

TATHASTU ICS

DAILY CURRENT
AFFAIRS
AUGUST 12

S.NO	TOPIC OF THE DAY
1	JUDICIAL CUSTODY OF KERALA ACTIVIST EXTENDED TILL AUGUST 25
2	TO CONTROL THE INCREASE IN PRICES, THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO RELEASE ADDITIONAL STOCKS OF GRAINS THROUGH OPEN MARKET
3	NEW SOIL HEALTH CARD SCHEME

JUDICIAL CUSTODY OF KERALA ACTIVIST EXTENDED TILL AUGUST 25

SOURCE : [TH](#)

WHY IN NEWS

The period of judicial custody for A. Vasu, a Kerala human rights activist renowned as GROW Vasu, has been prolonged until August 25th. This extension occurred because he declined to request bail once more during his appearance before the Kunnamangalam Judicial First Class Magistrate Court on Friday.

MEANING OF JUDICIAL CUSTODY

The term 'custody' refers to the act of taking someone into protective care. The terms "custody" and "arrest" do not have the same meaning.

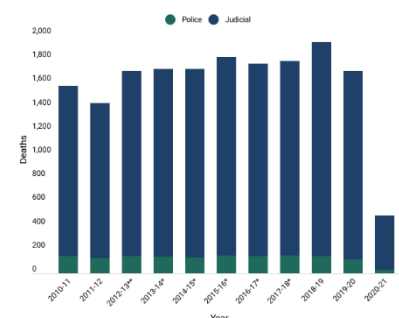
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JUDICIAL AND POLICE CUSTODY

PROVISIONS	JUDICIAL CUSTODY	POLICE CUSTODY
Custodian	magistrate	Police
Location	Jail	police station lockup
Duration	Up to 60 days, with extensions possible	Up to 15 days, with extensions possible
Purpose	To protect the accused and ensure a fair trial	To investigate the crime and gather evidence
Interrogation	Only with the permission of the magistrate	Can be done without permission

LAW OF CUSTODY IN INDIA

- The regulations governing the detention of an individual for the purpose of advancing an investigation in India are outlined in **Section 167 of the Criminal Procedure Code**.
- As per Section 167 of the Code, a person can be kept in the custody of the police for a maximum duration of 15 days upon the directive of a Magistrate. A Judicial Magistrate is authorized to extend the period of custody for up to 15 days, while an executive magistrate can order a custody period of up to 7 days.
- Individuals can be held either in police custody or in judicial custody. Police custody is limited to 15 days from the commencement of custody. In contrast, judicial custody may extend to 90 days if the crime carries a potential punishment of death, life imprisonment, or imprisonment exceeding 10

In Decade To 2019-20, NHRC Registered 139 Police Custody Death Cases Each Year, On Average



Source: Monthly reports (April 2018 - July 2020) and annual reports of the National Human Rights Commission 2010-11, 2011-12, 2016-17, 2017-18
Note: 2020-21 data from April to July 2020



years. For all other offenses, this period can go up to 60 days, provided the Magistrate is convinced of substantial reasons. After this period, the accused or suspect must be released on bail.

- In instances where a person transitions from police custody to judicial custody, the duration spent in police custody is subtracted from the total time allotted for judicial custody.

VARIOUS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC):**

The NHRC has issued several guidelines on police custody and judicial custody, including the following:

- Police custody should be used only when it is absolutely necessary and for the shortest possible period of time.
- The accused should be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest.
- The accused should be allowed to meet with their lawyer and family members.
- The accused should be medically examined as soon as they are arrested and again before they are produced before a magistrate.
- The accused should not be subjected to torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC:

Default bail

It is a type of bail that is granted to an accused person when the investigating agency fails to complete its investigation within the prescribed time limit. The provision for default bail is enshrined in Section 167(2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

The provisions for default bail are as follows:

- The accused person must be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest.
- The magistrate must consider the following factors before granting default bail:
 - ✓ The nature of the offence.
 - ✓ The evidence against the accused person.
 - ✓ The likelihood of the accused person absconding or committing a crime if released on bail.
 - ✓ The magistrate may impose any conditions on the accused person as he/she deems fit, such as the furnishing of a bond, the surrender of passport, or the reporting to the police station on a regular basis.

2. **The Law Commission of India:** The Law Commission of India has also made several recommendations on police custody and judicial custody, including the following:

- The maximum period of police custody should be reduced from 15 days to 7 days.
- The magistrate should be given the power to grant bail to the accused even if the police have sought police custody.
- The accused should be allowed to have a video recording of their interrogation.
- The police should be required to maintain a record of all the evidence that they gather during the interrogation of the accused.

