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RED TOURISM



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All about Praful Patel, Administrator of Lakshadweep

(Source: [Indian Express](#))

Context: *Praful Khodabhai Patel, the Administrator of **Lakshadweep** who has triggered a major political storm by **bringing certain draft regulations** for the Muslim-dominated Union Territory (UT), comes from Umta village in Mehsana district of North Gujarat, and has a diploma in civil engineering.*

Details:

- Considered close to Prime Minister Narendra Modi — who belongs to Vadnagar in the same district — Patel had a brief stint as MLA, during which he was Minister of State for Home when Modi was Chief Minister of Gujarat.
- After Modi became Prime Minister, Patel, 63, was appointed Administrator of the UTs of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. (The two erstwhile UTs, which were merged to create a single UT on January 26, 2020, had traditionally shared an Administrator.)
- In December last year, Patel, the first Administrator of the new UT of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, was also given charge of Lakshadweep following the death of the incumbent Administrator Dineshwar Sharma.

A Parivar family

- Patel was born in Himmatnagar of Sabarkantha district into a family with roots in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).
- A close aide of Patel's said that his father, Khodabhai Patel, had been active in the RSS, and held the post of treasurer of the Gujarat unit of the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, the farmers' organisation of the RSS. According to this person, Khodabhai had good relations with Modi during the latter's time in the RSS, and Modi would visit the Patel home whenever he was on tour in the region.
- The family's association with the Sangh Parivar has continued; Praful Patel's son Siddharth is currently convener of the Gujarat BJP's Social Media Cell.

Early years in politics

- Sources said that in the mid-1990s, when the BJP formed its first governments in Gujarat, Praful Patel had also worked as Personal Assistant to Dilip Patel, who was Minister of State for Narmada Development in the state government.
- In 2007, Praful Patel contested the Gujarat Assembly election from the Himatnagar constituency in Sabarkantha district on a BJP ticket, and entered the House.
- In 2008, he was appointed district president of the BJP's Sabarkantha unit, and became one of the few MLAs to also head a district unit of the party.

Time as a state Minister

- Praful Patel became well known in August 2010 when then Chief Minister Modi appointed him Minister of State (MoS) for Home.
- Patel replaced Amit Shah, Modi's closest aide, after Shah resigned as Minister ahead of his arrest in the alleged fake encounter killing of Sohrabuddin Sheikh (in November 2005). Apart from Home, Praful Patel also got seven other portfolios that had been held by Shah as MoS.
- During his stint as MoS Home, Praful faced allegations of being part of a meeting attended by top officials and some lawyers, where plans to derail investigations into the alleged fake encounters of Ishrat Jahan and three others were allegedly discussed.

After 2012



- In 2012, Praful contested the Gujarat Assembly election again, but lost. For the next four years, he remained largely removed from the headlines. During this period, Modi moved to New Delhi and was succeeded by Anandiben Patel in Gujarat.
- In August 2016, Praful was appointed Administrator of the UTs of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.
- In February this year, the sitting Lok Sabha MP from Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Mohan Delkar, died by suicide in a hotel room in Mumbai. Abhinav Delkar, son of the multi-term MP, has accused Praful Patel of having abetted his father's suicide.

All about the restrictions on government servants before and after retirement

(Source: [Indian Express](#))

Context: *With a notification dated May 31, the Centre has amended its pension rules putting new restrictions of officials of intelligence and security organisations after retirement. A look at various restrictions on government servants while in service and after retirement.*

What is new?

- The government has amended the CCS Pension Rules-1972. Under amended Rule-8(3)(a), officials retired from certain intelligence and security establishments will not be allowed to write anything about their organisation without permission.
- It says: "No government servant, who, having worked in any intelligence or security-related organisation included in the Second Schedule of the RTI Act, shall, without prior clearance from the Head of the Organisation, make any publication after retirement, of any material relating to and including: (i) domain of the organisation, including any reference or information about any personnel and his designation, and experience or knowledge gained by virtue of working in that organisation; (ii) sensitive information, the disclosure of which would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the state, or relation with a foreign state or which would lead to incitement of an offence."
- The Second Schedule of the RTI Act covers 26 organisations including the Intelligence Bureau, R&AW, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, CBI, NCB, BSF, CRPF, ITBP and CISF.

