(iii) **IN CASE OF HUNG HOUSE, ETC.:** In the event of a hung House, a no-confidence motion, or any such event, fresh elections should be held to constitute the new Lok Sabha or state Assembly for the unexpired term of the House.

(iv) **MEETING LOGISTICS REQUIREMENTS:** The committee has recommended that for meeting logistical requirements, the Election Commission of India will plan and estimate in advance, in consultation with the State Election Commissions, and take steps for the deployment of manpower, polling personnel, security forces, EVMs/VVPATs, etc., so that free and fair simultaneous elections are held in all the three tiers of the government.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: The Indian Express