



# 29.04.2026 NEWS

## A JUDGMENT AFFIRMING REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

- The Supreme Court's judgment, stating that no court should compel a woman to give birth against her will, is welcome.
- The court's view that the will and mental health of the mother carrying the child are more important than the fetus itself affirms the reproductive rights of women.
- A woman approached the Supreme Court seeking permission to terminate the pregnancy of her 15-year-old daughter, who became pregnant due to a relationship with an individual under the age of 18.
- The two-judge bench comprising Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan, which heard this case, granted permission for medical termination of pregnancy.
- The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Act, 2021, came into effect considering the welfare of vulnerable women, including victims of sexual assault, those pregnant due to incest, differently-abled women, and adolescent girls.
- This law provides a way to terminate a pregnancy up to 24 weeks.
- However, since the fetus in the 15-year-old girl's womb had exceeded seven months, the girl's mother sought the Supreme Court's guidance.
- Solicitor General Tushar Mehta argued that performing an abortion after 30 weeks could be life-threatening for both the mother and the child, and suggested that the child could be given up for adoption through the Central Adoption Resource Authority after birth.
- Deciding on one's body-related rights, specifically reproductive rights, is an integral part of the right to privacy emphasized by Article 21 of the Constitution.
- The Supreme Court, in its judgment, has categorically stated that the suggestion to give the child up for adoption if there is no desire to raise it, or that compensation could be claimed, cannot be accepted.
- The court noted that this would lead to negative consequences. By this verdict, the Supreme Court has respected the intrinsic feelings of the woman who came forward to terminate the pregnancy even while knowing it could be life-threatening.
- The court's observation "If we do not allow abortion now, no one will approach the courts. Illegal and improper abortions may take place" strongly points out the existing social evils.
- While previously only married individuals were eligible for medical termination of pregnancy, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Act, 2021, has ensured that all women have the right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy and defined that only the woman's consent is sufficient for it.
- In view of the 15-year-old girl's future, the Supreme Court has advised performing the abortion with appropriate medical safety arrangements.

## **UTTAR PRADESH PREPARING TO SURPASS TAMIL NADU, WHICH CURRENTLY HOLDS THE TOP POSITION IN THE LIST OF RAMSAR SITES**

- On February 2, 1971, an international convention was held in the city of Ramsar, Iran.
- About 170 countries participated and signed an agreement in this convention, which was conducted to protect wetlands across the world. This came into effect on December 21, 1975.
- According to this convention, wetlands that have water flow, provide natural habitats for birds and animals, and possess potential for biodiversity are selected for the Ramsar list.
- In India's list of Ramsar sites, Tamil Nadu holds the first place with 20 sites. Following this, UP holds the 2nd place with 12 sites. Shekha Lake in UP's Aligarh was recently added to the Ramsar list.
- Following this, it is expected that the Surha Tal Bird Sanctuary in UP's Ballia will soon be added to the Ramsar list.
- Furthermore, proposals from several other districts are also being prepared for inclusion in the Ramsar list.
- Experts believe that UP's geographical structure and the vast wetlands in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab region could make the state a pioneer in this field.
- Currently, there are 99 Ramsar sites in India. After Tamil Nadu and UP, Punjab, Odisha, and Bihar have 6 Ramsar sites each. In fourth place, Gujarat, Rajasthan, MP, and Jammu & Kashmir have 5 sites each.

## **INDIA RANKS 5TH IN HIGH MILITARY SPENDING**

- The report released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) based in Sweden states the following: In the year 2025, India spent 92.1 billion US dollars for its military requirements.
- India has significantly increased its defense expenditures. India's share in global military spending stands at 3.2 percent. In this ranking, the United States is in first place, China in 2nd place, Russia in 3rd place, and Germany is in 4th place.

## **UAE'S EXIT FROM OPEC**

- The United Arab Emirates, which joined this organization through Abu Dhabi in 1967 and continued as a member even after emerging as an independent nation in 1971, has now severed a relationship of more than 50 years.
- Economists predict that the exit of its long-term member, the UAE, will further weaken the OPEC organization, which already has several contradictions regarding the geopolitical environment and production quotas.
- This policy decision was taken only after intensive consideration of the country's current and future energy strategies. It was stated that no consultation was held with Saudi Arabia, which holds the leadership of the OPEC organization, regarding this withdrawal.
- Under the direct intervention of Saudi Arabia's Prince Mohammed bin Salman, that country began acting as a competitor to the UAE in attracting foreign investments.
- Similarly, in the Yemen civil war, Saudi and UAE forces worked together against the Iran-backed Houthi rebels.
- However, last December, Saudi Arabia bombed and destroyed the ammunition depots of the separatists supported by the UAE. Thus, this exit of the UAE from OPEC is seen as the climax of the intense regional political and economic competition prevailing between the two countries.
- Furthermore, it is cited as a major reason for this decision that OPEC's conditions to reduce oil production acted as a hurdle to the UAE's economic growth.
- Despite leaving OPEC, the UAE has clarified that it plans to increase crude oil production gradually and in systematic quantities, considering the demand of the international market.
- Through this, the country has assured that it will maintain a balance in the supply of crude oil in the international market.