Happy New Year

STUDY IQ
All's not well in the Army

A military force with deep roots of tradition and discipline in the Indian armed forces has seen the fastest job losses in the recent period. It's time the defence establishment gets its act together.

LEGAL EYE
What is special about special courts?

The rediscovery of urban India

After long years of neglect and dynamite, cities are feeling empowered under the ambitious plans of urban planning. The early results are already visible.

When women eat last

In households with a limited food budget, or where there is no refrigerator to store leftover food, the person who can last very often gets less of lower quality food.

Playing the angles, with Russia

If Vladimir Putin were to blast Barack Obama into oblivion, he would not trigger a war in Ukraine. It could trigger a cascade of geopolitical realignments across the world.

EDITORIAL
Board of Control for Cricket in India- BCCI president and secretary -removed for defying the Supreme Court’s order to accept reforms suggested by a court-appointed committee- R.M. Lodha Committee- bring transparency and accountability

Anurag Thakur, now faces legal action for contempt of court as well as prosecution for perjury.

His equivocation on whether he invited the International Cricket Council to say there is governmental interference in the BCCI’s affairs has led to the court hardening its stance against him.

None of this would have happened had the BCCI shown some sense of responsibility and a vision for the future cricket is administered in the country.

While the court expected cooperation and compliance, the BCCI responded with obstructionist tactics and defiance.

The price of such defiance is clear: the Supreme Court is now going to appoint a committee of administrators to supervise the board’s affairs.

Mr. Thakur has courted a double blow: the loss of power and authority as well as imminent punishment.
The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is the national governing body for cricket in India.
Formed in 1928 as a society, registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act.
It is a consortium of state cricket associations and state associations select their representatives BCCI officials.
The BCCI logo is derived from the emblem of the Order of the Star of India, the British Raj emblem during the colonial period.
In 1912, an all-India cricket team visited England for the first time, captained by the Maharaja of Patiala - Maharaja Sir Bhuipinder Singh
In 1926, two representatives of the Calcutta Cricket Club travelled to London to attend meetings of the Imperial Cricket Conference, the predecessor to current ICC
The BCCI is India’s richest sporting body and the richest cricket board in the world - BCCI does not depend on the Government of India for its finances.
R E Grant Govan - first president and Anthony de Mello as secretary.

The BCCI organises - domestic cricket competitions:
BCCI Corporate Trophy
Ranji Trophy
NKP Salve Challenger Trophy
Duleep Trophy
Vijay Hazare Trophy
Deodhar Trophy
Indian Premier League
Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy
Irani Cup
Bringing the BCCI under the Right to Information Act.
Separate governing bodies for BCCI and IPL.
Governance will be separated from the management of BCCI.
A player’s association introduced to give players a voice.
One association of each state will be a full member and have the right to vote. This would mean founder members NCC (Kolkata) and CCI (Mumbai) could lose voting rights.
Legalisation of betting.
No BCCI office-bearer can be Minister or government servant.
Two nominees of IPL teams will be in IPL governing council.
A robust agent registration system to safeguard players, agents will have to be cleared by an anti-corruption unit.
Every state should be full-time member of BCCI with the right of vote.
A CAG officer will be part of the BCCI auditors.
New Year’s-eve attack on an Istanbul nightclub that killed at least 39 people, mostly foreigners+ two Indians- Russian ambassador to Turkey

Rapidly deteriorating security situation in Turkey- which have raised questions about the government’s ability to provide even basic public security. The attacks have also badly hit the tourism economy, which makes a sizeable contribution to Turkey’s GDP.

2016- dozens of violent incidents, both by the Islamic State and Kurdish rebels.

Why is Turkey being repeatedly targeted?

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s Syria policy- monumental failure.

Like many of his Western allies, Mr. Erdogan also initially -offered help to the anti-regime rebels. Ankara also inadvertently helped the rise of the IS by allowing jihadists to cross into Syria via the Turkish border.

By the time the government realised its folly and started attacking the IS, the group had grown into a real terror machine.

He abandoned a ceasefire with the Kurdistan Workers Party, kicking off a new phase of the civil war. Mr. Erdogan is now in a tight spot.

The civil war with Kurdish rebels, which Mr. Erdogan might have hoped would curtail the nationalist ambitions of the Kurdish minority.

It is this fragility of the security architecture in Turkey that is frequently being exposed by the attackers.
A number of Kurdish enclaves exist in areas of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq outside the traditional Kurdish-inhabited area.
Controversial’ appointment-Lt. Gen. Bipin Rawat as the new Army chief speaks volumes of the deep-rooted tactical thinking within the government.

Rising infighting within the force, and their implications for India’s national security

First, to breach a well-established tradition in a conservative and hierarchical institution like the Army, the government should have a convincing and compelling reason which it doesn’t seem to have.

Second, the argument of merit is largely redundant at the topmost levels of an organisation where all officers are equally competent, failing which they wouldn’t have made it to the Lt. Gen. rank in the first place.

Third, there is no objective criteria for deciding merit at the senior levels of the Army brass besides previous annual confidential reports and civilian considerations, both of which are subjective.

Fourth, the argument that Gen. Rawat has the required experience in certain theatres is again beside the point because the “Chief of the Army Staff is not an operational commander but a coordinator and chief strategist.

