

16th July, 2024

Governance

Telecom Act 2023

Context: The UK government recently introduced new sections of the Telecommunications Act aimed at streamlining the processes for optimizing and regulating the telecommunications sector. Key sections, including 6–8, 48, and 59(b), became effective today.

- ❖ This legislation complements other provisions that have been in force since June 26, focusing on modernizing and increasing the efficiency of the telecommunications industry.



Understanding the Telecommunications Act

- ❖ The Telecommunications Act updates and replaces the Indian Telegraph Act of 1885 and the Indian Wireless Telegraph Act of 1933.

- ❖ These changes address significant technological advancements and transformations in the communications field.
- ❖ The primary objective of the Act is to establish a comprehensive legal framework for managing and allocating the telecommunications spectrum.

Spectrum Utilisation and Management

- ❖ The newly introduced sections emphasize the efficient utilization of the telecommunications spectrum.
- ❖ The regulations permit various actions, such as surrendering, sharing, trading, leasing, and assigning the spectrum.
- ❖ These measures aim to ensure the optimal use of the spectrum, a limited resource, and to adapt it to emerging technologies.
- ❖ The Act also endorses a technology-neutral approach, allowing flexible and diverse spectrum usage.

Regulatory Changes and Appointments

- ❖ Section 59(b) amends Section 4 of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Act 1997, establishing new rules for the appointment of the Chairperson and members of TRAI.
- ❖ This amendment is crucial to ensure that the regulatory body is governed by individuals who meet the contemporary standards and requirements of the telecommunications industry.

Science & Technology

'Robot Suicide' in South Korea

Context: In a first-of-its-kind event, a robotic government servant working for the Gumi City Council in South Korea was found broken at the bottom of a flight of stairs in late 2023. This incident has been referred to as a "robot suicide."

- ❖ The robot, named "Robot Supervisor," was an integral part of the council staff, possessing a civil service ID and maintaining a 9-to-5 work routine.



Role and Functions of the Robot

- ❖ The "Robot Supervisor" was not merely a machine but a vital part of the Gumi City Council, complete with an ID card and regular office hours from 9 AM to 5 PM.
- ❖ It had the capability to navigate between floors, use elevators, and perform various tasks such as document delivery and city promotion.

- ❖ These advanced functions highlighted the robot's ability to operate similarly to a human colleague.

Possible Causes and Investigation

- ❖ Prior to its discovery, there were reports of the robot repeatedly moving in the same area, indicating potential issues or distress. The exact cause of the robot's descent down the stairs is still under investigation.

- ❖ Speculation suggests that the demanding tasks and operational pressures may have led to a malfunction, metaphorically described as “robot suicide.” Bear Robotics, the manufacturer, is involved in analyzing the incident to determine the cause.

Defence

India-Russia JV Completes AK-203 Rifle Production Phase

Context: India and Russia have successfully completed the initial phase of their joint venture to manufacture AK-203 assault rifles. This project is a significant advancement within India's "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India) initiatives, highlighting the country's progress in indigenous defense production.



Recent Developments

- ❖ Alexander Mikheev, the head of Rosoboronexport, announced that the Korwa Ordnance Factory in

Amethi, Uttar Pradesh, is now fully equipped with the necessary technology for large-scale production.

- ❖ This announcement follows the delivery of the first 35,000 rifles to the Indian Army, adhering to the established schedules and contractual obligations.

Production and Localization Efforts

- ❖ Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited, the company spearheading this project, achieved a significant milestone by producing the first 5,000 AK-203 firearms by January of the previous year.
- ❖ With the Amethi factory now capable of meeting the Indian Armed Forces' demand for over 600,000 weapons, the focus is also on future exports, aligning with India's long-term strategic goals.

Environment

Global Conclave on Plastics Recycling and Sustainability (GCPRS)

Context: The Global Conclave on Plastics Recycling and Sustainability (GCPRS) is scheduled to take place at Bharat Mandapam in Pragati Maidan from July 4–7, 2024. Organized by the All-India Plastic Manufacturers' Association (AIPMA) and the Chemicals and Petrochemicals Association (CPMA), the event aims to raise awareness about the critical issues related to plastic use and its environmental impact, promoting recycling and sustainability efforts.



Conclave Goals and Themes

- ❖ The GCPRS 2024 will focus on sustainable plastic use, addressing challenges related to plastic waste disposal and its pollution of land, water, and air systems.

- ❖ The conclave aims to improve plastic waste management by exploring aspects such as collection, sorting, recycling (both chemical and mechanical), and the production of recyclable goods. Discussions will also cover the use of recycled products to enhance resource efficiency.

Industry Collaboration and Government Participation

- ❖ The event will foster collaboration between industry leaders and government officials to tackle global plastic waste challenges.
- ❖ It will provide a platform for stakeholders across the value chain to exchange ideas and develop practical solutions.
- ❖ Supported by various ministries, including the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, and the Swachh Bharat Mission, the conclave aims to promote circular practices and regulations concerning plastics.

The Indian Plastic Recycling Market

- ❖ The Indian plastic recycling market is projected to reach \$6.9 billion by 2033, driven by significant advancements in waste management and recycling practices. Currently, around 60% of plastic waste in India is recycled, primarily by the informal sector.

- ❖ The conclave will highlight how increased investment and consumer awareness are improving waste collection and recycling processes.



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