3. **The Justice Verma Committee:** The Justice Verma Committee was set up in the wake of the

2012 Delhi gang rape case to recommend reforms to the criminal justice system. The committee made several recommendations on police custody and judicial custody, including the following:

- The police should be required to inform the family members of the accused about their arrest within 24 hours.
- The police should be required to provide the accused with a copy of the FIR and the relevant sections of the law that they are being charged with.
- The police should be required to allow the accused to meet with their lawyer within 24 hours of arrest.
- The police should be required to video record all interrogations of the accused.

WAY FORWARD

- **Reevaluate and Enhance Time Limits:** Reassess and improve the existing time constraints for submitting charges, considering the complexity of each case. This will ensure comprehensive investigations and prevent unnecessary delays.
- **Incorporate Judicial Discretion:** Allow the judiciary the authority to refuse automatic bail in situations that endanger public safety or obstruct the investigative procedure.
- **Heightened Scrutiny and Stipulations:** Apply more rigorous scrutiny and impose suitable prerequisites for granting default bail, which may include stringent reporting obligations.
- **Streamline Legal Proceedings:** Streamline legal processes by investing in infrastructure, augmenting investigative capacities, increasing the number of judges and court personnel, and adopting effective case management strategies.
- **Adopt a Victim-Centric Approach:** Acknowledge the rights and concerns of victims by offering timely updates on case developments and involving them in bail determinations when appropriate, ensuring a well-rounded perspective.

TO CONTROL THE INCREASE IN PRICES, THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO RELEASE ADDITIONAL STOCKS OF GRAINS THROUGH OPEN MARKET SALES.

SOURCE : [TH](#)

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WHY IN NEWS

Worried about the surge in foodgrains prices, the government made the decision on Wednesday to sell an extra 5 million metric tonnes of wheat and 2.5 million metric tonnes of rice using the Open Market Sales Scheme (OMSS) from the reserves of the Food Corporation of India. The government anticipates that this action will guarantee sufficient domestic supply and control the costs of rice, wheat, and flour.

PRICE STABILISATION FUND

- The establishment of the Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) took place during the fiscal year 2014-
- 15 under the supervision of the **Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW)**.
- Its purpose was to manage the unpredictable price fluctuations of key agricultural and horticultural commodities such as onions, potatoes, and later, pulses were also included.
- Starting from April 1st, 2016, the administration of the PSF initiative was shifted from DAC&FW to the **Department of Consumer Affairs (DOCA)**.
- The primary objective of this scheme is to maintain a strategic reserve of the mentioned commodities, ensuring a controlled release to mitigate price instability and discourage unethical practices like hoarding and speculation.
- To create this reserve, the scheme encourages the direct procurement of goods from farmers or their associations at the farm gate or local markets (mandis).
- The PSF serves as a source of interest-free working capital advance to Central Agencies, State/UT Governments, and other relevant bodies for executing market intervention operations.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC

MARKET INTERVENTION SCHEME

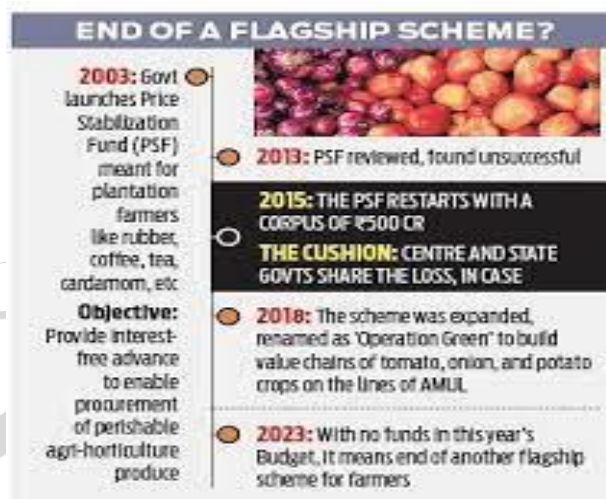
- Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities which are perishable in nature and are not covered under the Price Support Scheme (PSS).
- The objective of intervention is to protect the growers of these commodities in the event of a bumper crop during the peak arrival period.
- The scheme is implemented at the request of a State/UT government which is ready to bear 50 percent of the loss (25 percent in case of North-Eastern States), if any, incurred on its implementation.
- pre-determined quantity at the fixed Market Intervention Price (MIP) is procured by the agencies designated by the State Government for a fixed period or till the prices are stabilized above the MIP whichever is earlier.