What are the existing provisions?

- The pension of government servants is already subject to their conduct after retirement. Rule 8 of the CCS Pension Rules says: "Future good conduct shall be an implied condition of every grant of pension and its continuance... The appointing authority may, by order in writing, withhold or withdraw a pension or a part thereof, whether permanently or for a specified period, if the pensioner is convicted of a serious crime or is found guilty of grave misconduct... The expression 'grave misconduct' includes the communication or disclosure of any secret official code or password or any sketch, plan, model, article, note, document or information... which was obtained while holding office under the Government so as to prejudicially affect the interests of the general public or the security of the state."

Why amend the rules then?

- Sources in the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) said this was in process for around four years after the Committee of Secretaries recommended it.
- It was approved recently and notified on May 31.
- They said the move was prompted by concerns arising out of the fact that some high-profile retired officers had written books on their tenure, and some of these had revealed information.



What restrictions are government employees under while in service?

- Rule 7 of the CCS Conduct Rules restricts government servants from resorting to or abetting any form of strike or coercion.
- Rule 8 restricts them, except with government sanction, from owning or participating in the editing or management of any newspaper or other periodical publication or electronic media. If they publish a book or participate in public media, they “shall at all times make it clear that the views expressed by him are his own and not that of Government”.
- Rule 9 restricts a government servant from making statements of fact or opinion in writing or in a telecast or a broadcast “which has the effect of an adverse criticism of any current or recent policy or action of the Central Government or a State Government”
- Rule 9 of the CCS Pension Rules says that if any government official has committed any misconduct and retires, he or she may face departmental proceedings only until four years of the date of committing that misconduct.

Is a retired government servant restricted from taking up employment?

- Rule 26, Death-cum-Retirement Benefits Rules, restricts a pensioner from any commercial employment for one year after retirement, except with previous sanction of the central government.
- Non-compliance can lead the central government declaring that the employee “shall not be entitled to the whole or such part of the pension and for such period as may be specified”.
- This cooling-off period was two years until 2007, when an amendment reduced it to one year.

What about political activity while in service?

- The Conduct Rules bars government servants from being associated with any political party or organisation, and from taking part or assisting any political activity.
- An amendment on November 27, 2014 added a few clauses to Rule 3(1), one of which said, “Every government employee shall at all times maintain political neutrality” and “commit himself to and uphold the supremacy of the Constitution and democratic values”.
- Incidentally, the RSS is among the “political” organisations listed by the Centre from time to time.

But don't government servants join politics after retirement?

- There is no rule to stop government servants from joining politics after their retirement. In 2013, the Election Commission had written to the DoPT and Law Ministry, suggesting a cooling-off period for bureaucrats joining politics after retirement, but it was rejected.
- The Legislative Department of the Ministry of Law advised “that any such restriction (against officials joining politics or contesting polls)... may not stand the test of valid classification under Article 14 of the Constitution of India”.
- And the DoPT told the EC that its suggestions “may not be appropriate and feasible.”
- Among many examples in the Centre and the states, former Union Home Secretary R K Singh, who retired on June 30, 2013, joined the BJP on December 14, 2013, has twice been elected Lok Sabha MP since then, and is a Union Minister of State. Aparajita Sarangi, former Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Rural Development, took voluntary retirement on November 16, 2018, joined the BJP on November 27 that year, and is now a Lok Sabha MP.