Finally, and most fundamentally- politicisation of the armed forces.
First Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) - Army, Lt. Gen. Praveen Bakshi — now superseded by Gen. Rawat — being appointed as the While it may turn out to be mere speculation, if true, it may well be even more worrying. The first in line becomes CDS, third in line gets the Army chief’s job. What about the second in line, Lt. Gen. Mohamed Ali Hariz, one of the very few Muslim officers.

‘One Rank, One Pay’ question and parity with civil servants, there is not much discussion about the issue of promotion-related discrimination within the Army.

The outgoing chief Gen. D.S. Suhag, for instance, is reported to have promoted officers from the Gorkha regiment disproportionate opportunities for officers.

Kargil Review Committee report- recommended that promotion to the Colonel and Brigadier levels should be made quicker so that younger officers can command battalions and brigades- shortage of over 9,000 officers.

The last four Army Chiefs, including the current one, have been infantry officers- This ill-designed policy was challenged by serving officers in the Armed Forces Tribunal—which squashed the new promotion policy, holding that it violated Article 14 of the Constitution.

Gen. V.K Singh, Army chief from March 2010 to May 2012, was not only the first serving Army chief to take the government to court(D.O.B)

While politicisation of the affairs of the armed forces is indeed harmful- The Ministry of Defence (MoD) bureaucrats, with limited expertise in these matters, mostly function as gatekeepers keeping the forces away from the civilian seats of power. Modi government- seriously address and tackle some of these troubling issues, and thereby strengthen the country’s national security, the Defence Minister and the new Army chief should take urgent measures to address the sources of this growing discontent within the country’s ace force.
What is special about special courts?

- The legislature has introduced special courts on many occasions—usually with the intention to enable quick and efficient disposal of cases. But an examination of the laws that require setting up of special courts compared to the actual numbers that have been set up reveals the extent to which reality and intent are mismatched.

- In a short study by Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, 764 Central laws enacted and amended between 1950 and 2015.

- It was found that only three statutes provided for special courts between 1950 and 1981 - between 1982 and 2015, 25 statutes mandated the establishment of such courts - Special Court (Trial of Offences Relating to Transactions in Securities) Act, 1992.

- Setting up and designating special courts - Setting up a special court may require new infrastructure and facilities, whereas a designated court merely adds additional responsibilities to an existing court.

- However, implementation of the law does not necessarily follow this distinction between setting up and designation.

- Based on the nature of legislation and primary subject matter dealt with - divided the statutes into five clusters of economic offences, regulatory offences, law and order, social justice, and national security - The objective of special courts has been unclear.

- Mostly those falling under the cluster of economic offences, have provisions for special courts although older legislation, like the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, or the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, have a huge backlog of cases waiting to be cleared.

- Poor quality or complete absence of data remains a major concern for this study. Official websites did not always have the latest updated versions of statutes.
India is moving away from villages and is set to soon become more urban. To meet this demographic transition.

Long years of vacillation since Independence about our approaches to urban management - weak policy approach have taken a very heavy toll of life in urban areas as one sees now.

The Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) launched in 2005 was no doubt the first concerted effort to make a difference to the urban chaos.

Participatory urban planning - Under the new paradigm shift set - Objectivity and transparency in selection of cities and allocation of central resources under new urban missions are now the rule of law.

Till 2014, every project needed for a city was being appraised and approved in Nirman Bhawan - With this ‘top-down’ planning, there was no sense of involvement in and ownership of new schemes by city and State governments.

Citizen participation in urban planning and project prioritisation are now made mandatory - citizens contributed to the making of ‘smart city’. - Open defecation

Rules of urban planning - rewritten - States just can’t send half-baked and shoddy projects - financial year draws to a close. Under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) and Smart Cities Mission meant for improving urban infrastructure, there shall be a comprehensive assessment of infrastructure deficit before drawing up city-level action plans.

The first priority under AMRUT - ensure water supply improving sewerage networks, drainage and urban transport. Developing one park in each city every year is mandatory.
India has a major child malnutrition problem. The Rapid Survey on Children found that about 1 in 5 children are stunted, underweight, or suffer from severe wasting. Stunting, in particular, can have lifelong consequences for children’s health and cognitive development.

There are many causes of this stunting. Addressing poverty and improving education would help. However, development is not the only factor. Addressing poverty and improving education would help.

But development is not the only factor. Also, the health of a child’s mother matters critically.

The first two years - for a child’s physical and cognitive growth - are critically important on her mother's health. Ideally, breastfeeding for at least six months is crucial.

Social Attitudes Research for India (SARI) - In India society, girls are more likely to work outside the home and have their own bank accounts than men.

While the government cannot force people to give women an equal share of food, it could do a lot more to promote gender equality.

It could also more aggressively pursue policies to encourage girls’ education, discouraging dowry, supporting marriage choice, and encouraging female labour.

When women eat last

In households with a limited food budget, or where there is no refrigerator to store leftover food, the person who eats last very often gets less or lower quality food.
Order of the star of India-The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India is an order of chivalry founded by Queen Victoria in 1861. The Order includes members of three classes: Knight Grand Commander (GCSI) Knight Commander (KCSI).

ICC headquarters is in United Arab Emirates.
Chairman- Shashank Manohar
ICC President is Zaheer Abbas.

Bipin Rawat is 27th Chief of Army Staff.

Fundamental Rights is in Part III of constitution. (Article 12 - 35)
Article 15 and Prohibition of Discrimination in Indian Constitution. Article 15 (1) and (2) prohibit the state from discriminating any citizen on ground of any religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.