- Alongside domestic procurement from farmers and wholesale markets, the PSF can also be employed to facilitate imports.

MANAGEMENT OF PRICE STABILISATION FUND

- The Price Stabilization Fund is set to be overseen centrally through the **Price Stabilization Fund Management Committee (PSFMC)**. This committee will be responsible for endorsing all submissions from State Governments and Central Agencies.

- Operated as a **Central Corpus Fund**, the Price Stabilization Fund will be managed by the **Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC)**, an organization supported by the **Ministry of Agriculture**, dedicated to bridging agriculture with private enterprises, investments, and technology.



- From this Central Corpus, funds will be allocated in two distinct channels: one to State Governments/Union Territories (UTs) as an initial advance for each State/UT, determined by their initial proposal; and the second to Central Agencies.
- The initial advance provided to the States/UTs, paired with their corresponding contributions, will establish a revolving fund at the State/UT level.
- This fund can then be utilized by them for future market interventions aimed at regulating onion and potato prices. These interventions will be sanctioned by a State Level Committee specially established for this purpose.

BENEFITS OF PRICE STABILISATION FUND

- **Price Volatility Mitigation:** The fund helps control abrupt price fluctuations in essential commodities, ensuring stability in the market.
- **Consumer Protection:** Stable prices lead to affordable goods for consumers, preventing sudden spikes that could impact household budgets.
- **Farmers' Income:** Maintaining steady prices ensures farmers receive fair compensation for their produce, fostering agricultural sustainability.
- **Discourages Hoarding:** The fund's calibrated releases discourage hoarding and speculative activities, promoting a fair market environment.
- **Strategic Buffer:** The fund creates a reserve that can be used during periods of scarcity, ensuring an uninterrupted supply of crucial commodities.

ISSUES OF PRICE STABILISATION FUND

- **Funding:** Price stabilization funds can be expensive to set up and maintain. The government may need to raise taxes or borrow money to finance the fund.

- **Transparency:** It is important for the government to be transparent about how the price stabilization fund is being used. This includes providing information on how much money is in the fund, how it is being invested, and how it is being used to stabilize prices.
- **Efficiency:** The government needs to make sure that the price stabilization fund is used efficiently. This means ensuring that the fund is not used to subsidize inefficient producers or to prop up prices that are already high.
- **Political interference:** There is a risk that the price stabilization fund could be used for political purposes. For example, the government could use the fund to support certain industries or to reward its political supporters.
- **Moral hazard:** If the government is always there to stabilize prices, then producers may have less incentive to control their costs. This could lead to higher prices in the long run

WAY FORWARD

- **Improve transparency and accountability:** The PSF should be more transparent in its operations and decision-making process. This would help to build trust with farmers and consumers, and make it easier to identify and address any problems.
- **Target the fund more effectively:** The PSF should be targeted more effectively to the commodities that are most vulnerable to price fluctuations. This would help to ensure that the fund is used to its full potential in stabilizing prices and protecting the interests of farmers and consumers.
- **Make the fund more flexible:** The PSF should be more flexible in its use. This would allow it to be used to respond to sudden price shocks, and to address the specific needs of different regions and commodities.
- **Coordinate with other government programs:** The PSF should be coordinated more effectively with other government programs that are aimed at stabilizing prices, such as the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme. This would help to ensure that the government is taking a comprehensive approach to price stabilization.
- **Strengthen the regulatory framework:** The regulatory framework for the PSF should be strengthened. This would help to prevent fraud and misuse of the fund.

NEW SOIL HEALTH CARD SCHEME

SOURCE : [PIB](#)

WHY IN NEWS:

A massive programme of soil sampling, testing and generation of SHCs was launched to assist State Governments to issue soil health cards to all farmers in the country.

ABOUT NEW SOIL HEALTH CARD SCHEME

- The New Soil Health Card Scheme (NSHCS) is a government initiative to improve soil health
- and crop productivity in India. The scheme was launched in 2023 and aims to cover all farmers in the country by 2025.
- Under the NSHCS, each farmer will be issued a soil health card that contains information about the nutrient status of their soil.
- The card will also provide recommendations on the type and amount of fertilizers and other amendments that the farmer should apply to their soil to improve its health and productivity.
- The NSHCS covers a wider range of nutrients, includes more detailed recommendations on fertilizer application, and is being implemented using a more efficient and transparent system.
- By providing farmers with the information, they need to manage their soil more effectively, the scheme will help to improve yields, reduce input costs, and make Indian agriculture more sustainable.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC:

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana: This Scheme aims to counteract soil erosion, facilitate the revival of natural vegetation, encourage rainwater harvesting, and facilitate the replenishment of groundwater levels.