All about 'red tourism' promoted by China

(Source: [Indian Express](#))

Context: *As the Chinese Communist Party celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, the popularity of 'red tourism', which involves visiting places that are of historical and cultural importance for the party, is at an all-time high in the country.*

Details:

- Places such as Nanhu Lake in East China's Zhejiang, where the First National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party was held on a boat in 1921, and Mao Zedong's birthplace Shaoshan have been witnessing huge footfall in recent times. In fact, 'red tourism' has been bringing in huge revenues which is fuelling China's economic boom since the pandemic.
- But why is 'red tourism' so important in China and how is it helping businesses to grow? And why does it have its fair share of naysayers across the world who feel that it has some dark secrets? We explain.

What is China's 'red tourism'?

- In China, 'red tourism' refers to visiting sites which have a modern revolutionary legacy. Launched in 2004, the purpose of the project is to promote locations with historical and cultural significance to the ruling Communist Party's history while also providing an impetus to tourism and local businesses.
- 'Red tourism' seeks to spread awareness about the history of the Communist Party of China starting from its origins.
- For instance, historical events such as the Long March, the military retreat undertaken by the Red Army to evade the pursuit of the Kuomintang in 1934, and the ascent to power of Mao Zedong are at the heart of the project.
- The red sites in the country now form the core of a booming tourism industry that seeks to promote the party's heritage. 'Red tourism' reminds people of the sacrifices made by the leaders of the Communist party to forge a modern China. In doing so, it tries to entrench the party in the minds of the people by reinforcing ideology through history and tourism.
- Since coming to power, Chinese President Xi Jinping has been aggressively promoting 'red tourism'. Xi, who believes that the project can offer "spiritual red baptism" to the people, said in 2016, "Only by experiencing the hardships of the revolutionary era can people truly receive education."
- The party's official magazine recently quoted Xi urging members to "make good use of red resources, inherit red genes and pass on the red country from generation to generation".

What are some of the famous sites covered by 'red tourism'?

- Some of the most famous sites covered by 'red tourism' include Yan'an, Mao Zedong's revolutionary base area where the Red Army arrived after the Long March; Shaoshan, which is the birthplace of Mao; Jinggangshan, where leading members of the Communist Party of China established their first rural base for the revolution in 1927; Nanchang, the capital city of Jiangxi Province which witnessed a significant Uprising in 1927 led by Zhou Enlai and He Long (China's supreme commander); Jinggang Mountain in Jiangxi Province where the revolution led by the Communist Party of China began in October, 1927; and Zunyi in Guizhou Province which is dominated by ethnic minorities.
- Jiangxi and Guizhou provinces, which are sites of Mao's early battles and his escape from Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces in the Long March, are also a big tourist draw.
- The list of these sites is truly endless. Just Yan'an has 140 red sites including the Wangjiaping Revolutionary Museum and Fenghuang Mountain, the site of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Baota Hill, and Yangjia Ling Revolutionary Site.
- In Mao's hometown of Shaoshan, one can visit his residence, his bronze statues and relics, and also read his poems on stone tablets.



- The tourism also includes colourful events — visitors routinely put on revolutionary attire as they visit the former residences of Communist leaders and exhibition halls, party members chant admission oaths in ritualistic fashion and there are also lectures for children on the proud history of the Communist party in the country.
- In places like Jinggangshan, one can pose for photographs dressed in a uniform of the People's Liberation Army.
- Many of the red sites have museums and exhibitions on the history of the Communist Party of China. In 2016, the Zunyi museum launched a traveling exhibit that toured colleges and universities, besides also training over 100 school students to spread awareness about Communist history.
- The tourism packages often offer visits to culture parks which host performances and stage dramas on the important battles and events which played a key role in the growth of the Communist party. These culture parks also allow tourists to take part in role-playing projects in simulated battlefields which recreate the wars that the Red Army took part in.

Why is 'red tourism' popular, and how has it helped the economy?

- The tourism sites are a big attraction for the young Chinese population that loves to travel and learn more about the country's history.
- Moreover, the strategy of promoting tourist products while employing new technologies such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality has been hugely successful in attracting the youth.
- People aged between 21 to 30 account for 40 per cent of the tourists. A recent report by Alibaba's Fliggy revealed that bookings for tours by people born during the 2000s have seen a 630-per cent year-on-year increase in recent times
- The government has over the years invested heavily on 'red tourism' — 2.64 billion yuan (\$370 million) was budgeted between 2016 and 2020 for the project. And the big investments are starting to pay rich dividends.
- Trips to red sites accounted for 10% of domestic tourism spending in the first half of 2018, government statistics show.
- The growth in tourism has been exponential in the last few years — in Yan'an for instance, the number of visitors grew from 40.25 million in 2016 to 73.08 million in 2019.
- 'Red tourism' sites across China had more than 1.4 billion visits in 2019. The increased footfall means skyrocketing revenues — the tourist visits raked in more than 400 billion (\$62.2 billion) yuan of revenue in 2019, according to a revelation by the Chinese administration in a press conference.
- 'Red tourism' has also helped in the robust recovery of the tourism market in China after the pandemic.
- In 2020, there were more than 100 million 'red tourists' who contributed to 11% of domestic travel, CNN quoted Mimi Li, associate professor at Hong Kong Polytechnic University and an expert on Chinese tourism policy, as saying.
- Liu Qi, secretary of the Jiangxi Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China, recently said during a news conference in Beijing, that the number of tourists visiting 'red tourism' sites in Jiangxi rose by 300 per cent on a yearly basis during the recent May Day holiday.
- A report recently released by online travel booking platform Ctrip and Xinhua Finance stated that during the May Day holiday, online searches for 'red tourism' increased sevenfold from last month. Moreover, tourism bookings on Ctrip rose 375 per cent compared with the same period in 2019.
- Apart from the growing revenues for the government departments and private tourism companies, 'red tourism' is hugely popular because it supports a whole host of ancillary businesses, starting from antique shops selling Communist memorabilia to malls, restaurants and hotels.
- The project has given birth to an entire ecosystem of businesses that form the very crux of the country's booming economy. Yan'an, for instance, which was once considered to lie in the economic backwater of China, now boasts of an airport, new hotels and even an upcoming Starbucks outlet.

Why does 'red tourism' have its fair share of critics?



- Many critics say that ‘red tourism’ that seeks to educate people about the country’s past often indulges in one-sided story-telling. It can tend to gloss over the failures and misdeeds of the Communist leaders of the country, thus peddling a version of history which can suit the party’s interests.
- Many have pointed out that more than fostering the spirit of research and academic scholarship in history, ideological indoctrination is at the heart of this project.
- For example, in the Museum of the War of Chinese People’s Resistance Against Japanese Aggression in Beijing, the spotlight is on the sacrifices made by the Communist Party during the Sino-Japanese War in the 1930s and 40s. It seeks to argue that the then-fledgling party was the “mainstay” that led the country into victory.
- The official page of the museum states that the Kuomintang, which was the ruling party in the country from 1928 to 1949, did not put up a strong enough resistance to Japanese invasion — a claim which has been contested by researchers outside China.
- In the literature of the Communist Party of China and in state media, the former revolutionary bases are considered to be “holy sites”. Visits to these places are often seen as opportunities by the administration to entrench the party’s beliefs in the minds of the people and make them reaffirm their Communist faith.
- As Xi echoed Mao’s edict at a party meeting in October 2018, “east, west, south, north and centre — the party leads everything”.

All about the Mehul Choksi case

(Source: [Indian express](https://www.indianexpress.com))

Context: Fugitive jeweller Mehul Choksi, key accused in the Rs-13,000-crore PNB loan fraud case, was recently **arrested in Dominica** by authorities there after he was found to have illegally entered the country from Antigua, where he had been staying since 2018. India has now sent a team of eight officials, including from the CBI and the Ministry of External Affairs, to secure Choksi’s deportation to India. A private jet is said to have reached Dominica on May 28 to ferry him back to India. But the matter is now facing a legal hurdle with the jeweller’s lawyers approaching Dominica’s Supreme Court, which has stayed his movement out of the country and is set to hear the matter.

What is the legal hurdle?