National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture: This initiative comprises strategies that endorse time-honored indigenous methodologies such as organic farming and natural agriculture. By doing so, it lessens reliance on chemicals and other agricultural inputs, subsequently alleviating the financial burden on small-scale farmers.

KEY FEATURES OF NEW SOIL HEALTH CARD SCHEME

- It encompasses a broader array of nutrients compared to the earlier SHCS which include nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, zinc, iron, copper, manganese, and boron.
- It furnishes more intricate suggestions for applying fertilizers, tailored to the particular nutrient scarcities in the soil.
- The execution employs a more effective and open system, utilizing geospatial technology for soil type and nutrient deficiency mapping.

- Collaboration with the private sector is in progress to guarantee farmers' access to the necessary fertilizers and additives, facilitating soil health enhancement.

BENEFITS OF NEW SOIL HEALTH CARD SCHEME

- **Enhanced agricultural productivity:** By equipping farmers with the necessary insights for better soil management, the NSHCS can contribute to boosting crop yields.
- **Diminished expenditure on inputs:** Through the utilization of the advised fertilizers and enhancements, farmers have the potential to curtail input expenses and achieve monetary savings.
- **Elevated soil well-being:** The NSHCS has the potential to enhance soil health by tackling nutrient inadequacies and other issues.
- **Augmented sustainability:** Embracing the recommended fertilizers and enhancements can aid farmers in fostering greater sustainability within their agricultural methods.

MACRONUTRIENTS	MICRONUTRIENTS
Macronutrients are required in large quantities.	Micronutrients are required in small quantities
They are present in excessive concentration in plant.	They are present in low concentration in plant.
Also called as major elements	They are also called trace elements
They are usually not toxic to the cell if they are present in relatively higher concentration than the normal level.	They can be toxic for the plant if present excess in the cell than the required quantity.
Examples: C, H, O, N,P, K, Ca, S, and Mg.	Examples: Fe, Mn, Cu, Zn, Mo, B, Cl, and Ni. All micronutrients are minerals.

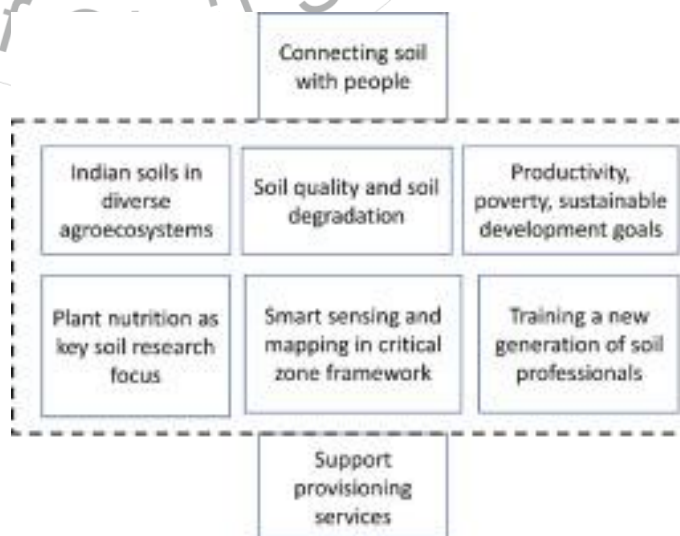
CONCLUSION

The NSHCS marks a significant stride in the government's endeavor to enhance soil health and bolster crop productivity in India. Anticipated to wield a noteworthy influence on the agricultural domain, the initiative is warmly embraced by farmers and environmental advocates alike.

VALUE ADDITION

Soil preservation fosters a sustainable and economically viable progress in alignment with the Goals of Sustainable Development:

SDG 6 — Ensure Availability and Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation for All: By aiding in drainage and filtration, soil contributes to the provision of uncontaminated water for both consumption and agriculture.



SDG 13 — Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts: Soil's capacity for carbon sequestration positions it as a crucial player in the fight against climate change, as it aids in the reduction of carbon in the atmosphere.

SDG 15 — Sustainably Manage Forests, Combat Desertification, and Halt and Reverse Land Degradation and Biodiversity Loss: The vitality of soils is indispensable for the enduring care of forests, the battle against desertification, and the reversal of land deterioration.