- Choksi’s legal team has asserted that contrary to claims made by Antiguan authorities, the jeweller did not flee Antigua but was abducted by laying a honey trap.
- The legal team has claimed Choksi was befriended by a woman over the last six months, called to an apartment in Antigua on May 23, and abducted by a group of men from there. He was then allegedly beaten up and forced into a yacht before being ferried to Dominica.
- While Antiguan PM Gaston Brown has told media that Choksi can be deported to India from Dominica itself, Choksi’s lawyers have argued that he cannot be sent back to India as he is not an Indian citizen anymore. Choksi acquired Antiguan citizenship in 2017, just over a month before he fled India in January 2018, and has even surrendered his Indian passport.

What is India’s case then?

- Sources in Indian agencies pursuing Choksi say he may have surrendered his passport, but India has not accepted this and a certificate of surrender of passport has not been issued.
- More importantly, they say Interpol has issued a Red Notice against Choksi for financial crimes committed in India, and this would be argued in court. India has already sent all relevant case papers to Dominica.



What does the law say?

- As far as Choksi's citizenship is concerned, the law is very clear: India does not allow dual citizenship. According to Section 9 of the Indian Citizenship Act, 1955, any Indian citizen who acquires foreign citizenship ceases to be an Indian citizen.
- "Any citizen of India who by naturalisation, registration, otherwise voluntarily acquires, or has at any time between the 26th January, 1950 and the commencement of this Act, voluntarily acquired the citizenship of another country shall, upon such acquisition or, as the case may be, such commencement, cease to be a citizen of India," Section 9 says.
- The only exception when this law does not apply is when the two concerned countries are at war with each other.
- Neither the Act nor the Citizenship Rules of 2009 specify any procedure required for termination of citizenship in case of acquisition of foreign citizenship. Legal experts say the law is clear that Indian citizenship will cease to exist the moment one acquires foreign citizenship.
- So, for all practical purposes, Choksi remains an Antiguan citizen even though the government there has begun a legal process to revoke his citizenship; this has been challenged in an Antiguan court by the jeweller.

What about his Indian passport?

- According to the Ministry of External Affairs, as per the Passports Act 1967, it is mandatory for all Indian passport holders to surrender their passports to the nearest Indian Mission/Post immediately after acquisition of foreign nationality.
- Misuse of Indian passports constitutes an offence under Section 12(1A) of the Passports Act 1967. "The Indian Citizenship Act, 1955, does not allow dual citizenship... The Government of India has prescribed imposition of penalty on a graded scale, depending on number of trips made on Indian passport after acquiring foreign nationality, for the violation of Passport Rules and retention of Indian Passport for more than three years after acquiring of foreign nationality," the Ministry says on its website.
- Sources, however, said the law's intent is to prevent a person from using an Indian passport for travel after acquiring foreign citizenship. Some countries, which do not allow dual citizenship, insist on surrender of the Indian passport before formalising citizenship of their country. However, this is not the case with Antigua.
- In any case, it is immaterial whether you have surrendered your Indian passport or not. If a foreign country has granted you citizenship, under Indian law you cease to remain an Indian citizen.

What can India hope for then?

- India's best chance of getting Choksi back to India is to convince the Dominican court that it has a strong legal case against him and that he is a fugitive. Sources said India would also argue that his sole intention of acquiring Antiguan citizenship was to escape the clutches of the law in India.
- "That he has an Interpol notice against him is good enough ground to hand him over to India. As far as the issue of his being beaten up is concerned, it is not associated with us. We don't know who has beaten him up," an official said.
- Another official argued that even Christian Michel, accused in the VVIP helicopter case, was brought to India from the UAE where he was staying as a British citizen. There, however, India followed extradition proceedings in court that dragged on for over a year. India does not have an extradition treaty with Dominica.
- The Indian team could face hurdles in the face of Choksi's legal team alleging human rights violations and suggesting a planned extra-judicial extraction on part of Indian and Antiguan authorities. Wide media coverage of the entire episode and serious injuries sustained by Choksi could also play a part in court.